

Handbook of
International Relations

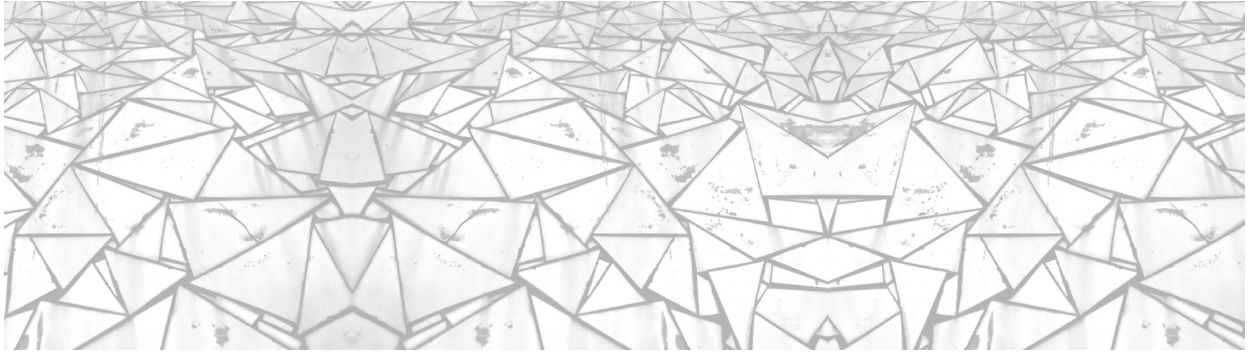


Second Edition

Edited by
Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse
and Beth A. Simmons



Handbook of
International Relations

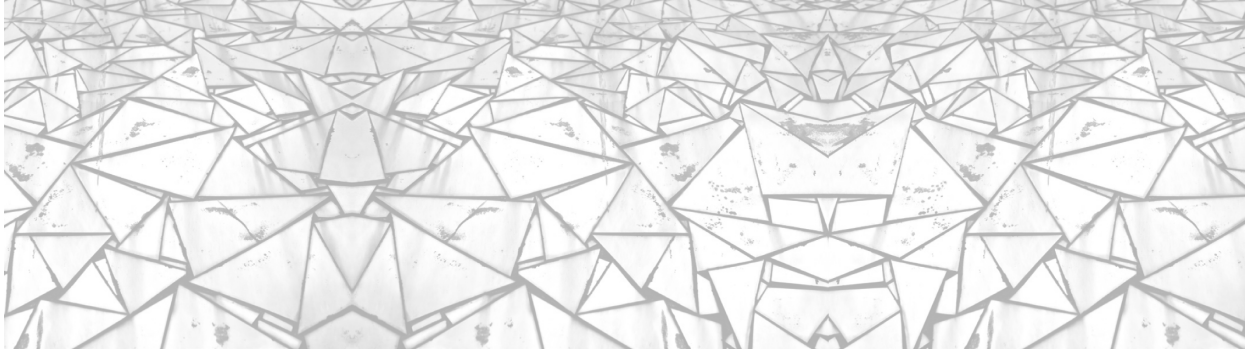


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London EC1Y 1SP

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2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320

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B 1/I 1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area
Mathura Road A
New Delhi 110 044

SAGE Publications Asia-Pacific Pte Ltd
3 Church Street
#10-04 Samsung Hub
Singapore 049483

Editor: Natalie Aguilera
Editorial assistant: James Piper
Production editor: Imogen Roome
Marketing manager: Sally Ransom
Cover design: Wendy Scott
Typeset by: Cenveo Publisher Services
Printed by:



SA-COC-1565

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First published 2013

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2011945767

British Library Cataloguing in Publication data

A catalogue record for this book is available from
the British Library

ISBN 978-1-84920-150-6
ISBN 978-1-4462-4758-7 (pbk)

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Preface

First Edition

The beginning of a new millennium is a particularly fitting occasion for taking stock of the past achievements and present condition of International Relations (IR). However, there is an additional reason as well, and one with considerable more intellectual clout: the surprising dearth of such attempts at stocktaking within this discipline during most of its short history. Those that have been published in the past few decades have either been brief guides to the subject matter (Groom and Light, 1994; Light and Groom, 1985), or have had the encyclopaedic ambition of covering not only the major analytical approaches within the discipline of IR but also all the significant political developments, events and personages which have characterized modern international relations *qua* empirical domain (Krieger, 1993). These (and similar) repositories of disciplinary knowledge and accumulated wisdom certainly deserve the space which they occupy on the shelves of our scholarly libraries. However, given the specific goals which their editors have set for themselves, they do not provide for the needs of those advanced students, both undergraduate and graduate, as well as more established scholars within or outside the field, who are in need of in-depth introductions to, and critical discussions of, the major theoretical and analytical concerns of contemporary IR research. In other words, this *Handbook* is intended to fill what we submit is currently a significant lacuna within the discipline: providing a single volume of extensive, systematic and authoritative overviews of the state of the art within the various sub-fields of the discipline.

In pursuing this ambition Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby's magisterial *Handbook of Political Science* (Greenstein and Polsby, 1975a) has served as an awe-inspiring exemplar. At the same time, their landmark effort – consisting of eight volumes altogether – is obviously a feat that is virtually impossible to repeat today, as is frankly acknowledged by the editors of its successor, the one-volume *New Handbook of Political Science* (Goodin and Klingemann, 1996). However, what can be replicated even when operating on a considerably more modest scale is the seriousness of the intellectual tone which suffuses their achievement; and we hope that we have succeeded at least to some degree in the delicate task of transferring this timbre to the present *Handbook*. In one major respect we do contend to have succeeded rather better than either of the above works of reference: covering the entire spectrum of IR as a field of scholarly endeavor. Thus, whereas the Greenstein and Polsby volume on *International Politics*

(Greenstein and Polsby, 1975b) consists of only six chapters (one of which, it must be acknowledged, subsequently turned into Kenneth Waltz's epochal *Theory of International Politics*), and the *New Handbook* has allotted only four chapters to IR, we have made space for twenty-eight chapter-long presentations, covering what we perceive to be the major areas of study and controversy characterizing the contemporary IR research community.

Choosing and agreeing on which topics to include – and hence which to exclude – has been a major task facing the three co-editors, but one which turned out to be far less divisive than we had first anticipated. The underlying structure which we have opted for is to make a distinction between three analytically different intellectual domains within the field, defining what in our view constitute three types of research discourses. The first pertains to the intellectual history of the discipline, as well as to the meta-theoretical, theoretical and normative concerns that characterize current thinking *about* IR as a distinctive field of research. Here we have, to a large extent, opted for a focus based on the current debate between 'rationalism' and 'constructivism', although we are fully aware of the controversial nature of this distinction itself. The second group of chapters has an essentially conceptual thrust, incorporating within its ambit the various *analytical* concerns, perspectives and contextualizations which have come to characterize current IR scholarship, cutting across the various issue-areas and substantive questions lying at the core of contemporary research. Instead of reinforcing thinking along the traditional lines of various substantive theories of IR – such as realism, liberalism, institutionalism and so forth – we have deliberately organized the *Handbook* in a way that would entice our authors to probe approaches such as these primarily in terms of their analytic utility in issue-based empirical research. The third, final and largest group of chapters focuses on the various *substantive* processes, actions and interactions which can be said to define the core empirical domain of international relations. Obviously, it is not always easy to maintain a clear distinction between these substantive issues areas and the analytic and cross-cutting conceptualizations highlighted in Part Two. However, from the point of view of the presumptive readers of this *Handbook* we have found it important to be able to offer separate and chapter-long discussions on conceptual topics such as 'sovereignty', 'power' and 'globalization', on the one hand, and substantive issues such as the pursuit of 'foreign policy', 'war' and 'peace', on the other. Although intimately linked, they at the same time belong to distinguishable discourses within IR.

Our choice of authors has been guided by two simple principles: to entice the best possible expertise to participate, and to make this a truly international (or at least trans-Atlantic) enterprise, despite the putative nature of IR as an essentially 'American social science' (Hoffmann, 1977; Waever, 1998). Hence, we are grateful that such a distinguished and international group of scholars has agreed to participate in this project. And although not primarily intended as such, it is nevertheless our hope that this *Handbook* will itself contribute further to the ongoing denationalization of IR as a scholarly profession. Whatever else its publication may achieve, enhancing this process during the coming years of the new millennium would indeed be a fitting side-effect of what has been a truly intensive and mutually rewarding trans-Atlantic collaboration between the editors and the authors of this *Handbook*.

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Preface

Second Edition

When the first edition of this *Handbook* was published a decade ago the editors were keenly aware that they were entering virgin territory with few landmarks to guide them. This posed a challenge but also gave us considerable scope for putting our own imprint on how to delineate the main analytic discourses, substantive research areas and scholarly debates characterizing the broad field of International Relations (IR) at the beginning of this millennium. In view of how the *Handbook* was subsequently received we have come to believe – admittedly rather immodestly - that our overall conceptualization of the field was on the whole sound and fruitful, and that it did in fact succeed in providing for ‘a single volume of extensive, systematic and authoritative overviews of the state of the art within the various sub-fields of the discipline’ (as we described our ambition in the preface of the first edition; see above).

However, in addition to continuously producing new knowledge, a dynamic field such as IR inevitably changes character and focus during a decade; hence, when the publishers approached us with the suggestion that it was time for a new edition, we had little reason to demur. The result is a thoroughly revised volume building essentially on the same three-fold structure of the first edition, but now enlarged to include five additional chapters. Authors carried over from the first edition – a large majority – were asked to revise their chapters from scratch, which in a number of cases has resulted in completely rewritten contributions. The order in which the chapters are presented has been rearranged, while a few have been dropped altogether. Some of the topics covered in the first edition have received new authors, and some of the chapters retained in this volume have been retitled. This is, in other words, a fundamentally revised volume which, it is hoped, will stand the test of time for an additional decade.

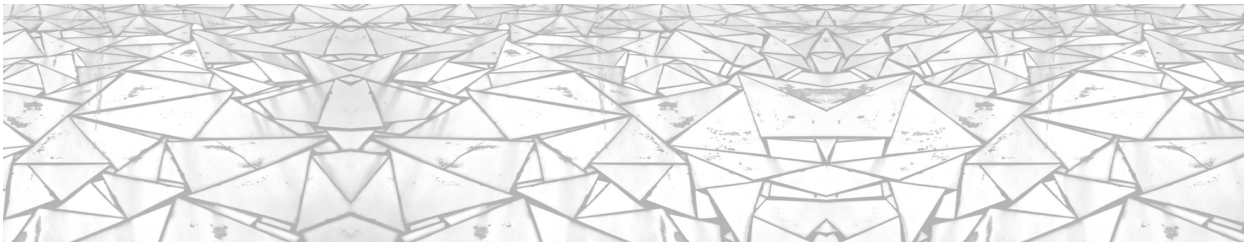
Finally, we once again wish to express our deep gratitude to the highly distinguished and heavily engaged group of international scholars who – either for the first or second time, and without remuneration – agreed to participate in this project. Working together with these thoroughly professional colleagues has been both an honour and a pleasure – not to mention how much we have learned from reading and editing their contributions. We also want to acknowledge once more our deep appreciation of the flexible and informal manner in which

those on the publishing side – in particular David Mainwaring, Natalie Aguilera and James Piper – have guided, coached and at times goaded us throughout this long editorial process. We may not always have kept to agreed deadlines, but they have accepted our excuses with admirable forbearance.

Walter Carlsnaes
Thomas Risse
Beth A. Simmons
August 2012

PART ONE

Historical, Philosophical, and Theoretical Issues in International Relations



On the History and Historiography of International Relations

Brian C. Schmidt

The historiography of international relations (IR), that is, both the scholarship on the history of the field and the methodological principles involved in that research and writing, is more advanced today than at any time in the past. During the last ten years, a wealth of new literature has appeared that greatly challenges much of the conventional wisdom regarding the development of IR. In light of the new and sophisticated research on the historiography of IR, it is even possible to suggest that progress is being made in understanding the complex and multifaceted story of the emergence and maturation of IR as an academic field of study. Scholars have also discovered that researching the history of the field can lead to new insights that have critical purchase in the present. Today, disciplinary history has achieved a level of recognition and legitimacy that it formerly lacked. This is a dramatic improvement on the previously existing attitudes that many expressed about disciplinary history. Despite the growing pluralization of the field and the ever-expanding

range of topics being investigated, an element of suspicion was cast on the task of examining its history. One possible explanation for the reluctance to grant legitimacy to this research task is the common notion that we already know the history. Another possibility is that those in the mainstream are satisfied with the dominant story that is told about the development of the field. In any event, there is no shortage of brief synoptic accounts of this history in introductory textbooks, state-of-the-field articles, and International Studies Association presidential addresses.

These renditions frequently retell a conventional story of how the field has progressed through a series of phases: idealist, realist, behavioralist, post-behavioralist, pluralist, neorealist, rationalist, post-positivist, and constructivist. The image of the first three phases has been so deeply ingrained in the minds of students and scholars that there almost seems to be no alternative way of understanding the early history of the field.

Hedley Bull, for example, claimed that it is “possible to recognize three successive waves of theoretical activity”: the “idealist” or “progressivist” doctrines that were dominant in the 1920s and early 1930s, the “realist” or conservative theories that developed in the late 1930s and 1940s, and lastly the “social scientific” theories that arose in the late 1950s and 1960s “whose origin lay in dissatisfaction with the methodologies on which both earlier kinds of theory were based” (Bull, 1972: 33). This story of the field’s evolution is, in turn, often buttressed by the closely related account of the field evolving through a series of “great debates,” beginning with the discipline-defining “great debate” between “idealists” and “realists” and extending perhaps to the latest debate today between “rationalists” and “reflectivists” (Banks, 1986; Katzenstein et al., 1999; Keohane, 1988; Lijphart, 1974a; Maghroori, 1982; Mitchell, 1980). This particular construction of the field’s history tends to have the effect of making the present debate a matter that all serious students of IR must focus on while relegating previous debates to obscurity.

Finally, the field’s history is commonly chronicled by reference to the external events that have taken place in the realm that has been conventionally designated as international politics. There is a strong conviction that significant developments in international politics such as wars or abrupt changes in American foreign policy have, more fundamentally than any other set of factors, shaped the development of IR. The birth of the field, for example, often associated with the founding of the world’s first chair for the study of international politics, in 1919 at the Department of International Politics at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, is characteristically viewed as a reaction to the horror of the First World War (Porter, 1972).

My main intention in this chapter is to problematize these prevalent interpretations of how the field has developed and to indicate that the history of the field is both more complicated and less well known than typically portrayed in the mainstream

literature. While it is quite evident that we do not possess an adequate understanding of how the field has developed, there are a number of reasons why it is crucially important for contemporary students of IR to have an adequate familiarity with this history. First, numerous theoretical insights, of largely forgotten scholars, have been simply erased from memory. Yet, once recalled, these insights can have critical purchase in the present. Second, the field has created its own powerful myths regarding the evolution of the field that have obscured the actual history (Booth, 1996; Kahler, 1997; Wilson, 1998). Third, an adequate understanding of the history of the field is essential for explaining the character of many of our present assumptions and ideas about the study of international politics. While current intellectual practices and theoretical positions are often evoked as novel answers to the latest dilemmas confronting international politics, a more discriminating historical sense reminds us that contemporary approaches are often reincarnations of past discourses. Without a sufficient understanding of how the field has evolved, there is the constant danger of continually reinventing the wheel. There is, in fact, much evidence to support the proposition that much of what is taken to be new is actually deeply embedded in the discursive past of the field. Finally, a perspicacious history of the field offers a fruitful basis for critical reflection on the present. Knowledge of the actual, as opposed to the mythical, history may force us to reassess some of our dominant images of the field and result in opening up some much-needed space in which to think about international politics in the new millennium.

My purpose in this chapter is not to provide a comprehensive history of the broadly defined field or discipline of IR. Not only would such an endeavor be impossible in this context, but, as I will indicate below, there is sufficient ambiguity concerning the proper identity of the field, with respect to its origins, institutional home, and geographical boundaries, that simply writing a generic

history of IR without addressing these kinds of issues in detail would be counterproductive. Moreover, while much of the previous work on the history of the field has not exhibited sufficient theoretical and methodological sophistication in approaching the task of providing an adequate historical account, recent work in this area is forcing scholars to confront a number of historiographical issues. This latest wave of scholarship clearly recognizes the necessary link that exists between establishing the identity of the discipline and presenting an image of its history (Bell, 2009; Thies, 2002). Furthermore, the manner in which the history of IR is reconstructed has become almost as significant as the substantive account itself, and therefore it becomes crucially important to address the basic research question of how one should approach the task of writing a history of the field.

I will begin by briefly discussing a number of lingering and contentious issues concerning the extent to which there is a well-defined field of IR that has a distinct identity, as well as the equally controversial question of whether the history of the field should be written from a cosmopolitan frame of reference that does not pay significant attention to distinct national and institutional differences, or whether it is necessary to approach this task from within clearly demarcated national contexts. Although it should be evident that IR is a discrete academic field after more than fifty to a hundred years of evolution, depending on how one dates the genesis of the field, ambiguities have continually arisen regarding both the character of the subject matter and the institutional boundaries of the field. Adding to the confusion surrounding the identity of the field is the overwhelming and continuing dominance of the American IR scholarly community, which sometimes leads to the erroneous conclusion that the history of IR is synonymous with its development in the United States. While there is much merit in Stanley Hoffmann's (1977) assertion that IR is an American social science despite the influence of a great many

European-born scholars, it is also the case that notwithstanding the global impact of the American model, there are many indigenous scholarly communities that have their own unique disciplinary history. This is, for example, clearly the case with the English School, whose contributions have only recently begun to be properly documented and assessed (Dunne, 1998; Little, 2000). These communities have certainly been deeply impacted by theoretical and methodological developments in the United States, but there are nevertheless differences in how the subject is studied in different parts of the world (Jorgensen, 2000; Tickner and Waever, 2009; Waever, 1998). The interdisciplinary character of the field and differences in national settings sometimes lead to the conclusion that a distinct discipline or field of IR does not really exist, but despite ambiguities about disciplinary boundaries and an institutional home, IR, as an academic field of study, has a distinct professional identity and discourse.

I next focus on two historiographical issues: first, presentism, which involves the practice of writing a history of the field for the purpose of making a point about its present character; and second, contextualism, which assumes that exogenous events in the realm of international politics have fundamentally structured the historical development of IR as an academic field of study. I will illustrate these issues by reviewing the existing literature. The most recent literature has cast increasing doubt on the conventional images of the development of IR. My critical purpose in this chapter is to challenge the dominant understanding of how the field has progressed and to encourage more sophisticated work on the disciplinary history of IR.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AS AN ACADEMIC FIELD OF STUDY

The task of demarcating the disciplinary boundaries of the field is an important

prerequisite to establishing authority over its object of inquiry. Yet the question of whether a distinct field or discipline of IR exists has been a matter of consistent controversy (Gurian, 1946; Kaplan, 1961; Neal and Hamlett, 1969; Olson, 1972; Olson and Groom, 1991; Palmer, 1980; Thompson, 1952; Wright, 1955). While the controversy is, in some ways, related to the contentious issue of the origins and geographical boundaries of the field, it more fundamentally involves the question of the identity of IR as a second-order discourse and the status of its subject matter. Although it is apparent that this question has never been answered satisfactorily, disciplinary history does provide an insightful vantage point for viewing the manner in which the field has attempted to establish its own identity. Recent work has focused on the dynamics of “discipline formation” and uncovered a number of previously neglected factors that contributed to the emergence of IR (Bell, 2009; Guilhot, 2008; Long, 2006; Vitalis, 2005).

The period that precedes the point at which we can discern the identity of the field as a distinct academic practice can be termed its “prehistory”; when there was a gradual change “from discourse to discipline” (Farr, 1990). This period is important for identifying the themes and issues that would later constitute the field as it took form during the early decades of the twentieth century (Long and Schmidt, 2005; Schmidt, 1998b). The field’s antecedents included international law, diplomatic history, the peace movement, moral philosophy, geography, and anthropology (Olson and Groom, 1991). In *The Study of International Relations* (1955), Quincy Wright identified eight “root disciplines” and six disciplines with a “world point of view” that had contributed to the development of IR. Wright, along with many others, argued that the task of synthesizing these largely autonomous fields of inquiry hampered the effort to create a unified coherent discipline of IR. Moreover, Kenneth Thompson observed that “there was nothing peculiar to the subject matter of international relations

which did not fall under other separate fields” (Thompson, 1952: 433). The interdisciplinary character of the field and the fact that other disciplines studied various dimensions of its subject matter has sometimes led to the question of whether “international relations is a distinctive discipline” (Kaplan, 1961). This is an interesting and important question that has often been answered by pointing to the field’s unique subject matter, typically defined in terms of politics in the absence of central authority as well as by adducing various epistemological and methodological grounds. Yet while the question of whether IR is a distinct discipline is intriguing, it is important not to let this become an obstacle to reconstructing the history of the study of international politics.

These issues do, however, highlight the importance of clearly identifying and focusing on the institutional context of the field. The variability in institutional context is, in part, responsible for the wide range of dates that have been used to mark the birth of the field. It makes a large difference, for example, whether IR was institutionalized as a separate discipline, as was largely the case after the First World War in the United Kingdom, where a number of independent chairs were created, or as a subfield of political science, as was the case in the United States, Germany, and France. Yet orthodox histories have been more inclined to emphasize the impact of significant political events on the development of the field than the character of the institutional setting of the field. In the case of the United States, for example, it is impossible to write the history of IR without locating it within the disciplinary matrix of American political science (Schmidt, 1998a, 1998b, 2008). In addition to these institutional variations, there are numerous differences with respect to intellectual climate, access to information, research support, links between government and academia, and the general structure and character of the university system (Simpson, 1998).

The significance of institutional context is closely related to the issue of the national

context of the field. Variations in institutional structure are intimately related to the national setting in which IR is situated. The issue of whether the boundaries of IR should be demarcated in terms of one particular country or whether it should be viewed as a more cosmopolitan endeavor without regard to national differences complicates the task of writing a history of the field. Although the creation of a truly global discipline may, perhaps, be an aspiration, studies continue to indicate that the academic study of international politics is marked by British, and especially American, parochialism (Crawford and Jarvis, 2001; Peterson, Tierney, and Maliniak, 2005; Waever, 1998). Ever since Stanley Hoffmann (1977) declared that IR was an "American Social Science," a lively discussion has ensued about the extent to which the American academic community dominates the "global discipline" of IR, and about the profound consequences that this dominance has for the discipline as a whole (Alker and Biersteker, 1984; Crawford and Jarvis, 2001; Goldmann, 1996; Holsti, 1985; Jorgensen, 2003; Kahler, 1993; Krippendorf, 1987; Smith, 1987, 2000; Waever, 1998).

Yet despite the alleged American hegemony, it is a fundamental mistake to associate the American study of international politics with the "global discipline of IR." While it is often the case that many national IR communities seem to be susceptible to embracing American theories, trends, and debates, IR, as Waever notes, "is quite different in different places" (1998: 723). Although limitations of space prevent me from commenting on the history of IR in every country in the world, and much of what follows focuses on developments in the United States and the United Kingdom, it is essential to acknowledge the burgeoning country-specific and comparative studies of the development of IR (Breitenbauch and Wivel, 2004; Chan, 1994; Friedrichs, 2001; Groom, 1994; Inoguchi and Bacon, 2001; Jorgensen, 2000; Jorgensen and Knudsen, 2006; Lebedeva, 2004; Makinda, 2000; Tickner and Waever, 2009). The case studies that have examined the

history of IR from within a specific country such as Denmark, Italy, Japan, and Russia have revealed that the history of the field is not synonymous with its development in the United States. The new comparative literature has clearly shown both the importance of, and variation in, the institutional context of IR. Political culture, which has generally been neglected in accounting for the history of IR in the United States, has been identified as an important factor in understanding how and why IR has developed differently in different countries (Breitenbauch and Wivel, 2004; Jorgensen and Knudsen, 2006).

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

One of the most significant problems in work on the history of IR is that these histories have failed to address adequately the question of how one should write a history of the field. The tendency has been to describe the history of IR as if a complete consensus existed on the essential dimensions of the field's evolution. In the absence of any significant controversy concerning how the field has developed, there has been little or no attention devoted to historiographical issues. Waever has remarked that the existing literature on the history of the field is "usually not based on systemic research or clear methods" and that it amounts to little more than "elegant restatements of 'common knowledge' of our past, implicitly assuming that any good practitioner can tell the history of the discipline" (Waever, 1998: 692). Yet as a number of related academic disciplines such as political science have begun to examine more closely their disciplinary history, several theoretical and methodological controversies have arisen over what in general constitutes proper historical analysis and, particularly, what is involved in disciplinary history (Bell, 2009; Bender and Schorske, 1998; Farr et al., 1990; Gunnell, 1991; Ross, 1991; Tully, 1988). The historiographical concerns that

this literature has raised have gradually begun to impact those who reflect on the history of IR. Duncan Bell has suggested that the latest work on the history of IR represents what he terms the “dawn of a historiographical turn.” According to Bell, “the intellectual history of the discipline is now taken far more seriously, studied more carefully and explicitly, and plays a greater role in shaping the theoretical debate, than in the past” (Bell, 2001: 123). But while the lack of theoretical sophistication is definitely rooted in the assumption that practitioners already know the history of the field, additional factors are at work in reinforcing the tendency to simplify, and thus distort, that history.

Presentism

There is a general assumption that the history of the field can be explained by reference to a continuous tradition that reaches back to classical Athens and extends forward to the present (Schmidt, 1994). The IR literature contains numerous references to the idea that there are epic traditions of international thought that have given rise to coherent schools or paradigms such as realism and liberalism (Clark, 1989; Donnelly, 1995; Holsti, 1985; Kugler, 1993; Zacher and Matthew, 1995). Furthermore, and more importantly for the discussion at hand, there is a widespread conviction that these ancient traditions represent an integral part of the field’s past and therefore are relevant for understanding the contemporary identity of the field. While it is certainly the case that the study of the theorists associated with the classic canon of Western political thought constitutes an element of the practice of IR, as evidenced, for example, by Kenneth Waltz’s *Man, the State and War* (1959), it is nevertheless a fundamental misconception to presume that the work of classic political theorists such as Thucydides or Kant can be construed as constitutive antecedents of the literature of contemporary IR.

There is a certain irony in the widespread tendency of contemporary scholars to make

reference to the writings of classic political theorists in that one of the dominant assumptions for many years was that the canon of classic texts from Plato to Marx did not have very much to say about international politics. This was the view popularized in Martin Wight’s polemical essay “Why is there no International Theory?” (1966), which he presented in 1959 at the inaugural meeting of the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics. Wight’s argument contributed to the view that there was a rich and well-defined tradition of political thought but an impoverished and essentially contested tradition of international thought. This view, along with the scientific ambitions of the behavioralists who directly challenged the relevance of the canon, led the fields of political theory and IR to drift apart, producing a profound sense of estrangement that only recently has begun to change (Armitage, 2004; Boucher, 1998; Brown, 2000; Schmidt, 2000; Walker, 1993). David Boucher has argued that one of the reasons why IR does not have an established canon of classic texts stems from the mistake that IR theorists made when they “cut themselves adrift from the mainstream of political theory in order to develop their own theories and concepts” (1998: 10).

The strained and troubled relationship between political theory and international relations theory has not, however, prevented scholars from constructing numerous typologies and traditions for classifying the ideas of classic political theorists and linking them to the work of contemporary students of international relations (Boucher, 1998; Donelan, 1990; Doyle, 1997; Holsti, 1985; Wight, 1992). While, symbolically or metaphorically, contemporary practitioners may wish to describe themselves as descendants of Thucydides or Kant, a serious conceptual mistake is made when the history of the field is written in terms of the development of an epic tradition beginning with classical Greece or the Enlightenment and culminating in the work of contemporary scholars. This common practice, which can be found in a

multitude of synoptic accounts of the history of the field, commits the error of confusing an analytical with a historical tradition, resulting in significant obstacles to tracing the actual historical development of IR (Schmidt, 1994). Although discussions of a tradition of IR are widespread and, as Rob Walker (1993) has noted, far from monolithic, they tend to refer less to actual historical traditions, that is, self-constituted patterns of conventional practice through which ideas are conveyed within a recognizably established discursive framework, than to an analytical retrospective construction that largely is defined by present criteria and concerns. In the case of the disciplinary history of IR, such retrospectively constructed traditions as realism are presented as if they represented an actual or self-constituted tradition in the field, and serious problems in understanding and writing the history of IR result when the former is mistaken for, or presented as, the latter.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty is that such epic renditions of the past divert attention from the actual academic practices and individuals who have contributed to the development and current identity of the field. Instead of a history that traces the genealogy of academic scholars who self-consciously and institutionally participated in the professional discourse of IR, we are presented with an idealized version of the past in the form of a continuous tradition stretching from ancient times to the present. These epic accounts, which are the norm in many of the leading undergraduate texts, serve to reinforce the idea that we already know the history of the field. Attention usually is devoted to “founding fathers” such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Kant, while a host of individuals who contributed to the institutionalized academic study of international politics are routinely neglected. While academic scholars such as James Bryce, Frederick S. Dunn, Pitman Potter, and Paul S. Reinsch may not be as historically fascinating, they are much more relevant for tracing the actual development of the field.

The widespread tendency to write the history of the field in terms of its participation in an ancient or classic tradition of thought often serves to confer legitimacy on a contemporary research program. One of the primary purposes of the various histories of IR is to say something authoritative about the field’s present character, and this often contributes to the tendency to distort the history of the field. In order either to advocate a new direction for the field and to criticize its current structure, or, conversely, to defend the status quo, scholars often feel compelled to justify their position by referring to and characterizing the general evolution of the field. For example, histories that seek to account for the rise and subsequent dominance of realist theory frequently feel obliged to demonstrate the timeless insights of the realist tradition, beginning with Thucydides or Machiavelli. And those who periodically criticize the pluralistic character of the field quite often make reference to an earlier period when there was supposedly a dominant paradigm or approach that united it. The crux of the matter is that many of the attempts to reflect on the history of IR are undertaken largely for “presentist” purposes rather than with the intention of carefully and accurately reconstructing the past.

“Whig” history, which Herbert Butterfield (1959: v) described as the tendency “to emphasize certain principles of progress in the past and to produce a story which is the ratification if not the glorification of the present,” and the problem of presentism in general, has become a controversial issue among those who are engaged in writing the history of the social sciences (Collini et al., 1983; Dryzek and Leonard, 1988; Farr et al., 1990). The problem with presentism is not that historical analysis is utilized to make a point about the present, but that history is distorted as it is reconstructed to legitimate or criticize a position that the writer has set out in advance to support or to undermine. Whig history “consists in writing history backwards,” whereby the “present theoretical consensus of the discipline ... is in effect

taken as definitive, and the past is then reconstituted as a teleology leading up to and fully manifested in it" (Collini et al., 1983: 4).

Given the elusive but persistent goal of mainstream IR in the United States to achieve the status of a "true" science, it is understandable why so many of the existing accounts of the history of the field continue to be Whiggish in character. Histories of the field, and images of that history, are frequently advanced for the purpose of either illustrating theoretical progress and scientific advance or diagnosing an obstacle that is preventing the field from making scientific progress (Brecher, 1999). George Stocking provided an early and persuasive explanation for why the professional social scientist was likely to be Whiggish. According to Stocking, there is "a sort of implicit whiggish presentism virtually built into the history of science and by extension, into the history of the behavioral sciences" (Stocking, 1965: 213). The reigning logical positivist account of science that was offered by philosophers of science during the 1950s and 1960s, which is the medium through which most social scientists acquired their understanding of science, was one of incremental and cumulative progress whereby a greater understanding of the natural world was made possible by an increasing correspondence between theory and fact. Since logical positivists claimed that there was an essential unity and hierarchy of scientific method, the history of social science was bound sooner or later to replicate the same forward advance of knowledge.

Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1970) challenged the logical positivist account of science and provided a basic impetus for post-positivist philosophers and historians of science. Not only did Kuhn attack logical positivism's central premise of the separation of theory and fact, as well as the correspondence theory of truth, but he sought to replace the orthodox textbook account of the history of science with the idea of a discontinuous history marked by scientific revolutions, that is, "those non-cumulative developmental episodes in which

an older paradigm is replaced in whole or part by an incompatible new one" (Kuhn, 1970: 92). Kuhn's theory of paradigms and scientific revolutions represented a significant challenge to the orthodox account of scientific development. The crucial point of Kuhn's revisionist account of the history of science was his argument that there was no transcendental vantage point from which to claim that the replacement of one paradigm by another constituted "progress," because the criteria for progress was paradigm-specific. While Kuhn made a significant impact on philosophers and historians of science, many of whom were displeased by the relativistic implications of the argument that resulted in the inability to vindicate scientific progress, his book had an equally dramatic impact on the field of IR, especially with respect to how many scholars have come to understand the history of the field. The fact that IR scholars increasingly have turned to Kuhn and other philosophers of science, particularly Imre Lakatos (1970), who, for many, appeared to reestablish evaluative criteria of progress, serves to illustrate the point that the task of writing the history of the field often has been subordinate to the more fundamental goal of demonstrating progress in the field.

There are two principal ways in which the work of Kuhn in particular, and the literature emanating from the philosophy and history of science in general, has had an impact on the historiography of IR. First, IR scholars quickly set out to establish their own paradigms. The situation was very much the same in political science, where political scientists began to use the word *paradigm* to denote specific schools of thought such as behavioralism (Almond, 1966). In IR, realism has been assumed by many to be the leading candidate for a paradigm, and scholars have repeatedly undertaken the task of defining and operationalizing the core assumptions of the realist paradigm (Guzzini, 1998; Keohane, 1983; Vasquez, 1983). The frequency with which references are made to the realist paradigm have led some to term it the "traditional

paradigm” which, according to Arend Lijphart, “revolves around the notions of state sovereignty and its logical corollary, international anarchy” (1974b: 43). Quite frequently references to the realist paradigm are used interchangeably with references to the “realist tradition” or the “realist school of thought.”

Yet while realism is considered by many to be the leading paradigm in the field, it has certainly not been the only candidate for paradigmatic status. Scholars have made reference to a host of alternative paradigms which are almost always defined in opposition to the propositions of realism and whose origins are typically linked to developments in international politics. A classical example of this, even though it allegedly predates the realist paradigm, is the so-called idealist paradigm of the interwar period. John Vasquez claims “that the first stage of international relations inquiry was dominated by the idealist paradigm,” which was “important in terms of institutionalizing the field and creating the emphasis on peace and war” (1998: 33–4). Some of the other rival paradigms to realism have included the “behavioralist paradigm” (Lijphart, 1974a), “world politics paradigm” (Keohane and Nye, 1972), global society and neo-Marxist paradigms (Holsti, 1985), a “new paradigm for global politics” (Mansbach and Vasquez, 1981), and pluralism (Little, 1996).

Kuhn’s concept of a paradigm as well as other concepts borrowed from the philosophy and history of science, such as Lakatos’s (1970) conception of a “scientific research programme,” have not only been used to provide grounds for defining distinct “schools of thought,” but also to evaluate the overall evolution of the field as well as specific approaches in the field (Elman and Elman, 2003; Ferguson and Mansbach, 1993; Guzzini, 1998; Keohane, 1983; Lijphart, 1974a, 1974b; Smith, 1987; Tellis, 1996; Vasquez, 1998). Arend Lijphart, for example, has argued that “the development of international relations since the Second World War fits Kuhn’s description of scientific revolutions”

(1974a: 12). The underlying purpose of utilizing analytical frameworks borrowed from the philosophy and history of science largely has been to demonstrate that scientific advances are being made and that the field as a whole is progressing. In the quest for cognitive authority over the subject matter of international politics, IR has been drawn to philosophers of science in the belief that they can provide the grounds for empirical judgment and evaluation. Ferguson and Mansbach, for example, note that the attraction of the Kuhnian framework for describing the history of IR is that it allowed “international relations scholars to see progress in their field while surrounded by theoretical incoherence” (Ferguson and Mansbach, 1993: 22). Yet this is simply a misuse of Kuhn, since he argued that his account of the development of science was not applicable to the history of the social sciences, since they were “pre-paradigmatic.” Moreover, analytical constructs such as idealism and realism do not meet the criteria of a paradigm as Kuhn described it. And while Kuhn’s framework has been employed to demonstrate progress, his basic argument was that it was not possible to speak of progress from a second-order perspective.

Contextualism

The second, and equally pervasive, assumption is that the history of the field can be explained in terms of exogenous events in the realm of international politics. Many assume that it is self-evident that the field’s history from its alleged birth after the First World War to the present has been events-driven; that significant changes in American foreign policy or international crises and wars are directly responsible for the rise and fall of different theories, methodologies, and foci in the field (Hoffmann, 1977; Kahler, 1997; Krippendorff, 1987; Olson and Groom, 1991; Smith, 1987). Hoffmann’s claim that “the growth of the discipline cannot be separated from the American role in world affairs after

1945” went largely unchallenged, leading to the common view that the field’s history has been shaped by how the United States responded to various international events (Hoffmann, 1977: 47). The popularity of external accounts can, in part, be attributed to the fact that they seem to be intuitively correct. While it certainly would be difficult, if not impossible, to understand the evolution of IR without being cognizant of the events that have shaped international history, there are, nevertheless, problems with accounts that suggest that a wider historical context can explain how and why IR developed in the manner that it did.

The first problem concerns the very manner by which one defines “context.” If the intention of disciplinary history is to understand how and why the field developed in the manner that it did, then the focus should be on how academic practitioners perceived, and the extent to which they recognized and defined, “external” events. But very often in IR, it is just the reverse: context is defined retrospectively and in a broadly general manner and then assumed to be able to account for the basic nature of the conversation in the field at a particular point in time. Yet not only are the actual connections between the “outside” context and “inside” developments poorly clarified, but the empirical details of the putative explanatory context are not always carefully demonstrated. One person’s account of external context often differs from another’s, and the very task of conceptualizing context raises a host of historiographical issues. The important point to emphasize is that the subject matter of IR is always constructed conceptually by the members in the field, and thus the relevance of the “outside” is determined by how those in the academy conceive of and react to it.

This brings us to a second problem with some contextual accounts, namely, the manner in which external factors are held to account for internal, disciplinary developments. The fact that IR is conceived as an academic enterprise devoted to the study of international politics does not automatically imply that exogenous events that comprise

the subject matter at any given point in time can explain what happens inside the field. There is no direct transmission belt between particular developments in the world and what is going on in a field with respect to schools of thought, methodological orientation, disciplinary debates, and even the substantive focus of analysis. Thus, the relationship between external events and the internal disciplinary response manifested in conceptual or theoretical change must be empirically demonstrated and not merely assumed. Despite claims to the contrary, many contextual accounts have a difficult time demonstrating such a connection.

Beginning in the late 1990s, the conventional events-driven wisdom regarding the evolution of IR was challenged by a new group of disciplinary historians (Dunne, 1998; Jorgensen, 2000; Schmidt, 1998b, 2002; Thies, 2002). Rather than focusing on external factors to explain the history of the field, proponents of an internal approach argued that the most relevant context is the immediate one of the conversation that the individuals who self-consciously viewed themselves as members of the field of IR were engaged in and the disciplinary and university setting (Schmidt, 1998b). In other words, those advocating an internal approach insist that the most appropriate context for investigating the history of IR is its academic setting and not the world at large. It has also been suggested that an internal as compared to an external focus can help to account for the distinct national differences in how the field has developed. The merits of an internal approach, however, have not escaped critical scrutiny (Bell, 2001; Holden, 2002, 2006; Kahler, 1997; Makinda, 2000). While applauding the recent attention that has been directed to the historiography of IR, Holden argues that those who have rejected a contextual approach and adopted an internal discursive approach have generally failed to understand the merits and potential of the former. This is especially the case for those like Holden and others who have associated a contextual approach to disciplinary history with the work of Quentin Skinner and John

Pocock on the history of ideas. The claim is that advocates of an internal approach do not understand their work very well and therefore inappropriately dismiss it (Holden, 2002; Quirk and Vigneswaran, 2005). The basic argument of Skinner and the Cambridge School of intellectual historians is that ideas have to be situated in their proper historical and linguistic context. An internal focus is deemed to be both erroneous and impossible, with critics contending that contextual factors are conspicuously present in the work done by those who claim to be utilizing an internal approach (Brown, 2000; Holden, 2002; Little, 1999). This charge, however, really misses the mark and makes it appear that an internal approach assumes that the history of IR can be written as if it were hermetically sealed from the world of international politics.

Perhaps one way to resolve the debate between internal and external accounts is simply to frame the issue in terms of what is the most appropriate and relevant context for understanding the history of IR. The debate should not be construed in terms of whether (external) context matters or not, but what is the most appropriate context. One does not need to be a constructivist to recognize that contexts are always constructed and do not have an objective and independent existence. Contexts, after all, are not logically comparable to the things being contextualized, but are constructions created and reimposed from the perspective of the present. And because of the fact that IR is widely perceived as a field that studies the activity of international politics “out there” does not at all imply that there is a singular external context that we all could point to as shaping the history of the academic conversation about something conventionally termed international relations.

THE GREAT DEBATES

Within the orthodox historiography of IR, it has been through the organizing device of the image of a series of “great debates” that the

story of the field’s development has been framed. The story of the great debates has served to demonstrate either coherence or incoherence but, most commonly, the idea that scientific progress is being made. The widespread belief that the field’s history has been characterized by three successive great debates is so pervasive and dominant that, as Waever notes, “there is no other established means of telling the history of the discipline” (1998: 715). The story of the field’s three great debates is, as Steve Smith (1995) and Kjell Goldmann (1996) have argued, one of the most dominant self-images of the field. While all academic disciplines experience their share of disciplinary controversy, IR may be unique in that most practitioners believe that the history of the field has been singularly marked by these defining debates. This view has been reinforced by explaining the debates in terms of exogenous influences such as the outbreak of the Second World War, the Vietnam debacle, and the end of the Cold War. Perhaps more than any other claim about the general history of the field, that which postulates three great debates must be critically examined. It is not entirely clear that all of the debates actually have taken place, and an examination of the discursive artifacts of the field leads one to ask if the field’s history has been seriously distorted by viewing it within this framework. I do not deny that the field has experienced numerous controversies, but I question the appropriateness of understanding them in terms of the conventional story of the field’s three great debates.

What were the debates about?

According to the conventional wisdom, the first great debate, which Miles Kahler (1997) has termed the “foundational myth of the field,” was between the interwar “idealists” and the postwar “realists.” Almost every historical account concedes that the realists won the first debate and, as a result, reoriented the field in a more practical and scientific direction (Fox, 1949; Guzzini, 1998; Thompson,

1960; Waldo, 1954). The alleged superiority of the realist view has made it appear unnecessary to consider carefully the nature of the claims made by those writing in the field prior to the Second World War or even the writings of many of those who are considered early realists. The interwar “idealists,” who are greatly disparaged, are typically depicted as a group of utopian pacifists and legalists who focused their attention on reforming international politics rather than on analyzing the realities of politics among nations. The “debate,” which allegedly took place as the League of Nations system broke down, is often described in Kuhnian terms. While the idealists supposedly envisioned ever-lasting peace, the Second World War is depicted as a glaring anomaly representing a severe crisis in the idealist paradigm, which eventually resulted in its replacement by the realist paradigm, which was superior in its ability to rationally explain the persistent and ubiquitous struggle for power among nations (Guzzini, 1998; Hollis and Smith, 1991; Vasquez, 1998). Sometimes the idealists are represented as alchemists who were concerned with “what ought to be” while the realists are portrayed as scientists focusing on “what is,” which was a prerequisite for creating a science of politics (Carr, [1939] 1964). This story of the “debate” between “idealists” and “realists” continues to exert a strong influence on how the field understands its own history, and this accounts in part for the perpetual need to retell the tale of how IR was once rooted in idealism but was fortunate, after the Second World War, to have embraced realism.

The second great debate, as characteristically described in the literature, took place within the context of the behavioral revolution that was already deeply impacting the social sciences, especially political science, and which pitted “traditionalists” against “behavioralists” or “scientists.” The debate is symbolized by the intellectual exchange between Hedley Bull (1966), who sought to defend what he termed the “classical approach,” and Morton Kaplan (1966), who

was one of the early advocates of what came to be known as the “scientific approach.” A growing sentiment among American scholars was that the field was losing ground in its quest to acquire the mantle of science. While realism, it was argued, served a number of paradigmatic functions, some scholars claimed that its tenets, such as the a priori foundational claim that the struggle for power stemmed from basic biological drives rooted in human nature, as well as its methodology, which relied heavily on historical examples, were preventing the field from achieving scientific status.

As in the case of political science, the debate became polarized between those who believed that the methods of the natural sciences, or at least those described by logical-positivist philosophers of science as the hypothetico-deductive model, could be emulated and adopted in the study of international politics, versus those who argued that the study of the social world was not amenable to the strict empirical methods of natural science (Knorr and Rosenau, 1969; Morgenthau, 1946; Nicholson, 1996; Reynolds, 1973; Rogowski, 1968). George Liska described the period in which the debate between traditionalists and behavioralists took place as the “heroic decade” and suggested that the key division was “between those who are primarily interested in international relations and those who are primarily committed to the elaboration of social science” (1966: 7). The debate over the merits and adequacy of a positivistic approach surely has not diminished, but there is, nevertheless, a common view that the debate helped to foster the scientific identity of the field through the widespread acceptance and utilization of scientific methods which aided in the task of developing a cumulative theory of international politics. Morton Kaplan’s (1957) systems theory; Karl Deutsch’s (1964) communications and cybernetics theory; Thomas Schelling’s (1960) early game theory, Richard Snyder, H.W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin’s (1954, 1962) development of decision-making theory; and J. David Singer

and Melvin Small's (1972) data collection in their correlates of war project at the University of Michigan are generally viewed as contributing to the scientific identity of the field.

Historical accounts of the third debate tend to be more ambiguous than that of the other two debates, but it is commonly described as an inter-paradigm debate that took place in the early 1980s among realists, pluralists, and structuralists (Banks, 1985; Maghroori, 1982; Olson and Groom, 1991; Waever, 1996). The typical explanation of the origins of the third debate holds that, during the 1970s, realism fell on some difficult times when events in the realm of international politics, particularly in the economic sphere but also regarding matters of peace and security, appeared to contradict some of the key realist assumptions about the nature of interstate politics (Smith, 1987). As a result of this apparent incongruity, it is generally believed that alternative approaches such as Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye's ([1977] 1989) theory of "complex interdependence," Immanuel Wallerstein's (1974) "world systems theory," John Burton's "cobweb theory" (1972), and "dependency theory" (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979) were developed and directly challenged many of the central tenets of realism. Most fundamentally, critics of realism attacked the core claims of state-centrism, the notion that independence rather than interdependence characterized the condition of international politics, and that a clear distinction could be made between "high politics" (i.e., military and security issues) and "low politics" (i.e., economic, environmental, and human rights issues). It has been suggested that it was within this context of a growing focus on interdependence (Cooper, 1968; Rosecrance and Stein, 1973) that the distinct subfield of International Political Economy emerged (Katzenstein et al., 1999).

While it was argued that the publication of Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* (1979) gave a new lease of life to realism in the form of neorealism, most accounts of the third debate do not conclude that realism was

the victor. Unlike the previous two "great debates," the "third debate" is, according to Waever, "seen as a debate not to be won, but a pluralism to live with" (Waever, 1996: 155). In other words, claims about the ascendancy of neorealism did not mean that adherents of a liberal (pluralist) or Marxist (globalist) approach stopped contributing to the discourse of IR, and some have even questioned whether the three "paradigms" were ever in competition with one another (Smith, 1995; Wight, 1996). Adding to the confusion of understanding this period of disciplinary history in terms of a "third debate" was the emergence, during the 1980s, of a number of post-positivist approaches that were sharply critical of all the mainstream approaches in the field (Der Derian and Shapiro, 1989; George and Campbell, 1990; Peterson, 1992). According to Yosef Lapid, the attack by feminists, Frankfurt School critical theorists, and post-structuralists on what they perceived to be the positivist epistemological foundations of the field signaled the dawn of a "third debate," which he claimed consisted of a "disciplinary effort to reassess theoretical options in a 'post-positivist' era" (1989: 237). That the literature can simultaneously make reference to two fundamentally different controversies under the same label of the "third debate" should be enough to indicate that there is something seriously wrong with this understanding of the history of the field.

What's wrong with the self-image of the great debates?

The newest cohort of disciplinary historians have both noted the peculiarity of the field's self-image being derived from the idea of a set of recurrent debates and pointed to some of the problems that are involved in viewing the history of the field in this manner (Bell, 2003; Goldmann, 1996; Kahler, 1997; Schmidt, 1998a, 1998b, 2012; Smith, 1995; Waever, 1998; Wilson, 1998). There are so many problems and difficulties involved in

understanding the history of the field within the framework of the three great debates that we might be better off simply to reject discussing this account of how the field has developed. In the first place, when attention is directed to the details of the field's history, it is not evident that all of the three debates actually took place. This is especially the case with respect to the first "great debate" (Ashworth, 2002; Kahler, 1997; Quirk and Vigneswaran, 2005; Schmidt, 2012; Thies, 2002; Wilson, 1998). Second, the stylized versions of the debates do not do justice to the nature of the controversies that were in fact taking place. Third, by focusing only on the three great debates, a number of additional and, extremely important, disciplinary controversies continue to be overlooked. Finally, the use of the analytical framework of a series of great debates to account for the field's history is a conservative move that gives the field a greater sense of coherence than the actual history of the field warrants.

One of the most significant findings to emerge from the recent scholarship on the history of the field is that, contrary to popular belief, the field was never dominated by a group of utopian scholars who adhered to something akin to what has been described as the idealist paradigm (Ashworth, 2006; Baldwin, 1995; Kahler, 1997; Little, 1996; Long, 1991; Long and Wilson, 1995; Osiander, 1998; Schmidt, 1998a, 1998b, 2002, 2012; Thies, 2002; Wilson, 1998). In most cases, it is difficult to find a scholar who was self-consciously and institutionally a member of the field of IR who adhered to the tenets that are frequently associated with a construct termed "idealism" or "utopianism." Many of those who have been dubbed "idealists" turn out, upon closer inspection, to subscribe to a position that is quite different from the manner in which it has been characterized in the secondary literature. On the basis of careful historical research, a variety of interwar discourses have been identified that together provide a very different account of this period of the field's history (Ashworth, 2006; Long and Schmidt, 2005; Osiander,

1998; Schmidt, 2002, 2012; Sylvest, 2004; Thies, 2002). While it is the case that many of the interwar scholars shared a practical mission to reform the practice of international politics, this objective, I argue, does not in and of itself qualify the enterprise as utopian. Apart from seriously distorting the formative years of the field's history, the idealist tag has inhibited understanding some of the deep discursive continuities that exist between the present and the past.

Perhaps the most important continuity is the concept of anarchy that has given the field of IR a distinct discursive identity. Although it might appear to those who are not familiar with the institutional history of IR that anarchy is some newly discovered research puzzle that lends itself to the latest tools of social scientific inquiry, anarchy – and the closely related concept of sovereignty – has served as the core constituent principle throughout the evolution of the field (Schmidt, 1998b). The interwar scholars were keenly aware of the fact that their subject matter, which included an analysis of the causes of war and peace, directly dealt with issues arising from the existence of sovereign states in a condition of anarchy (Dickinson, 1926). Many of those writing during the interwar period understood that sovereignty and anarchy were inextricably associated with, and mutually constitutive of, each other, and this explains why much of the interwar discourse focused on the concept of state sovereignty. The juristic theory of the state, which during the early 1900s was the most influential paradigm for the study of political science, depicted the international milieu as one where states led an independent and isolated existence (Willoughby, 1918). Proponents of juristic theory evoked the pre-contractual image of individuals living in a state of nature to describe the external condition of states and drew many of the same pessimistic conclusions that realists have made about politics conducted in the absence of a central authority.

Beginning in the 1920s, juristic theory was challenged by a new group of thinkers who collectively put forth the theory of

pluralism that fundamentally transformed the discourse of both political science and IR (Gunnell, 1993; Little, 1996; Schmidt, 1998b, 2002). Pluralists such as Harold Laski (1927) and Mary Parker Follett ([1918] 1934) argued that juristic theory was entirely inconsistent with the modern condition of interdependence, and this clearly indicated that the state was no longer omnipotent and immune from all other sources of authority. The interdependent quality of international politics, which pluralists took to be axiomatic, along with the existence of many international public unions (Reinsch, 1911), raised serious doubts about the validity of the claim that each nation-state was entirely sovereign in relation to all other actors. There are many similarities between the pluralist critique of juristic theory and the debate over interdependence that took place during the 1970s, and yet there is almost no recognition of this earlier discourse (Wilde, 1991). Richard Little argues that one of the main reasons why the intellectual heritage of pluralism has been obscured stems from the “willingness of the discipline to accept the attachment of the idealist tag to this seminal literature” (1996: 69). The “idealist tag” has also obscured the manner in which the interwar scholars approached the study of international security (Baldwin, 1995) and international organization. While the interwar scholarship is most often associated with the misfortunes of the League of Nations, not everyone writing during this period assumed that the introduction of this new international organization would by itself alter fundamentally the logic of international politics. The most pressing theoretical issue for those involved in the study of international organization concerned the manner in which various conceptions of state sovereignty could be reconciled with the operation of the League of Nations. This was certainly the case for Pitman Benjamin Potter, who was the person responsible for giving specific form to the study of international organization in the United States (Potter, 1925).

Refuting the notion that the interwar period was distinguished by idealism does not, however, rest on denying that the field experienced a change of emphasis after the Second World War. By the early 1940s, it was apparent that the field was undergoing a transition, which was best exemplified by the argument that the study of international politics should replace international organization as the central focus of the field (Fox, 1949; Kirk, 1947; Thompson, 1952). Those who began to enter the profession under the self-proclaimed “realist” identity were responsible for changing the emphasis in the field, but it is important not to exaggerate the discontinuities between the pre- and postwar discourse of IR. Like those writing before the Second World War, the aim of many of the “realists” was to speak truth to power. This was especially the case with the émigré scholars who deeply impacted the discourse of both political science and IR. A careful reading of the texts by E.H. Carr ([1939] 1964), Hans J. Morgenthau (1948), and Frederick L. Schuman (1933) reveals a number of continuities with the earlier discourse which have been entirely overlooked as a consequence of viewing their work in terms of the dubious dichotomy between idealism and realism. While it is the case that Morgenthau and the other “realists” helped to make international politics the nucleus of the field, it was not the case that those writing before the outbreak of the Second World War were unfamiliar with many of the core claims of the “new” power politics model (Bryce, 1922; Reinsch, 1900). The discursive artifacts of the field’s history do not lend much support to the claim that a debate, in the sense of an intellectual exchange between opposing theoretical positions or paradigms, ever took place between the interwar and the post-Second World War scholars.

Yet the emerging revisionist consensus on the erroneous and mythical character of the first great debate has been called into question. Joel Quirk and Darshan Vigneswaran prefer to describe the debate as a “half-truth, or highly distorted and overly simplistic

caricature, rather than a complete fiction” (2005: 91). Quirk and Vigneswaran argue that a number of scholars in the 1940s and 1950s were instrumental in creating the idealist–realist divide, but that it was later scholars, particularly those involved in the third debate of the 1980s, who are most responsible for creating the myth of the first great debate. Despite what the revisionist historians have written, Emmanuel Navon (2001) argues that compared to the so-called third debate, the first and second debates were authentic and continue to be relevant because they involved issues that are central to IR theory. Still others argue that the great debates framework have helped to organize the discipline and thus are “actually a part of the structure of the discipline” (Waever, 2007: 291). Thus, even if the historical details are incorrect, Waever (2007) and Lapid (2002) continue to defend the great-debates framework for understanding the development of the field.

Compared with the recent research on the interwar period of the field’s history, the details generally associated with the “second great debate” or the “traditionalism versus scientism debate” have not been carefully and systematically investigated. Consequently, this later period is not very well understood, and additional research is required. Within the existing literature on the second debate, which typically construes it as a debate about the scientific status of the field, two different accounts of the nature of the controversy have been put forth. Many of the early accounts of the controversy heralded it as a “great debate” that contributed to a major transformation in the field (Bull, 1972; Kaplan, 1966; Lijphart, 1974a, 1974b). Lijphart, for example, claimed that the “traditionalism-science debate of the 1960s” was more substantive and fundamental than the earlier debate between idealism and realism (1974a: 11). He argued that the behavioral revolution in IR resulted in a new paradigm – “the behavioral paradigm” – that was at great odds with the substantive claims of the traditional realist paradigm. According to this view, the traditionalists – those who

approached the study of international politics from a legal, philosophical, historical, or inductive point of view – lost out to what was perceived to be a scientific approach that sought to emulate the methods of the natural sciences. The result was that IR became more scientific, realism lost its dominant position, and the field was brought more in line with the other social sciences.

Beginning with John Vasquez’s influential book *The Power of Power Politics* (1983), an alternative view of the “second debate” began to emerge that argued that the controversy was really only a pseudo debate which was largely confined to methodological issues and did not involve substantive aspects of the subject matter of international politics (Guzzini, 1998; Hollis and Smith, 1991; Holsti, 1985, 1998; Vasquez, 1998). Vasquez (1983) sought to demonstrate that the behavioralists largely worked within the realist paradigm and merely sought to advance the methodological credentials of the field. In this manner, the debate has been construed as a “methodological debate” which took place “within a single [realist] theoretical orientation,” and that it was “about how to conduct inquiry within that approach” (Hollis and Smith, 1991: 31). One of the more significant implications of this revisionist interpretation is the view that the “field has been far more coherent, systematic, and even cumulative than all the talk about contending approaches and theories implies” (Vasquez, 1998: 42).

While I concede that there is some merit in each of these accounts, neither sufficiently captures the nature of the disputes that occurred during the 1950s and 1960s. A crucial issue that informed the behavioral debate was the problem of IR’s cognitive authority as a second-order discourse. It increasingly became the case, especially within the American context, that science provided the model for achieving the authority of knowledge, and the quest during the 1950s and 1960s, as well as before and after this period, was to emulate what were believed to be the canons of inquiry in natural science

(see Wight, Chapter 2 in this volume). The commitment to achieving a body of knowledge about international politics that was scientifically credible and that could command practical authority has always been a defining goal of the field. What has changed over the course of time is the content of the idea of science.

One of the consequences of neglecting a careful study of the history of the field has been a failure to recognize adequately the work of the members of the Chicago School of political science. In the 1920s and 1930s, Harold Lasswell, Charles Merriam, and Quincy Wright believed that they were at the forefront of developing a universal science of politics (Fox, 1975). The Chicago School's idea of a science of international politics was one that viewed international relations as merely a single subdivision of a more inclusive approach that focused on the role of power across a broad range of associations from the local to the global level.

There are a number of explanations of why the idea of science that the behavioralists brought to the field largely centered on the concept of an international system (Kaplan, 1957; Rosenau, 1969). The idea of a system was central to the behavioral movement, but its application to IR took on a number of distinctive and problematic properties. Within political science, the systems approach (Easton, 1953) was meant to replace the study of the state, which the behavioralists deemed to be archaic and contributing to the backwardness of the discipline. Yet within IR, where the influence of the behavioral persuasion arrived late, the adoption of the concept of a system did not supersede the focus on the interaction of states, since it would have risked the very identity of the field (Little, 1978). The properties accorded to the "international system" were largely derived from a detailed, and increasingly quantitative, analysis of the units (states) (Buzan and Little, 2000). The systems approach gave rise to what has been termed the "level of analysis problem," which involves the question of the relative weight that should be attributed to the units as

opposed to the system as a whole (Hollis and Smith, 1991; Singer, 1969; Wight, 2006). Waltz's (1979) attempt to construct a systems theory was based on the model of microeconomics, which sought to overcome the problem of reductionism that he attributed to the earlier generation of systems thinkers. It would appear that Buzan and Little (2000) are correct to argue that the concept of an international system is deeply contested, and I would suggest that carefully examining the period that has been construed in terms of the second debate might add clarity to the present conversation.

Whether or not we accept the idea that a "great debate" took place, it is important that we not deemphasize the consequences that the increasing attachment to scientism has had for the development of the field. First, it has resulted in IR surrendering its intellectual autonomy to a number of cognate fields that appeared, for whatever reason, to be more scientific. Second, the commitment to science contributed to a growing rift between the American scholarly community, which sought to emulate the positivist approach to knowledge, and much of the rest of the world that remained deeply suspicious of studying international politics in this manner. The members of the English School, Hedley Bull, Herbert Butterfield, John Vincent, Martin Wight, and others, were, for example, "skeptical of the possibility of a scientific study of International Relations" (Dunne, 1998: 7). They chose to focus on what they termed an "international society" that involved the study of history, culture, religion, and philosophy (Dunne, 1998; Epp, 1998; Little, 2000). Yet their work, as well as most of the scholarship from Britain, was, until recently, almost completely ignored by American scholars. A third consequence was a divorce between political theory and international relations theory (Boucher, 1998). Just as the history of political thought became a focal point of attack by behavioralists in political science, the idea that the study of international political theory could advance the scientific credentials of the field was rejected.

Fourth, the bifurcation of political theory and international theory had the effect of marginalizing normative concerns and contributed to what Steve Smith has termed the “forty-years detour” whereby it became “simply old-fashioned, and very unacademic, to introduce normative concerns into analysis unless they were themselves to be the objects of analysis” (1992: 489). The field has only recently begun to recover from this detour and has rediscovered normative international political theory.

The limitations of utilizing the “great debates” framework for understanding the history of the field is plainly apparent when we come to the 1980s and the so-called “third great debate.” As the field has become increasingly pluralistic, perhaps owing, in part, to its institutional growth, there seems to be a plethora of debates. In addition to the two versions of the “third debate” mentioned earlier, the inter-paradigm and post-positivism debates, there is the debate between neorealism and neoliberalism (Baldwin, 1993; Kegley, 1995); between rationalists and reflectivists (Keohane, 1988; Walker, 1989); and between rationalists and constructivists (Katzenstein et al., 1999; Wendt, 1999; see Hurrell, Chapter 3 in this volume). Yet this listing only begins to scratch the surface, since there are also numerous debates within specific approaches such as constructivism, feminism, realism, and post-structuralism.

Although it is difficult to provide an adequate historical perspective on these more recent developments, it is simply impossible to lump all of these controversies under one grand master debate. No matter what general characteristics we assign to the debate, it would not help us to understand the most recent history of the field. Waever has suggested that one way to get beyond the confusion of viewing recent developments in terms of a singular third debate is by acknowledging that we have entered a “fourth debate” (1996). Here Waever, like several others in the field (Lapid, 1989; Smith, 2000; Vasquez, 1995), suggests that we make a sharp differentiation between, on the one

hand, approaches such as critical theory, post-structuralism, postmodernism, and specific versions of constructivism and feminism that fall under the post-positivism label and, on the other hand, the mainstream, which he argues is wedded to a rationalist orthodoxy. The latter is seen as resulting from what Waever (1996) terms a “neo-neo synthesis” in which, during the 1980s, neoliberalism and neorealism essentially became indistinguishable on the basis of their shared commitment to a rationalist research program.

Post-positivism has sparked a considerable amount of meta-theoretical reflection on the current identity and composition of the field. The activity of reflecting on the nature of theory has come to comprise a significant component of the discourse in IR. As in other fields where the challenge to positivism has been mounted, post-positivists in IR view the traditional epistemological foundations of the field, often assumed to emanate from the Enlightenment, as no longer a philosophically defensible basis for making authoritative judgments about validity in political inquiry. In this manner, “post-positivism has placed the scientific study of world politics in a serious crisis” (Vasquez, 1995: 234). Many of these “alternative” or “dissident” approaches seek to deconstruct the traditional positivist foundations of the field and to embrace a radical anti-foundationalism that can enable multiple voices or perspectives to be heard. This is seen by some as leading to a major restructuring of IR, allowing for additional space in which to think about the issues that currently comprise the subject matter of the field (George and Campbell, 1990; Neufeld, 1995; Tickner, 1997). For others, post-positivism, and post-modernism in particular, has raised fears about relativism, as the loss of an epistemological foundation is believed to undermine the authority of scholars to provide transcontextual grounds for truth (Rosenau, 1990; Vasquez, 1995).

While there is little doubt that various post-positivist approaches have contributed

to the field's pluralistic character, generated an expansive body of interesting literature, and forced the field to confront a host of new meta-theoretical questions, how large an impact they have made on the mainstream core of the field is still not clear. Like previous "alternative" approaches, the main object of the post-positivist critique has been realism; yet realism, in one form or another, survives and continues to provide what many would argue to be the initial essential assumptions for explaining international politics as it has been traditionally defined by the field of IR (Walt, 2002). This can partly account for why, of all the alternative approaches that have entered the field since the early 1980s, Wendt's particular conception of constructivism, which accepts many of the assumptions of realism, is the approach being taken most seriously by the mainstream today. To the dismay of some of the critical scholars in the field, Wendt (1999) claims that his version of constructivism is able to entertain the role of ideas, norms, and the process of identity formation while at the same time subscribing to a realist world-view and a positivist epistemology.

CONCLUSION

Although there is a general sense that we already know the field's history, I have attempted to demonstrate that there are many problems with the conventional story about how the field has developed. The most recent work on the history of IR has shown that many of our orthodox understandings about the development of the field are simply incorrect. Research on the history of the field is not just an exercise in antiquarianism but an attempt to increase our capacity to examine critically the contemporary nature of the field by an understanding of the intellectual roots from which it has evolved. A perspicacious history of the field might even help to prevent the tendency for the field to proclaim something quite old as new.

For a field that appears to be perpetually consumed by identity crises, careful attention to some of the previous identities by which we were possessed would represent a fruitful research agenda. There is ample opportunity for the diverse approaches in the field to explore their own intellectual roots and, thereby, to recognize some of the continuities between the past and the present. By problematizing the conventional wisdom regarding the development of the field, new avenues of research are opened as are the possibilities of discovering previously neglected figures from the past. Notwithstanding Christina Sylvester's (2002) critique that disciplinary historians have failed to take note of women, gender, and feminism, disciplinary history can be a means of recovering marginalized and excluded voices, including those of women (see Tickner and Sjöberg, Chapter 7 in this volume) and African-Americans (Vitalis, 2000).

The research exercise of investigating the history of the field has, in recent years, acquired a much greater level of intellectual respect and academic legitimacy. One of the defining characteristics of the historiographical turn is that much more attention has been placed on the theoretical and methodological assumptions that are involved in researching the history of the field. Although the debate between "internalists" and "externalists" has contributed to more emphasis being placed on historiographical issues, it is important that this controversy not become another enduring disciplinary dichotomy. As Bell has noted, "the internal/external distinction occludes as much as it illuminates," adding that "these are not the only options available" (2009: 10). One aspect missing from the internal/external debate is the role of ideology in the development of IR (Little, 1999; Oren, 2003). The role of race is also missing, which Robert Vitalis (2005) has argued fundamentally shaped the early history of IR. There are now a variety of approaches that have been successfully utilized to explore various dimensions of the field's history, including a historical sociological approach (Guzzini, 1998); a sociology of science

approach (Waever, 1998; Tickner and Waever, 2009); a genealogical approach (Smith, 1995); and a cultural-institutional approach (Jorgensen and Knudsen, 2006). Each of these approaches has its own merits, and when successfully applied to the disciplinary history of IR, holds out the promise of confirming John Gunnell's (1991) point that truth is very often more convincing than fiction and carries as much critical force.

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Philosophy of Social Science and International Relations

Colin Wight

A key issue for any social science discipline is the extent to which it might be considered a science. According to Brian Schmidt, the scientific status of international relations (IR) is the “defining goal of the field” (see Chapter 1). However, where Schmidt sees the development of IR¹ in terms of a continuing attempt to provide scientific credentials for its knowledge claims, I see a discipline that is structured around a set of deep contestations over the very idea of science itself and the extent to which IR can, and should, be a science. The development of IR cannot be understood as the inexorable march toward science since many within the discipline are opposed to a science of IR, irrespective of any benefits that might derive from the label. What science is and whether IR can or should be a science is a subject of impassioned debate within the discipline (Bull, 1969; Ferguson and Mansbach, 1988; Hollis, 1996; Hollis and Smith, 1990; Kaplan, 1969; Nicholson, 1996a, 1996b; Ogle, 1981; Reynolds, 1973; Wendt, 1999; Wight, 2006; Chernoff, 2005, 2007; Jackson, 2010; Schram and Caterino, 2006). For many working within the philosophy of social science, this

issue effectively defines the content of its subject matter (Bhaskar, 1979). Following conventional usage within the philosophy of social science, I shall call this the problem of “naturalism.”² Within the context of this question a range of subsidiary issues typically emerge: the nature of explanation, the nature of causation, the nature of laws, and so on (Bunge, 1996; Reynolds, 1973; Suganami, 1996; Kurki, 2008).

Of course, the philosophy of social science in IR is not only concerned with the question of science. Another fundamental question has revolved around what is known as the agent–structure problem (Carlsnaes, 1992; Dessler, 1989; Wendt, 1987; Wight, 1999a, 2006). This issue defies easy definition, and the confusion over what is at stake in the agent–structure problem has led one pair of commentators to suggest that it is not at all clear if the contributors to the debate in IR are referring to the same problem (Friedman and Starr, 1997). Whatever this problem does involve, however, all parties agree that a substantive element of it concerns a conundrum best elaborated by Marx: “Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as

they please; they do not make it under conditions chosen by themselves” (Marx, 1962). The agent–structure problem then, is concerned with the relationship between active and self-reflecting agents and the structural context in which their activity takes place.³ There are many aspects to this problem, and it has surfaced under various guises within the philosophy of social science⁴ (Singer, 1961). When combined with the issue of naturalism, it is tempting to picture these problems in terms of a matrix such as Figure 2.1 (Hollis and Smith, 1990; Wendt, 1999; see also Carlsnaes, Chapter 12 in this volume).⁵

The problem with such diagrammatic devices is that their inability to deal with the complexity of the issues introduces a high level of distortion as to what the actual fault lines are (Hollis and Smith, 1992: 216; see also Carlsnaes, Chapter 12 in this volume). That is, the matrix provides an image of rigid boundaries that do not hold when the issue is considered in other discursive and less dichotomous ways. Moreover, taking seriously the fact that those involved in the study of IR largely construct the self-images of IR that dominate, we can see how the fault lines of contemporary IR might themselves be an artifact of the pictorial representation of them in two-by-two matrix form. In short, the use of such devices to explain disciplinary divisions contributes to their construction. Such devices may be valuable aids in teaching and understanding complex issues, but we should always be aware of what Mario Bunge calls the “Myth of Simplicity” (Bunge, 1963).

The primary aim of this chapter is to provide an account of the philosophy of social science within IR in order to demonstrate that the contemporary theoretical cleavages that structure the discipline are unable to support the weight they are being asked to bear. In short, the contemporary meta-theoretical framework the discipline employs is a bar to constructive dialogue; a hindrance to much-needed research into issues of vital concern; a confused misrepresentation of the issues; and most importantly, a construct of those

| | Explaining | Understanding |
|-----------|------------|---------------|
| Structure | | |
| Agents | | |

Figure 2.1 Philosophical positions in relation to social study.

working in the field, and hence they have it within their power to change it.

I begin by providing a set of arguments for taking the philosophy of social science seriously and give a brief sketch of the development of the philosophy of social science. In the following section, I briefly discuss the early development of the discipline in the context of claims that it is a science of social affairs. The third section deals with the first genuine attempt to constitute IR as a science on the basis of literature drawn from the philosophy of science and the philosophy of social science. A key component here will be understanding the role of positivism and its use within the discipline.⁶ In the fourth section, I concentrate on contemporary debates and, in particular, attempt to throw some light on what is increasingly becoming what one commentator has called “a philosophical swamp” (Walker, 2000).⁷ Finally, I briefly outline some of the recent attempts to escape from this “philosophical swamp” that aim to produce a more productive and integrative cross-paradigm conversation within the discipline.

LEGITIMATION: DOES IR NEED THE PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE?

The utility of examining the philosophy of social science within IR is not self-evident. Critical voices have often doubted whether the discipline has either the intellectual resources, or the need, to engage in such an exercise (Griffiths and O’Callaghan, 2001: 199;

Skocpol, 1987). Many would prefer to leave such esoteric speculation to those more able – philosophers, perhaps (Wallace, 1996). Others doubt whether philosophy as a different “order of discourse” can provide the kind of legitimation claimed on its behalf (Gunnell, 1975: 54, 1998: 6). Often, this skepticism towards disciplinary self-reflection derives from a belief that such inquiries lead to the neglect of more substantive forms of knowledge generation (Gunnell, 1998: xii; Halliday, 1996: 320; Mann, 1996; Skocpol, 1987).

There is something deeply ironic in the fact that the social sciences feel the need to legitimate their activities in relation to the philosophy of social science. After all, apart from some notable exceptions, scientists rarely legitimate their practices in terms of the philosophy of science (Gunnell, 1998; Nicholson, 1996a). Indeed, modern science only emerged as a science once its autonomy from philosophy was firmly established (Gordon, 1991).

Yet although most natural scientists were happy to leave speculative philosophy behind, many concerned with social inquiry were not (Winch, 1958; in IR see Bull, 1969; Hollis and Smith, 1990). This is an intellectual split that still structures the contemporary social sciences, but it is important to note that it emerges not only out of a desire to maintain a philosophical presence within social inquiry, but also from a desire to keep a certain form of science out (Bull, 1969; Reynolds, 1973). In general, those who reject a scientific IR are not against systematic inquiry per se. Indeed Vico, often cited as an authoritative source by those arguing against a social science, entitled his major work *New Science* (Vico, [1744] 1984). When hermeneutics first emerged as a distinctive approach to inquiry, its early proponents still conceived of themselves as being engaged in the development of a science of meaning (Bauman, 1978; Dilthey, 1976; Husserl, 1982; Outhwaite, 1975). Often, the rejection of a science of the social world is derived from deep-seated fears in relation to some claimed dehumanizing aspects at the heart of

science itself (Aliotta, 1914; Ashley, 1987, 1989; Morgenthau, 1946; Thompson, 1981).

The philosophy of science only really emerged as a recognizable field of study in the 1930s (Dingle, 1952; Gordon, 1991; Gunnell, 1998; Oldroyd, 1986). Early understandings of science were rudimentary and were generally based upon accounts developed by Thomas Hobbes, John Stuart Mill, David Hume, and Rene Descartes (Gordon, 1991). However, conscious reflection on the nature of human inquiry can be said to have played a role in the human sciences ever since reflection on the human condition became a recognizable activity (Gordon, 1991; Manicas, 1987). Thucydides, for example, is said to have been the first scientific historian (Abbott, 1970; Gilpin, 1986: 306; Tellis, 1996), or perhaps even a positivist.

It is doubtful if this characterization of Thucydides as a positivist can be sustained (Bagby, 1994; Garst, 1989), particularly if one places the development of positivism in a historical perspective (Kolakowski, 1969; Oldroyd, 1986). Yet, it does highlight the manner in which positivism and science became interchangeable terms in the twentieth century (Bhaskar, 1986). If social inquiry is to emulate the natural sciences, it needs to examine its methods, procedures, and underlying rationale. It needs a yardstick against which its claims to be a science can be measured. Where better to look than the philosophy of science? Since knowledge claims in social science are almost always couched in terms of some philosophical justificatory framework, the various disciplines have felt the need to examine their status (Reynolds, 1973: 14).

Gunnell (1975: 54) sees this as an impossible enterprise and argues that “political science must chart its own methodological route, and that the defense of that route cannot be achieved by invoking the authority of science.” There are two problems with this claim. First, the influence of the philosophy of science on social inquiry is not simply methodological, and second, his argument relies on the assumption that the philosophy

of science can tell us nothing about the practices of science. But the philosophy of science *does* claim to reflect on the practice of science and to pronounce on some of its essential elements. No doubt it will get much wrong, but there is no a priori reason to assume it will get it all wrong. Since the philosophy of science does claim some legitimacy in terms of its understanding of science, then it is perfectly appropriate for social inquiry to look to it for resources. Moreover, academic disciplines are not as hermetically sealed as Gunnell seems to suggest and include philosophical concepts as essential elements within their frameworks.

The final reason why such abstract conceptual inquiries are important is that whereas natural scientists may disagree on the actual content of specific explanations, they agree on what an explanation of a given phenomenon would look like. Social scientists, on the other hand, do not. For a discipline supposedly born out of a desire to uncover the causes of war, not knowing the conditions under which such a discovery might be made seems a damning indictment. Knowing the causes of war is one thing; knowing that we know them is an altogether different matter. Equally, there is no consensus on the nature of causation itself, or how we should study it (Kurki, 2008), and these issues can only be addressed through a systematic analysis that will inevitably draw on debates from the philosophy of science and the philosophy of social science.

Yet engagement alone does not guarantee success, and it has to be admitted that many of the complaints against the use and abuse of the philosophy of social science within IR have some substance (Halliday, 1994: 23; Kratochwil, 2000; Wallace, 1996). In general, these problems occur due to a lack of conceptual clarity, the misuse of key terms, and the naïve appropriation of key concepts developed in cognate disciplines with little awareness of the specifics of their use or the context of their development. The most glaring examples of these concern the use of terms such as ontology, epistemology, and

methodology, although the widespread and uncritical adoption of Kuhn's notion of paradigms has been equally damaging (Banks, 1985; Vasquez, 1998). Within the philosophy of social science and the philosophy of science, these terms have very specific uses and function to maintain analytical clarity and as ways of delineating very specific aspects of the field. In IR, on the other hand, these terms are often thrown around like philosophical hand grenades, with little consideration given to how they are deployed, or to what end.⁸

EARLY IR: A SCIENCE WITH NO PHILOSOPHY

Science was not always a problematic term in the discipline. Early practitioners were perhaps not clear on how the term was deployed, but there was a general acceptance that IR could and should be a science. Ashley J. Tellis argues that the development of realism from Thucydides to the present day can be understood as a "Long March to Scientific Theory" (Tellis, 1996). And despite a number of critiques questioning the extent to which Thucydides can be considered a realist, few have doubted that his discussion of the Peloponnesian War is "severe in its detachment, written from a purely intellectual point of view, unencumbered with platitudes and moral judgments, cold and critical" (Bury, 1975: 252).

Thomas Hobbes had provocative views about which subjects could be deemed to be scientific, but there is little doubt that he considered his own work a science, and he perhaps even thought of himself as the inventor of political science (Ryan, 1996). Within Hobbes's notion of political science, there were already the seeds of a very clearly demarcated difference between what he called "political science" and "political prudence" (Ryan, 1996). According to Hobbes, Thucydides's analysis was based at the level of political prudence; in general, it

equated to practical wisdom and was attained through a close examination of historical examples. Political prudence was a genuine form of knowledge, yet it is inevitably knowledge of particulars. It is a form of knowledge based upon experience of the past and of what has happened. It is not, however, knowledge of how things *must* work and what *must* happen. It was not scientific knowledge. Science, for Hobbes, must be hypothetical, general, and infallible. But nonetheless, he considered that politics could, and should, be a science.

Interwar idealism was likewise committed to the role of science in the fostering of human progress (Carr, 1946; Long, 1995: 306). This period of IR was driven by Enlightenment ideals of progress based on scientific knowledge and the application of reason (George, 1994: 74–7). Richard Little, however, argues that early IR differed from other social sciences that emerged at the time in that it did not attempt to model itself on the natural sciences and was not “concerned with uncovering laws which would assist in the comprehension of an infinitely complex reality” (Little, 1980: 7; see also Smith, 1987).

The problem with Little’s analysis is that he is projecting a very particular account of science back onto the work of the interwar idealists. He seems to assume that a normative dimension to inquiry precludes it from being a science (Little, 1980: 7). This is a very particular, and contentious, account of the fact/value relationship within science. Moreover, there are many defenders of a scientific IR who are committed to providing scientific explanations precisely in order to bring about social change (Nicholson, 1996a: 3, 2000: 197; Wright, 1962).

The charge that the early origins of the discipline were “unscientific” is located within the damning critique launched by E.H. Carr. In what can only be considered a strategic polemic, Carr argued that the “science of international politics is in its infancy” (Carr, 1946: 14). According to Carr, realism could provide such a science through its emphasis on “the acceptance of facts and on

the analysis of their causes and consequences” (1946: 14). The alternative to this science, according to Carr, was idealism, which he characterized as “alchemy” (1946: 14).

Interestingly, despite Carr’s commitment to science, some have argued that he is best considered part of the interpretive tradition within the discipline (Dunne, 1998: 7), whereas others see him as operating with both a scientific and interpretive outlook (George, 1994: 77). But whichever tradition Carr should be considered to be within, his critique of the idealists does indicate something important about the disciplinary politics of such labels. Carr’s claim that realism was based upon acceptance of the facts and analysis of their causes and consequences is mirrored by Norman Angell’s plea for the development of education about international political affairs. The lack of such education, claimed Angell, was a barrier to the “impartial search for truth, the true interpretation of all the facts” (Angell, 1947: 17); without this belief we render “inoperative the only method by which we can hope to make steady progress: the correction of social theory and doctrine in the light of fact and experience; the scientific method applied to society” (Angell, 1947: 23).

Hans Morgenthau was one of the first major figures in the discipline to openly argue against IR as a science. His early work was conceived as an attempt to provide a “scientifically unassailable classification of international disputes” (Honig, 1996: 289). And this commitment to science was still evident in his 1940 essay “Positivism, Functionalism and International Law” (Honig, 1996; Morgenthau, 1940). In this piece, he bemoaned the attempt to construct international law at a technical level devoid of scientific principles (Morgenthau, 1940: 284). This position was completely reversed in *Scientific Man and Power Politics*, where he rejects all hope of a scientific IR (Morgenthau, 1946, 1972). Yet despite Morgenthau’s clear renunciation of science and positivism, scholars within IR still aligned him with science (Hollis and Smith,

1990: 23), with some even going as far as to label him a positivist (George, 1994; see Bain, 2000 for an alternative view).

The assertion that Morgenthau should be viewed as committed to a science of IR is generally made on the basis of his claim that politics is governed by “objective laws that have their roots in human nature” (George, 1994: 93; Hollis and Smith, 1990: 23–4; Morgenthau, 1948: 4). But to construe this claim as supporting a commitment to scientific IR is to miss the point. In conceding that politics is governed by objective laws of human nature, Morgenthau is actually saying that there is no need for a science of IR, because IR is governed by laws that are explained by biology, not social science (Griffiths, 1992: 39). There is nothing for a science of IR to discover, and we know the laws of human behavior. Morgenthau’s theory is best viewed as a manual for state leaders. It is a technical guide to policy based on an understanding of the laws that govern human interactions. Importantly, Morgenthau does not ground his arguments about human nature in any scientific context, but in a metaphysical one (Griffiths, 1992: 38, 43; Honig, 1996: 305).

What is interesting about these developments is the absence of any sustained discussion on the nature of the science that was either being advanced or rejected. There was little attempt to legitimate claims about science by recourse to bodies of literature developed in other disciplines, and no real attempt to spell out the actual content of the science being proposed. Indeed, for someone like Herbert Butterfield, science simply *was* traditional forms of inquiry (Butterfield, 1951; Dunne, 1998: 123). This lack of legitimation in terms of the philosophy of science is understandable given the underdeveloped state of the philosophy of science at the time. However, developments were moving on rapidly, and a consensus was emerging which was, for better or worse, to stamp its mark on IR in ways that could not have been envisaged. The science of IR was about to rediscover some philosophy.

ADOLESCENT IR: THE LEGITIMATION OF SCIENCE

The systematic use of the philosophy of science within IR begins with what John Vasquez terms the “behavioral revolt” (Vasquez, 1998: 39). Although this “revolt” had been taking place within political science and other social sciences since the early 1950s, it did not begin to emerge into IR in a substantive way until the 1960s (Knorr and Rosenau, 1969). In 1950, Harold Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan explicitly argued that their attempt to provide a framework for political science was informed by developments in logical positivist philosophy of science (Gunnell, 1975; Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950).⁹ This turn to the philosophy of science was validated by David Easton (1953, 1965), who argued that “the widespread acceptance of the philosophy of science as a basis for social inquiry represents a “takeoff” phenomenon in social science, promising sustained growth in social interpretation” (Lane, 1966).

Despite claims to be following the scientific method, behavioralism was actually an attempt to implement a particular philosophy of science that was dominant at that time, which was positivism. Thus, positivism became synonymous with the term science in the discipline. This is an important point and highlights something often missed in disciplinary discussions relating to the study of IR. For the model of science that underpins the “behavioral revolt” in IR is based upon a very specific philosophy of science and not the practices of scientists (Gunnell, 1975: 19).

This also helps explain many of the contemporary confusions surrounding science in IR, since it is never clear whether it is science *per se* that is being rejected, the logical positivist version, or other less extreme positivist versions. This problem is compounded by the fact that there is no longer a consensus on what positivism is, with one commentator identifying 12 versions of it (Halfpenny, 1982). Moreover, the philosophy

of science itself was soon to reject positivism and to claim that the practices of scientists did not conform to the positivist model. This held out the rather paradoxical prospect that all approaches that had attempted to emulate the positivist model were not actually following scientific procedures.

Before proceeding to examine the treatment of positivism within IR, it is important to consider something of the claims being made on its behalf that had a significant impact on IR. Two, in particular, stand out: operationalism and instrumentalism were at the heart of the “behavioral revolt,” and both are firmly embedded within logical positivism/positivism (Gunnell, 1975). The commitment to operationalism is generally well understood: since the validity of a theory ultimately rests on the “facts,” all concepts that are considered to be scientific or empirical must be defined operationally. Within behavioralism, this has generally been taken to mean the language of observation (Gunnell, 1975; Nicholson, 1996a). Less well understood is the closely related instrumentalism that pervaded logical positivism/positivism.

Instrumentalism was the device employed by positivists to get around some tricky questions concerning the status of nonobservable terms in theories. From the instrumentalist perspective, theoretical concepts are judged not by their truth or falsity, but by their theoretical utility (Singer, 1969: 76; Waltz, 1979: 8; Wasby, 1970: 66; Wight, 2007a, b, c). For the instrumentalist, theories cannot be taken as assertions about the way the world is. Theoretical terms that could not be translated into observational ones were to be treated “as if” they existed. Facts are what matter, and theory is simply a better way of collecting them (Gunnell, 1975: 26–7). From this instrumentalist perspective, “truth” was not part of the lexicon of positivism, nor was any search for underlying causes (see Griffiths, 1992: 96–8, for an account of why Kenneth Waltz is not concerned with truth). Indeed, positivism since Comte had long given up according ontological status to anything beyond the

phenomena or the search for truth (Comte, [1854] 2000: 28). According to Comte:

In the final, the positive state, the mind has given over the vain search after Absolute notions, the origin and destination of the universe, and the causes of phenomena, and applies itself to the study of their laws – that is, their invariable relations of succession and resemblance ... I merely desire to keep in view that all our positive knowledge is relative, and, in my dread of our resting in notions of anything absolute ... (Comte, [1854] 2000: 68, 190)

This also helps illuminate how some contemporary confusions emerge in relation to positivism. For example, Hollis and Smith’s claim that Morgenthau’s version of realism is “an essentially positivistic way of analysing events, since it relied on a notion of underlying forces producing behaviour” (Hollis and Smith, 1990: 23) is problematic given positivism’s rejection of the search for underlying causes.

Underpinned by positivism, a more overt scientific approach took a firm hold in the discipline (Alker, 1965; Hollis and Smith, 1990; Rosenau, 1971). When viewed from the perspective of the philosophy of social science, four aspects stand out. First, whatever the merits of positivism, behavioralism in IR was at least consistent with its fundamental principles and attempted to validate its “scientific” credentials as opposed to simply taking them as given. Abraham Kaplan’s *The Conduct of Inquiry* (1964) is perhaps the most important work in this respect, but others had preceded it (Brecht, 1959; Van Dyke, 1960; see also Meehan, 1968). Second, the behavioralists were scathing about the lack of rigor within classical realism (Hollis and Smith, 1990: 28) and they deemed realism to be unscientific. The consistent application of positivism entailed that assumptions about human nature were metaphysical, nonobservable, and hence unscientific. Third, the importation of positivism to IR was not without sustained resistance. At the forefront of this resistance was Hedley Bull’s polemical attack on what he called the scientific approach (Bull, 1969: 361). Against

this scientific approach, which he clearly sees embedded within positivism (Bull, 1969: 362), Bull argues for the “classical” approach embodied within the works of Zimmern, Carr, and Morgenthau. Donald J. Puchala, however, argues that within American IR the new version of science peddled by behavioralists was rejected by major American figures in the field (Ferguson and Mansbach, 1988; Puchala, 1991). Stanley Hoffmann, in an early critique characterized as a “wrecking operation,” was scathing about Kaplan’s proposed science of IR (Hoffman, 1961). Also, Leo Strauss (1953) attacked the onward march of “scientism in political science,” and Michael Haas (1969) identifies many American critics. Yet, despite these critical voices, the behavioralists were able to take control of the label “science.” Fourth, while the introduction of behavioralism was initially hailed as a dramatic stride forward in terms of the development of a “scientific” IR (Lijphart, 1974a, 1974b), later accounts now argue that this debate did not fundamentally change underlying assumptions and was essentially only a very limited debate about methodology (Guzzini, 1998; Hollis and Smith, 1990; Holsti, 1985, 1998; Vasquez, 1998).

Another neglected aspect of the behavioral revolution within IR is the extent to which its adherents conceived of themselves as going beyond social science and instituting a “behavioral science” (Easton, 1965: 18). The “behavioral revolt” was not only about placing IR on a more scientific basis, but about taking part in an ambitious attempt to unify all of the human sciences into a seamless whole. In fact, David Easton saw the behavioral movement as the next stage in the development of human knowledge, where the human sciences would be united into one research program, centered on the notion of behavior (Easton, 1965).

Whatever the overall impact of the “behavioral revolt” on the discipline, it legitimated the turn to the philosophy of social science and the philosophy of science. References to Hempel, Nagel, Popper, Kuhn, Feyerabend,

and Lakatos became commonplace. Waltz devoted a chapter of his *Theory of International Politics* (1979) to the philosophy of science, and strongly defended an instrumentalist treatment of theoretical terms (Griffiths, 1992: 93). And, of course, Thomas Kuhn has shaped the discipline in fundamental ways. That Kuhn’s framework was adopted so universally across the discipline is puzzling when one considers that Kuhn himself thought that the social sciences were in a pre-paradigmatic state and doubted whether they could ever be “mature sciences” (Kuhn, 1962: 164–5; see also Kuhn, 1970: 245; see Ferguson and Mansbach, 1988 for a critique of the attempt to apply Kuhn to IR).

Yet, reasons for Kuhn’s success in the social sciences are not hard to find. Political scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists recognized in their own practices and disciplinary conflicts Kuhn’s picture of paradigms. They were delighted to hear that what had previously been thought of as a barrier to the development of a social science was the way it was done in respectable sciences. Traditionalists could now portray themselves as working in a different paradigm, thus making themselves immune to critiques from the scientists. The scientists could continue unperturbed, safe in the knowledge that they were actually contributing to knowledge growth under the guise of normal science. And dissidents could now portray themselves as revolutionary heroes of a new paradigm. Here was a philosophy of science that not only seemed to put science in its place, but legitimated what social scientists already did and required little in the way of change. Kuhn’s ambiguous terminology was also a key factor. His master concept, that of paradigm, was particularly subject to various interpretations; Margaret Masterman (Masterman, 1970) identified 21 different ways Kuhn used the term, a criticism Kuhn accepted (Kuhn, 1970). This ambiguity allowed the framework a large measure of flexibility and ensured its welcome into disciplines that made definitional debate a key component of their research practices.

But Kuhn's framework came with two related and major problems.

The first was an incipient conservatism (Guzzini, 1993: 446; Smith, 1992: 494; Wight, 1996). Science progressed, argued Kuhn, in periods of normal science (Kuhn, 1962). This claim had normative force. It meant that if progress in terms of knowledge production were to be achieved, then IR scholars needed to find themselves a dominant paradigm. Realism seemed an obvious candidate, but it would have come as no surprise to Kuhn to see competitors quickly emerging. The inter-paradigm debate that developed in IR vindicated Kuhn's assertion that the social sciences were pre-paradigmatic (Kuhn, 1962: 164–5). But if IR scholars were to achieve progress and move into normal science, then the discipline needed a dominant paradigm. This meant that pluralism could be seen as a threat to progress. But Kuhn had already built into his framework a mechanism where paradigms could flourish, even if progress could not.

This was the issue of incommensurability (in IR, see Guzzini, 1993; Waever, 1996; Wight, 1996). Kuhn had seemed to suggest that there was no rational way to compare paradigms (Kuhn, 1962, 1970). Paradigm choice, for Kuhn, was a matter of faith; or what Imre Lakatos would call "mob psychology" (Lakatos, 1970: 178). This made any notion of an inter-paradigm "debate" oxymoronic. Incommensurability became another Kuhnian buzzword that seemed to offer non-mainstream approaches some shelter. After all, incommensurability seemed to leave the world safe for critical theory to exist unencumbered by critiques from the positivist mainstream. Dissenting voices, however, were soon to see the perils in the incommensurability thesis (Guzzini, 1993; Waever, 1996; Wight, 1996). Incommensurability not only provided a safe haven for critical theory, but also for the mainstream (Guzzini, 1993). If incommensurability meant that cross-paradigmatic conversation was in principle impossible, how could the critics critique the mainstream?

There is little doubt that Kuhn's work has fundamentally – for better or worse – shaped the discipline. However, the discipline has typically seen this as a resource to be mined as opposed to displaying any awareness of either the complexities of his ideas, or the many trenchant critiques of his position. Even in those instances where the difficulties are acknowledged, these are brushed aside in the attempt to apply the framework (Vasquez, 1998; see Katzenstein et al., 1998 for a similar treatment of Lakatos, and Elman and Elman, 2003 for a critique). Often, Kuhn's notion of paradigms was grafted onto a Lakatosian framework for theory choice with little in the way of justification (Christensen and Snyder, 1997; Elman and Elman, 1997; Vasquez, 1997b; for a critique, see Waltz, 1997). The philosophy of science was now in IR, and the discipline needs to consider it much more carefully if it is to play such a fundamental role. Unfortunately, before the discipline could reflect on its turn to the philosophy of science, there was to be an explosion of alternative philosophical sources of inspiration.

CONTEMPORARY IR: PHILOSOPHY, BEGINNING, AND END?

If the Kuhnian experience within the discipline vindicated the turn to the philosophy of science, then the philosophy of social science was surely everywhere. Unfortunately, this was not the case. Despite a vast body of literature on the philosophy of social science, the number of works dealing with these issues specifically in relation to IR is small (George, 1994; Hollis and Smith, 1990; Neufeld, 1995; Mackenzie, 1967, 1971; Nicholson, 1983, 1996a; Reynolds, 1973; Sylvester, 1993). There are, of course, many references to the philosophy of social science, but these are scattered around the discipline in fragments (Alker, 1996; Campbell, 1988; Carlsnaes, 1992; Dessler, 1989; George and Campbell, 1990; Wendt, 1987). Hollis and Smith, in the

first sustained presentation of this argument within IR, argue that the discipline could do better than turning to the philosophy of science and that there were models of social science not based on the natural sciences that might be more appropriate (Hollis and Smith, 1990: 68–91). The philosophical inspiration for their argument is Peter Winch, although they also draw on a range of hermeneutic thinkers as well, particularly Weber (Weber, 1949; Winch, 1958).

In fact, Hollis and Smith's argument had already played a fundamental role in structuring the discipline, even if those arguing against a science of IR have never specifically located their argument in a sustained engagement with the philosophy of social science. Reynolds (1973) perhaps stands out as a notable exception, but his work is concerned with the distinction between science and history, as opposed to that between science and hermeneutics. More importantly, and contrary to Hollis and Smith, Reynolds argues that the traditionalists and the scientists have "more in common than their advocates have perhaps realized" (Reynolds, 1973: 15). Likewise, W.J.M. Mackenzie (1967, 1971) also sees no fundamental conflict in the attempt to integrate a scientific IR with more traditional forms of inquiry.

Hollis and Smith's book emerged in the context of what has come to be called the post-positivist turn (George, 1989, 1994; Holsti, 1989; Lapid, 1989), and has given the antiscience wing of the discipline a series of formidable philosophical arguments to draw from. Hollis and Smith argue that one can have either an explanatory account (based on scientific principles), or an understanding account (based on hermeneutic principles); what one cannot have is some combination of the two (Hollis and Smith, 1990, 1994). In reality, Hollis and Smith's "two stories" thesis is not wholly consistent with that of either Winch or Weber (Hollis and Smith, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1996). Winch (1958) had rejected all attempts to construct a science of the social, and Weber (1949) had

insisted on the necessity of both forms of analysis.

Weber rejected both the positivist contention that the cognitive aims of the natural and the social sciences were basically the same and the opposing historicist doctrine that it is impossible to make legitimate generalizations about human behavior because human actions are not subject to the regularities that govern the world of nature. Against the historicists, Weber argued that the method of science, whether its subject matter be things or men, always proceeds by abstraction and generalization. Against the positivists, he took the view that the explanation of human behavior could not rest only on its external manifestations, but required also knowledge of the underlying motivations. Hence Weber's definition of sociology as that science which aims at the *interpretative understanding* (*Verstehen*) of social behavior in order to gain an explanation of its causes, its course, and its effects. According to Weber, what distinguishes the natural and social sciences is not an inherent difference in methods of investigation, but rather the differing interests and aims of the scientist. Both types of science involve abstraction. Hence, there is no insurmountable chasm between the procedures of the natural and the social scientist; they differ only in their cognitive intentions and explanatory projects (Weber, 1949).

Weber saw the notion of interpretative understanding as only a preliminary step in the establishment of causal relationships. The grasping of subjective meaning of an activity, he argued, is facilitated through empathy (*Einfühlung*) and a reliving (*Nacherleben*) of the experience to be analyzed. But any interpretative explanation (*verstehende Erklärung*) must become a causal explanation if it is to attain the stature of a scientific proposition. *Verstehen* and causal explanation are correlative rather than opposed principles of method in the social sciences (Weber, 1949).

Given the philosophical justification of the arguments of Hollis and Smith, however, the only alternative is a philosophical refutation,

not simply a rejection of the position, or a creative redescription (Suganami, 2000; see Patomäki, 1996, for a philosophical engagement). This task is complicated by the fact that many of the labels currently being deployed in the discipline are not clearly delineated, or their content is not sufficiently explained (see Smith, 1995 for an account of the discipline's self-images; see also Waever, 1996). In this respect, despite the appearance of philosophical sophistication, the discipline has moved from throwing philosophical hand grenades to a largely untargeted artillery barrage against an ill-defined series of enemies.

Often, this phase of disciplinary development is called the "third debate" (George, 1989; Lapid, 1989; Neufeld, 1994, 1995; Sylvester, 1993), but there are problems with such a designation. In particular, it is not clear what the content of the "third debate" is, or who the debaters are (Smith, 1995: 14; Vasquez, 1995: 217–18; Waever, 1996). Mark Neufeld, for example, claims both that the "third debate" is the "inter-paradigm debate" between realism, pluralism, and structuralism (Neufeld, 1994: 19; see also Banks, 1984, 1985), and that it represents the discipline's attempt to move beyond the positivist orthodoxy (Neufeld, 1994: 19). Christine Sylvester treats it as simply the move beyond positivism (Sylvester, 1993: 140–68). Ole Waever provides a solid critique of the confusion surrounding the "third debate" (Waever, 1996).

The post-positivist turn began in the mid-1980s. Just as Kuhn was becoming well embedded within the literature, a number of other developments were being imported into IR. Often, these interventions would include references to Kuhn and Feyerabend as ways of delegitimizing claims to science (George, 1989: 271; Neufeld, 1994: 14), with defenders of science tending to draw on Kuhn, Popper, or Lakatos (Herman and Peacock, 1987; Keohane, 1989; King et al., 1994; Nicholson, 1996a; Vasquez, 1998). But the philosophy of science no longer provided the only fertile ground for sources of legitimation. Moreover, the overturning of the positivist orthodoxy within the philosophy of science

now meant that there was no "secure" account of a scientific methodology on which to draw (Chalmers, 1992; Hollis and Smith, 1990; Oldroyd, 1986; Stockman, 1983; Trigg, 1993; Tudor, 1982). This meant that a range of disparate positions was now being imported into the discipline, with the relationships between them being unclear and unspecified.

Critical theorists criticized mainstream commitments to science (Cox, 1981; Hoffman, 1987; Linklater, 1990). For some, critical theory is seen as a replacement for a positivist form of social science (Brown, 1994; S. Smith, 1996: 24). Yet, as Mark Hoffman points out, critical theory did not denigrate positivism, but rather aimed to show how scientific knowledge aimed at mere technical control was not the only legitimate type of knowledge (Hoffman, 1987: 236). Certainly, Habermas viewed positivist, hermeneutic, and critical research as legitimate components of all social inquiry (Habermas, 1988). Likewise, Andrew Linklater seems to accept the validity of positivist-informed research, whilst rejecting the idea that it exhausts the possibilities (Linklater, 1990). Positivism as a valid philosophy of science is accepted, and only the boundaries of its legitimate use within social science are disputed. As such, a critical theory approach to social science will incorporate elements of positivism as well as hermeneutics, but attempt to go beyond them in terms of emancipatory potential.

Feminist approaches in IR, as in other social science disciplines, critiqued science on the basis of its male-centered assumptions and lack of attention to gendered forms of knowledge construction (Elshtain, 1997; Enloe, 1990, 1993; Sylvester, 1993; Tickner, 1992; Zalewski, 1993). However, there is little in the way of agreement about appropriate standards of inquiry within feminism (Zalewski, 1993; see also Tickner and Sjoberg, Chapter 7 in this volume). Some feminists view their work in terms of science, even if they would not accept the label positivist (Enloe, 1990).

Often described as the most radical attack on the assumptions of social science,

postmodernism and post-structuralism are difficult bodies of thought to characterize (Ashley, 1987, 1989; Ashley and Walker, 1990; Campbell, 1998a; Der Derian and Shapiro, 1989; George, 1994; Walker, 1993). Also, the discipline seems unable, or unwilling, to attempt to make any differentiation between postmodernism and post-structuralism, and tends to treat the two terms as synonymous (Rosenau, 1990: 84–5; Vasquez, 1995). This is problematic in terms of the philosophy of social science.

Post-structuralism emerges out of a general critique of structuralism (Harland, 1987). It is critical of structuralism's attempt to develop an objective science of social structures, but equally important is that post-structuralism expresses no desire to return to a form of inquiry based upon the subjectivity of agents (Harland, 1987, 1993; Rabinow, 1982; Rosenau, 1990). Structural forms of inquiry had come to dominate many forms of social science (Althusser and Balibar, 1970; Durkheim, [1938] 1964; Harland, 1987, 1993). Structuralism proposes that understanding social practices requires the decentering of individual subjectivities and a focusing of attention on the structural modalities and organizing principles within which social practices are framed (Harland, 1987, 1993; Kurzweil, 1980). Structuralism was an attempt to scientifically describe the structural principles with which activity could be explained (Harland, 1993; Jackson, 1991). Waltz's structural realism, although not specifically embedded with a structuralist meta-theory, can be understood as a structuralist theory of IR (Waltz, 1979; see Ashley, 1984 for a critique of Waltz that makes this explicit).

Post-structuralism departs from two central tenets of structuralism (Harland, 1987, 1993). First, the logic of structures, which structuralism had thought was clear and determinate, is challenged (Derrida, 1988). For post-structuralism, structures do not operate according to one organizing principle or logic (Harland, 1987). Indeed, for post-structuralism there is no underlying logic to structures, and hence there is structural

indeterminacy (Doty, 1997; Harland, 1987; see Wight, 1999b for a critique). Social outcomes, which are products of social structures, are also indeterminate (Doty, 1997). Attempts to ascribe a logic to social activity must necessarily either fail or impose a logic on the situation through claims to some form of legitimacy – generally science (Derrida, 1988).

But science, as a social practice dependent upon structures, also falls to the same logic, and its outputs are either indeterminate, or such determinacy that does emerge can only be the outcome of practices that attempt to tame the indeterminacy of structures (Ashley, 1987, 1989; Ashley and Walker, 1990). This means that all claims to scientific objectivity are actually social practices imposing order through practices of power (Ashley, 1987, 1989; George, 1994; Walker, 1993). Postmodernism expands on this post-structuralist position and grafts onto it various other wholesale critiques of reason, reality, truth, and so forth (Brodribb, 1992; Callinicos, 1990; Dews, 1987; Eagleton, 1996; Farrell, 1996; Nicholson, 1993; Owen, 1997; in IR see Brown, 1994; Devetak, 1996; Jarvis, 2000; Rennger and Hoffman, 1990; Vasquez, 1995).

The fourth source of influences and ideas that began to be imported is that of social theory. This position has been labeled constructivism within the discipline (Adler, 1997; Guzzini, 2000; Hopf, 1998; Kratochwil, 1989; Onuf, 1989, 1998; Ruggie, 1998; Wendt, 1987). This is a very problematic term because there are some very conflicting positions being imported under this label (Adler, 1997; Hopf, 1998; see also chapter 5 by Adler in this volume; Ruggie, 1998). The confusion is evident when one considers that John Ruggie, in his typology of constructivism, includes post-structuralism (Ruggie, 1998: 35; see also chapter by Adler in this volume), whereas Smith sees a clear demarcation between them (Smith, 1995, 1996, 1997).

Wendt (1987, 1999) and David Dessler (1989, 1991, 1999) provide good introductions to scientific realism (see also Shapiro

and Wendt, 1992). Ashley J. Tellis (1996) writes of something called “scientific realism” and aligns it with Karl Popper’s “critical rationalism.” It seems unlikely, however, that by “scientific realism” Tellis means the philosophy of science version of it, and his scientific realism can only be political realism that attempts to be scientific. Nonetheless, precisely because the labels are deployed with little clarification, confusion abounds. Kratochwil provides a recent attempt to address scientific realism, but ultimately his treatment lacks, an understandable, depth of analysis (Kratochwil, 2000; see also Doty, 1997, and the critique by Wight, 1999a, and the subsequent exchange: Doty, 1999; Wight, 2000). Heikki Patomäki and Colin Wight have begun what might be a closer examination of scientific realism, although the tenacity of the view that science equals positivism is a serious obstacle to any serious evaluation of alternative views of science (Patomäki and Wight, 2000; see also Patomäki, 1996, 2001; Lane, 1996; Wendt, 1999).

Smith calls scientific realism an epistemology, which is a strange reading given that scientific realism is a philosophy of science that does not privilege any particular epistemological stance (S. Smith, 1996).¹⁰ The problem here is the use of the term *epistemology* within the discipline. Unfortunately, the discipline tends to use epistemology to mean any generalized approach to study. Smith, for example, talks of something called a “postmodern epistemology,” and of postmodern work on epistemology being diverse (Smith, 1996). But this can only be to misuse the word *epistemology*, since epistemology is the branch of philosophy concerned with the theory of knowledge and not a philosophy of science. In fact, very few books on epistemology include references to positivism (Haack, 1993).¹¹ Epistemological questions are typically concerned with the grounds we have for accepting or rejecting beliefs. Insofar as many postmodern positions reject these as valid questions, they also reject epistemology. In short, postmodernism as yet has no epistemology, and is unwilling to advance

one (see the debate between Campbell, 1998b, 1999 and Wight, 1999b; and between Doty, 1999 and Wight, 2000; also Osterud, 1996, 1997; Patomäki, 1997; Smith, 1997). It is for this reason that Peter Katzenstein, Robert Keohane, and Stephen Krasner argue that it falls outside the social science enterprise (Katzenstein et al., 1998: 678; Sørensen, 1998: 88).

A key factor that the discipline has yet to take seriously is that the demise of the positivist orthodoxy within the philosophy of science now means that there is “no definitive or agreed canon of scientific explanation” (Hollis and Smith, 1990: 67). This means that science is not synonymous with positivism. This should have been the lesson drawn from developments within the philosophy of science. Yet the discipline seems tenaciously wedded to the idea that science is positivism (Nicholson, 1996a, 1996b, 2000; S. Smith, 1996).

The term *post-positivist* is ambiguous as to whether it constitutes an outright rejection of positivism, an outright rejection of science, or a reformulation of the idea of science on the basis of new developments within the philosophy of science (Laudan, 1996). Indeed, many of the developments within the philosophy of science that deserve the label “post-positivist” are certainly not antiscience, although they may well be antipositivist (Bhaskar, 1978, 1986; Kuhn, 1962, 1970, 1982, 1990; Laudan, 1996). This opens up the possibility of a nonpositivist, yet still scientific IR; a science of IR, that is, that does not follow positivist principles.

There is little doubt, however, that for many within the discipline a commitment to science still remains a commitment to positivism (Nicholson, 1996a, 1996b, 2000). Even Wendt, whilst advocating a scientific realist philosophy of science, can declare, “I am a strong believer in science ... I am a ‘positivist’” (Wendt, 1999: 39). This is an impossible position to hold. One cannot be both a scientific realist and a positivist; the two accounts of science are diametrically opposed on some very fundamental issues

(Bhaskar, 1978; Feyerabend, 1981; Hollis, 1996). Positivism, in this sense, has lost all meaning. Indeed, the discipline's understanding of positivism seems a caricature of what is a very sophisticated, although in my opinion highly flawed, philosophy of science. This confusion surrounding the meaning of positivism threatens to destabilize any attempt to employ it (Nicholson, 1996a, 2000; S. Smith, 1996). Many seem to equate positivism with realist (in the philosophical sense) accounts of science (Campbell, 2001; George, 1994); or treat it as meaning any approach that relies on a belief in a "world out there" – a form of philosophical realism (Campbell, 2001; George, 1994). However, Hollis argues that positivism, insofar as it is committed to an empiricist epistemology, is actually an antirealist (in the philosophical sense) philosophy (Hollis, 1996: 303; George also admits this, 1994: 53).¹²

There have been some serious attempts to clarify the content of positivism in the discipline (compare George, 1994; Hollis, 1996; Nicholson, 1996a, 1996b, 2000; S. Smith, 1996), but it is doubtful, given the disciplinary baggage surrounding the label, if there is anything to be gained from its continued deployment (Nicholson, 1996a, 1996b, 2000). Smith provides a good account but one that omits many of the most fundamental issues – particularly positivism's commitment to a Humean account of cause; its antirealism and associated phenomenism and instrumentalism; and the covering law model of explanation (S. Smith, 1996;

see Kowlakowski, 1969, for a more in-depth account of positivism).

All of this adds up to a very confused picture in terms of the philosophy of social science. IR has struggled to incorporate an increasingly diverse set of positions into its theoretical landscape. In general, the discipline has attempted to maintain an unsophisticated and outdated two-category framework based on the science/antiscience issue. The terminology of this framework may have changed, but ultimately contemporary disciplinary categories seem to be mirror images of Carr's distinction between science and "alchemy." Currently there are three continuums that the discipline seems to consider lining up in opposition to one another. The first of these is the explaining/understanding divide (Hollis and Smith, 1990). The second is the positivism/post-positivism divide (Lapid, 1989; Sylvester, 1993). The third is Keohane's distinction between rationalism and reflectivism (Keohane, 1989). The newly emerging constructivism claims the "middle ground" in between (Adler, 1997; Price and Reus-Smit, 1998; Wendt, 1999). This constitutes a field configured as in Figure 2.2.

Another complicating factor is that of causation (Harré and Madden, 1975; Lerner, 1965; Suganami, 1996; Wright, 1974). Hollis and Smith ultimately reduce the distinction between explaining and understanding, and by implication positivism and post-positivism, to the issue of causation: "To understand is to reproduce order in the minds of actors; to explain is to find causes

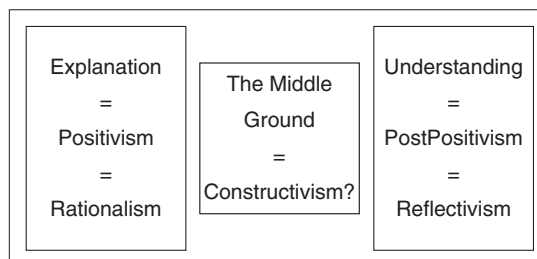


Figure 2.2 Contemporary IR.

in the scientific manner” (Hollis and Smith, 1990: 87). This would suggest that all causal accounts are necessarily positivist. Indeed, David Campbell, in accepting the logic of this framework, argues: “I embrace the logic of interpretation that acknowledges the improbability of cataloguing, calculating and specifying the “real causes”” (Campbell, 1992: 4). This seems to suggest that interpretative (understanding) accounts eschew causation. But what kind of causation is being rejected here? Hollis and Smith view cause in Humean positivist terms, whereas Campbell offers no explanation of what he means by “real causes” (Hollis and Smith, 1991: 407; 1994: 248–50).

Ruggie, presumably still on the post-positivist/ reflectivist side, is committed to causation, but discusses it in the context of the covering law model of explanation and contrasts this with a narrative form of explanation (Ruggie, 1998: 34). Hidemi Suganami has also addressed the issue of cause in a very similar manner, but the ontology of his account is unclear and he seems to imply that the narration itself is the cause (Suganami, 2000). This is a very idealistic account of cause, and would seem to suggest that Thucydides’s narrative of the Peloponnesian War was actually its cause (Patomäki and Wight, 2000; Suganami, 2000). Missing from Suganami’s discussion is the difference between “narration-of-causes” and “narration-as-cause.” Both are equally valid in terms of social science, but the distinction is important in temporal terms. A narration of the causes of the First World War cannot literally be the cause of the First World War, whereas a narrative that portrayed certain groups as inferior could be part of the cause of their being treated as inferior. Dessler (1991) has a good discussion of cause from a non-Humean position and contrasts this with correlation.¹³

The distinction between constitutive and explanatory theory is another issue that has emerged within the discipline as a result of the contemporary way of framing the issues (Burchill and Linklater, 1996; Smith, 1995;

Wendt, 1999). Steve Smith sees this as the main meta-theoretical issue facing the discipline today (Smith, 1995: 26). Smith clearly sees explanatory theory as being essentially positivist in orientation and constitutive theory as post-positivist (Smith, 1995: 26–7). According to Smith, explanatory theory seeks to offer explanations of international relations, whereas constitutive theory sees “theory as constitutive of that reality” (Smith, 1995: 26–7). Underlying Smith’s formulation is still the science/antiscience schema; is the social world to be “seen as scientists think of the “natural” world, that is to say as something outside of our theories, or is the social world what we make it” (Smith, 1995: 27)?

But just whom does the “we” refer to here? Setting this distinction in opposition to explanatory theory that attempts to explain international relations, we can presume that Smith means “we” IR theorists, not “we” members of society. But this seems implausible. It seems to suggest that “we” IR theorists make the world of international relations. On the other hand, if the point is simply that the world is socially constructed by the actors engaged in that world, then it would be difficult to find many social scientists who think otherwise (Holsti, 1998: 29; Searle, 1995). Even such a mainstream scholar as Kenneth Waltz accepts that the social world is socially constructed (Waltz, 1979: 48).¹⁴

It may well be that academic theories eventually filter down into society and fundamentally change it, but as yet, there is little to suggest that “we” are in a privileged enough position to say “we” IR theorists make the world we study. Wendt’s reply to Smith on this issue seems basically sound, and even though social objects do not exist independently of the concepts agents have of them, they do exist “independent of the minds and bodies of the individuals who want to explain them” (Wendt, 1999: 75). Wendt rejects Smith’s science/antiscience framing of this issue, and argues that both explanatory theory and constitutive theory transcend the natural–social science divide (Wendt, 1999: 78; see

Smith, 2000, for a reply). According to Wendt, constitutive theory is concerned with “how” social objects are constituted, and what “X” is (Wendt, 1999: 78).

The issue of constitutive theory and explanatory theory is often linked to that of whether reasons can be causes (Hollis, 1994; Smith, 2000). This used to be a major issue of concern for the philosophy of social science (Winch, 1958, although compare Winch, 1990; Davidson, 1963; MacIntyre, 1973). Today the construal of reasons as causes is generally accepted as a necessary component of interpretative accounts. In general, understanding reasons as causes has come to be seen as necessary in order to preserve the difference between action and behavior (Bhaskar, 1979; Carlsnaes, 1986; Davidson, 1963). For if the reason for an act is not part of the causal complex responsible for the act, then the contrast drawn between an act and a bodily movement, upon which hermeneutic accounts insist, is negated; such as that for example, the difference between signaling to a friend (act), and scratching one’s head (behavior), (Bhaskar, 1979: 169–95). The difference between a waving arm and signaling to a friend depends upon the possession, by an agent, of a *reason* to wave one’s arm in that manner, namely, the desire to signal to a friend. In this respect, the desire to wave to one’s friend can rightly be considered as part of the causal complex responsible for the waving of the arm in the appropriate manner (Carlsnaes, 1986; Patomäki, 1996). If reasons are stripped of their causal function, behavioralism beckons.

Smith’s rejection of reasons as causes is derived from his acceptance of a positivist account of cause. Winch accepted that his rejection of causal accounts in social explanations was based on a Humean/positivist account of cause, and that devoid of such an account causal talk was not only appropriate, but necessary for social explanation (Winch, 1990). Because of this, Wendt has suggested that Hollis and Smith’s “two stories” thesis is “a legacy of positivist conceptions of explanation” (Wendt, 1991: 391).

The explanatory/constitutive divide is linked to the rationalist/reflectivist dichotomy by a number of authors (Adler, 1997; Laffey and Weldes, 1997; S. Smith, 1996; Wendt, 1999). The division of the discipline into rationalist and reflectivist camps is generally attributed to Robert Keohane (Keohane, 1989), although in recent years it has played less of a role, with many within the discipline preferring to talk of a rationalist/constructivist divide. The original distinction was specifically formulated by Keohane to capture the difference between two approaches to international institutions, but the terms have rapidly come to signify two radically opposed approaches to the study of IR itself (Keohane, 1989; S. Smith, 1996; Wendt, 1992). According to Keohane, rationalists are theorists who accept what he calls a “substantive” conception of rationality. By this he means that behavior can be considered rational insofar as it can be adjudged objectively to be optimally adapted to the situation (Keohane, 1989: 160). Reflectivists, on the other hand, take a “sociological approach to the study of institutions” and stress the “role of impersonal social forces as well as the impact of cultural practices, norms, and values that are not derived from a calculation of interests” (Keohane, 1989: 160). Reflectivists emphasize “the importance of “inter-subjective meanings” of international institutional activity” (Keohane, 1989: 161).

As formulated, this is an ontological difference, not an epistemological or methodological one. Keohane claims that the study of international politics will require both approaches if empirical research is not to suffer (Keohane, 1989: 161). Keohane’s rationalist/reflectivist distinction can be understood as one in which rationalists focus their attention on how institutions function, whereas reflectivists are more interested in how institutions come into existence, how they are maintained, and how they vary across cultural and historical contexts (Keohane, 1989: 170). According to the reflectivist critique, rationalist theories are said to be one-dimensional, static, universalistic, ahistorical,

and decontextualized (Keohane, 1989: 170–3). Keohane acknowledges all of these limitations, yet argues against a wholesale rejection of rationalist approaches in favor of a broadening of the research agenda to incorporate reflectivist perspectives (Keohane, 1989: 171).

Whereas Keohane originally based the distinction between rationalist and reflectivist approaches on ontological grounds and accepted the need to broaden the ontological horizon of investigation, the reflectivist reaction to it is based upon the epistemological criteria that Keohane sees as nonnegotiable (Keohane, 1989: 174; Katzenstein et al., 1998). That the reflectivist reaction to Keohane's position has been primarily based upon epistemological issues demonstrates the depth of the science/antiscience split within the discipline. Moreover, the fact that the vast majority (if not all) of so-called reflectivists within the discipline do indeed supply empirical support for their claims throws yet more doubt on the validity of this particular cleavage (Campbell, 2001; Wendt, 1999: 67, 2000: 173). If the distinction between a rationalist and a reflectivist is made on these epistemological grounds alone, then there are simply no practicing reflectivists in IR today. Even the severest critics of Keohane's epistemological concerns enlist empirical support for their arguments (Ashley, 1987, 1989; Ashley and Walker, 1990; Campbell, 1998b, 2001; George, 1994; Smith, 1997; Walker, 1993).

There is one final dichotomy that demonstrates the inability of this crude framework to support the weight it is being asked to bear. This is the material/ideational split. There is little constructive to be said about the way the discipline currently frames this issue. From a philosophy of social science perspective, it makes little sense. Rationalists, explainers, and positivists are said to concentrate on material factors; reflectivists, understanders, constructivists, and post-positivists are said to focus on ideational factors (Laffey and Weldes, 1997; Ruggie, 1998; S. Smith, 1996, 2000; Wendt, 1995, 1999, 2000).

This issue again is derivative of the science/antiscience split. But there is simply no philosophy of science position that can legitimate this split. Positivists of all sorts of persuasion can legitimate analysis of ideational factors; it is how they treat them that matters (Haas, 1991: 190; Laffey and Weldes, 1997). Likewise, non-positivist philosophies of science and social science can privilege material factors (Marx, 1966). Of course, different theorists can focus their attention on these factors to varying degrees, but even in these instances this would be an ontological choice related to the object of inquiry, not one derived from an a priori commitment to some mythical epistemological position. If the difference between rationalists and reflectivists, or positivists and post-positivists, or even constructivists and rationalists, is based on the material versus ideational issue, then Keohane, given his claim that "institutions can be defined in terms of their rules," is not a rationalist or a positivist (Keohane, 1989: 163).

There may, of course, be coherent ways in which these two claims can be reconciled, but this would require much greater conceptual clarity. Moreover, despite the commitment to objects external to thought, Campbell is still essentially advocating a form of philosophical idealism in tying the existence of those objects to discourses – without humans, no discourses; without discourses, no objects – in a sense, a version of positivism. To say more on the material/ideational issue within IR would confer on it a legitimacy that it clearly does not deserve. It does, however, demonstrate how the current way of framing the issues throws up such absurdities.

There have, however, been emerging signs of a more nuanced treatment of many of the issues. For some, the age of "isms" seems to be over, if indeed it ever was a defining feature of the discipline (Reus-Smit and Snidal, 2008). While it is certainly the case that explicit debate about the relative merits of differing approaches no longer seems to dominate theoretical discussion, this does not

mean that the divisions and cleavages have dissipated. In fact, theoretical fragmentation now seems deeply embedded within the field, and explicit attempts to build research programs across theoretical approaches are limited. The positivist mainstream approach largely located in the United States still dominates many of the major journals. Underpinning this approach is an almost universal acceptance of a Lakatosian framework (Elman and Elman, 2002; King, Keohane, and Verba, 1994). A notable exception to this is Chernoff, who has vigorously advanced conventionalism as an alternative underpinning for contemporary positivism (Chernoff, 2006, 2009b).

Scientific realism still remains an important alternative to positivism that generates considerable attention, but it is still not clear how this approach fundamentally changes the nature of research practice. However, the scientific realists have made a strong case for placing ontology at the forefront of research, and this does seem to be a general trend replicated across the social sciences more generally (Glynos and Howarth, 2007; De Landa, 2006; Wight, 2006; Jackson, 2010). Yet this appeal to ontology has not gone unchallenged, and the positivist mainstream still remains generally skeptical of ontological discussion of any kind, viewing it largely an issue of metaphysics, not science (Chernoff, 2009a).

Yet the scientific realist claim that researchers should treat their theoretical posits as “real” has been rejected by many. Various forms of pragmatism have been articulated which attempt to sidestep altogether the issues of whether theoretical terms actually refer to anything real. According to the pragmatists, the discipline should eschew the epistemological angst that seems to have characterized this field since the post-positivist turn and orient itself towards the study of “practices and problematic situations” (Bauer and Brigi, 2007; 2). This has led to something of a practice turn in IR (Adler and Pouliot, forthcoming), which links to the “relationalism” advocated by Jackson and

Nexon (1999). At the heart of all these new approaches is an explicit commitment to generate cross-theoretical conversations in an attempt to deal with the fragmentation that seems to have infected the discipline since the post-positivist turn.

An alternative view, however, has been advanced by Monteiro and Ruby (2009), who suggest that the philosophy of social science and the philosophy of science in IR have had a negative impact on the development of the discipline and that the attempt to ground the discipline in secure foundations is a mistake. In many respects, Monteiro and Ruby ultimately end up endorsing a form of pragmatism, so despite their critique of the philosophy of science, it plays a role nonetheless. Their piece led to the publication of a forum in the same journal debating the question “Who needs the philosophy of science anyway” (International Theory, 2009). Despite the many differences among them, the contributors to the forum all essentially agree that despite the many problems that have emerged in debates surrounding the philosophy of science, it is an indispensable aspect of what the discipline does. One of the contributors to the forum, Patrick Jackson, has published a sophisticated account that attempts to map a new framework for understanding the cleavages surrounding this issue (Jackson, 2010).

CONCLUSION

Mervyn Frost once declared IR the “backward discipline” (Frost, 1986). It was “backward,” he argued, due to a lack of self-conscious reflection concerning its analytical and research endeavors (Frost, 1986: 39). On these grounds, IR can hardly be considered “backward” today. However, it would be a mistake to consider that self-reflection necessarily constitutes progress. It may be that Holsti’s characterization of the discipline as “dividing” is a more accurate description (Holsti, 1985). And even then there is the difficult question of where the dividing lines

are and whether division is something the discipline desires? When positivism dominated the philosophy of science, the choice for the discipline was simple, but stark. Either science, or not science; which effectively translated into “positivism or perish.” When the positivist orthodoxy began to crumble, hopes were high for a more pluralistic IR: one less grounded in austere visions of a deterministic science and one much more amenable to the introduction of alternative patterns of thought. Is this where we are today?

Unfortunately not. Unable to shake the positivist orthodoxy because it never really understood it, the discipline simply poured the newly emerging patterns of thought into the old framework. But, as any mathematician could testify, a “thousand theoretical flowers” into two will not go, and hence the current framework bursts at the seams. Simply adding a new “middle ground” category does not help and nor does subsuming a range of differing categories under one label. And so the current framework “disciplines” and demands that one declares one’s allegiance. Once declared, one’s analytical frame of reference is specified and one’s identity firmly fixed. As a rationalist, you *will* privilege material factors, causation, and science; as a postpositivist/reflectivist, you *will* privilege ideational factors, deny causation, and are anti-science. Any attempt to challenge this categorization is tamed and forced into one or other extreme. This is exactly the reaction from both sides of the divide to Wendt’s attempt to occupy the middle ground. The idea that one has to declare which tribe one belongs to and that this determines one’s ontological frame of reference, epistemology, and appropriate methods seems a bizarre way for a discipline to proceed. However, some within the discipline have begun to question the validity of the framework itself (Ashley, 1996; Patomäki and Wight, 2000; Sørensen, 1998; Wæver, 1996).

These objections notwithstanding, and given the long history of the discipline’s attachment to this framework, its rejection looks unlikely. Part of the explanation for

this deeply embedded attachment is surely a form of disciplinary identity politics that stakes out borders which only the foolhardy might violate (Campbell, 1998a, 2001). After all, without borders what would the border police do? If this is the result of the philosophy of social science in IR, then perhaps the discipline can do without it. But such an assessment would miss the point. The philosophy of social science is not something the discipline can use or discard in that manner. The subject we study is not wholly empirical, hence philosophy constitutes part of what we study, part of what we are, and helps inform what we do. In this case, perhaps the best we can hope for is that we can do it better. In the final analysis, it is worth keeping in mind that meta-theoretical debate on the issues I have covered in this chapter tend to be much more tribalistic in language than in practice. When it comes to concrete empirical research, it is doubtful if anyone could consistently occupy any one of the positions and still maintain coherence. Hopefully, the following chapters in this volume will demonstrate the veracity of this claim.

NOTES

1 Throughout this chapter, the abbreviation IR refers to the institutionalized academic discipline of international relations.

2 The problem of “naturalism” is concerned with the extent to which society can be studied in the same way as nature (Bhaskar, 1979: 1).

3 Again, subsumed under this question are a range of issues relating to the nature of the entities; for example, what is a “person”; the collective action problem; the nature of social structures, and so on.

4 Although this debate was labeled the agent–structure debate, it has been argued that this was simply a different terminology for what used to be called the individual/society problem, or the macro/micro problem. However, although these problems are related, there are good grounds for considering them as distinct problems (see Layder, 1994).

5 Figure 2.1 is said to represent four possible positions that can be taken when the problem of naturalism is combined with the agent–structure problem. The top left box, where explanation meets

structure, can be understood as a scientific approach to social study that concentrates its attention on structural forces. The bottom left box (explanation and agents) represents a scientific approach focusing on agents. The boxes on the right-hand side of the diagram represent a nonscientific approach to social study (hermeneutics perhaps), which, of course, can either focus on structural factors (top right) or agential ones (bottom right).

6 Positivism as a philosophy of science. There are many versions of positivism and much that divides those who claim to be positivists. However, these caveats aside, positivism can be characterized in the following manner.

(i) Phenomenalism: the doctrine that holds that we cannot get beyond the way things appear to us and thereby obtain reliable knowledge of reality – in other words, appearances, not realities, are the only objects of knowledge.

(ii) Nominalism: the doctrine that there is no objective meaning to the words we use – words and concepts do not pick out any actual objects or universal aspects of reality, they are simply conventional symbols or names that we happen to use for our own convenience.

(iii) Cognitivism: the doctrine that holds that no cognitive value can be ascribed to value judgments and normative statements.

(iv) Naturalism: the belief that there is an essential unity of scientific method such that the social sciences can be studied in the same manner as natural science (see Kolakowski, 1969). From these philosophical assumptions, most positivists adhere to the following beliefs about the practice of science: (1) The acceptance of the “covering law” model of explanation (often referred to as the D–N model). (2) An instrumentalist treatment of theoretical terms. Theoretical terms do not refer to real entities, but such entities are to be understood “as if” they existed in order to explain the phenomena. (3) A commitment to the Humean account of cause. To say that event *a* necessitated event *b* need say no more than when *a* occurred, so did *b*. This leads to causal laws being interpreted as “constant conjunctions.” (4) A commitment to operationalism, which entails that the concepts of science be operationalized – that they be defined by, and their meaning limited to, the concrete operations used in their measurement.

7 My analysis is an Anglo-American perspective on the issues, and it might be argued that Continental European IR would address the issues in a different manner. However, many of the antiscience positions that I address in this chapter take their inspiration from German idealism, and in this respect, one could argue that the underlying issues are the same even if

the terms of debate might differ (see Jørgenson, 2000).

8 It is important to maintain the distinctions between ontology, epistemology, and methodology. *Ontology*, in the philosophy of science and the philosophy of social science, is used to refer to the set of things whose existence is claimed, or acknowledged, by a particular theory or system of thought: it is in this sense that one speaks of “the ontology of a theory.” The term *epistemology* comes from the Greek word *epistēmē*, meaning knowledge. In simple terms, epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge or of how we come to know. *Methodology* is also concerned with how we come to know, but is much more practical in nature. Methodology is focused on the specific ways – the methods – that we can use to try to understand our world better. Epistemology and methodology are intimately related: the former involves the *philosophy* of how we come to know the world and the latter involves the *practice*.

9 Logical positivism was a school of philosophy founded in Vienna during the 1920s by a group of scientists, mathematicians, and philosophers known as the Vienna Circle. The logical positivists made a concerted effort to clarify the language of science by showing that the content of scientific theories could be reduced to truths of logic and mathematics coupled with propositions referring to sense experience. Members of the group shared a distaste for metaphysical speculation and considered metaphysical claims about reality to be meaningless. For the logical positivists, only two forms of knowledge were valid: that based on reason and that based on experience.

10 There is no easy definition of scientific realism. However, within the philosophy of science, scientific realism has been the dominant alternative to positivism. Scientific realism rejects the tenets of positivism outlined in notes 7 and 12. They claim that explanation in both the natural and social sciences should entail going beyond simply demonstrating that phenomena are instances of some observed regularity, and uncovering the underlying and often-invisible mechanisms that causally connect them. Frequently, this means postulating the existence of unobservable phenomena and processes that are unfamiliar to us. Realists believe that only by doing this will it be possible to get beyond the mere “appearance” of things to deeper forms of explanation.

11 Understanding why positivism came to be referred to as an epistemology is a simple task once one understands the manner in which logical positivism claimed only scientific knowledge could be considered real knowledge (a position few positivists would hold today; Nicholson, 1996a).

12 Empiricism is the philosophical belief that all knowledge is ultimately based on experience, that is, information received through the senses. It is opposed

to rationalism and denies that we have any a priori knowledge or innate ideas: we owe all our concepts to experience of the world. Rationalism is the opposite epistemological position that claims that reason rather than sense-experience is the foundation of certainty in knowledge (Aune, 1970).

13 See King et al., 1994, Nicholson, 1996a, and Patomäki, 1996 for alternative discussions of cause; see also Deutsch, 1966.

14 Waltz's acceptance that the social world is socially constructed problematizes the use of the label "constructivist" to indicate that those falling under the label share at least one thing in common: the idea that the social world is socially constructed; if this is the key factor, then Waltz is also a constructivist, a conclusion few constructivists would be willing to accept.

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Ethics and Norms in International Relations

Andrew Hurrell and Terry Macdonald

One can approach the subject of norms and ethics in international relations (IR) from three distinct perspectives: the first considers the role that normative ideas play in the practice of politics (how have ideas about what should be done influenced political behaviour?); the second seeks to engage in rational moral debate as to the nature of ethical conduct (what ought we to do?); and the third examines the extent to which moral behaviour is influenced, both positively and negatively, by the changing dynamics of international and global politics (given the evolving realities of political life, what can we do?).

This chapter examines all three of these questions and the links between them. In doing so, it seeks to draw on some of the most important developments that have taken place within both IR and political theory. Research and writing on ethics and world politics has increased exponentially (for an overview, see Bell, 2010). There has been an ever-greater emphasis on questions of global justice within both political theory (see Dryzek, Honig, and Phillips, 2006) and political philosophy. Within IR, work on

norms and values, on the role of argument and deliberation, and on the evolving normative structure of international society has continued apace. Some have suggested that contention over the relationship between the empirical and the normative represents one of the principal axes of diversity within IR (Reus-Smit and Snidal, 2008).

This chapter concentrates on the links between normative theory on the one hand and the historically created normative practices embedded within the institutions of international and global society on the other. For all the norm-talk inspired by constructivist scholarship and for all the books and articles on global justice, the nature and character of 'normative theory' remains somewhat elusive. The first task is therefore one of clarification.

The chapter is divided into four parts. The first section examines the different ways in which normative theorists and IR scholars have engaged with the study of ethics and norms in world politics and the broad move from limited contact and separation to shared concern and common, but often parallel and somewhat distanced, endeavour; The

second section focuses on the political theory side of the story. It asks three questions: First, what is 'normative' theory? What is its purpose, and what kind of knowledge about IR does it attempt to generate? Second, what are some of the key issues and arguments that have been developed by normative theorists of IR in recent years? And third, what have been the main methodologies employed in developing these normative theories, and what are their limitations? The third section begins with those arguments in IR that stress the real but heavily constrained place of ethical issues in international politics. It then examines how normative structures have evolved and how focusing on normative structures help us to understand better the nature and meaning of specific rules, how they affect behaviour, and how they change through time.

In the fourth section, we examine two specific issues: normative responses to the dense but pluralist character of contemporary global institutions; and normative responses to the abuse of political power. The goal is to illustrate how the agenda of global justice is evolving; how that agenda is closely tied to particular readings of the post-Cold War character of international society; and how a common concern with global political justice illustrates how normative theory can connect productively with some of the traditional core concerns of IR.

INTERNATIONAL NORMATIVE THEORY IN CONTEXT

John Rawls's famous claim that 'Justice is the first virtue of social institutions' has, when applied to IR, long faced the realist rejoinder that international life has never had very much to do with the pursuit of virtue or of justice (Rawls, 1999b: 3). As Robert Gilpin put it, '[A]narchy is the rule; order, justice, and morality are the exceptions' (Gilpin, 1986: 304). As it developed within both Western practice and Western academia, IR was often built on the assumption that the

'international' constituted a distinctive domain of social life and that there was a deep and permanent separation between domestic 'order' and international 'anarchy'. Within domestic society it might be possible to envisage politics as concerned with institutionalized order and with notions of justice or the 'good life'; outside there was only the never-ending story of the reproduction and recurrence of conflict.

On some accounts, this view derived from a secular view of an egotistical and power-seeking human nature (Morgenthau); sometimes from a religious view of 'fallen man' (Wight); and sometimes from a view about the nature of group psychology and politics (Niebuhr). In a more recent academic vein, it is held to rest upon the inescapable imperatives for expansion that come from the international system. In other cases, the focus was on norms rather than on material structures. For Raymond Aron, for example, it was the legality and legitimacy of armed force that constituted the crucial distinguishing feature of IR. 'Dans les civilisations supérieures, ces relations me paraissent les seules, parmi toutes les relations sociales, qui admettent le caractère normale de la violence' (Aron, 2006: 858).

As the academic study of IR developed, it became therefore common to stress the uniqueness of the international (Schmidt, 1998; Bull, 1977, new ed., 2012). This view was often reinforced by a particular understanding of the 'political': the idea that political conflict is ubiquitous and perennial, and that antagonism is constitutive of human societies. Such a view may apply to all aspects of political life. Or it might apply with particular force to international life because of the especially difficult political problems created by the multiplicity of separate political groupings; by the immense value diversity across the global system; and by persistent inequality driven by historically deeply embedded patterns of uneven development.

Distinctiveness was also read into the history of ideas. For Wight, 'international theory' differed fundamentally from 'political theory'; it lacked a rich classical

tradition of its own (Wight, 1966). For many of the great figures of the Western canon such as Hobbes, Rousseau, or Marx, one had to piece together their often scattered and cursory thoughts on IR or to look to lesser figures and to the ideas of practitioners of war, law, and diplomacy. In addition, the gap between the empirical and the normative increased as IR became an ever-more professionalized field concerned above all with the positive explanation of political phenomena.

Yet the view of international life as a morality-free zone driven and dominated by material interests and material power and the notion of an absolute or clear-cut separation of empirical and normative enquiry came under increasing challenge. In the first place, and as we shall see below, a power-political view of international life certainly does not mean that norms play no role in international political life (Beitz, 1979; Bull, 1977/2012; Hurrell, 2007).

Second, the idea of a radical division between domestic political theory and international political theory has been undermined by developments in the history of political thought. On one side, much work has stressed the linkages between the international and the domestic, for example, concerning the role of empire and extra-European conquest in the development of 17th century Western views of property, social order, and political rule (see in particular Tuck, 1999; Hont, 1994; Rothschild, 1995; Pagden, 1995). On the other side, as Linklater (1998), Brown (1992), Rengger (2000), Walker (1992), Boucher (1997, 1998, 2009), and others have argued, if we shift the focus of the questions asked and if we alter the way in which we conceive of the divide between the domestic and the international, then we get a rather different set of historical debates and traditions (Mapel and Nardin, 1992, 1998). A concern with the nature and extent of community, for example, places the moral basis of the state in question and opens up a fundamental division between cosmopolitan and communitarian answers to normative

issues (Brown, 1992; Frost, 1996; Walker, 1999).

Third, the revived interest in normative inquiry also followed from broader doubts as to the possibility of a purely positivist political science: the idea that the observable regularities in the social world can be analysed with the same methods that have proven successful in analysing the natural world and that social interaction is governed by objective forces the causal workings of which can be formulated in terms of general laws which hold independent of human subjectivity. In part, this reflected the power of Robert Cox's simple but powerful statement that 'Theory is always *for* someone and *for* some purpose' (Cox, 1986: 207), and his influential development of the distinction between critical theory and problem-solving theory. In part, it has followed from the growth of constructivism: the view that international norms are constitutive as well as regulative; the claim that norms, rules, and institutions create meanings and enable or make possible different forms of social action; and the idea that many of the most important features of international politics are produced and reproduced in the concrete practices of social actors. In part, it followed from the attacks made by a wide range of critical and postmodern theorists on positivism.

In the case of political theory, the move is also one of from relative neglect to ever-increasing concern. Here, the neglect of the international derived from the natural concern among political theorists with domestic society. But we should also note the view in the English-speaking world in the 1950s that political theory itself was 'dead' (Laslett, 1956), partly because of the achievements of explanatory social science and partly under the influence of logical positivism and the view that ethical statements had no truth value. By the early 1970s, this situation had reversed itself with what David Miller characterised as the 'resurgence of political theory' (Miller, 1990: especially 427–434); and, in particular, with the torrent of work

that followed from the publication of John Rawls *Theory of Justice* in 1971.

But engagement was also forced upon political theorists by the intensity and complexity of the moral dilemmas of world politics. This had, of course, been true of the Cold War period, which saw major work on just war (Walzer, 1977), on the ethics of nuclear deterrence, and, for a rather brief moment in the 1970s, on distributive justice (for example Singer, 1972). But the inevitability of engagement grew stronger in the post-Cold War world as a result, for example, of the frequency of ethnic and nationalist conflict; the so-called 'new interventionism', the increased activism of the United Nations, especially in the areas of human rights and humanitarian intervention. Yet lurking behind these specific examples has been a more general and potentially important shift. For many theorists (and for much political and public opinion), increased economic interdependence, an increasingly dense and activist transnational civil society, and an expansion in the number and scope of international institutions have shifted understandings of global justice. They have necessarily altered the scope and circumstances of justice. Integration and globalization had undermined the boundedness of political communities whose particular cultures, traditions, and ways of living are given so much weight by communitarians. For many, they have given a new reality to the sense of sharing a single world and to the nature of plurality, connection, and finitude (O'Neill, 1996: chapter 4).

Finally, the division between explanatory social science and normative theory was also coming under attack from the side of political theory. Charles Taylor provides an emblematic example, in his call for an interpretivist or hermeneutic approach to all social theory and his argument that positivism neglects the way in which all political behaviour has to be interpreted by human agents in the light of both their own self-understandings and of shared intersubjective meanings (Taylor, 1985).

THE EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORMATIVE THEORY

What is normative theory and what kind of knowledge does it generate?

In very broad terms, 'normative' theories in international relations are concerned with answering questions about *what we should do* in global political life: what ends we should pursue, what rules we should obey, and what institutions we should build and support. In Kantian terms, normative theorising involves the use of 'practical reason' (reasoning about what action one should take), as distinct from the 'theoretical reason' (reasoning about matters of fact) that underpins scientific inquiry.

As noted above, it has been conventional in social-scientific research to suppose that while the practical goals and values of political actors may play a role in setting research agendas, these purposes can be set aside once the research question has been posed. In contrast, the political goals and values of the researcher (and her broader political community) constitute the central topic of normative inquiry. The purpose of normative theory is to establish what values, goals, and reasons for action the researcher – or rather the political community to which her arguments are addressed – ought to embrace and to realise through concerted political action.

This characterisation appears at one level to be very straightforward: notions of 'should' and 'reasons' are familiar and readily intelligible to all agents accustomed to undertaking intentional action in the world. The nature of this subject matter can appear more elusive, however, if we try to probe for a deeper understanding of what kind of properties normative concepts describe, and how we can come to have knowledge of them. There has been a great deal of debate within the philosophical field of 'meta-ethics' about what kind of properties are described with normative notions of 'ought' and 'right' and 'good' and so on, and accordingly what it is

that we are doing exactly when we reason about what we should do. Some of these philosophical questions are metaphysical in nature: are normative properties the kinds of things that ‘exist’ in the natural world, and if so do they exist independently of human judgement? A related set of questions considers the character of normative claims and arguments: are normative claims ‘truth-apt’ – that is, can they be true or false, or are they expressions of feeling or disposition or commitment that count as neither true nor false propositions? Following from these sorts of questions are epistemological questions about what it can mean to have ‘knowledge’ of normative properties or imperatives, and through what natural faculties or processes of inquiry we can come to have such knowledge (For a good introduction to these debates see Miller, 2003).

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to survey or assess these complex philosophical debates. For the most part, normative political theorists have tended to bracket these deeper philosophical problems wherever possible, and proceed instead on the basis that it is possible to develop practical answers to practical questions (about what we should do) by building on the intuitive and politically articulated understandings of values and reasons for action that we already possess. As John Rawls has famously put it, the goal has been to develop normative theory that is ‘political not metaphysical’ in character (Rawls, 1996).

Normative theory-building often begins then with what we might call ‘first-order’ or ‘policy’ questions – about what specific actions ought to be taken in a particular political decision-making context. For example: is a state justified in waging a war against another under a particular set of circumstances, and if so what strategies of warfare is it permitted to employ to increase its chances of victory? Or what forms of assistance should citizens of rich countries give to those living in extreme poverty elsewhere in the world to help improve their lives?

Normative theory building can also sometimes begin with more abstract ‘second-order’ questions, about the character of the political values that should guide more specific instances of practical decision making. Questions of this kind ask what it is that makes particular political actions or institutions ‘good’ or ‘right’ or at least comparatively ‘better’ than alternatives – that is, broadly speaking ‘justified’. Answering these questions involves articulating the content of certain political values or standards – such as ‘equality’, ‘freedom’, ‘justice’, ‘democracy’, ‘toleration’, ‘human rights’, ‘self-determination’, and so on – and explaining what these values consist in, what is appealing about them, and what would be entailed in realising them in global political life. John Rawls has argued that the general approach to normative theory building should be to move back and forth between these two levels of reflection – reflection on what should be done in particular instances, and on what abstract values should be pursued and realised in more general terms – with the aim of reaching a harmonious rational reconciliation or ‘reflective equilibrium’ between our understandings of each (Rawls, 1999b, 1996).

What are some of the key issues and arguments addressed by normative theories in International Relations?

Within the constraints of this chapter, it is impossible for us even to survey fully let alone to elaborate the multitude of theoretical paradigms and approaches. Instead, we highlight some of the central themes that have cut across many of these debates, and that have tended to shape and structure normative analysis of many specific topics. Given the dominant focus on the paradigm of ‘justice’ within the broader field of contemporary normative political theory, these themes have usually been framed as questions about the nature and requirements of ‘global justice’ – though as we shall discuss

later, it is not always entirely clear how the concept of 'justice' relates to certain other normative concepts such as 'democracy' and 'legitimacy'.

Perhaps the most fundamental theoretical division has been between 'cosmopolitan' and 'communitarian' theories of 'global justice'. Very broadly speaking, 'cosmopolitans' claim that duties of justice are global in scope and apply among all individuals equally irrespective of nationality or citizenship (Beitz, 1999; Caney, 2005; Moellendorf, 2002; Pogge, 1989), whereas 'communitarians' claim that some or all duties of justice apply only within sovereign states (Nagel, 2005), nation-states (Miller, 1995; Miller, 2007; Walzer, 1985), or 'peoples' (Rawls, 1999a). This general divide feeds into, and is sustained by, several more specific theoretical debates, within which cosmopolitans and communitarians have tended to take different positions.

One issue on which cosmopolitans and communitarians have often been divided is the question of *interventionism*, and in particular the conditions under which powerful liberal states and institutions may be justified in violating the sovereignty of nonliberal states or societies in attempts to protect some set of individual rights. Cosmopolitan and communitarian positions on these issues are sometimes distinguished by the different views they take about the relative priority that should be accorded to the dual liberal values of individual *autonomy* and political *toleration* in the context of cultural pluralism and moral disagreement – a topic explored extensively by normative theorists in relation to domestic dilemmas about political 'multi-culturalism' within liberal states (Kymlicka, 1995). Some cosmopolitan liberals have argued that individual autonomy is the primary value and should be protected on a global basis by interventionist means where necessary (Tan, 2000; Teson, 2005; Buchanan, 2004), whereas communitarian liberals have tended to place greater priority on the value of tolerating diverse cultures and political systems, and have accordingly been more

resistant to liberal interventionism (Rawls, 1999a).

A second source of disagreement between cosmopolitans and communitarians has been the sense in which (if any) principles of global justice ought to be *egalitarian* in character. The value of equality – in particular as it is related to the distribution of social and economic goods – has been a central preoccupation of normative political theory more broadly in recent decades. Debates about global justice have reflected this preoccupation, with much analysis proceeding by taking an egalitarian theory of domestic social justice as a starting point, and considering whether the same egalitarian principles should apply on a global scale – or if not, why and how the principles should differ (Pogge, 1994; Barry and Valentini, 2009; Beitz, 2001; Miller, 2004). In general, cosmopolitans have argued that egalitarian distributive principles ought to be extended globally, whereas communitarians have claimed that egalitarian distribution of social and economic goods is only a requirement of justice within liberal-democratic nation-states – because of their egalitarian cultures, or the special character of their institutional schemes, or some such reason.

Arguments about the cultural and institutional preconditions for egalitarian justice have fed into another broader theoretical debate about whether, and if so how, duties of justice are justified in ways that makes them contingent upon facts of particular kinds about the nature of political institutions and relationships. Communitarians have been united in the view that principles of justice are contingent on social and political facts of some kind or another – whether simply facts about the norms constitutive of particular national cultures (Walzer, 1985), or alternatively facts about the kinds of institutions and special relationships that connect people into interdependent political communities of different kinds (Nagel, 2005). Cosmopolitans have taken a wider range of positions on this general issue. Some have argued that global duties of justice can be derived directly from

the intrinsic moral value of individuals and need not be seen as contingent upon any other facts about cultural norms or existing social and political institutions (O'Neill, 2000; Singer, 2002; Caney, 2005). Others have accepted that duties of justice are indeed 'practice-dependent' in important ways, but argued that the requisite factual preconditions for duties of global justice to apply are currently met (Sangiovanni, 2008; Ronzoni, 2009; Valentini, 2010). This debate about the 'practice-dependent' character of principles of justice is very significant, as it has the potential to provide terms on which some variants of communitarian and cosmopolitan arguments about global justice might be more productively reconciled.

What methodologies have been utilised in developing normative theories, and what are their limitations?

Earlier we observed that a central goal of much recent normative scholarship has been to develop theories that are 'political not metaphysical' in character – that is, to build normative theories that eschew ontological and epistemological argumentation and instead engage directly with the values and reasons deployed in real political life. A good deal of normative theory proceeds in a fairly methodologically un-self-conscious way, drawing heavily on appeal to intuitions (about what is right, good, obligatory, etc.) and roughly employing the strategy of 'reflective equilibrium' described above. But some theorising supplements this kind of normative reflection and reasoning with more elaborate methodological strategies, taking one of two main forms: 'constructivist' and 'interpretive'.

'Constructivist' theories aim to provide a method of deriving normative principles for agents without resorting either to metaphysical claims about moral 'facts' (which would generate significant philosophical difficulties) or to moral relativism. Instead, constructivist theories attempt to

justify normative principles by developing a two-pronged theoretical account: first, an account of the morally salient characteristics of the agents to whom the practical principles are supposed to apply (the 'practical identities' of agents, as Korsgaard [1996] puts it); and second, an account of what principles it would be rational for agents of this kind to choose for themselves, as a means of enacting the values inherent in their identities. These methodological approaches are not incompatible with the more general strategy of 'reflective equilibrium', but rather offer "thought experiment[s] for the purpose of public- and self-clarification", as Rawls (2001: 17) puts it, through which the content of practical intuitions and abstract values can be more systematically derived and articulated.

Rawls's version of constructivism has been the most influential in the literature, and takes a couple of different forms, each of which has its defenders and its critics. In his earlier work, Rawls developed an individualist constructivist argument for liberal justice based on the principles that a set of individuals with the identities of democratic citizens would choose if they were 'rational' (assuming interests in a given set of rights, liberties, social opportunities, and material goods, and knowledge of basic facts about their society such as resource scarcity, limited altruism, and pluralism in individuals' talents, tastes, and values) and also 'reasonable' (as concerned about the interests of all other individuals as their own interests, as modelled through the choice situation of the 'original position'). (Rawls, 1999b; Rawls, 1996) Some philosophers have argued that this individualistic construction can be extended globally, to vindicate a *cosmopolitan* liberal account of global justice (Kuper, 2000; Buchanan, 2000). In his later writing on the 'Law of Peoples', however, Rawls rejected this cosmopolitan extension of his theory (Rawls, 1999a). Instead, he articulated a constructivist justification for a separate set of norms to regulate international society, based on the principles

that agents with the practical identities of 'peoples' (essentially, idealised nation-states) would choose for themselves if they were rational and reasonable. Rawls's constructivist strategy and argument has been challenged from many directions, including by writers employing alternative versions of constructivist methodology. Perhaps most notably among the latter group, Onora O'Neill has defended a constructivist theory of cosmopolitan global justice based on a 'thinner' account of individual identity derived from an interpretation of Kant's moral philosophy – assuming not the specific interests and values of democratic citizens, but only limited rationality and some capacities for interdependence with others in social life – that she claims vindicates commitment to certain universal normative principles which diverge from those incorporated within Rawlsian international theory (O'Neill, 2000).

Interpretive approaches share with constructivism the ambition to elaborate normative standards that neither appeal to metaphysical arguments about moral 'facts', nor submit to moral relativism. Instead of arguing that particular principles are normative because particular actors have *reason* to accept them as such, however, interpretive arguments present principles as normative when it can be demonstrated that communities (national or global) already *do* so endorse them, as articulated publicly in the moral, political, and legal discourses and practices of their societies and as embedded also in the intuitive judgements of their members. The interpretive method for normative theory building thus combines various forms of discourse analysis (of legal rules, justificatory arguments offered publicly by political actors, and so on), with direct appeal to the intuitive normative commitments of the members of the relevant political community (the intended audience of the normative theory) which are developed through participation in the relevant practices. Michael Walzer has elaborated and defended a prominent version of this interpretive approach,

and applied it to develop substantive normative theories of justice and just war (Walzer, 1985, 1992, 1994). Others who have employed different versions of the interpretive method have included Mervyn Frost in his various writings on international ethics (Frost, 1986, 2002), and Charles Beitz in his recent theoretical account of human rights (Beitz, 2009).

Interpretive approaches can be very helpful for certain theoretical purposes – in particular for resolving normative dilemmas faced by political actors or their communities, by clarifying and giving a coherent account of the various values and principles that sit in sometimes ambiguous relationships within a wider normative discourse to which they are committed (such as discourses around ideas of 'liberalism' or 'sovereignty' or 'justice'). Interpretive approaches face greater problems, however, with the task of justifying particular principles to those within or outside of particular political communities who may challenge and reject them. In simple terms, while interpretation is helpful in resolving normative *dilemmas* faced within unified political communities, it is not so helpful in resolving normative *disputes* between different individuals or groups who simply disagree about what should be done. This is so since merely interpreting the meanings of goods and principles inherent in a particular set of normative discourses does not explain to a sceptic why these should be accepted and supported, if there appear to be good critical reasons to reject them. This arguably means that the method of interpretation must be supplemented with justificatory reasoning of other kinds, to the extent that we expect our normative theories to be able to serve the purpose of helping to adjudicate and resolve normative disputes.

These other forms of justificatory reasoning may adopt a constructivist or some other methodological strategy; but insofar as the arguments take the general form of explaining to political agents what they have most compelling reason to do, then they must confront some more general methodological

difficulties. These difficulties are sometimes characterised as debates about the meaning and utility of ‘ideal’ versus ‘non-ideal’ forms of normative theorising (Stemplowska and Swift, 2012), and sometimes as debates about the precise sense in which normative theory should be understood to be ‘political’ in nature.

One simple view about the purpose of normative theory is that it is supposed to articulate ideals of goodness or rightness that can be used to *evaluate* political actions and institutions, working on the assumption that actions and institutions are better justified the closer they get to embodying or realising these ideals. The problem with this, however, is that there are many different dimensions in which real political conduct and institutions can deviate from an ideal, and a normative theory that merely tells us what perfect goodness or rightness or justice consists in does not tell us what kind of proximity or distance from the ideal should be more highly valued, and relatedly, how we should compare the non-ideal alternatives likely to be present on real political agendas (Sen, 2009). Is it better to get closer to the ideal in the present at the cost of undermining our prospects for reaching it in the longer term, or to move further away from it now in order to take a more effective transformative pathway towards its longer-term realisation? (Simmons, 2010)

A second set of general methodological problems concerns the issue of *fact sensitivity* in normative reasoning – that is, whether and how justified answers to the question of what we should do must take into account particular categories of political *facts*. The basic problem here is, does ‘ought’ imply ‘can’? If so, what kinds of empirical constraints or obstacles should count to obviate or alter the content of an ‘ought’? And conversely, what are the kinds of hurdles than the imperative force of an ‘ought’ precisely requires agents concertedly to overcome? Facts that may plausibly have some bearing on normative principles that can include some that may be stable across different contexts (such as facts about human psychology,

physical needs and capacities, and so on), as well as others that may be highly contextually variable and contingent on a range of historical, cultural, institutional, environmental, and other factors (such as facts about resource scarcity, technological capacity, social institutions, and so on).

This general issue raises some more specific dilemmas, which are touched upon in Rawls’s analysis of the distinction between ‘ideal’ and ‘non-ideal’ theory. One dilemma involves the question of *time frames*, since the range of obstacles that it will be possible for an agent to overcome will vary depending on the time frame over which the ‘ought’ is supposed to operate: the shorter the time frame, the more it seems reasonable to take account of contextually contingent constraints, whereas over longer time frames it might be possible to make progress towards more ‘idealised’ normative standards. Others have argued that normative theory should be able to guide our decision making ‘in the here and now’, and this expectation lends support to a stronger responsiveness of normative principles to existing political constraints (For a discussion see Stemplowska, 2008).

A further and very significant dilemma of this general kind involves the question of facts about actors’ motivations, and in particular the conditions under which they will be *motivated* to act morally, to obey social rules, and to lend their support to public institutions. This set of facts is central to Rawls’s distinction between ideal and non-ideal theory: the main feature of his ‘ideal’ theory of justice is the assumption – in the reasoning process through which principles of justice are derived and justified – that all members of society will be motivated to comply with just principles even when their own self-interest may give them reason to act otherwise. This ‘ideal-theoretical’ strategy of building a false assumption of this kind into the justification of normative principles has been criticised by several writers, who argue that it makes the theory utopian and of little utility as a basis for real-world policy and

institutional design (Farrelly, 2007). The broader question of what bearing questions of 'desire' or 'motivation' ought to have on normative reasoning has played a part also in broader philosophical debates, at the intersection of moral philosophy and the philosophy of action, about what Korsgaard has called the problem of 'normativity'. (Korsgaard, 1996).

This set of methodological debates about the justificatory significance of different kinds of facts points to deeper philosophical ambiguities, especially as to whether or to what extent normative justifications may draw upon *non-moral* reasons of various kinds – in particular, reasons that are *self-interested* or *prudential* (for some individual, individuals, or group). The generic normative concepts of 'should' and 'ought' have been closely associated with ideas of 'morality', and treated as though the question of what we *should* do is equivalent or reducible to the question of what it is *morally 'right'* or '*good*' to do. Ideas of moral 'right' and 'good' are commonly characterised as embodying distinctive categories of reasons for action – as reasons that adopt an 'impartial' or 'collective' point of view, for instance, as distinguished from reasons applying from some kind of 'egoistic' or 'self-interested' perspective. This has meant that normative political theory (including normative international theory) has been widely approached as a branch of applied moral philosophy, from which wholly self-interested forms of reasoning and justification are to be excluded.

As we shall discuss later in this chapter, however, there is arguably a strong case for approaching the task of normative theory more broadly than this, to incorporate more adequately certain kinds of non-moral reasons that political actors may have for action. This is so since even if we are to accept that a particular action is morally right or good, a complete justification for a particular course of action must provide further reasons to explain why we should do the thing that is *moral*, in the event that this conflicts with the thing that serves the self-interested purpose with which moral reasons

are being contrasted. This point is especially crucial if we think that normative theories should be capable of providing us with reasons that are sufficiently compelling to *motivate real political action*. As we shall discuss later, this point has potentially significant implications for debates in IR about the nature of political and institutional *legitimacy*, and the conditions under which it might be achieved.

There has also been a tendency in much contemporary normative theorising to narrow the scope of normative theorising in a second respect – to exclude serious discussion of 'instrumental' or 'strategic' considerations that may provide reasons for or against particular forms of political action. Here, it is sometimes supposed that normative political theory (as a form of moral philosophy) should concern itself exclusively or at least primarily with identifying right or good *ends* of action, broadly construed, and that 'strategic' or 'instrumental' reasoning about the best *means* to attain these ends are better off delegated to others (perhaps to social scientists or policy-makers) likely to be better equipped than philosophers to make good strategic judgements. While it is certainly true that instrumental problems often raise complex factual and explanatory questions that specialised social scientists or practitioners will be better positioned than moral philosophers to answer, this does not mean that strategic questions should be excluded from the domain of normative theorising. Rather, it means that the strategic aspects of normative theory will need to be developed in constructive dialogue with salient fields of social-scientific research and practical political endeavour.

NORMS AND ETHICS WITHIN INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

The instrumentally driven, power-inflected, and conflictual character of global politics discussed in Section I is often viewed solely as a constraint on normative politics and on

the possibility of moral progress. But this is an incomplete picture, even of writing within the realist tradition (for the ethics of realism, see Williams, 2005; and Bell, 2009). Realist writing on global justice was often sceptical, but it was rarely wholly dismissive. The point of 'realism' was not to demonstrate the existence of all-determining laws of political life which leave no room for political and moral choice. It was rather to warn against the dangers of moral theorizing that ignored the pathologies of power characteristic of international life. Carr was clear about the need for utopian ideas and insistent that power must have a purpose: 'Most of all, consistent realism breaks down because it fails to provide any ground for purposive or meaningful action' (Carr, 2001: 86). Understanding power was necessary to puncture the illusions of liberal 'utopianism', to highlight the moral traps, blow-backs, and dirty-hands involved in the actual promotion of liberal goals, and, most importantly, to engender restraint and humility (For a recent discussion, see Price 2008).

Building upon this kind of realist caution, international society writing stressed the two sides of the problem. On the one hand, the structurally non-ideal character of international politics limits the possibility of effective moral action. Normative theorizing about the international can never take the underlying political order for granted; order must remain a primary value on which all other goals must ultimately depend; and a shared global public political culture is always likely to remain fragile. But, on the other hand, politics is not just about violence, coercion, and the clash of material power. Rather, at the heart of politics lies the need to turn the capacity for crude coercion into legitimate authority. There is always likely to be a basic requirement of legitimacy, and this will, in turn, create space for normative argument and debate. As Wight put it: 'The fundamental problem of politics is the justification of power. ... Power is not self-justifying; it must be justified by reference to some source outside or beyond itself, and thus be transformed into "authority"' (Wight, 1991: 99).

Four more specific themes of this classical view can be identified. The first theme concerns power and the conditions of order. The old-fashioned 'institutions' of international society (the balance of power, Great Power management, a pluralist international law, and war) matter because, in the first place, a breakdown of major power relations carries with it catastrophic dangers; and, in the second place, because stabilizing the power-political interests of the major players is crucial to the stability and effectiveness of the elaborate multilateral institutions needed to realize global justice. This is at the heart of what Cochran calls the 'notion of international ethics as international society management' (Cochran, 2009).

A second theme or thread concerns diversity and value conflict. One of the perennial attractions of a state-based, pluralist conception of international society is that it seems to provide one way – and perhaps the least bad way – of organizing global politics in a world where actual consensus on fundamental values is limited or where there is widespread scepticism as to how a cross-cultural morality might be grounded. If diversity and value conflict are such important features of international life, then we should seek to organize global politics in such a way as to give groups scope for collective self-government and cultural autonomy in their own affairs and to reduce the degree to which they will clash over how the world should be ordered.

A third theme emerges from the idea that moral values should, as far as is possible, be kept out of international life and particular international institutions. The realist emphasis on the idea of an objective national interest has always been easy to criticize on empirical grounds. But, like so much in the world of the so-called 'realists', it expressed a normative idea – that international life will be better, or again less bad, if states try to put aside arguments about fundamental values or deep ideological commitments and instead concentrate on bargaining over limited interests; and that it might be possible to link the

character of these interests to a shared understanding of legitimacy and legitimate foreign policy behaviour. Of course, this involves myth-making and hypocrisy, but it can also serve a purpose, including a moral purpose.

Political theorists often berate international society theorists for their lack of concern with the foundations of moral argument or their reluctance to engage with any strong conception of the good. This may be true. But the contrary position is to argue that, in political life, foundations are dangerous things. It was precisely the obsession with the 'foundations' of religious belief that made 17th century in Europe so bloody and interventionist. The Hobbesian 'solution' – so influential for international society thinking – was to look instead for the empirical conditions for agreement, a set of facts 'about what the world will call good', as Hobbes put it.

This leads to the fourth, and more positive, thread, namely, the argument that international society has the potential not just to help manage international conduct in a restrained way but also to create the conditions for a more legitimate and morally more ambitious political community to emerge: by providing a stable institutional framework within which substantive norms can be negotiated; by developing a common language in which claims and counterclaims can be made and debated with some degree of accessibility and authority; and by embedding a set of formal rules that embody at least elements of equality and at least some restraints on the power and ambitions of the strong. In addition to its functional and contractual character, this is where the international legal order enters most strongly into the normative picture – as a widely shared and historically embedded practice of normative argumentation and justification.

On this account – perhaps rather easily idealized – international law and society law can be viewed as a sociologically embedded transnational cultural practice in which claims and counterclaims can be articulated and debated and from which norms can emerge

that can have at least some determinacy and argumentative purchase. Legal, moral, and political norms, then, can play a communicative and epistemic role, shaping the conditions within which claims, including justice claims, can be made and debated. It is on these foundations that more expansive understandings of global justice might develop. International society has at least the potential not just to help manage international conduct in a restrained way but also to create the conditions for a more legitimate and morally more ambitious political community to emerge: by providing a stable institutional framework within which substantive norms can be negotiated; by developing a common language in which claims and counterclaims can be made and debated with some degree of accessibility and authority; and by embedding a set of formal rules that embody at least elements of equality and at least some restraints on the power and ambitions of the strong. This pattern of thought feeds directly into the more recent views of those who have stressed the deliberative potential of international institutions (Mitzen, 2005); the importance of argument (Risse, 2000; Müller, 2004); and the difficulty of avoiding considerations of justice and fairness in international life (Welch, 1993, Albin, 2001).

This branch of IR has brought together political theorists, analytically minded international lawyers, historical constructivists, and those working within the tradition of the English School. There are many differences and shades of opinion, but also a series of general commitments. The international system cannot be viewed solely in material terms as a decentralized, anarchic structure in which functionally undifferentiated units vary only according to the distribution of power. Central to the 'system' is a historically created, and evolving, structure of common understandings, rules, norms, and mutual expectations. The concepts of state sovereignty, international law, or war are not given by the game of power politics; rather, shared and historically grounded understandings of war or sovereignty define what the nature of

the game is and how it is to be played and, very critically, how it might change or evolve.

Material structures matter, but these material structures cannot be understood outside of the shared knowledge and shared understandings held by the actors themselves. Among these shared understandings and inter-subjective knowledge, norms and institutions play a number of fundamental roles. They may well serve as regulatory rules designed to constrain choices or as parameters within which individual agents pursue their own preferences. But the critical point is that they do far more than this. In the first place, they help explain how actors are constituted. As Wendt puts it, this is 'one of the most important things a structure can explain' (Wendt, 1999: 16). Second, they help us make sense of the identity of actors and hence of the sources of their preferences. Norms can be understood as expressions of what states are, where they belong, and of the kinds of roles they play. And third, norms do not simply constrain but also enable and empower action. In Martin Hollis's words: 'They enable not only by making collective action easier but also by creating forms of activity' (Hollis, 1991: 13).

A great deal of academic work has involved more detailed historical understanding of how the institutional structure of the classic European state system emerged and developed. Thus, the study of classical theories of international relations has grown significantly (for general studies, see Clark and Neumann, 1996; Doyle, 1998; Knutsen, 1992; and Boucher, 1998), and there have been important reassessments of the major traditions of thought in IR (Walker, 1992; Nabulsi, 1999; Dunne, 1998). Westphalia has been demythologized by Krasner (1999), Osiander (1994), and Philpott (1999). Biersteker and Weber (1996) and Bartelson (1995) have emphasized the importance of seeing state sovereignty as a social construct.

Other, related, work involves seeking to delineate and trace models of the international normative order, both in terms of the

different goals to be promoted and the different means of achieving them. Thus, Falk distinguished between Westphalian and Charter conceptions of the international legal order (Falk, 1969), a theme developed by Cassese (Cassese, 1986). Bull distinguished between 'pluralist' and 'solidarist' models of international society (Bull, 1977/2012; Alderson and Hurrell, 2000), a way of thinking developed more recently by Wheeler (Wheeler, 2000; see also Buzan, 2008). Nardin distinguished between purposive and practical associations (Nardin, 1983). Reus-Smit sought to analyse different international societies by distinguishing between issue-specific regimes, fundamental institutions, and constitutional structures (Reus-Smit, 1999). Philpott has traced the development of 'revolutions in sovereignty' (Philpott, 2000).

How we think about these changing normative structures affects our understanding of the role of norms in international life: how we interpret and understand specific rules, how they affect outcomes, and how they change through time.

What norms are

All normative analysis revolves around the two classic meanings of the term *norm*. On the one hand, norms are identified by regularities of behaviour among actors. Norms reflect actual patterns of behaviour and give rise to expectations as to what will, in fact, be done in a particular situation. On the other, norms reflect patterned behaviour of a particular kind: a prescribed pattern of behaviour which gives rise to normative expectations as to what ought to be done. Thus, regularity is combined with an internal attitude involving criticism of oneself or others on the grounds that a particular norm is being violated. Norms can therefore be defined as 'a broad class of prescriptive statements – rules, standards, principles, and so forth – both procedural and substantive' that are 'prescriptions for action in situations

of choice, carrying a sense of obligation, a sense that they *ought* to be followed' (Chayes and Chayes, 1994: 65).

Deciding which norms matter and in which circumstances will be difficult, if not impossible, without being able to systematically distinguish levels of authority or normativity among the different principles or rules within a particular regime. Equally, compliance cannot be reduced to following a static set of clear sharp-edged rules (see Chayes and Chayes, 1995; and Koh, 1997). But for the sceptic, it is the very ubiquity of norms in international life, their frequent ambiguity, and the variety of interpretations to which they may give rise that is the problem. Powerful actors can always find a norm to support their consequentially based choice. Norms are often in conflict. As Krasner puts it: 'International rules can be contradictory ... and there is no authority structure to adjudicate such controversies'. Or again: 'The international environment has been characterized by competing and often logically contradictory norms, not some single coherent set of rules' (Krasner, 1999: 6, 54). The strong can always pick and choose among existing rules or set new ones, through formal agreement or through custom – a source of international law which places disproportionate weight on the actions and arguments of powerful states (Byers, 1999).

It is important to recognise the seriousness of the problem and to avoid a stylized or idealized view of the legal order. But it is one thing to accept that indeterminacy and instability are problems but quite another to argue that anything goes. In the first place, it is in the very nature of norms that there will always be questions as to which norms are relevant and how they should be interpreted. The critical issue is the degree to which interpretation reflects shared practices. The theoretical point is well made by Kratochwil: 'As a practice, a rule not only tells me how to proceed in a situation that I have never faced before, it is also governed by certain conventions of the community of which I am

part. To this extent, my interpretations of a rule as well as my uses of words are monitored and reinforced by a group of competent speakers' (Kratochwil, 2000: 52). The institutional point is that international law is built around an interpretative community of lawyers (and others who argue in and through law) who inhabit a more or less unified conceptual universe and who share a common set of discursive practices. It is by dint of this that questions relating to the determinacy of rules or the meaning of contested concepts can be rationally debated, if never fully resolved. Second, international law has to be understood as an integrated institution and as an interconnected normative system in which historical development and the evolution of specific legal doctrines or concepts over time play a crucial role. Thus, the content of a particular norm and the degree of obligation that attaches to it is related to its place within this broader normative order. Doubtless there are many cases where competing principles animate controversy. Similarly, many rules are capable of widely differing interpretations. But the integrity of law sets limits to the range and influence of eligible principles, and to the range of legitimate interpretations (Brunée and Toope, 2010). If indeed 'organized hypocrisy' is a useful term, we still need to reflect on the crucial fact that it is just that: *organized* hypocrisy.

Something similar is true of moral and normative argument. All human societies rely on historical stories about themselves to legitimise notions of where they are and where they might be going. Over time, understandings of normative problems and categories of normative arguments become organized into intelligible patterns, traditions, or ideologies. Thus, to take the case of war: the continual involvement of individuals and societies in war and conflict, the moral and political necessity of trying to make sense of what war involves, and the limited range of plausible arguments have led over time to the creation of intelligible patterns, traditions, and ideologies. As Walzer puts it: 'Reiterated over time, our arguments and

judgements shape what I want to call *the moral reality of war* – that is, all those experiences of which moral language is descriptive or within which it is necessarily employed' (Walzer, 1977: 15).

How norms affect outcomes

For neo-realists, norms do not matter in themselves but only to the extent that they reflect, or are backed by, the power of powerful actors. For rationalist theorists within IR norms and institutions matter to the degree that they affect actor strategies (but not their underlying interests or preferences) by reducing transaction costs, by identifying focal points for coordinated behaviour, and by providing frameworks for productive issue linkage. Moving beyond rationalism, cognitive approaches highlight the role of knowledge, and especially of scientific or technical knowledge, in shifting state understandings of interest in ways that foster cooperation.

Attempts to go beyond these kinds of approaches rely on two well-established steps. The first is to challenge the rationalist account of human choice and human agency. Rationalists like to claim that they adopt an 'actor-centred' theory and that, if this is rejected, then one is necessarily committed to a view of human agents blindly following internalized norms. Thus, Elster contrasts instrumentally rational action that is hypersensitive to consequences with norms understood as internalized Kantian imperatives ('blind, compulsive, mechanical or even unconscious', Elster, 1989). Krasner distinguishes between consequential action on one hand and 'taken for granted' 'deeply-embedded' 'internalized' norms on the other. (Krasner, 1999). And Keohane has written on the differences between instrumental and normative 'optics' (Keohane, 1997).

As against this, the critics of rationalism highlight the complexity of human choice and the inevitability of deliberation, of moral conflict, and of moral purpose. As Jackson

puts it: 'People are not automated or mechanical things. People are human beings who make choices, and whose policies and actions must be justified to other people' (Jackson, 2000: 8). The critics also point to the difficulties of any clear-cut distinction between a rational logic of consequences and a norm-following logic of appropriateness. How we calculate consequences is often far from obvious and not easily separable from our understanding of legal or moral norms. At any point in time, it may indeed to be helpful to think of actors making choices between consequentialist calculations and normative appropriateness. But over time, the obviousness of certain sorts of norms (for example, against slavery or military conquest) becomes such an accepted part of the international political landscape that it becomes part of how actors routinely calculate consequences. As we have stressed in the earlier discussion of normative theory, it is important to avoid artificially stark divisions between instrumental/strategic and moral forms of reasoning and action – since real political practices of argumentation and justification and legitimation draw in both together and in complex ways.

The second well-established challenge to rationalism is to question the rationalist account of how norms are related to causality. The issues are complex and murky but the basic point is a simple one, that there are many routes to explaining social action.

Norms may 'guide' behaviour, they may 'inspire' behaviour, they may 'rationalize' or 'justify' behaviour, they may express 'mutual expectations' about behaviour, or they may be ignored. But they do not effect cause in the sense that a bullet through the heart causes death or an uncontrolled surge in the money supply causes price inflation. (Kratowil and Ruggie, 1986).

Two other points should be noted. The first relates to constitutive norms. 'Constitutive rules define the set of practices that make up any particular consciously organized social activity – that is to say, they specify *what counts* as that activity' (Ruggie, 1998: 22).

The distinction between regulatory norms and constitutive norms has a long history within philosophy and jurisprudence (Rawls, 1955; Searle, 1995), although it is by no means universally accepted (for example by Raz, 1975/1999: 108–111). Constructivist writing has laid great emphasis on the importance of constitutive rules, and the theoretical and general debate has been intense.

Second, there are many different mechanisms by which norms are diffused across the international system and internalized by actors. It is easy to suggest in broad terms that past institutional choices affect the present choice of norms and the framework within which strategic interaction takes place. But, as Krasner argues with his usual clarity of purpose, it is much harder to establish how institutions become embedded: ‘that is, dictate actual behaviour and endure over time or across different environmental conditions’ (Krasner, 1999: 226). Within the rationalist agenda, the systemic dimension is incorporated through hard notions of path dependence (and maybe also of sunk costs) that ‘lock’ actors into patterns of behaviour. Patterns are followed because the costs of divergence are high. Within a sociological account, the explanatory work will have to be done by some version of individual socialization.

Whether individual-level socialization is important is an empirical question and not one that can be settled by theoretical fiat. But, very importantly, it is by no means the only mechanism by which actors may come to ‘internalize’ norms that originate elsewhere in the system. (For a study of China that also illustrates many of the general issues involved, see Johnston, 2008). Three other mechanisms deserve brief mention. The first can be labelled *discursive enmeshment* and highlights the importance of argumentation, deliberation, and persuasion. Words are not always cheap. The reasons for making normative claims or framing interests in normative language may well be purely instrumental. Such a course of action legitimizes and makes universal claims that

would otherwise seem partial and particular. It may reflect straightforward calculations of interest. But accepting particular principles, ideas, and arguments shapes and constrains the sorts of arguments that can be made in the future and provides institutional and normative platforms for different forms of political mobilization.

A second mechanism concerns *bureaucratic enmeshment*. Individual leaders may well remain completely unsocialized into international norms. And yet they may find that external norms have been incorporated into bureaucratic structures in ways that preclude or raise the costs of certain sorts of policies. There may, for example, be very powerful situational pressures to deviate from the laws of war. Yet politicians and generals may find themselves effectively constrained by the incorporation of these rules into bureaucratic operating procedures and national military codes. Similarly, national and international bureaucratic procedures in the field of human rights (to compile reports or to attend review meetings) help explain the continuity of human rights policies despite the changing attitudes and commitment of individual leaders (Simmons, 2009). Third, there is *legal internalization*. As should by now be well known, international legal rules cannot be understood in any straightforward sense as simply ‘international’. At one level, rule-governed behaviour does reflect the dynamics of interstate politics and of interstate institutions. But that interstate dynamic is very often heavily influenced by the degree to which international rules have been incorporated into national legal systems and also by transnational groups and pressures that act across the domestic/international divide.

How norms change

Change matters. As Hollis put it: ‘Norms are no less effective for being fluid and no less real for being negotiable. Both ideally and actually the stuff which binds societies is

more like mastic than cement'. (Hollis, 1991: 13). But how are we to understand normative change? Here, great emphasis has been placed on the role of transnational civil society. Transnational civil society refers to those self-organized intermediary groups that are relatively independent of both public authorities and private economic actors; that are capable of taking collective action in pursuit of their interests or values; and that act across state borders. Their role in norm formation and norm development is important (although by no means obviously greater than, say, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries): first, in the formal process of norm creation, standard setting, and norm development; second, in the detailed functioning of many international institutions and in the processes of implementation and compliance; and third, in direct participation in many governance activities (disbursing an increasing proportion of official aid, engaging in large-scale humanitarian relief; leading efforts at promoting democracy or post-conflict social and political reconstruction). In all of these areas, the analytical focus has been on transnational networks – for example, knowledge-based networks of economists, lawyers, or scientists; or transnational advocacy networks which act as channels for flows of money and material resources but, more critically, of information, ideas, and values. (Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). This work has generated important work at the intersection of the empirical and normative, especially in terms of the potential that these trends hold out for greater deliberation (see, for example, Bohman, 2007; Macdonald, 2008).

Second, there is the inherent tendency for all normative systems (especially reasonably well-institutionalized judicial systems) to expand from within and to enmesh actors within certain patterns of discourse, reasoning, and argumentation. As Stone Sweet put it: '...norms...develop in path-dependent, self-reinforcing ways, one mechanism of which is the ubiquity, and naturalness, of normative reasoning itself. Normative

systems are inherently expansionary to the extent to which they enable people to reason from one situation to another, by way of analogy' (Stone Sweet, 1999: 157). In complex legal institutions such as the ECJ or the WTO dispute settlement procedures, norm development does not simply reflect periodic bargains among states. It often takes place internally through the practices of the institutions themselves, filling in gaps in treaties, developing answers to new problems, establishing precedents (even where precedent is not formally admissible).

Third, normative change reflects changes in the organization of domestic society and in the powerful transnational ideological forces that have shaped those changes. Thus, the legitimacy of governments (democratic and authoritarian) has come to depend on their capacity to meet a vastly increased range of needs, claims, and demands. In part, this has involved increased expectations of the role of the state in economic management (something that remains substantially true even in an era of deregulation, privatization, and globalization). In part, it reflects changed notions of political legitimacy and broadened understandings of self-determination, of human rights, and of citizenship rights. In addition, although it may be true, as realists tell us, that the international system tames and socializes revolutionary regimes, it is also true that each of the great social revolutions of the modern era has left an indelible mark on the dominant norms of international society (Armstrong, 1993; Halliday, 1999). In one sense, this may be obvious. But it is obscured by the very common tendency in IR to distinguish too sharply between 'thick' domestic norms and 'thin' international norms. Many international norms (national self-determination, economic liberalism, sustainable development) are powerful precisely because of the way in which they relate to the transnational structures within which all states are embedded and to the broad social forces that have transformed the character of states and altered the dynamics of the state system.

NORMATIVE THEORY AND THE EVOLVING CHARACTER OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

In this final section, we suggest how the changing normative structure of international society has shaped the sorts of questions currently being asked by normative theorists. We highlight the importance of questions of political justice, first, in relation to the changing character of governance and institutionalization; and second, in relation to the evolving character of power politics.

Normative responses to the pluralist structure of global institutions, and the prominence of nonstate actors

In the 1990s, global order was widely understood through the lens of liberal internationalism or liberal solidarism. Globalization was rendering obsolete the old Westphalian world of Great Power rivalries, balance of power politics, and an old-fashioned international law built around state sovereignty and strict rules of nonintervention. Bumpy as it might be, the road seemed to be leading away from Westphalia – with an expanded role for formal and informal multilateral institutions; a huge increase in the scope, density, and intrusiveness of rules and norms made at the international level but affecting how domestic societies are organised; the ever-greater involvement of new actors in global governance; the moves toward the coercive enforcement of global rules; and fundamental changes in political, legal, and moral understandings of state sovereignty and of the relationship between the state, the citizen, and the international community. In addition to an expansion of interstate modes of governance, increased attention was being paid to the world of complex governance beyond the state. Such governance was characterized by the complexity of global rule making; the role of private market actors and civil society

groups in articulating values which are then assimilated in interstate institutions; and the increased range of informal, yet norm-governed, governance mechanisms often built around complex networks, both transnational and trans-governmental, and the inter-penetration of international and municipal law and of national administrative systems. From this perspective, the state was losing its place as the privileged sovereign institution and instead becomes one of many actors and one participant in a broader and more complex social and legal process.

Many analysts saw great potential in the disaggregated state, in fluid and flexible networks of experts, and in the claims that dynamic experimental rule making can be both efficient and deliberatively inclusive (Slaughter, 2004; Sabel and Zeitlin, 2010). Sceptics worried about precisely these same features – the dangers posed by the often hidden rule by experts and embedded orthodoxy, the marginalization of meaningful politics, and the perils of de-formalization and of the deepening fragmentation of the legal ‘system’ (Koskeniemi, 2009; Krisch, 2010).

What do these changes imply for normative theory? If normative theories are to succeed in identifying regulatory principles for global institutions that are appropriately responsive to the differences between global and domestic institutions, they must begin with some understanding of the main dimensions in which institutions in fact differ at these levels. Most established normative theories of *domestic* justice and democracy characterise the set of institutions that are to be regulated as a unified or singular institutional ‘scheme’ or overarching social ‘basic structure’. Often, this unified institutional structure is identified with the sovereign institutions of statehood and the broader social and economic institutions these sustain; these institutions are unified through structuring and governing the collective life of a ‘bounded society’ (Rawls, 1996; Nagel, 2005).

However, the existing global institutional architecture possesses neither the principled

authoritative order of a constitutional framework or sovereign structure of rule, nor the mature social apparatus for collective judgement and action associated with the cultural institutions constitutive of nations or 'peoples'. This existing global institutional order can be described as 'pluralist' in character – in the sense that political decisions and impacts can best be understood as emanating from a plurality of organisationally and socially distinct institutional actors, rather than from any singular or unified global institutional 'scheme' or 'structure'.

Normative theories of global justice and democracy have only recently begun to engage seriously with the implications of this institutional pluralism. Many theorists have adopted the holistic approach to regulating institutions, by posing normative questions about the regulation of a 'global basic structure' or 'global institutional scheme'. The major problem with this is that in the kind of pluralist global world we have described, it is not clear where it is possible to locate political agency. Yet it is precisely practical questions about the attribution of political responsibility that must be settled if normative theories are to succeed in identifying a transformative pathway towards more just and democratic global institutions.

To help address this problem, a growing body of work approaches the normative analysis of global institutions in a way that places these questions about political agency and responsibility at the centre of theoretical inquiry. Some of this work focuses on identifying the normative responsibilities of particular existing institutional agencies within the overarching global institutional scheme. The issues tackled in these literatures include both broad philosophical questions about the characteristics that particular institutions must possess to be capable of bearing moral and political responsibilities (Erskine, 2003), and more specific questions about the social and political responsibilities of specific international institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, and WTO (Woods and Narlikar, 2001), as well as powerful

nonstate actors such as NGOs and corporations, and the global 'supply chain' institutions in the globalized economy through which corporations commonly operate (Rubenstein, 2007; Koenig-Archibugi, 2004; Kuper, 2004; Macdonald and Macdonald, 2010; Macdonald, 2008).

Other work in this broad category focuses not on allocating responsibilities among existing institutional agents, but rather on giving an account of the sorts of new institutions that would need to be created to generate the institutional capacity or political agency required to discharge collective normative duties. Debate of this latter kind draws in various questions about the role of international law in fostering norms of global justice and democracy, and the contribution that might potentially be made by different legal models such as those of 'global administrative law'. It also includes analysis of how global justice and democracy might be promoted by building new mechanisms for curbing abuses of power by prominent state and nonstate actors within a pluralist institutional order, through the development of new mechanisms of political accountability and democratic control targeted specifically to these actors.

These new literatures are still developing, but have the potential to contribute a great deal to normative analysis of global institutions. In doing so, however, they raise not only very complex practical questions of policy and institutional design, but also broader methodological questions of the kind we discussed in Section II – about the nature and utility of 'ideal' versus 'non-ideal' forms of theorising, the relevance of different categories of facts to normative evaluation and justification, and so on. As a result, increasing attention to normative dilemmas arising from the fact of global institutional pluralism is helping to feed a growing theoretical interest in the questions of methodology we highlighted above. Each of these developing sets of debates – on global institutions, and on normative methodology – is likely to benefit from being brought into

greater dialogue with the other as these literatures develop.

Normative responses to the abuse of political power in global politics

If one reading of the post-Cold War order highlighted the practical and normative challenges posed by changing patterns of governance and institutionalization, another reading stressed a rather different set of forces and refocused attention on a range of older concerns of IR such as unequal power, power transitions and value conflict, and cultural diversity. These factors have included: (1) the renewed salience of security, the re-valorization of national security as a value that can and – for a dispiritingly large number of people – should trump ideas of universal human rights, and a renewed preoccupation with war-fighting and counter-insurgency; (2) the continued or renewed power of nationalism, no longer potentially containable politically or analytically in a box marked ‘ethnic conflict’ but manifest in the identity politics and foreign policy actions of the major states in the system; (3) the renewed importance of nuclear weapons as central to major power relations, to the structure of regional security complexes, and in the construction of great power hierarchies and the distribution of seats at top tables; (4) the national and transnational power of religion (both aspects matter); and (5) the return of balance of power as both a motivation for state policy (as with US policies in Asia) and as an element in the foreign policy of all second-tier states.

Still more important, as the 1990s progressed, so economic globalization fed back into the structures and dynamics of a Westphalian state system rather than pointing towards its transcendence. The state as an economic actor proved resilient in seeking to control economic flows and to police borders; and in seeking to exploit and develop state-based and mercantilist modes

of managing economic problems, especially in relation to resource competition and energy geopolitics. Most significant, the very dynamism and successes of liberal globalization was having a vital impact on the distribution of interstate political power – above all, towards the East and parts of the South. If the debate over power shifts in the 1990s concentrated on the shift of power from states to firms and nonstate actors, the ‘power shift’ of the past decade has focused on rising and emerging powers, on state-directed economic activity, and on the mismatch between existing global economic governance arrangements and the distribution of power among those with the actual power of effective economic decision.

These developments raise once more the centrality of order between and among the major powers of the system. They also bring questions of cultural diversity firmly back into the picture, especially insofar as they involve one might call the ‘provincializing of Westphalia’ and the shift in power away from the core Western industrialized world – historically first built around Europe and the European colonial order and then around the United States and the Greater West (Bull and Watson, 1985; Little and Buzan, 2010).

This shift has important implications for normative theorizing. In the first place, it gives greater space to those voices concerned with what Western liberal cosmopolitanism looks like when seen from outside: for example, the close historical relationship between European cosmopolitan ideas and the spread of empire (Pagden, 2000); or the problem that emancipation into the global liberal order might not be so emancipatory if the terms of entry involved a denial of agency and autonomy (Rao, 2010). Second, it highlights the need to understand and appreciate the diversity of views and visions of the world as they appear in different cultural and civilizational contexts (Katzenstein, 2010; Tickner and Waever, 2010). And third, it forces a reassessment of the cultural and religious foundations of much Western political thought. Charles Taylor, for example, traces

what he calls the Modern Moral Order to a very specific historical process of secularization (Taylor, 2007; for the neglected importance of religion in Western theories of international relations, see Hurd, 2010).

This reading of the international system brings IR and normative theory together but in ways that are rather different from those imagined in the 1990s. For example, Jeremy Waldron has suggested that much Kantian-inspired theory has appeared as a debate among people who have already agreed about many of the most central principles of justice or whose life worlds are deeply connected and convergent (Waldron, 2010). Equally, it was rather easy to work around a rather under-specified category of 'non-ideal' theory and to leave compliance problems, whether legal or moral, to one side when the direction of history seemed to be so clear and when structural power appeared so clearly weighted on the side of the global liberal order. One of the consequence of the emergence of non-Western or nontraditional emerging powers and of new forms of political and social mobilization and of the broader 'provincializing' of the 'Western liberal order' is to create a far greater heterogeneity of interests and values and a far greater capacity for effective contestation.

Insofar as political theory assumes a more realist approach in the light of these far less auspicious developments, so the connections with the traditional agendas of IR come back into focus. On this account, a more realist normative political theory should accept that there will be a recurring (but not absolute) need to give priority to order over justice; that the appropriate standards of evaluation will arise from within the political world itself rather than coming from an external legal or moral standpoint; and that politics is all too often characterized by in-eliminable conflict rather than reasoned consensus. (On the new realism in political theory, see Galston, 2010) It is a view that doubts whether the maxims of law and morality can ever wholly displace the centrality of political decisions and political judgement.

What does this mean for normative theory? Contemporary normative theories of global politics, largely preoccupied with the concept of justice, have directed relatively little attention to these issues. This can perhaps be attributed in part to the general tendency to approach normative political theory as a branch of moral philosophy and which Bernard Williams has called 'political moralism' (Williams, 2005). This moralised approach to normative analysis is epitomised in Rawlsian 'ideal-theory', which through its methodological assumption of 'full compliance' by social actors with institutional norms explicitly precludes taking into account any facts about the abuse of power in political life in the process of identifying normative principles for regulating institutions.

At the level of global politics, it is plain that problems of power politics continue to pose serious political challenges, about which no theoretical complacency is warranted. Moreover, it is not yet clear whether or how the problem of global political order could be solved without some major upheavals in domestic institutions of sovereign statehood, such as those entailed in various cosmopolitan institutional proposals, for example. This implies that the problem of political order remains a live one also at the domestic level, and that problems of order at these different levels should be treated as interdependent. As Bernard Williams has argued, the problem of political order is the 'first' political question in the sense that solving it is a precondition for posing any further political question. However,

[i]t is not (unhappily) first in the sense that once solved, it never has to be solved again. This is particularly important because, a solution to the first question being required all the time, it is affected by historical circumstances; it is not a matter of arriving at a solution to the first question at the level of state-of-nature theory and then going on to the rest of the agenda. (Williams, 2005: 3)

For this reason, it is essential that normative analysis of global institutions – and to some degree of political institutions more generally – extend its focus beyond the

issues of moral principle articulated through 'ideal' theories of justice, and resume the more traditional habit of placing problems of power and order at the forefront of theoretical inquiry, thereby bringing IR and Political Theory into closer connection.

Two main approaches are emerging in the normative literature. The first focuses on institutional processes through which the exercise of power by dominant political actors can be constrained and brought into line with institutional norms by countervailing forms of power located elsewhere within the social order – that is, by imposing *external* constraints on power through institutionalised regulation or accountability. This kind of regulative function is a central purpose of many legal and democratic institutions, and as such some important theoretical contributions have been made on this issue in literatures that offer designs for 'cosmopolitan' or 'global' models of law and democracy. Some of the prescribed mechanisms for curbing abuses of power in global politics are quite radical in character, such as proposals for significant limits imposed on the sovereign authority of states through the development of cosmopolitan law, and for fully democratic processes of social choice and accountability enacted on a global scale. Other prescribed institutional reforms with this purpose include the imposition of less demanding standards of transparency and accountability directed at both states and powerful nonstate actors – which fall short of democratic standards, but constrain power more effectively than status quo institutional arrangements (Keohane, 2003; Grant and Keohane, 2005).

Another important way in which institutions can constrain the abuse of power and establish political order is by fostering an 'internalised' commitment on the part of powerful actors to comply with institutional norms, through harnessing a category of motivational reasons distinct from either capitulation to coercion or strategic pursuit of interests. Institutions that are able to secure support for their norms through this

kind of mechanism are sometimes said to possess the quality of 'legitimacy'. Just as normative theories of law, democracy, and accountability articulate a justified framework for the management of power that functions by imposing various *external constraints* on powerful agents, there is a need for the development of a normative theory of legitimacy that articulates a justified framework for the management of power that functions by aligning the *internal motivations* of powerful actors with institutional norms. Buchanan and Keohane (2006) have recently undertaken some pioneering normative research on the topic of global institutional legitimacy, which makes an important preliminary contribution to a broader theoretical agenda of this kind. Despite the value of their contribution, however, their work has not yet fully grappled with some of the central philosophical challenges that arise in trying to understand the value of legitimacy in global politics.

One central intellectual obstacle to the development of a normative theory of legitimacy is that it would require an analytic and methodological approach that traverses the conventional divide between social-scientific and normative modes of inquiry. This would, once again, draw together the two fields outlined in this chapter – on the one hand, descriptive questions (about the structure of motivation and the causes of social action), and on the other, evaluative and prescriptive questions (about the normative standards that ought to be regarded as appropriate or justified for political institutions). Thus far, it has been commonplace in scholarship on the topic of legitimacy to insist upon a firm analytic distinction between a *normative conception* of legitimacy – defined as the moral right of an institution to rule – and a *social-scientific conception* of legitimacy – defined as the widespread belief that an institution has the right to rule (Buchanan and Keohane, 2006; Beetham, 1991). However, while it is an analytic truth that these two conceptions of legitimacy are distinct from one another when defined in these particular terms, they do not exhaust the plausible

understandings of the concept or the modes of inquiry appropriate to its content. Indeed, neither of these conceptions adequately captures the way the concept is widely used in mainstream normative discourse – which is to characterise *a normative good* (a desirable quality for institutions to possess), *the value of which is grounded, at least in part, in its sociological function* (of harnessing a special kind of motivated support for institutional norms among the institutions' subject populations).

If we try to make analytic sense of this colloquial political understanding of legitimacy, however, it quickly becomes evident that the normative and social-scientific dimensions of the concept cannot be so easily disentangled. If legitimacy is characterised simply as the moral right of an institution to rule, and if this moral justification does not entail or necessitate the existence of any beliefs by social actors, then it is not clear how it could follow that we should expect legitimacy to have any of the motivational or behavioural implications that are commonly attributed to it (e.g., in Buchanan and Keohane 2006; Buchanan, 2010). Conversely, if legitimacy is characterised simply as the widespread belief in the moral justifiability of institutions, and if this widespread belief does not entail or necessitate the truth of the proposition that they are morally justified, then it is not clear how it could follow that legitimacy should be regarded as a normative good. Instead of distinguishing different conceptions of what legitimacy *is* as an institutional property, then, it is perhaps more helpful to distinguish normative from social-scientific *questions about* legitimacy. Certainly the normative question of how we should evaluate and practically respond to institutional legitimacy is properly distinguished from the social-scientific question of how legitimacy functions within institutions as a matter of fact. However, distinguishing these *questions* is entirely compatible with there being a unified conception of what the property of legitimacy *is*, about which questions of both these types are being asked.

Some progress might be made in theoretically characterising this property of legitimacy by probing the recognition that both normative and sociological discussions of legitimacy are concerned with the operation of a particular category of *reasons for action*, that are distinguished from interest-based and strategic categories of reasons, and that derive their force as reasons from their embeddedness in the *identities of social actors*. Sociological analyses of legitimacy generally try to characterise the way in which reasons embedded in social identities generate *motivational* force (as causes of social action), while normative analyses of legitimacy generally try to characterise the way in which reasons embedded in social identities generate *justificatory* force (as grounds for regarding particular actions as worthy of being done). Here, we can recognise some striking parallels between the analytic structure of normative and sociological 'constructivisms' – both of which view normativity (in its imperative and its motivational dimensions) as anchored in social 'identities', which contain the content and embody the force of a special category of reasons (Wendt, 1999; Korsgaard, 1995).

The idea that the justificatory force and the motivational force of reasons are in some way inextricably connected in some is not itself new; rather, it is central to the established philosophical position of reason 'internalism'. The classic defence of this position in the contemporary philosophical literature is articulated by Bernard Williams, who writes that "[i]f there are reasons for action, it must be that people sometimes act for those reasons, and if they do, their reasons must figure in some correct explanation of their action" (Williams, 1981: 102). There is an ongoing debate on this topic cutting across the philosophical fields of metaethics and philosophy of action, and it is possible that some insights and analytic tools from these debates could contribute to the clarification of some of the theoretical difficulties at the heart of contemporary attempts to develop a theory of legitimacy for application to

global institutions. Indeed, these theoretical problems exposed in relation to the concept of legitimacy point to the need for deeper examination of the points of contact between normative and empirical study of norms in global politics more broadly, as a way of developing a more integrated understanding of the role of norms in global life.

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Rational Choice and International Relations

Duncan Snidal

CHALLENGES TO RATIONAL CHOICE

Rational choice is one of the major approaches to the postwar study of international relations (IR). It has helped define contemporary theoretical debates about international politics and has advanced our understanding of such topics as the implications of anarchy and the possibility of cooperation. In some eyes, rational choice has been on a mission to establish its hegemony over the field and has failed to appreciate both its own limitations and the value of alternative approaches. Several vigorous critiques of this approach – both internal and external – are now well established, and rational choice might as a result appear to be in retreat.¹

This chapter evaluates the challenges raised by those criticisms with an eye toward how rational choice can deal with them.² I begin with a discussion of the critiques and argue that each contains some significant element of truth. But they are more usefully thought of as stimulants to improving rational choice than reasons for rejecting it. I then briefly investigate this claim in terms of a set

of the substantive and theoretical puzzles that rational choice and the IR field more generally are currently trying to deal with. Rational choice offers no simple solutions to these problems, and it is not the only way to address them. But it is a powerful and flexible approach that, if it takes the criticism seriously, will rise to these new challenges.

Internal critiques about the way rational choice conducts its analysis can be divided into two primary categories. The first is that rational choice has developed a fetishism over mathematical technique that leads it to substitute abstract and complicated models for commonsensical theoretical development. At its best, this line of argument continues, rational choice simply reproduces what we “already know” in a more obscure language; at its worst, it uses obfuscation to hide its emptiness. Worse yet, explanations not cast in the language of rational choice, and even arguments highly compatible with rational choice but not couched in its technical garb, have not been appreciated. Technique has falsely triumphed over substance.

While it contains an element of truth, this critique fails to appreciate the value of

technical approaches used properly. More importantly, it conflates a discussion of particular ways to do rational choice with the approach taken as a whole, which need not be technically complicated or mathematically obscure. Proponents should realize that formalization is not the *sine qua non* of rational choice but only a tool. Applications of, and even deductions within, rational choice can be entirely “verbal.” That is often the best way to proceed. But skeptics should appreciate that the power of approach derives in no small part from established results that might not have been obtained except through formalization.

The second internal critique is that rational choice has no strong empirical legs. According to this view, proponents have not tested it adequately and, when they have, have found little support. Instead of remedying this deficiency, they argue, rational choice has retreated to theoretical speculations that are increasingly irrelevant.

Again, there is an element of truth here, since some rational choice has been more heavily oriented toward developing theoretical arguments about international politics than toward evaluating them. Moreover, the versatility and flexibility of rational choice create special difficulties for testing. But this critique is mistaken in two important respects. First, it confuses the (im)possibility of testing rational choice as a general approach with the more reasonable project of testing specific hypotheses or substantive theories based on a rational choice perspective. Second, it seriously underappreciates the extent to which rational choice is driven by empirical considerations and plays a central role in a wide range of empirical work. Nevertheless, the greatest challenge to rational choice is to strengthen its range and depth of empirical application. This is an ongoing project, however, and I document substantial work that addresses this challenge. In the end, the most interesting debates should be over how best to evaluate rational models empirically, since there is no disagreement over the need to do so.

More recently, an important set of external critiques, grouped loosely under the constructivist label, have pointed out that rational choice emphasizes certain problems and sets aside other issues by assumption. This leads some to doubt the value of rational choice contributions altogether, whereas others are sympathetic to the contributions of rational choice but see it as having run its course or being unable to answer big questions. Rational choice is found deficient in explaining who the key actors are, in explaining their interests, explaining the origin of institutions, or in explaining how these change. These deficiencies present challenges that need to be understood and, where possible, addressed. But the deficiencies are also overstated and (in their weaker form) justifiable as savvy methodological moves by which rational choice analysis gains its power.

My goal here is not to engage the constructivist–rationalist debate but to draw on constructivist criticisms as posing important challenges that rational choice can and should address.³ I argue that IR rational choice analysis cannot resolve all of these challenges, but it can improve itself by taking them seriously and selectively modifying itself in response.

I address these different critiques, first from a methodological direction and then, building on that, from a substantive direction. The next section begins by asking “What is rational choice?” I propose that rational choice is a methodology incorporating general theoretical assumptions but that it is wide open in terms of specific substantive content. Indeed, its association with particular substantive positions – especially ones deriving from its tradition in realism, neorealism and, more recently, neoliberalism in IR – makes it too easy to confuse the limits of these substantive approaches as inherent limits of rational choice. In fact, rational choice is extraordinarily flexible and is compatible with a wide range of substantive approaches. Other reputed limitations are not inherent to rational choice but represent tactical methodological choices to facilitate

analysis. That does not eliminate them as limitations, but closer examination suggests how they are potentially surmountable or, alternatively, why it may be unwise to surmount them.

Building on this, I consider the two internal critiques of rational choice methodology. I argue that formalization is not a necessary feature of rational choice but has played an indispensable role in its development. But softer, nonmathematical approaches have been equally central in the development of the theory and in its application to specific problems. Most importantly, formal and soft approaches are highly complementary, not competitive. On the empirical side, rational choice faces some special limitations, and so its empirical development lags behind its theoretical development. But it also is much stronger empirically than its critics claim; a significant body of empirical research illustrates the wide range of approaches that are being used to strengthen it further in this regard.

The final section of this chapter considers how rational choice can handle three important challenges facing its broader application to IR. The first is the general problem of change. I argue that while some substantive theories employing the rational choice approach may reject the study of change, that is not true of rational choice in general. Although rational choice imposes some methodological limits on incorporating change, it can address important issues of change in the international setting. The second challenge is the problem of explaining preferences and actor identities within rational choice. This continues the discussion of change, and I argue that rational choice can relax its assumption of fixed preferences provided it does so in a systematic manner. The third substantive challenge is incorporating normative concerns. Although I do not engage a full normative discussion, I show that rational choice is capable of engaging normative considerations in a number of different ways and that addressing these, in turn, will feed back on the positive theory in useful ways.

WHAT IS RATIONAL CHOICE?

Rational choice is a broad enterprise with permeable boundaries. It is not a substantive theory except at the most general level.⁴ Therefore, it is usually viewed as a methodological approach that explains both individual and collective (social) outcomes in terms of *individual goal-seeking under constraints*. This broad conception needs to be filled in considerably before it can have much specific content, either theoretically or empirically. There is a myriad of possible ways to do so – some of which respond to important critiques of the approach.

Yet any theoretical methodology such as rational choice entails some very general substantive commitments.⁵ The focus on goal seeking presumes that explanation should proceed in terms of relevant actors, the goals they seek, and their ability to do so. The approach also requires some specification of constraints – which may be technological, institutional, or arise from interdependencies among actors' choices. Within and beyond this, rational choice is remarkably open to alternative specifications. Notably, the goals are *not* restricted to self-regarding or material interests but could include other-regarding and normative or ideational "goals." Moreover, while the baseline theory is often developed in terms of hyper-rational actors with powerful calculating abilities, the theory is open to incorporating limits to their capacities or constraints on their decision making. Finally, the theory is most often used as a positive theory of how actors behave in practice, but it can also be used as a normative theory to evaluate how actors behave or to indicate how they should behave.

Any application of rational choice that aspires to be a theory "of something" requires more detailed substantive commitments (Snidal, 1985). In IR, the "neo-" tradition has assumed that states are the key actors, that they seek goals such as power or wealth, and that they are relatively effective at pursuing their interests. The warrant for

these assumptions comes not from rational choice, however, but from substantive knowledge of international politics. For example, the social choice literature raises thorny questions about treating aggregates as actors (Arrow, 1951) so that use of the state-as-actor assumption depends on implicit substantive claims. Alternative assumptions that propose other actors (for example, transnational activists or subnational interests), or actors pursuing different goals (for example, moral values or profits) or actors with differential abilities to do so (for example, in terms of more limited calculating ability or lack of information), are equally compatible with rational choice. Thus, rational choice is not at all limited to conceptions of self-interested, materialistic “economic” actors, or to anomic, power-seeking state actors in international affairs. Different substantive specifications can lead to different theories within the broader umbrella of rational choice.

Goal seeking obviously does not cover all aspects of human (or state) behavior in any straightforward way. There are other rich traditions of research in IR based on (for example) psychological or cognitive limits of decision makers (Jervis, 1976; Steinbruner, 1974) or, more recently, explanations that depend on identity or culture (Katzenstein, 1996), or on the role of “appropriateness” as an alternative basis for behavior (Finnemore, 1996; March and Olsen, 1989).⁶

The elasticity of the rationality concept makes it tempting (and a little too easy) to reduce these alternative conceptions to a form of goal seeking. Treating “appropriateness” as an element of utility function, or bounded rationality as information costs, simply misses the difference between the approaches, which need to be taken more seriously (Sen, 1977). Nevertheless, rational choice is often a central part of the explanation even where different motivations are also at play. Many behavioral findings about the limits of decision making – hysteresis and framing effects, for example – are implicitly defined in terms of deviations from a

rational choice baseline. Similarly, while human rights activists or other actors may be driven by different considerations and use different techniques than are typically captured by rational choice, the analysis of their behavior in international politics requires careful attention to their strategically rational behavior (Johnston, 2002; Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Conversely, rational choice analysis can advance by taking the alternatives seriously and seeing what elements it can incorporate. An example is the effort to understand communication (Morrow, 1994a) and rhetoric (Goldsmith and Posner, 1999, 2002b) among states. But rational choice does not have to be a closed system in this process, and the resulting explanations may blend elements of rational choice with alternative approaches.⁷

One criticism of rational choice is that it takes the identity and interests of actors as outside the analysis – and thereby brackets one of the most interesting aspects of international politics and change. Leaving that issue to later, it is not true on the constraint side, which is determined by both exogenous and endogenous factors. Some constraints derive from available “technology,” but the more interesting ones are political and social. In many equilibria, for example, each individual is “constrained” by others’ choices in the sense that its best choice, and what it can achieve, depends on the choices of others. Institutions themselves are equilibria – sometimes emerging endogenously within a game and sometimes the legacy of interaction in a prior game – that serve as constraints for actors in a game (Calvert, 1995; Snidal, 1996). These institutional constraints also provide the means by which rational choice can move beyond its focus on actors (that is, its “ontological commitment”) to investigate how institutions impose structural constraints on the actors. This is especially important with regard to beliefs which straddle individual goal seeking and collective institutional constraints. Beliefs are properties of individuals, but their impact often comes because they originate in and depend on

intersubjective “common knowledge” among the collective (Morrow, 2002; Wendt, 1999).

Operating as a causal theory, rational choice is often criticized for assuming what is of greatest interest – including the identities of the actors, their interests, and the institutional structures or rules of the game. To be sure, a causal rational choice account needs to be clear about what is exogenous and what is endogenous in order to proceed. It may specify these things according to substantive knowledge of which elements are (relatively) fixed compared to other elements more subject to change. It therefore defines the scope of what is being analyzed, and identifies various factors as endogenous (to be explained) or exogenous (taken as given). The latter category includes “deep” assumptions that the researcher uses implicitly without highlighting or perhaps even realizing (for example, market institutions in traditional neoclassical economics; sovereignty in neorealist arguments). In other cases, a “partial” equilibrium analysis reflects an explicit understanding that certain factors are being held constant which might otherwise affect the analysis. The justification for this bracketing is that the excluded effects are small – or change slowly – compared to the effects of the included variables.

Moreover, rational choice analysis is not inherently causal, as is reflected in the centrality of equilibrium analysis in the theory (Marshall, 1910). An equilibrium is a statement of consistency among specified elements, that there is no pressure on any of the elements to change given the values of the other elements. It is thus an evaluation of a whole state of affairs and claims only that the elements can coexist with one another while stipulating nothing about their sequence or causal relation. In this respect, equilibrium analysis is constitutive rather than causal (cf. Lake and Powell, 1999b: 32; Wendt, 1999). Causal analysis is induced when substantive assumptions of exogeneity and endogeneity are introduced for tactical methodological reasons to trace the implications of change in one element on another while holding other

elements fixed or constant. Comparative statics does this by assuming an exogenous change in one element will result in an endogenous change in one or more other elements. But the choice of what is fixed and what fluctuates is not inherent to rational choice but to the interpretation put on the model.

Rational choice is also associated with some further methodological commitments that are neither logically entailed by it nor necessarily distinguish it from other research approaches. One commitment is to simplification, the notion that good explanations are lean and minimize the assumptions made. This simplicity – and the structure of some of the problems that are analyzed – lends itself to formalization, discussed below. Another reason rational choice stresses simplicity is to constrain its own versatility so that its explanations do not become tautologies. But the price of making simplifying assumptions such as fixed interests and fixed environments is that rational choice sets aside potentially important questions (for example, what determines interests) by assumption. Even if this self-imposition of theoretical blinders is for a good reason, it nevertheless raises the question whether rational choice can relax those assumptions (possibly by tightening others) to broaden its analysis.

A second commitment of rational choice is to generalization. One virtue of abstract concepts and models (for example, prisoners’ dilemma, agency problems, asset specificity) is that they transcend substantive problems. Thus, similar rational choice analyses have been offered of such disparate phenomena as the family, the market, and war. This greatly facilitates the transference of insights and intuitions across fields, for example, from the study of American politics to IR (Martin, 2000; Milner, 1998). It has also been an important factor in the spread of IR theory into other areas such as international law (Abbott, 1989; Burley, 1993; Setear, 1999). But this commitment to generalization is not simplistic in the sense of requiring that human action can be reduced to fully generalizable

“laws,” as is often implied by critiques. Instead, it is in the spirit of showing how a very broad framework can encompass compatible analyses that explain many different situations. Indeed, the development of rational choice in its game-theoretic mode has involved a proliferation of increasingly specific and therefore different structures or contexts (that is, game specifications), each of which may exhibit substantial further variation as its parameters vary. Generality obtains at the level of transferable insights rather than mechanical rules or scientific laws.

An immediate implication is that rational choice is not a singular approach but rather a large family of approaches. These are highly complementary at the level of basic methodology, but they can be completely inconsistent in terms of their substantive arguments. Thus, many of the debates within rational choice – and certainly most of those within IR – are actually debates driven by substantive assumptions that originate outside the methodological framework.⁸ Rational choice can play a useful role in clarifying and even adjudicating these debates because it provides a common conceptual framework for specifying the problem and a machinery for checking consistency and implications of arguments. Gaining the full advantage of these capabilities explains the importance both of formalization of arguments and of developing empirical connections.

METHODOLOGICAL DEBATES AND CHALLENGES FOR RATIONAL CHOICE

This section examines “internal critiques,” which are largely methodological in terms of debating “how to do rational choice” rather than the advantages or disadvantages of the approach taken as a whole. I focus on the relation of rational choice to formal mathematical models and to empirical testing. My argument is that formalization is highly complementary to “softer” (that is, nontechnical) rational choice and that neither can be

successful without close attention to the other. The complaint that rational choice has paid insufficient attention to empirical testing holds some merit but nevertheless greatly undervalues the substantial empirical work of various types that is based on rational choice approaches. More importantly, attention to empirical issues has grown considerably among rational choice researchers, and a new concern for evaluating theoretical arguments is apparent.

Rational choice and formalization

Rational choice has an elective affinity for formalization, by which I mean the use of mathematical models to represent theoretical arguments and simplified versions of the real world. Formalization is by no means a necessary feature of rational choice. Many important applications of rational choice can be properly described as “soft,” meaning that they are not closely tied to formal models or arguments. Indeed, one indicator of the success of formal rational choice is the extent to which key analytic arguments and conclusions, such as those emerging from theories of collective action, cooperation theory, principal-agent models, and signaling models, have become part of our verbal vocabulary and common understanding of international politics. This is not to say that mathematics is not central to rational choice – far from it – since many important developments have been generated or significantly improved by formalization. Moreover, the persuasiveness of soft rational choice often rests on the “hard” formalization that stands behind it.⁹

Theoretical rational choice need not rest on mathematical models. Early rational choice political economists, including Adam Smith and David Hume, did not invoke mathematics. Much of the contemporary economics that has been most influential on IR – notable examples include the work of Ronald Coase (1960), Douglass North (1990), and Oliver Williamson (1975, 1985) – is not mathematical to any significant extent.

Moreover, traditional IR contained significant though informal elements of rational choice thinking long before any move toward formalization (Morgenthau, [1948]1978: 4–10). Contemporary rational choice theorizing in IR often draws on formal results but is not formal itself (e.g., Keohane, 1984; Koremenos et al., 2001a; Lake, 1999; Oye, 1986).

Conversely, mathematical models need not involve rational choice. Recall Lewis Frye Richardson's (1960) arms race model using coupled differential equations to represent a dynamic action-reaction process where each nation-state acquires weapons in response to the others' level of armaments. Richardson describes it as a model of "what men would do if they did not stop to think." Even game-theoretic models have no necessary connection to rationality. Evolutionary game models are of this sort and their relation to rational models is an area of ongoing research (Kahler, 1999). Barry O'Neill (1999) uses game theory to underpin an explicitly nonrational choice framework – indeed he allies his work closely with constructivism – and to explain a wide range of international phenomena through symbolism.

There is also no singular way to model rational choice. Noncooperative game-theoretic models are the predominant approach, and they largely subsume traditional microeconomic and decision-making approaches.¹⁰ But choice within this broad family of models entails increasingly detailed substantive commitments. In deciding on a specific model – for example, between a strategic game model versus a nonstrategic decision-making model, or between an extensive (tree) form game versus a simultaneous (matrix) form game, or between complete versus incomplete information games – we are making substantive judgments as to what are the most important features of the problem. The tendency to assume that one class of models (often more complex ones or newer ones) is inherently superior is generally misguided. Proper model choice, including the level of formalization, depends on the substantive problem being analyzed.

Simple representations have been as important as technically complex ones in promoting rational choice analysis. The obvious example is the prisoners' dilemma (PD) game, which is now so much part of our common theoretical vocabulary that Stephen Walt (1999: 9) seeks to exclude it as an example of formalization in his critique of such approaches even though it fits his definition of a formal theory. Like other simple games, including "assurance," "coordination," and "chicken," PD carries an impressive analytical load that has considerably clarified and advanced our thinking about international politics. The fact that it has become a standard metaphor for international anarchy is an indicator of its power as soft theory; the fact that its clarity has made its limitations apparent and stimulated a large family of extensions and refinements shows the power of its formal representation.

Many soft rational choice arguments that have become standard in the literature are ultimately based on mathematical derivations. Although Walt treats Olson's (1965) analysis of collective action as not placing "much emphasis on mathematical rigor," that claim seriously misunderstands Olson's enormous debt to Paul Samuelson's (1954) very rigorous and quite technical analysis of public goods. The economics field was befuddled by public goods until Samuelson's formalization provided a clear conceptual basis to move forward. Olson's great contribution was to connect the formal analytics to wide-ranging political examples and to extend the analysis through soft theory (for example, selective incentives). It provides an excellent example of how soft rational choice can build off formalized work to overturn well-entrenched conventional wisdom and create a common framework for substantial advances.

Similarly, the result that cooperation can be supported by strategies of reciprocity is referred to as the "folk theorem" because a simple version had been widely known (at least among game theorists) for a long time.¹¹ The understanding of the effectiveness of

reciprocity also predates its mathematization, while explicit “tit-for-tat” policies predate game theory by 400 years, and informal “eye-for-an-eye” behavior goes back much further. Yet the folk theorem result that seems so obvious in the light of game theory was a novel claim for IR theory when expressed in terms of the possibility of “cooperation under anarchy” (Oye, 1986), just as tit-for-tat’s victory surprised most game theorists who participated in Axelrod’s (1984) tournament. Formalization of the cooperation argument was essential for establishing the conditions under which cooperation was possible and for overcoming substantial intellectual resistance on that point. By identifying the precise preconditions for cooperation, formalization also opened up avenues of analysis regarding the limitations of those arguments (for example, poor information, large numbers, distributive issues) as well as ways to overcome those limitations (for example, different strategies, issue-linkage, institutional roles).

While proponents make much of how rational choice formalization has produced results that are “counterintuitive,” critics respond that most of these results are “obvious.” The debate is pointless for two reasons. First, most good results cease being counterintuitive once they are properly understood. Collective action and PD are good examples where what was once surprising is now conventional wisdom (Barry and Hardin, 1982). Second, and more important, counterintuitiveness is vastly overrated as a criterion. In a field that has no shortage of unsubstantiated “surprising” claims, formalization performs a more important service by helping us work out the underlying logic and clarifying the grounds for the different claims. A prime example has been the improved understanding of the role of information in the deterrence (Powell, 1990) and assurance problems (Kydd, 2000).

A related contribution is that formalization provides a systematic framework for exploring detailed implications and extensions of arguments. While this happens within any one model, it also occurs across analyses.

A good example is the set of interconnected advances that follow from the initial formalization of how cooperation is possible among states. For example, Downs and Rocke (1995) show how domestic uncertainty will impede cooperation and the impact this may have on preferred institutional arrangements. James Fearon (1998) shows that when bargaining differences among alternative cooperative outcomes are introduced, the “shadow of the future” that enforces decentralized cooperation among states also creates incentives that may impede the attainment of cooperation. Barbara Koremenos (2001) demonstrates that introducing flexibility to cooperative agreements provides an institutional means of overcoming such problems in many circumstances. Although the specific models vary, their close relationship and clarity allow their conclusions to be readily compared and integrated.

A different complaint against formalization is that with a little cleverness one can derive virtually any conclusion (Stein, 1999). Unfortunately, the complaint is not generally valid, as is demonstrated, for example, by the difficulty of finding a realistic mechanism for optimal public goods provision and by the difficulty of providing a satisfactory rationalist account of war (Fearon, 1995; Garzke, 1999). Even if a model can be trumped up, however, the whole point of formalization is to insist that its assumptions and logic be explicit so that any “tricks” can be discovered. It is true that tricks can be buried in the mathematics, but they can also be unearthed and more readily revealed as tricks than can tricks in comparably complicated verbal arguments. The explicitness, precision, and clarity of formal analysis lend themselves to this goal.

Usually, of course, it is not a matter of tricks but of different assumptions. Here, formal analysis provides an excellent way to clarify the terms of a substantive debate. An example is the “relative gains” debate. Grieco (1988) argues that liberal theories misspecify the cooperation problem as an absolute gains problem (that is, how much each received),

whereas states also care about relative gains (that is, who gets more). He shows that cooperation is much more difficult under relative gains, although Snidal (1991) demonstrates that even under Grieco's assumption, the inhibiting effect on cooperation is significantly limited in multilateral settings. Powell (1991) challenges the need to use the relative gains assumption by showing that the relative gains concerns can be induced as a by-product of strictly absolute gains concerns for survival.

This raises an interesting question about the aesthetics of models and theories. Should we prefer Powell's more parsimonious explanation because it assumes only absolute gains and derives relative gains concerns within the model? This does not by itself invalidate Grieco's assertion that states seek relative gains for primordial reasons. Indeed, one might equally be able to derive absolute gains preferences as a by-product of relative gains concerns (that is, I want more in order that I have more than you). This difference can be resolved only by finding a way to investigate the assumption itself or by generating divergent predictions from the two approaches. Either way, the formalization of the argument and the logical derivations sharpen the issues at stake (Grieco et al., 1993).¹²

In addition to the complaint that rational choice can predict anything, another complaint is that rational choice predicts everything and therefore predicts nothing. It is not true of all models, of course, since some give quite precise predictions. Therefore, it is usually expressed in terms of the multiple equilibria produced by the folk theorem result that (under certain conditions) any point of cooperation that makes everyone better off can be attained. But should game theory be blamed for creating this multiplicity, or credited for revealing it and raising new questions about how the resulting indeterminacy is resolved? Regardless, there is a need to narrow the prediction, a problem which the formal theory has had only partial success with.¹³ Any solution almost certainly requires

bringing additional substantive considerations into the theory – perhaps through psychological theories of decision making, or social norms, or historical analyses of path dependence.

Thus, we can endorse and extend to IR more generally Walt's approving quotation of Schelling's warning that we should not "treat the subject of strategy as though it were, or should be, solely a branch of mathematics." But this caveat must be understood in the context of Schelling's general concern that "the promise of game theory is so far unfulfilled" with respect to his goal of improving "the retarded science of international strategy." Schelling's point is *both* that mathematics isn't sufficient for developing good theory *and* that the verbal theory of military strategy that developed without formalization is moribund. His work shows how formal analysis can provide an invaluable basis upon which to build a largely verbal theory. Schelling's brilliance, of course, is that he is able to keep the mathematics in the background and in the appendices, while connecting it to a rich set of anecdotal examples and broad theorizing.

The challenge for rational choice is to find an appropriate combination of hard and soft approaches. Because the formal theory is now so much more developed, the contemporary mixture does and should include some highly technical pieces. At the same time, the real success of these models depends on several things. One is that the model itself not be so complex that it ceases to be a reasonable representation of what actors are actually capable of doing.¹⁴ Another is that the underlying logic be expressed in softer terms, even if that means less precisely, in order to exploit the complementarities between hard and soft approaches. Formal results can provide a new impetus for informal speculation, now informed by a clearer baseline and better able to proceed on problems that defy hard formalization. Finally, an important criterion for gauging the success of a model is whether it can be connected to empirical evidence, to which we turn next.

Empirical evaluations of rational choice arguments

Rational choice has also been criticized as insufficiently attuned to empirical matters, especially testing. This is an important and partly valid complaint. Enthusiasm for the theory's deductive power sometimes displaces attention to empirical realism and testing. This problem is aggravated by the difficulty or impossibility of observing some key variables such as preferences and beliefs, and by the flexibility of the theory, such that it can be adapted to fit the data in an ad hoc manner. However, the partial validity of the complaint should not be misconstrued as indicating an inherent fault of the approach as much as a failure of application. Below, I discuss some of the significant and growing body of empirical rational choice IR research, both quantitative and qualitative, that illustrates the empirical usefulness of the perspective.

Rational choice as a whole cannot be tested; only specific hypotheses and substantive theories within rational choice can be tested. Rational choice operates at such a general level, and covers such a range of models, that it makes no more sense to think of testing it than it would to test "statistics." Furthermore, at the most abstract level, the conclusions of rational choice are "true" by logical derivation. They are made empirically relevant – and falsifiable – only by mixing them with substantive assumptions (for example, goals of actors, "rules of the game"). Thus, what can be tested are applications of particular rational choice models to specific substantive problems. If the finding is negative, we reject the application of that model and the associated substantive assumptions and theory to that issue – not the model itself, and certainly not rational choice as a whole. This is the same as (say) when a Poisson model of war initiation fails and we reject the attached substantive theory of war initiation, not the Poisson model or its potential application to other areas of international politics. Of course, if a Poisson, signaling, or

whatever type of model fails across a wide variety of circumstances and succeeds on few, we should conclude that it isn't much help for understanding IR. Only in this very limited sense can we "test" rational choice as a whole.

For this reason, much of the antagonism between rational choice and its critics is again misplaced. Rational choice should not claim to explain everything and should not be held to that standard. The appropriate question is whether it can explain a fairly wide range of phenomena. Although the standard IR approach is to line up one theory against another so that the success of one is tied to the failure of another, that is not a necessary condition for understanding international politics. It is perfectly plausible, bordering on the obvious, that actors are motivated by both the "logic of consequences" and "the logic of appropriateness," for example, and our empirical task is to sort out under what conditions each logic operates – including the recognition that they operate together in some circumstances (March and Olsen, 1989). It is equally apparent that actors sometimes deviate significantly from the strict assumptions of rational choice so that conclusions need to be tempered by consideration of whether the simplification is adequate for the problem.¹⁵ Conversely, many of these deviations can only be understood in terms of a baseline of rationality. For example, James Fearon (1995: 409) points out that a better rational explanation of war may increase our estimate of the importance of "irrational" factors. So the complementarities of explanations may be more important than their differences – especially if the goal is understanding substantive problems rather than scoring debating points. In brief, rational choice should claim to explain, and be expected to explain, only some important aspects of international life, not all.

A generic difficulty in empirical testing is that when an argument or model fails, proponents will respecify it before abandoning it. This is simultaneously a virtue and a defect, which though not unique to rational choice is

magnified by its versatility. It is a virtue because the “thinness” of any general theory means that its conjectures are unlikely to perfectly match any case or set of cases. Reformulation allows us to capture nuances and details of the case that we did not theoretically anticipate, or to relax simplifying but unrealistic assumptions (for example, replacing the unitary state assumption with a specification of domestic interests). It allows us to revise rather than reject the model. In this sense, it is not unlike the use of different models in statistical work, or different specifications within any particular model. The corresponding defect is that revision undercuts testing, and heavy-handed revision merges into curve fitting. This even erodes the logic of discovery if patching up a model to fit a case displaces the effort to identify a very small number of unexpected revisions that improve our understanding. In the extreme case, we end up “rationalizing” the model rather than testing it.¹⁶

But while “rationalization” is certainly a concern, rational choice offers safeguards that limit the danger posed. First, formalization restricts curve fitting. As noted, it is difficult to generate a reasonable model that produces a particular result, especially since formalization makes assumptions and arguments explicit and subject to scrutiny. Verbal theory (“soft rational choice”) provides more latitude in this respect, but even here the theory imposes significant limitations on acceptable explanations. Arguments drummed up to rescue the empirical failings of a model are more likely to appear ad hoc when compared to the systematic theory. Second, the emphasis on parsimony works against curve fitting in both formal and verbal theory. (To expand the analogy, it is more difficult to “curve-fit” with a straight line than with a higher-order polynomial, or with one or two independent variables rather than with many variables.) Third, rational choice’s aspirations to generalization limit its ability to modify models to fit particular cases. Finally, and most important, rational choice has adopted methodological strategies to limit

the possibility of rationalization. The much-maligned assumption of fixed preferences, for example, arises not from a metaphysical belief that preferences are fixed but from methodological considerations of enabling empirical disconfirmation through limiting the possibilities of “curve fitting” via imputed preferences.¹⁷

Thus, rational choice is caught between the “rock” of empirical criticisms and the “hard place” of theoretical (constructivist) criticisms of its conception of international politics. Fixed preferences increase the potential for falsifying a rational model but make it difficult to accommodate change in the character of actors and of the system. However, this difficult trade-off is not unique to rational choice. It emerges from the more general problem of reconciling expansive theory with empirical testability. In other words, the “revealed preference” problem, whereby rational choice explanations tend to tautology if preferences are induced from behavior, is no more or less severe than the “*revealed norm*” problem of constructivism when social “norms” are induced from observation of social practice.

Although the empirical application of rational choice has lagged behind its theoretical development, a significant and growing amount of attention has been devoted to testing rational-choice-based theories using both quantitative and qualitative methods. On the quantitative side, an excellent example is the emphasis on empirical analysis in the “expected utility” theory of war pioneered by Bruce Bueno de Mesquita (1981). In addition to strengthening the attention to theoretical issues over earlier correlational investigations, this line of analysis has paid careful attention to the difficult measurement problems inherent in expected utility arguments and, especially as it has developed into a fully strategic model, to the difficult problems of estimation associated with equilibrium predictions (Signorino, 1999; Smith, 1999). The implications of the theory are testable, and it has received considerable empirical support (Bennett and Stam, 2000;

Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, 1992), but also much criticism. The point here is not whether the theory is right or wrong but that it demonstrates that quantitative testing is an achievable goal for rational choice arguments.¹⁸

A second cumulative empirical agenda guided by rational choice has been the analysis of sanctions. The basic model is of one actor (the “sender”) imposing a demand on another actor (the “target”) and threatening to impose a sanction unless the demand is met. In addition to a progression of theoretical efforts to develop improved models of sanctioning (Drezner, 1999; Kirschner, 1997; Martin, 1992; Smith, 1995; Tsebelis, 1990), there has been extensive empirical work in both the qualitative and quantitative traditions to evaluate the theoretical claims (Dashti-Gibson et al., 1997; Drezner, 1999, 2000; Drury, 1998; Pape, 1997; Shambaugh, 1999). Debate continues on the efficacy of sanctions, on the selection of evidence, and on exact theoretical specifications, but there is no debate that this is a serious effort to join theory and data.

On the more qualitative side, rational choice has implicitly underpinned many important arguments which have been evaluated through historical and comparative case studies. One of the difficulties here, as noted earlier, is that rational choice arguments are so pervasive that it is sometimes easier to distinguish analyses that are predominantly not rational choice (for example, organization theory, normative, psychological) rather than ones based on rational choice. Nevertheless, a list of empirical analyses that are closely tied to rational choice theory would include such important books as those by Vinod Aggarwal (1996) on international debt, Jeffry Frieden (1991) on debt and development, Robert Gilpin (1981) on war and change, Hein Goemans (2000) on war termination, Joanne Gowa (1994) on alliances and trade, Joseph Grieco (1990) on the Tokyo Round, Lloyd Gruber (2000) on NAFTA, David Lake (1999) on US foreign policy, Lisa Martin (2000) on making credible

commitments, Walter Mattli (1999) on regional integration, Ronald Mitchell (1994) on environmental compliance, Helen Milner (1997) on domestic politics and IR, Andrew Moravcsik (1998) on European integration, Kenneth Oye (1992) on economic discrimination, Beth Simmons (1994) on interwar monetary politics, Jack Snyder (1991) on imperial overextension, Daniel Verdier (1994) on trade policy, and even Stephen Walt (1987) on alliance formation.¹⁹ This is necessarily a partial list of books, and it ignores the much greater number of relevant articles.²⁰ But it certainly illustrates an impressive quantity and range of empirical applications significantly guided by rational choice. It also illustrates a wide variety of styles in the empirical application of rational choice. Some use explicit models to guide their analysis, others use verbal models as heuristics to guide their verbal argument, and still others simply focus on goal-seeking behavior as their fundamental explanatory factor.

Qualitative testing of models based in whole or in part on rational choice has the same possibilities and drawbacks as similar tests of other theories. However, there are two routes (neither exclusive to rational choice) by which this capacity can be enhanced. First, the generality and systematic character of rational choice makes it particularly well suited for evaluation through connected case studies. The potential for development in this regard is seen in comparing the early Cooperation Under Anarchy project (Oye, 1986) to the recent Rational Design project (Koremenos et al., 2001a). The Oye volume shows the value of using very general rational choice insights (for example, “Iteration promotes cooperation in PD”) to guide understanding across a wide range of empirical cases. The RD project builds on this by increasing the specificity of independent and dependent variables and developing a series of precise conjectures based directly on formal rational choice results (for example, “Institutional flexibility will increase with uncertainty”). These institutional design conjectures can be clearly

evaluated in specific cases and are sometimes found wanting. However, the overall success of the conjectures demonstrates the value of rational choice for understanding international institutional design.

Second, Robert Bates et al. (1998) have coined the term “analytic narratives” to describe a more systematic use of rational choice as a qualitative empirical research tool for individual case studies.²¹ Their method uses a rational choice framework to guide the description of the case in terms of actors, preferences, choices, environmental constraints, strategic interdependencies, etc., and then invokes stronger theoretical results to assess the underlying mechanisms that lead to equilibrium outcomes. Its distinctiveness rests on a self-conscious effort to connect explicit and detailed rational choice models to historical events. In doing so, analytic narratives engage the tension between the formal logic and parsimony of the rational choice framework on the one hand, and an effort to capture specific contexts and analysis of developments over time characteristic of the narrative on the other hand. This combination has attractive advantages, including opening up the rational choice framework by pushing for a deeper and tighter analysis of the underlying mechanisms of change. The analytic side encourages generalization while the narrative side encourages closer contextual specification. While the approach can be seen as a form of rational choice imperialism, the authors argue it can more fruitfully be understood as an effort to find a “middle ground.”

The rhetoric of “analytic narratives” is exaggerated in a number of respects. First, the approach is not as novel as the name which, as Bates et al. (2000) point out, effectively describes what a number of rational choice and other case specialists have already been doing without the label. In particular, the well-established approach of “process tracing” (George and McKeown, 1985) is similar in spirit and can be applied using a variety of theoretical perspectives (for example, analytical Marxism, prospect theory).

Nevertheless, Jon Elster (2000: 694), in an otherwise unyielding critique of analytical narratives, argues that rational choice has a special advantage because it “is the only theory in the social sciences capable of yielding sharp deductions and predictions.” Of course, this requires that the predictions are sharp – a potential problem if multiple equilibria are pervasive – and that ex post choice among ex ante predictions doesn’t dull the sharpness of the latter.

This richness of predictions poses a challenge for the use of analytic narratives. Proponents present it as a method not only of interpretation and theoretical discovery but of “testing” – although these are rarely so neatly separated in practice – whereas critics may see it as little more than a more formalized approach to curve fitting (Dessler, 2000; Green and Shapiro, 1994). As with any case-oriented approach, this limitation is attenuated (but not eliminated) to the extent that the narrative explains a rich variety of facts within the case and to the extent the same theory fits across cases (King et al., 1994; Van Evera, 1997). Analytical narratives are stronger tools than process tracing or other qualitative approaches to the extent that rationalist theory restricts the range of predictions, and enable skepticism, if not strict falsification, of the application. By this reasonable standard of comparison, analytic narratives hold substantial potential.

Elster’s severe critique of analytic narratives implicitly applies to any systematic explanation that would meet (say) the standards of Green and Shapiro (1994). It nevertheless contains a series of points that should promote modesty in the development of analytic narratives in IR. First, actors should not be endowed with extraordinary powers of computation (for example, able to anticipate complicated strategic contingencies over long periods, or to deal rationally with any type of uncertainty). Overly sophisticated models that require equally sophisticated actors are not plausible representations of the international life, and these complications make testing that much harder. Second, Elster

is suspicious of aggregate actors such as the states, international organizations, or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that populate many IR arguments. While his preferred solution of disaggregating down to individuals is generally impractical – as well as denying the importance of collective properties that cannot be captured in the individual units – his alternative solution that the “aggregate as actor” assumption be justified is wholly appropriate. This also provides insight into state “preferences,” a point I expand on below. Finally, Elster makes the important point that rational choice models not only must recognize that rational motives need not be material but, equally importantly, that they coexist with other motivations whose impact may not be understood through rational models. Thus, strategic actors can be moral, and moral actors can be strategic. This delimits the scope of rational approaches, but it doesn’t necessarily undermine their power. Proper scope delimitation should make rational choice more effective in the range it applies (Abbott and Snidal, 2002).

Whether in response to its critics or simply as a natural continuation of its research program, rational choice is responding to its weaknesses as an empirically applied theory. The resulting growth in empirical work will have several salutary effects. Closer attention to empirical issues promotes explanations that are “thicker” in specifying key features and context of issues and in identifying underlying mechanisms. While empirical successes in explanation and systematic testing will strengthen the grounds for accepting these explanations, empirical failures will identify aspects of international politics that rational choice does not explain well. Proponents will treat failures as anomalies that need to be accommodated. This will occur first through retrofitting and reformulating the theory – a form of curve fitting which is inherently unsatisfactory from a testing perspective but may be illuminating both of the individual case and of more general mechanisms. The ultimate empirical test, of course, is whether these reformulated

models have a more general applicability to other empirical cases.

SUBSTANTIVE CHALLENGES FOR RATIONAL CHOICE

The ultimate challenge for rational choice is not whether it has been too formal or has focused insufficiently on empirical matters in the past, but how well it can handle emerging issues in the future. While many of these issues will be driven by changing substantive problems – increasing globalization, shifting economic and military power, emerging issues, and so forth – rational choice will be judged by how it addresses the theoretical and empirical questions that they raise. To explore these prospects, I consider three important questions that face international relations in theory and practice.

Incorporating dynamics and change

Rational choice might seem ineffective for studying change. The concept of equilibrium is inherently static since it is defined as the absence of any tendency to change. And the standard way to model “dynamic” choice is by redefining it as a static choice of an optimal strategy for all time, typically under an assumption of stable preferences (Kreps, 1990). Thus, even game models that represent sequences of choices through time, whether in the extensive form or as repeated play of a normal form game, typically take the fundamental structure of the situation as fixed and then focus on determining the equilibrium outcome.

Change is usually introduced through comparative static analysis of how the equilibrium shifts in response to exogenous change. The actual dynamic process and time path are not described, but bracketed under the assumption that actors adjust to a new equilibrium as it emerges. This failure to engage the process and mechanisms of

change becomes even more glaring when there are multiple equilibria so that choice among equilibria also needs to be explained. This is a particular shortcoming of the cooperation literature where the central question of when or how there will be a transition between equilibria – from anarchy to cooperation, or from one cooperative arrangement to another – is thereby ignored. Similarly, for historical analysis, it leaves open the question of when the prevailing equilibrium path will persist for reasons of path dependency or when there will be a shift to a superior time path.

There are some examples of more properly dynamic IR rational choice analysis. Power-transition theory (Gilpin, 1981; Organski and Kugler, 1980) argues that rapid shifts in power caused, for example, by differential economic growth will make war more likely. Powell (1999b) proposes a formal model that emphasizes the informational problems. By decomposing the concept of power shift, he shows that the size of a shift affects the probability of war but that its speed does not. James Fearon (1997) deepens this analysis by making shifts in power endogenous as concessions between states affect their future power balance. His finding that such changes do not lead to war (except in specifiable and unlikely circumstances) is an excellent example of a nonobvious result that could only be found through formalization.²²

This sort of change, while important, is only partial. The reason is that the underlying substantive interpretation is deeply rooted in realism. Realism is fundamentally a theory of stasis that is premised on an enduring international anarchy with states as the primary actors.²³ Rational choice offers a number of analyses of change within this overarching “anarchy” equilibrium. Change is typically driven by shifts in the distribution of power; adjustment mechanisms include war, changing coalition patterns (Niou et al., 1989; Wagner, 1986), or decisions to acquire arms (Intriligator and Brito, 1984). Similarly, realist analysis of political economy incorporates change driven by a changing distribution

of power – as in hegemonic stability theory (Gilpin, 1981). Although all of these analyses focus on change at one level, their underlying presumption is that the overall system is stable. However, this restriction on the scope of change inheres in substantive assumptions drawn from realist theory rather than in the rational choice approach.²⁴

Rational choice analyses of cooperation and institutions introduce the possibility of broader change in international politics.²⁵ The cooperation literature establishes the possibility of attaining a different equilibrium than envisioned by realists. Institutions are seen as facilitating the attainment of cooperative equilibria and reinforcing and stabilizing those equilibria over time. Important mechanisms include improving information about potential joint gains from cooperation, reassuring actors that others also intend to join in the cooperative equilibrium, and providing timely information about behavior to diminish incentives to cheat. The impact cumulates within actors as they learn about the world and about each other, and changes their individual expectations regarding each other’s preferences and behavior. It also takes place at the collective level through the creation of norms of behavior and shared beliefs about the new equilibrium outcome. Here, rational choice moves beyond its individualism since equilibria and common knowledge are properties of the collective. Through this, institutional analysis is developing an analysis of institutions as independent factors in international politics and, possibly in some cases, as autonomous actors.

The foregoing is only a sketch of the past and evolving trajectory of rational choice institutionalism. My purpose is to show that rational choice potentially encompasses a wide range of change in international politics, although it has not fulfilled this broad agenda by any means. How successfully it can meet the constructivist challenge of explaining fundamental change in actor preferences (and identity), as well as change in the international political settings, remains

an active research question. My claim is only that it has the potential to do much in this regard.

Before turning to some (slightly) more detailed considerations of actor and preference change, let me distinguish two reasons why IR rational choice analysis has been reluctant to take on such issues. The first is because of substantive assumptions that are used in specific arguments but are not intrinsic to rational choice. Most realist analyses and some institutionalist analyses reject the assumption of fundamental change by maintaining a substantive emphasis on states as the central actors with constant goals and facing problems analytically similar to those of the past. Other analyses accept the notion of change both through institutions and within actors, but tend to see it operating more incrementally. This goes to a second methodological reason for reluctance to incorporate change, which essentially goes back to the revealed preference problem. Because considerations of change introduce even more flexibility into rational models, and preferences cannot be directly observed, the concern is that explanation will reduce to tautology. To avoid this, rational choice imposes limits on itself, such as fixed preferences. But in doing so it also limits its ability to examine possibly important phenomena. The next section considers some possible strategies for improving its analysis of changes in actors and in preferences.

Endogenous actors and preferences

Rational choice has traditionally assumed that the actors and interests are fixed in any analysis and has explained change in terms of changing constraints. The reason is that preferences are impossible to observe directly, whereas constraints are usually more observable. Under these conditions, fixed preferences allow for a tight analysis of many issues in an empirically falsifiable way, whereas assumptions of changing preferences lead to slippery and untestable arguments. However,

the fixed preference assumption is not always valid and cannot handle all problems. In an article that is widely cited to justify the fixed preferences assumption, Stigler and Becker (1977) assert “not that we are clever enough to make illuminating applications of utility-maximizing theory to all important phenomena ... [but that] no other approach of remotely comparable power and generality is available.” Their central argument is that fixed preferences *sometimes* provide a powerful analytic premise, whereas “assumptions of unstable tastes ... really have only been ad hoc arguments that disguise analytical failures.”²⁶

Even this position – or at least the conventional interpretation of it – is overstated. Becker (1992, 1996) has moved well beyond it to consider “the evolution of preferences out of past experiences [which] seems far more intuitive, even when extended to institutions and culture, than the opposite assumption so dominant in economics that preferences are independent of the path.” These two positions – which Becker reconciles through the notion of stable meta-preferences – reflect the tension between sound methodological strategies and addressing certain, substantively important problems. IR rational choice analysis faces the same tension between maintaining the power of the approach while expanding its scope of coverage. Here I briefly sketch several different ways in which it can do so.²⁷

While treating states as aggregate actors with well-defined preferences is often a troublesome assumption for rational choice analysis, enriching the assumption provides a useful window for analyzing preference change. In IR, this has occurred as part of an effort to create a richer understanding of “state” motivations by unpacking them into their domestic components, both theoretically and empirically (Milner, 1998; Walsh, 2001).²⁸ A wide range of examples includes analyses of political and economic coalitions (Frieden, 1991; Milner, 1988; Moravcsik, 1997; Rogowski, 1989), the analysis of two-level games (Evans et al., 1993; Putnam,

1988), principal–agent models (Downs and Rocke, 1995), audience costs (Fearon, 1994), domestic commitment problems (Drezner, 2001), and macro-historical explanations of the evolution and changes in state preferences (Rosecrance, 1986; Spruyt, 1994). The logic is that aggregate preference change can be explained in terms of the changing relative influence of underlying constituencies, and their coalitional behavior, even where the preferences of the underlying constituencies are stable. Preference change can also result from variations in the regime type that determine how groups are aggregated (Goemans, 2000) or, within regime type, by variations in the specific aggregation rules (Rogowski, 1999). Such derivations of aggregate preferences impose strong theoretical and empirical requirements, but they offer a way to specify state preferences independently of observed state behavior.

A different type of preference change occurs when new actors with different goals enter an issue. Globalization, for example, may empower new actors ranging from activists to experts to firms. Insofar as they can be treated as goal-seeking actors, rational choice can explore the implications of their addition to the international setting. Of course, the heterogeneity of these new actors dramatically increases the complexity of the problem being analyzed and makes modeling more difficult. For that reason, analysis will lean toward soft rational choice informed by formal results. Examples of introducing non-state actors include bankers (Lipson, 1986), ship owners (Mitchell, 1994), environmental NGOs (Raustiala, 1997), soldiers (Morrow, 2001), airlines (Richards, 2001) and international business firms (Mattli, 2001). Indeed, even Keck and Sikkink's (1998) constructivist analysis of transnational activists treats them as strategically rational agents at the international level. While this illustrates the complementarity of constructivist and rational approaches in examining the impact of new actors, there is no reason in principle why rational choice explanations may not be valuable in explaining the emergence of

these nonstate international actors through the same logic used to explain the rise of domestic interest groups (Hansen, 1991; Schattschneider, 1935).

A third case is that of deliberate decisions to change actors and their preferences. This occurs when the members of an international arrangement, and therefore the preferences of the relevant actors, are objects of choice. Rational choice has had some preliminary empirical success in addressing membership within international institutions as a solution to an institutional design problem (Downs, et al., 2000; Koremenos, et al., 2001c). The new members can be states, but they also can be firms or NGOs admitted to participate on some international problem (Raustiala, 1997) or IOs that are either created or empowered on some issue (Abbott and Snidal, 1998; Thompson, 2001). In other cases, the membership is fixed but some actors seek to change the nature of other actors. Examples include human rights activists who seek internal reform in repressive states, international financial institutions that require program beneficiaries to adopt market reforms, or organizations such as the EU and NATO that impose "democracy" requirements on prospective members.

Finally, actors sometimes deliberately seek change in their own national "preferences." This is what free trade coalitions hope will be the case as noncompetitive industries decline and what political leaders seek when they bind themselves to international arrangements to solve commitment problems (Drezner, 2001). States also engage in processes ranging from joint scientific research to cultural and political exchanges in order to learn more about the world, about each other, and about their joint expectations. By changing not only their own information but also their shared beliefs with respect to equilibrium behavior, they change their preferences over courses of action even if their underlying preferences are stable. Again, if the processes strengthen the relative position of some domestic actors, that may also change aggregate state preferences. More dramatically,

states make rational plans to join international institutions such as the EU, WTO, or international legal agreements with the understanding – often reflected in resistance from some quarters – that those institutions will significantly shape their own future course. Rational choice has a largely unfulfilled role to play in analyzing this sort of deliberate preference change.

The examples illustrate different strategies for introducing preference change through aggregation processes, the introduction of additional actors, through the choice of actors, or through changing information and the external institutional environment. They are speculative, although in each case some progress has been made. But these approaches also raise tensions between the advantages of parsimony and the value of empirical richness, and between formal and softer analyses. Finally, despite these possibilities, rational choice (and for that matter, other approaches) should remain modest about the extent to which it can offer systematic analyses of the complicated problem of actor and preference change.

Normative and policy analysis

Because the research impetus of rational choice has been heavily “scientific” such that it is even labeled “positive” theory, both proponents and critics often see it as far removed from normative analysis. This is ironic since rational choice began as a normative enterprise (Stein, 1999) and lends itself readily to normative analysis, at least along the utilitarian lines from which it developed. So it is fair to say that rational choice in IR has not fulfilled its normative potential, but not fair to say that it cannot do so (Wendt, 2001).

Rational choice already contains important normative elements. At an individual actor level, it is implicitly a theory of how people should behave – what is the best choice? – in a given situation. At a collective level, it examines how groups can do better through cooperation to attain a superior equilibrium. But while these efficiency

considerations have important normative content – and, to reiterate, efficiency need not be defined in terms of material interests – rational choice can and should engage other normative considerations.

Distributional questions are slowly emerging as an important area of inquiry in IR rational choice and bring both a positive and normative dimension. Theoretical work has moved beyond the use of coordination problems to exemplify “the” distributional problem to a realization (especially via the folk theorem) that distributional issues are pervasive. An important literature has emerged exploring how distributional differences inhibit cooperative efficiency gains (Fearon, 1998; Krasner, 1991; Morrow, 1994a). Empirical work has begun to examine the impact of cooperative arrangements on distributive outcomes at both the international and domestic levels (Goldstein, 1996; Gruber, 2000; Oatley and Nabors, 1998). By emphasizing that there may be losers as well as winners from “cooperative” schemes, analysis of this sort invites a normative evaluation of the achieved equilibrium in comparison to alternative possibilities.

Institutional design questions bring rational choice yet closer to normative analysis. Analyses of institutional arrangements have addressed how issue linkage (Mitchell and Keilbach, 2001; Sebenius, 1983), membership (Koremenos et al., 2001c; Pahre, 2001), and incorporation of escape clauses and other forms of flexibility (Koremenos, 2001) can remedy distributional impediments to cooperation. Since institutional analysis is premised on the analysis of alternative equilibria, it is a short step from asking what institutions states *will* design to asking what institutions they *should* design. For example, bargaining models typically predict the outcome among individuals in particular circumstances but can equally be used to ask what protocols and institutions will lead to preferred outcomes. Brams and Taylor (1996) illustrate the possibilities in their investigation of how to devise fair allocation devices among rational agents. IR has only begun to engage this type of analysis, but rational choice is

eminently suited for it and already offers a large number of insights (Young, 1994).

It is less clear how fully rational choice can incorporate other normative issues – such as justice, appropriateness, or autonomy – but it can certainly contribute to an analysis of their impact in IR. Of course, insofar as other values can be treated as objectives of actors, rational choice can readily incorporate them. Despite the danger of trivializing other values by simply relabeling them as interests, this can be valuable for understanding their impact (and perhaps the impact of the actors who carry them), as well as the possibilities of and strategies for attaining them. Finally, by showing that good institutional design must be consistent with interests to be effective, rational choice can help normative analysis avoid foundering on naïve idealism.

Rational choice can further benefit by addressing the “positive” impact of normative conceptions by way of their influence on actors’ behavior. This is one of the central insights raised by constructivist critiques of interest-based approaches. Rational choice often has nodded implicitly to it through reference to the role of normative considerations in creating “focal points” to guide choice among multiple equilibria. But no adequate theory of focal points – normative or otherwise – has been developed.

Another area where normative considerations appear important is in international legalization. Rational choice has now begun to explain the form and content of legalization (Goldstein et al., 2000). While significant insights have been generated in seeking to explain legalization from a strictly rationalist perspective (Goldsmith and Posner, 1999, 2002a, 2002b), a purist approach may overlook the normative force of law reflected in such key concepts as legitimacy, obligation, or compliance pull (Abbott and Snidal, 2000, 2002; Hurrell, 1993; Finnemore and Toope, 2002). Because these concepts are notoriously vague, however, rational choice can play an important role in tightening the theoretical discussion and sorting out the logic of the claims. An important example is

the debate on compliance initiated by the Downs et al. (1996) critique of “managerial approaches” (Chayes and Chayes, 1995) and its extension into a more general critique of the legal “transformationalist” school (Downs et al., 2000). However, the goal should not be to show how rational choice can make the normative perspective redundant, but to explain how rational incentives and normative understandings interact through legalization.

A turn to normative questions also suggests a need to shift the emphasis of tools within the rational choice toolkit. Primary concern for problems of enforcement and associated problems of commitment and information led to an emphasis on noncooperative game theory as the appropriate method of analysis. While enforcement remains an important issue, it is not the only one. Other models that de-emphasize enforcement problems may be more valuable for these new problems. Cooperative game theory with its focus on how the gains from cooperation are divided may provide better insights into distributional issues.²⁹ Similarly, attention to questions of mechanism design – that is, how to design institutional arrangements so as to achieve the desired ends – may be more relevant as the field shifts to address normative issues.³⁰ Now, instead of using rational choice to ask the positive question “Given actors’ interests and (institutional and other) constraints, what will be the outcome?,” we turn the analysis around to ask “Given actors’ interests, how should we rearrange institutional constraints to achieve our normatively desired outcome?” Rational choice analysis in IR is barely on the threshold of asking such questions, but they are the means through which its normative and policy potential can be unleashed.

CONCLUSION

While the analysis of IR in terms of goal-seeking agents has long been a central part of IR theory, rational choice analysis has

become more explicitly theoretical by drawing upon both formal and informal analytic results. Its considerable successes have led to optimism and even arrogance regarding its future prospects, but there have also been failures and shortcomings which critics appropriately have been quick to point out. Rational choice cannot resolve all of these challenges, but by addressing them seriously it can increase its own power to enhance our understanding of international affairs.

The view of rational choice adopted here is expansive. In particular, I did not draw a line between formal and soft rational choice because their relation is highly symbiotic. Formal results often provide the hard kernel behind softer analysis, while softer analysis encourages a wider range of interpretation and application of the model. For this reason, soft rational choice approaches lie behind many of the empirical tests of the theory because they facilitate the adaptation of the abstract theory to different issues, cases, and historical periods.

While rational choice has numerous shortcomings, some of its seeming failings are best understood either as important features of the world or as a result of appropriately cautious strategies for analyzing it. The existence of multiple equilibria, for example, may indicate not a failure of a model but an important indeterminacy in the world, and in our ability to predict outcomes. Of course, it remains a reasonable goal for rational choice – in concert or in competition with other approaches – to explain how and why a specific equilibrium is attained. Similarly, rational choice models that leave out important considerations such as change in preferences thereby restrict their ability to handle some important international issues. But this limitation may have a benefit in allowing other questions to be studied more carefully. Of course, rational choice should seek to expand its range of coverage with regard to excluded issues but, in doing so, it should remember that the power of its analysis rests partly on the limits it imposes. Without such limits, rational choice (like other approaches)

explains nothing by pretending to explain everything.

Thus rational choice in IR should be neither defensive nor arrogant. It does not have to be defensive because it has led to significant advances in our understanding of international politics. Many of its limitations are self-imposed for good reasons, and others provide challenges that it can be expected to address. But rational choice should not be arrogant, because its critics have identified significant shortcomings in its theoretical and empirical work. Rational choice cannot answer all these challenges, and the answers it can give are often “soft” compared to its aspirations.

NOTES

I thank an anonymous referee, Susan Pratt, Alexander Thompson, and the editors of this volume for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

1 For a representative range of critiques, not all specifically addressed to international relations, see Elster, 1989; Friedman, 1996; Green and Shapiro, 1994; Katzenstein, 1996; Monroe, 2001; Ruggie, 1998; Walt, 1999; Wendt, 1999; Yee, 1997.

2 For other recent efforts to look at this question from different perspectives, see Lake and Powell, 1999a, a number of the articles in Katzenstein et al., 1998, and Hasenclever et al., 1997.

3 Fearon and Wendt (2002) discuss the relation between constructivism and rationalism.

4 As always, the word “theory” is a bit elusive here. Rational choice is essentially a normative theory of how actors should choose in different (abstract) circumstances that becomes a positive theory when actors are assumed rational and the empirical circumstances (e.g., of IR) are specified. Formalization introduces a parallel mathematical “theory” which provides an abstract representation with minimal substantive content. A particular empirical interpretation of this abstract theory turns it into a substantive theory.

5 I thank Thomas Risse for pressing me on this point.

6 Here and elsewhere I use specific references as iconic representations of work in the field. There are too many relevant contributions to provide an exhaustive bibliography.

7 Axelrod’s work on the evolution of cooperation (1984) and agent-based models (1997; see also

Cederman, 1997) are illustrative. See also Rubinstein's (1998) effort to model bounded rationality and Fearon and Wendt (2002).

8 Even differences within rational choice methodology – for example, over the use of one solution concept rather than another – are ultimately debates over how the actors would (or should) handle a particular problem.

9 Powell (1999b) and Lake and Powell (1999b) provide a good overview of important issues pertaining to the use of models in international relations. See Walt (1999), for a critique and the subsequent responses by Bueno de Mesquita and Morrow (1999), Martin (1999), Niou and Ordeshook (1999), Powell (1999a), and Zagare (1999).

10 Allan and Dupont (1999) provide an excellent overview of the diversity of alternative models. They develop a typology of 16 different types of social model, of which they categorize 8 as rational. They also pay special attention to the relation between model choice and empirical applicability.

11 The "folk theorem" says that any feasible payoff combination can be an equilibrium in an ongoing interaction provided that the players are sufficiently patient (i.e., don't discount the future too heavily) and that every player receives at least as much as they can guarantee themselves even if everyone else gangs up on them. An important consequence is that most such interactions will have "multiple equilibria."

12 See Hasenclever et al., 1997, for an excellent overview of this debate.

13 A clear success is the introduction of "subgame perfection" to eliminate incredible threats, while concepts such as sequential or Perfect Bayesian equilibria have also been widely used to good effect. But the value and empirical applicability of more complicated equilibrium "refinements" has been increasingly challenged (Allan and Dupont, 1999).

14 This does not mean that the actor must be able to "solve" the model or understand it in its entirety, but it must be able to reasonably perform the tasks assigned to it. For example, an international negotiator need not understand the Arrow (1951) theorem in order to recognize opportunities for strategic agenda setting or linkage.

15 Well-known deviations include the bureaucratic and psychological schools of decision-making, especially the literature which builds on work such as that by Kahneman and Tversky (1979) in challenging rational choice directly (Levy, 1997). Some of the internal rational choice critiques of key concepts such as discounting (Laibson, 1997) and risk (Rabin and Thaler, 2001) also suggest limits inherent in the logical theory as a representation of rational decision making.

16 Without diverting my argument that rational choice can meet the challenge of testing head-on, the value of curve-fitting in IR should not

be dismissed. Establishing systematic empirical relations is a real contribution to a field that remains fairly short of clear and systematic facts. The 'democracies don't go to war' correlation, for example, has stimulated important work on both the theoretical and empirical fronts. Even identifying a situation as fitting a particular model (e.g., as prisoners' dilemma) may enhance our understanding of it.

17 See not only the standard cite to Stigler and Becker (1977) but Marshall's (1910) early discussion of preferences and time periods.

18 For a critique of the empirical contributions of rational choice, including the expected utility theory of war, see Walt (1999), and replies by Bueno de Mesquita and Morrow (1999), Martin (1999), Niou and Ordeshook (1999), Powell (1999), and Zagare (1999).

19 The most controversial inclusion here is (deliberately) the work of Walt, who has been highly critical of rational choice and especially formal models. See Frieden, 1999: 50–1 for a cogent analysis of Walt's work as fitting in the rational choice tradition – or at least of how it could be improved by a more self-conscious attention to the (soft, not formal) rational choice approach.

20 Consider also examples such as Goldstein (1993), and Goldstein and Keohane (1993), which are critical of rational choice as too limited (by leaving out ideas) but proceed in a largely complementary manner; works such as Spruyt (1994) that engage important elements of rational choice arguments but move significantly beyond them; or works such as Pape (1996) that use a rational choice framework to sort out different verbal arguments.

21 Analytic narratives can be seen partly as an elaboration of earlier discussions of the use of rational choice approaches in "interpretive" accounts (Ferejohn, 1991; Johnson, 1991). Indeed, the possibility of its strictly interpretive usage reminds us that rational choice has no necessary connection with positivism and "testing."

22 Another example of more dynamic analysis that has been applied to IR is Axelrod's (1984, 1997) analysis of the evolution of cooperation, which can be interpreted from a rational choice as well as other perspectives. It shows how dynamic processes of selection, imitation, or learning may lead to changed outcomes.

23 Thus, Robert Gilpin's (1981: 211) study of change maintains "that the nature of international relations has not changed fundamentally over the millennia." See also Waltz, 1979: 65–6, and Krasner, 1999, with respect to sovereignty.

24 Of course, the realist substantive position may be right. See Grieco, 1997, for a persuasive case for the value of studying the constant factors in international life across time and systems.

25 For a full treatment of international institutions, see Simmons and Martin's contribution to this

volume. Here, I offer more of a speculative sketch of the trajectory of rational choice approaches.

26 Choice over time also raises deep problems of inconsistency even when preferences are constant (Strotz, 1955–56), which are further aggravated by changing preferences (Hammond, 1976). One could interpret such results as indicating the inability of rational choice to deal with changing preferences over time. In my view, a superior interpretation is that the models reveal deep problems relevant to any analysis of changing preferences. See Schelling (1978) and Elster (1979), for extensions of these problems that bridge beyond rational choice, and Becker (1996), for an effort to incorporate them within rational choice.

27 See Milner (1998), for a general overview of the IR unitary actor assumption and Frieden (1999), for an overview of general issues and strategies for determining preferences.

28 Empirical work, often but not always closely guided by rational analysis, has taken the lead, but Milner (1998), discusses how theoretical rational choice can catch up with it.

29 The standard distinction between cooperative and noncooperative games is that agreements are binding in the former and not in the latter. Moulin (1995) argues that this misunderstands the self-enforcing nature of the core and other stability concepts in cooperative game theory. More important, for some IR problems – such as agreements within the EU or many agreements among the OECD countries – there is no more doubt that parties will abide by their agreements than in domestic contexts. In such cases, cooperative game models can allow for a tighter focus on the bargaining–distribution problem by de-emphasizing the enforcement problem.

30 I thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting that I mention this literature. For an overview of mechanism design, see Myerson (1991) and Mas-Colell et al., 1995; and, for a less technical introduction, see Dutta (1999).

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Constructivism in International Relations: Sources, Contributions, and Debates

Emanuel Adler

Fifteen years ago, constructivism was only beginning to be firmly established as a mainstream research approach in international relations (IR) and a challenger to other approaches, mainly rationalism. Today, constructivism has become firmly established in mainstream IR theory, both in North America and around the world.¹

However, during this period, five notable changes have taken place, affecting constructivism's location in the map of IR theory today. First, the so-called debates of the 'isms,' including a debate between constructivism and rationalism, have decreased markedly. Constructivism and rationalism seem instead either to be developing in parallel directions, thus showing that 'analytical eclecticism' – as Peter Katzenstein and Rudra Sil (2010) have called it – is taking roots in IR theory, or, as Jeffrey Checkel argues in this volume, that there has been a growing attempt to build bridges between different approaches. The most ambitious bridge-building projects actually aim at synthesis

(Jupille et al., 2003), whereas other projects, for example, on 'international practices' (Adler and Pouliot, 2011a, 2011b), aim at establishing a dialogue or conversation between the different 'isms'.

Second, constructivism has become 'naturalized' – scholars now research world politics from a constructivist or synthetic perspective without 'flag waving'. Not only have constructivism's research strategies matured, but placing social action in context, or the notion that social reality is constructed, have also become received wisdom even among some rationalists (Keohane, 2008).

Third, despite – or because of – the internal debates going on within constructivism, its 'middle ground' (Adler, 1997) has moved just a little closer to critical and linguistic constructivist approaches, without uncritically adopting their ontological and epistemological arguments. In other words, normative critical arguments, as well as discourse and practice analysis, are now more commonly used by mainstream constructivists

to understand the construction of social reality. This move has not affected established epistemological and methodological positions; some constructivists analyze discourses and practices in a style closer to a positivist research tradition (Risse, 2000), while others are firmly anchored in post-positivist research and methodological strategies (Pouliot, 2010; Williams, 2005).

Fourth, regardless of their epistemological and methodological viewpoints, constructivists of all stripes are largely engaged in empirical research as much as – if not more than – other research traditions. This should put to rest the argument still heard in some rationalist quarters that constructivists mostly engage in meta-theory while avoiding, or at best doing little, empirical research leading to meaningful findings.

Finally, while constructivists remain keenly interested in studying the construction of social reality by norms (Tannenwald, 2007) – now increasingly also by rights (Alkopher, 2007; Reus-Smit, 2011) – and the normative implications of such constructions (Price, 2008), the focus of constructivist analysis has shifted in the direction of identity and its strategic consequences (Checkel and Katzenstein, 2009; Mitzen, 2006; Risse 2010), power (Barnett and Duvall, 2005), military strategy (Adler, 2009, 2010; Fierke, 1998), practices (Adler and Pouliot, 2011a, 2011b), and habits (Hopf, 2010).

This chapter reflects these changes, but also updates constructivism's evolution during the last decade while at the same time trying to capture other important changes in its debates and research programs. It explores where constructivism came from, what brings constructivists together (and thus sets them apart from adherents of other IR approaches), and what divides constructivists. In particular, I show that constructivists deal extensively with metaphysics and social theories less for their own sake than because constructivism provides a firm basis for building better IR theories.

I also argue that despite divisions among constructivists, all of us (modernist,

modernist linguistic, and critical) – with the exception, perhaps, of the extreme post-structuralist wing of radical constructivism – share two understandings: what Stefano Guzzini (2000: 149) summarized as *the social construction of knowledge* and *the construction of social reality*. Combined, these understandings are constructivism's *common ground*, the view that because the material world does not come classified, the objects of our knowledge are not independent of our interpretations and our language, and are therefore social artefacts. This means that different collective meanings are attached to the material world twice – as social reality and as scientific knowledge. In other words, knowledge is both a resource that people use in their day-to-day lives for the construction of social reality, as well as the theories, concepts, meanings, and symbols that scientists use to interpret social reality.

This description is for analytical purposes only. Reflexive knowledge or interpretation *of* the world, when imposed on material reality, becomes knowledge *for* the world – the power to change the world in accordance with collective understandings and, concurrently, with human motives and intentional acts. So, not only is there no perfect correlation between objects 'out there' and our classifications of nature, but social facts, which are the objects of our study, emerge from the interaction between knowledge and the material world, both of which vary.

Unlike positivism² and materialism,³ which take the world as it is, constructivism sees the world as a project under construction, as *becoming* rather than being. Unlike idealism,⁴ post-structuralism, and postmodernism,⁵ which take the world *only* as it can be imagined or talked about, constructivism accepts that not all statements have the same epistemic value and consequently there is some foundation for knowledge.

I start by tracing four constructivist IR approaches to their philosophical and sociological roots and suggest a synthesis between pragmatism and realism. I then provide a brief historical account of the evolution

of IR constructivism. Next, I describe three aspects of IR constructivism: (1) the common ground (in ontology, epistemology, and methods); (2) conceptual contributions to IR theory (its 'added value'); and (3) substantive empirical contributions. A survey of the major debates within constructivism follows.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF CONSTRUCTIVISM

Constructivism, which reached the shores of IR in the 1980s, describes the dynamic, contingent, and culturally based condition of the social world. It has major implications for understanding knowledge, including scientific knowledge. Constructivism thus has the potential to transform the understanding of social reality in the social sciences. It stresses the reciprocal relationship between nature and human knowledge and suggests a view of the social sciences that is contingent, partly indeterminate, nominalist,⁶ and to some extent externally validated (Kuhn, 1970). With the exception of its radical post-modern wing, however, constructivism does not challenge science, rationalism, and modernity; it merely makes science more compatible with the constructivist understanding of social reality.

Let us begin by putting to rest the widely held assumption that constructivism is yet another IR 'ism', paradigm, or fashion, which, highlighting the role of norms in IR and offering a more optimistic approach to IR, has recently joined the ranks of 'realism' (neorealism) and 'liberalism' (neoliberalism). Constructivism is, in fact, a three-layered understanding – involving metaphysics,⁷ social theory, and IR theory and research strategies – of social reality and social science and of their dynamic, mutually constitutive effects.

First, constructivism is a *metaphysical stance* about the reality that scholars seek to know and about the knowledge with which

they seek to interpret reality. This position has been applied not only to IR but also to the social sciences in general (for example, sociology, psychology, and education) to mathematics, and, via the philosophy of science and the sociology of knowledge, to the natural sciences. Thus, from an IR perspective in which paradigms are associated with broad worldviews of international political life (such as realism, liberalism, and Marxism), constructivism is more like a paradigm of paradigms.

Second, building on the metaphysical position, constructivism is a *social theory* about the role of knowledge and knowledgeable agents in the constitution of social reality. It is as social theory, for example, that we should understand the role of intersubjectivity and social context, the co-constitution of agent and structure, and the rule-governed nature of society.

Finally, constructivism is an IR *theoretical and empirical perspective* that, building on the other two layers, maintains that IR theory and research should be based on sound *social* ontological and epistemological foundations. IR constructivism has led to new and important questions, for example, about the role of identities, norms, causal understandings, and power in the constitution of national interests, about institutionalization and international governance, and about the social construction of new territorial and nonterritorial transnational regions.

Debates within IR constructivism take place on all three levels: metaphysics, social theory, and IR theory. IR constructivists have often inadvertently 'jumped around' the levels without specifying whether the points they are making are about metaphysics, social theory, or IR. This may be one of the reasons for the misunderstanding and confusion that exist outside the constructivist camp and for the charges that constructivists do only 'metatheory'. Constructivists, however, are the first group of political scientists to have grounded IR theory on an explicit metaphysics and social theory. Not only does this grounding promote more realistic social assumptions; in

the wake of the flood of recent empirical constructivist work, it also disposes of the charge that IR constructivists are meta-theorists. Constructivists could not have reached level three (IR constructivist theory and research) without levels two and one (social theory and metaphysics). Indeed, constructivists could not have approached nonconstructivists without letting them know that the constructivist picture of the social world (and the way to attain knowledge of this world) is different than theirs. In fact, the argument of nonconstructivists – that IR does not need to be grounded on metaphysics and social theory, or that metaphysical and social theory assumptions should remain unspoken – is a social-constructivist move par excellence.

Because constructivism in the social sciences builds on centuries of intellectual developments in philosophy, sociology, and social theory, it is not easy to speculate about its origins. Nor is this the place for an intellectual history of constructivism. To illustrate the roots of the debates within IR constructivism, however, I present four currents of thought that have affected IR constructivism: neo-Kantian ‘objective hermeneutics’, linguistic ‘subjective hermeneutics’, critical theory, and pragmatist philosophy of science. I then describe four IR constructivist approaches – modernist, modernist linguistic, radical, and critical – which rely, directly or indirectly, on one or more of these currents of thought and a strategy for bridging between them.

Constructivism can be traced back to Immanuel Kant – whom Ian Hacking describes as ‘the great pioneer of constructivism’ (1999: 41) – and to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century ‘neo-Kantians’. Kant believed that although knowledge can tell us something about objective reality, it must nevertheless be ‘restricted to the realm of phenomena, or that which appears to consciousness’ (Delanty, 1997: 45). Neo-Kantians took Kant’s insight – that to know means imposing the a priori forms of our minds on the structures of nature – and carried it from nature to culture. For example, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,

Wilhelm Dilthey (1989) and Edmund Husserl (1962) set the human sciences apart from the natural sciences. Max Weber (1978) called for an autonomous social science, based on the understanding of meaning (*‘Verstehen’*) and the explanation of motivations that lead to actions.⁸ More recently (building on Alfred Schutz [1962]), Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) developed the concept of ‘the social construction of reality’. Neo-Kantianism, in sum, is an *objective approach to hermeneutics*.⁹ Working within the realm of reason, it stresses the need to understand consciousness. Because it believes in the possibility of attaining empirical knowledge without the mediation of language, it aims to explain society. However, neo-Kantianism rejects Carl Hempel’s (1965) covering-law type positivism,¹⁰ which aims at prediction, and prefers a ‘particularizing positivist strategy’¹¹ that reconstructs historical processes and narratives. Neo-Kantianism, which I call the ‘weak programme’ of constructivism in the social sciences, looms large in modernist versions of IR constructivism.¹²

Constructivism’s ‘strong programme’ in the social sciences is based on a turn from consciousness to language and from objective to *subjective hermeneutics*. Led by Martin Heidegger (1962) and Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953), this current of thought directly challenged positivism by arguing that social facts are constituted by the structures of language and that, accordingly, consciousness can be studied only as mediated by language. In general, the turn to linguistics radicalized the anti-positivist movement by taking science as being at best ‘forever constrained by its social context’ (Delanty, 1997: 53) and at worst as a discourse that cannot attain objective knowledge or criticize society. Peter Winch (1958), who argued that social action is ‘rule following’ within a concrete form of life (Delanty, 1997: 55), brought the radical linguistic logic to the social sciences. Post-structuralists such as Jacques Derrida (1978) and postmodernists such as Michel Foucault (1980), however, challenged

reason, science, and modernity, thereby bringing radical linguistics to its ultimate relativist destination. We can trace two IR constructivist approaches – a ‘modernist linguistic’ approach and a ‘radical’ approach – to constructivism’s strong programme in the social sciences.

Critical theory, which resulted from an attempt by the so-called Frankfurt school to turn a Marxist critique of political economy into a critique of ideology (Adorno, 1976; Horkheimer, 1972), falls between the weak and the strong programmes of constructivism in the social sciences (see also the chapter by Maja Zehfuss in this volume). Jürgen Habermas’s critique of instrumental rationality (1984, 1987) showed that the social sciences should abandon the cognitive interest in control, which is characteristic of instrumental rationality, in favour of a cognitive interest in emancipation. ‘Critical’ IR constructivism builds on Habermas’s blend of insights from the philosophy of language with beliefs in the objectivity of natural knowledge, the role of explanation in the social sciences, and human progress.

Another current of thought that bridges the weak and strong programmes of constructivism in the social sciences is *pragmatism*. Dismissing the Cartesian notion that we must choose between objectivism and relativism, pragmatism (Peirce, 1966; Dewey, 1977; James, 1975) suggests that we need to adjust our ideas about truth as experience unfolds (Smith, 1996: 23). More specifically, it underscores the role of choice, deliberation, judgement, and interpretation by communities of scientists who immerse themselves in a type of rational persuasion that must aspire, but cannot always be assimilated, to models of deductive proof or inductive generalization (Bernstein, 1985). For example, Thomas Kuhn’s (1970) pragmatist philosophy of science played a large role in the development of the four IR constructivist approaches mentioned earlier. Although not a pragmatist, Karl Popper (1982), who stressed the role of background expectations in the development of scientific theories, can also be said to

have contributed to the development of IR constructivism.

The philosophical and sociological approaches listed above have left their imprint on the various strands of IR constructivism. A *modernist* type of constructivism in IR (John Ruggie [1998a: 35] called it ‘neoclassical’) results from the combination of objective hermeneutics with a ‘conservative’ cognitive interest in understanding *and* explaining social reality. Thus, for example, IR modernist constructivists, such as Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (1998), Mlada Bukovansky (2002), Jeffrey Checkel (2001), Martha Finnemore (1996, 2003), Jeffrey Legro (2005), John Ruggie (1998a), Thomas Risse-Kappen (1995), Peter Katzenstein (1996), and Alexander Wendt (1999), uncover the causal social mechanisms and constitutive social relations that make IR more intelligible.

Modernist linguistic (or ‘rules’) constructivism results from the combination of subjective hermeneutics with a ‘conservative’ cognitive interest in explaining and understanding social reality. Modernist linguistic or rule-oriented constructivists, such as Friedrich Kratochwil (1989) and Nicholas Onuf (1989), believe that, because of the primacy of epistemology, understanding social reality means uncovering the processes by which social facts are constituted by language and rules. They are interested in explaining how social rules (including legal rules) and what John Austin (1962) and John Searle (1995) have called ‘speech acts’¹³ ‘make the process by which people and society constitute each other continuous and reciprocal’ (Onuf, 1998a: 59). Other proponents of modernist linguistic constructivism, such as Karen Litfin (1994), Neta Crawford (2002), Christian Reus-Smit (1999), Jutta Weldes (1999), and Ted Hopf (2002), though emphasizing discourse and its power to construct social reality, nevertheless conduct empirical historical and interpretive research aimed at understanding the emergence of social reality.

Radical constructivism in IR, which often embraces postmodern and post-structuralist

perspectives, results from a combination of a radical turn to language (and thus to subjective hermeneutics) with a dissident emancipatory or deconstructivist attitude toward knowledge in general. As such, it lies at the extreme edge of the strong programme of constructivism in the social sciences. In general, radical constructivists do not question the existence of material reality; most often they conduct empirical research (Der Derian, 1987; Doty, 1996; Weber, 1995; Hansen, 2006). However, because they believe that material reality cannot be truly represented, they are agnostic about material reality and prefer to concentrate on discourse, narratives, and texts (Ashley, 1987; Bially Mattern, 2005; Campbell, 1992; Hansen, 2006; Walker, 1993; Zehfuss, 2002). What drives many radical constructivists outside the constructivist 'common ground' is neither their emancipatory or deconstructivist cognitive interest, nor their insistence on uncovering power structures disguised as truth and their pessimistic view about the social world. Rather, it is their view that no statements can be more valid than others, that nothing can be done to assess the validity of normative and epistemic claims, and that science is accordingly just one more hegemonic discourse.

A number of feminist approaches have adopted radical constructivism. While generally IR feminists are uncomfortable with being subsumed under a constructivist umbrella, most consider gender as socially constructed (Locher and Prügel, 2001; Tickner, 1997) and as a code through which power operates. For most IR feminists, gender is an analytical category that allows them to highlight established hierarchies between masculine and feminine principles (Enloe, 1990; Sylvester, 2002; Tickner, 2001). According to post-structuralist feminists, binary oppositions that privilege the masculine principle, such as rational/emotional or autonomy/dependence, run through language. Most social relations are considered to be gendered in similar ways (Peterson, 2004). Ann Tickner (1997)

actually argues that the differences in ontology and epistemology between feminism and mainstream IR are gendered (see also the chapter 7 by Laura Sjöberg and Ann Tickner in this volume).

Critical constructivism in IR results from the combination of objective hermeneutics (mainly the approach of Habermas and his followers) with a dissident interest in the emancipatory effects of knowledge. Critical constructivists, such as Andrew Linklater (1998), Robert Cox (1986) (who follows Antonio Gramsci [1971]), Heather Rae (2002), Paul Keal (2003), and Craig Murphy (2005), share the view that striving for a better understanding of the mechanisms on which social and political orders are based is also a reflexive move aimed at the emancipation of society. In general, critical constructivists follow a pragmatist approach.

Pragmatic realism, a term I borrow from Hilary Putnam (1990) to designate a combination of modernist pragmatism and scientific realist philosophy (especially a 'critical realist' view of the construction of social reality),¹⁴ may provide a way to consolidate the common ground within IR constructivism. Pragmatic realism says that, although representations of the natural and social world are always made from a point of view and are thus interpretations, there nonetheless exists a material reality outside human interpretations; social facts emerge from the attachment of collective meaning to a previously existing material reality. It follows that rules evoking *reasons* for action, individuals' reasoning processes, and collective understandings within dialogical communities – all of which are part of a pragmatist interpretation of social reality – may also be interpreted as being part of the social mechanisms that scientific realists believe help explain social reality. These mechanisms, and the structures on which they are based, involve the intersubjective 'stuff' that makes material reality meaningful; they do not exist outside human practices. Hence, pragmatic realism does not assume the unity of the natural world and the social world.

THE EVOLUTION OF CONSTRUCTIVISM IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

One often reads (e.g., Price and Reus-Smit, 1997) that IR constructivism was a result of IR theory's 'third debate' (Lapid, 1989) and that the end of the Cold War made it popular (Hopf, 1998). This is true if one looks at the immediate conditions of its acceptance and growing influence, including the partial disenchantment with materialist and positivist views of social science and, in the wake of the Cold War's end, by the dismal record of prediction in IR. More generally, the IR discipline has also responded to some earth-shaking changes, such as the decline of sovereignty, the growing social and economic importance of knowledge, globalization, the Internet, and changes in the natural environment. These and other changes have been bringing home the post-positivist message that 'science is not independent of its object but constructs it' (Delanty, 1997: 8). Despite all this, it was in fact a century or more of interpretative sociological scholarship that penetrated IR at least a decade before the end of the Cold War that made IR constructivism possible.

Another common narrative, which is narrow and suffers from a short memory though it gives due credit to some pioneers of constructivism, is that in the beginning there was Onuf (1989), who coined the concept of constructivism in IR; then there was Wendt (1992b) – and the rest is history. To refine this narrative, we should add some synergetic links between people, trends, and research programs that made IR constructivism possible.¹⁵

Some of the credit for the development of IR constructivism should go to the radical constructivists who, in the late 1970s, shocked the IR community by building their arguments around Foucault (1980) and Derrida (1978). Dialectically, they opened a space for the development of less radical strands of constructivism, which I have identified as the

'middle ground' (Adler, 1997). Particularly influential were works by Richard Ashley (1987) on power, practice, and international community; by James Der Derian (1987) on diplomacy; by David Campbell (1992) on US foreign policy; by Andrew Linklater (1998) on moral community; and by Rob Walker (1993) on sovereignty. Also influential were the neo-Gramscian critical theory of Robert Cox (1986) and Ann Tickner's (1992) feminist theory. It was mainly their work that Yosef Lapid (1989) had in mind when he wrote his powerful article on the 'third debate' in IR theory.

IR constructivism, however, has older and deeper roots. Karl Deutsch et al. (1957) and Ernst Haas (1958) anticipated modernist constructivism. In the 1950s, Deutsch promoted a research programme on security communities which dealt with peaceful transnational collective identities. Deutsch himself was not a constructivist and favoured a positivist epistemology. His sociological approach, however, which emphasized social transactions and social communication, had an indelible influence on later developments in constructivism. For example, Peter Katzenstein (1996), who was a student of Deutsch, later edited a trail-blazing book on culture and national security. Many of its chapters were written by Katzenstein's students, who also became leading and widely published constructivists, including Audie Klotz (1995), Richard Price (1995), Christian Reus-Smit (1999), and Nina Tannenwald (2007). Also in this book, Alastair Johnston (1995) and Elizabeth Kier (1997) introduced a distinctive perspective on strategic culture. Later, Adler and Barnett (1998) put a constructivist spin on Deutsch's security community concept (see also Acharya, 2009; Adler, 1997; Adler and Greve, 2009; Bially Mattern, 2005; Risse-Kappen, 1995; Pouliot, 2010).

Although Raymond Duvall did not study with Deutsch, he collaborated with Bruce Russett, who did (Russett and Duvall, 1976). Duvall became the mentor of, among others, Alexander Wendt (1999), Michael Barnett

(1998), Roxanne Doty (1996), and Jutta Weldes (1999). In a seminal 1987 article, Wendt brought Giddens's (1979) structuration theory¹⁶ and scientific realism to the attention of IR scholars; David Dessler (1989) followed suit shortly thereafter. Wendt then wrote a series of very important articles (1992b, 1994, 1998) and a book (1999); these established him as the leading constructivist scholar. I am not saying that Duvall and Wendt owe their constructivist perspective to Deutsch. However, the substantive part of Wendt's theory deals with security-community-like collective identity formation. It is also noteworthy that in the early 1960s, Onuf, one of the most influential early constructivists, studied with Deutsch at Yale. According to Onuf, Deutsch 'got him thinking' about constitutive and regulative legal action (personal communication). Onuf's 1989 book, where he first referred to the interpretative turn in IR as 'constructivism', along with Kratochwil's 1989 book on rules, norms, and decisions, became a beacon for modernist linguistic and rule-oriented constructivist research.

In the early 1980s, Haas (1983) turned to sociology, looking for an explanation of international cooperation based on learning, that is, on the introduction to politics of scientific consensual understandings. Borrowing the concept of 'episteme' from Foucault, Ruggie (1975), who studied with Haas, further developed this program, which Peter Haas (1992) and Adler and Peter Haas (1992) turned into an agent-oriented constructivist research program on 'epistemic communities'. Adler (1991) also used Ernst Haas's ideas to develop the concept of 'cognitive evolution', a constructivist interpretation of collective social learning which involves the innovation, selection, and international diffusion and institutionalization of collective understandings. In 1986, Ruggie joined forces with Kratochwil, who came to constructivism via insights from international law and language-based 'speech-act theory'; together they wrote a seminal article on international regimes from a constructivist

perspective. Robert Keohane (1988) picked up the gauntlet thrown down by these two scholars, whom he called 'reflectivists', and challenged them and other 'reflectivists' to develop empirical research along positivist lines. This call stimulated a second generation of constructivists to engage in empirical research, although generally not along positivist lines. Ruggie and Kratochwil later wrote a series of important articles that helped establish the modernist type (Ruggie, 1993b, 1998a) and linguistic type (Kratochwil, 1993) of IR constructivism.

In addition to Kratochwil, other German scholars were prominent in the development of constructivism, mainly by initiating an important debate between instrumental rationalists (e.g., Keck, 1997) and Habermas-inspired communicative rationalists (Müller, 1994). For example, Risse (2000) not only did important work on communicative rationality but also became a 'conveyor belt' of ideas between German and American constructivist scholarship.

The English school (Bull, 1977), which interprets IR as being social and historical, and stresses the existence of an international society that is driven by norms and identity (Linklater and Suganami, 2006), played a role in promoting constructivist ideas (see Jepperson et al., 1996). Moreover, the work of English-school scholars (e.g., Jackson, 1990; Linklater, 1998), especially those of a later generation (Dunne, 1995), has sometimes gone further than modernist constructivism in stressing discourse and the critical aspects of knowledge. Prominent English-school scholars have also self-consciously adapted constructivist insights in order to strengthen the English school's analytical framework (Buzan, 2004). According to Reus-Smit (2002), not only can the English school learn from constructivism how to be more sociological, but constructivism can also learn from the English school how to be more normative. In his view, a dialogue between the two approaches would bring both closer to the standard of practical reason.

We cannot talk about the English school's influence on IR constructivism without also referring to the collaboration between Buzan and Waever (2003), which gave rise to the 'Copenhagen School', and the important and now widely disseminated concept of securitization (Waever, 1995; Buzan et al., 1998), which conceptualizes security as a speech act. While securitization incorporates classical realist understandings (Williams, 2003), it also has strong constructivist affinities (Buzan et al., 1998; Waever, 1995).¹⁷

In addition to Waever, other Scandinavians have had a strong impact on the evolution of constructivism in IR. Walter Carlsnaes (1992), for example, was one of the first scholars to build on critical realism; he was followed by Heikki Patomäki (2002). Iver Neumann (1999), in turn, conducted important studies of collective identity formation and more recently on international practices (2002). Scandinavians (e.g., Carlsnaes, 1992) also played an important role in early agent-structure debates and helped establish important IR journals, such as the *European Journal of International Relations*, that became a forum for constructivist ideas. European scholars, among them Scandinavians, also played a role in bringing constructivism to studies of European integration (Christiansen et al., 1999).

Back in the United States, Martha Finnemore (1996) brought John Meyer's (1980) 'sociological institutionalism' to IR; her stress on the diffusion of Western norms to the Third World reinforced constructivist arguments about the constitutive effect of cultures. Constructivists (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Barnett and Finnemore, 2004) also used other forms of sociological institutionalism (March and Olsen, 1998; Powell and DiMaggio, 1991) to explain the generation, diffusion, and institutionalization of culture. In addition, a sociological turn toward social movements and networks also made inroads into IR constructivism, especially the idea of 'transnational advocacy networks' (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

In partial opposition to a liberal type of constructivism that dominated North American academia in the 1990s, a realist constructivism, emphasizing the role of power in the construction of social reality, emerged in the early 2000s (Barkin, 2010). Samuel Barkin's realist constructivism aims to understand how norms emerge out of particular power relationships and how new norms change existing power structures. While numerous constructivist scholars agree on realist constructivism's added value for IR theory, they disagree on the precise common denominator of classical realism and constructivism (Jackson and Nexon, 2004; Sterling-Folker, 2004).

Other interesting trends also emerged over the last ten years. There has been a tendency to leave meta-theoretical debates behind and focus on empirical research, which is perhaps why many constructivists are eager to leave paradigmatic divides behind and engage in some form of dialogue, acceptance, or even synthesis with other IR approaches. We have witnessed efforts to combine different theoretical schools, for example, realism and constructivism (Barkin, 2010; Goddard, 2008), constructivism and the English school (Buzan, 2004), constructivism and critical theory (Barnett and Duvall, 2005; Bially Mattern, 2005; Neumann and Sending, 2007; Williams, 2005), and constructivism and organizational theory (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004). A recent meta-theoretical emphasis on pragmatism (Friedrichs and Kratochwil, 2009; Katzenstein and Sil, 2010) and scientific and critical realism (Patomäki, 2002; Wight, 2006) argues for constructivism's positive engagement with other scholarship, or at least a form of benign neglect. There is also an emerging interest in normative theory with the goal of developing a practicable and realistic ethics (Price, 2008); an enhanced interest in a theory of agency, as exemplified by efforts to combine psychology with constructivism (Lebow, 2008; Ross, 2006); a focus on process as bridging the agent-structure conundrum (Jackson and Nexon, 1999); and a recent

turn to practice in IR (Adler, 2005, 2008; Adler and Pouliot, 2011a, 2011b; Hansen, 2006; Neumann, 2002) which conceives of the social as bundles of ideas and matter that are linguistically, materially, and intersubjectively mediated in the form of practices (Adler and Pouliot, 2011b).

IR CONSTRUCTIVISM'S COMMON GROUND, 'ADDED VALUE', AND SUBSTANTIVE EMPIRICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

IR constructivism's common ground: ontology, epistemology, and methods

All strands of constructivism converge on an *ontology* that depicts the social world as intersubjectively and collectively meaningful structures and processes. In this world, 'material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded' (Wendt, 1995: 73). Several crucial implications follow from this. First, the social world is made of intersubjective understandings, subjective knowledge, and material objects (Popper, 1982; Searle, 1995). The world that constructivists see, therefore, is neither better nor worse than the world seen by neorealists and neoliberals. But it is a world that is broader, more contingent, more unexpected, more surprising, and endowed with more possibilities. Second, social facts – which are facts only by human agreement and account for the majority of the facts studied in IR – differ from rocks and flowers because their existence depends on human consciousness and language. In other words, social facts depend, by way of collective understanding and discourse, on the attachment of collective knowledge to physical reality (Searle, 1995). For example, when we classify and refer to some people as 'self' and to other people as 'the other', a notion of what is in 'our' interest, as opposed to the 'other's' interest, emerges. Third, although individuals

carry knowledge, ideas, and meanings in their heads – where else would they be? – they also know, think, and feel only in the context of and with reference to collective or intersubjective understandings, including rules and language. In other words, it is from this context or background that people borrow the epistemic, normative, and ideological understandings, rules, and discourses that 'make individuals into agents by enabling them to act upon the world in which they find themselves' (Gould, 1998: 81). Fourth, constructivists (except for radical constructivists) all consider the mutual constitution of agents and structures to be part of constructivism's ontology.

Again with the exception of the radicals, constructivists share, if only partially, an *epistemology* that makes interpretation an intrinsic part of *social science* and stresses contingent generalizations. Contingent generalizations do not freeze understanding or bring it to closure; rather, they open up our understanding of the social world. Moreover, constructivists of all types are not interested in how things *are* but in how they *became* what they are. In addition, most constructivists agree with the premise that the validation for knowledge is only partly external. In other words, constructivists argue that even if it were possible to grasp social reality's minimalist foundations and thereby inch toward truth, in practice theories are far from being true pictures of the world.

Despite this consensus, there are also wide epistemological disagreements among constructivists. For example, some modernist constructivists follow scientific realism (Carlsnaes, 1992; Patomäki, 2002; Patomäki and Wight, 2000; Wendt, 1999; Wight, 1999, 2006) and look in the workings of social mechanisms for causal and/or constitutive explanations of social phenomena. Other modernist constructivists (Barnett, 1998; Reus-Smit, 1999; Ruggie, 1998a) establish causality by means of abduction or 'a process of successive interrogative reasoning between explanans and explanandum' (Ruggie, 1998b: 880), thereby teasing out tentative explanations

from thickly described narratives. Still other modernist constructivists embrace a ‘particularizing positivist strategy’ (Katzenstein, 1996; Sikkink, 1993), or, like Checkel (2001), take constructivism to be consistent with positivism’s generalizing or covering-law strategy.

Modernist linguistic constructivists (Friedrichs and Kratochwil, 2009; Kratochwil, 1989; Onuf, 1989) and critical constructivists (Cox, 1986; Williams and Krause, 1997) reject the natural-science concept of causation and argue that ‘to ask for a reason for action is to try and find the rule that led to the action’ (Smith, 2000: 159). Consequently, their approach to the social world is based on consensus within a community of research practitioners; to arrive at ‘truth’ they use argumentative procedures, abduction, narrative analysis, practical reasoning, and ‘therapeutic redescription’ (Deibert, 1997: 180–7). Finally, a majority of radical constructivists embrace postmodernist pragmatism and study how the world is ‘talked into existence’ by means of signs, discourse, and narratives.

Constructivists use a large variety of *methods*: positivist, post-positivist, quantitative, qualitative, and combinations of these. The conventional qualitative methods most used by constructivists include case studies (Klotz, 1995); process tracing, including process tracing of ideas and their institutionalization in practice (Sikkink, 1993); counterfactuals (Checkel, 2001); and the comparative method (Reus-Smit, 1999). A combination of quantitative and qualitative empirical methods – what Alker (1996) calls ‘emancipatory empiricism’ – has also been used to promote a critical approach. Some constructivists have followed the conventional path of grounding research on one concept, such as ‘epistemic communities’ (P. Haas, 1992; Adler and Haas, 1992); and others have used formal methods, such as agent-based models (Cederman, 1997). Interpretative methods applied with great success have included genealogy (Price, 1995), ethnography (Zabusky, 1995), semiotics (Bially Mattern, 2005), narrative analysis (Barnett, 1998), and

a combination of cognitive mapping and symbolic analysis (Johnston, 1995). During the last decade, a search for a ‘homegrown’ constructivist methodology has been under way. While Checkel emphasizes agency (2001), and more recently causal mechanisms (2006), according to Colin Wight (2006) a full constructivist account can be attained by temporarily bracketing agency and focusing on structure. Audie Klotz and Cecelia Lynch (2007), in turn, identify macro-historical comparisons, genealogy, and participant-observation as methods dedicated to uncovering structures, and narratives, framing, and ethnography to emphasize the agency side. Along similar lines, Vincent Pouliot (2007) suggested ‘subjectivism’, which aims at recovering subjective meanings (with the help of ethnography and qualitative interviews, as well as their intersubjective contextualization through discourse analysis and/or the play of practice), objectifying those meanings, and tracing their change over time. Lupovici’s (2009) constructivist methodological strategy, in turn, focuses on a combination of process tracing, discourse analysis, and counterfactuals, which help establish causality and identify constitutive validity.

Several things stand out in this diversity, uniting many constructivists and setting them on a collision course with positivism. First, there is the notion that the quest for explaining causal processes requires the interpretive practice of uncovering intersubjective meanings. Second, constructivists generally draw descriptive inferences by means of traditional quantitative and qualitative methods and draw causal or constitutive inferences by means of historical narratives. Wendt (1999: 86), for example, argues that constitutive theories are explanatory and not merely descriptive (but see King et al., 1994). Constructivists generally believe that the barriers to true knowledge are posed not only by poor or defective methods, but also by the nature of social reality, which is at least partly indeterminate and contingent. Constructivist explanations, therefore, usually include reconstructed

narratives that – because how social facts become established in the social world is relevant to how they exert their influence (Adler, 1997: 339) – are as much about partly indeterminate processes as they are about partly determinate outcomes. The use of narratives and other interpretative methods, however, does not mean that all statements or all variables have the same weight; rather, such methods are used to uncover the validity of statements (Morrow, 1994) and to reveal social structures, social mechanisms, and empirical regularities.

Constructivism's 'added value' and substantive empirical contributions

By *added value*, I mean substantial improvements in the understanding of some conceptual building blocks of IR theory, especially knowledge, change, social communication, rationality, language, power, and practice.

(1) Constructivism considers intersubjective *knowledge* and ideas to have constitutive effects on social reality and its evolution. When drawn upon by individuals, the rules, norms, and cause-effect understandings that make material objects meaningful become the source of people's reasons, interests, and intentional acts; when institutionalized, they become the source of international practices. Constructivism's added value, therefore, is that it helps explain why people converge around specific norms, identities, and cause-effect understandings, and thus where interests come from (Adler, 1991; Finnemore, 1996; Ish-Shalom, 2006; Legro, 2005). Moreover, it puts to rest the naïve notion that *either* material objects *or* 'ideas' – but not both – constitute interests. Instead, constructivism advances the notion that interests *are* ideas; that is, they are ontologically intersubjective but epistemologically objective interpretations about, and for, the material world (Weldes, 1999). This means that interests cannot be mechanically deduced from international anarchy and the distribution of material resources. As Wendt (1999) has

shown, international anarchy may be consistent with a state of permanent war, a state of calculated partial cooperation, and a state of more-or-less-permanent peace.

(2) It may be only a slight exaggeration to say that if constructivism is about anything, it is about *change*. For rather than using history as a descriptive method, constructivism has history 'built in' as part of its theories. Historicity, therefore, shows up as part of the contexts that make possible social reality, the path-dependent processes involving structural and agent change, and the mechanisms involved in the explanation of change. Constructivism's added value, therefore, is to take change less as the alteration in the positions of material things than as the emergence of new constitutive rules (Ruggie, 1998a), the evolution and transformation of new social structures (Dessler, 1989), and the agent-related origins of social processes. Constructivist scholarship locates different sources of change, but in particular agency, process, structures, and practices, all of which are usually interrelated. In reference to agency, constructivism has generated theoretical and empirical studies about, for example, policy entrepreneurs (Goddard, 2009), epistemic communities (Adler and Haas, 1992), and transnational advocacy networks (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Regarding the mechanisms of change, some constructivists emphasize collective learning, cognitive evolution, epistemic change, and the 'life cycles of norms', all of which involve the institutionalization of people's novel knowledge, practices, and discourses (Adler, 1991; Barnett, 2009; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Haas, 1990; Ruggie, 1993b). Jeffrey Legro (2000), who focuses on structural mechanisms of change, suggests that pre-existing ideational structures affect the external shocks that are most likely to lead to changes in collective beliefs, and those actors who are most likely to successfully implement new ideas. Adler and Pouliot (2011b), in turn, confront the classic agent-structure dichotomy by identifying practices as an important source of international change. Critical

constructivists (Cox, 1986; Linklater, 1998), instead, take change not as something passively observed and explained, but as something that can occur as a result of reflexive analysis. Thus, critical constructivism points to potential alternatives to prevailing structures (Hopf, 1998: 180).

(3) Social communication is another important added value of contemporary constructivism. Not only do collective understandings diffuse across time and place by means of it; social communication also enables agents to fix the meanings of material reality (Luhmann, 1989: 17). Building on Luhmann, Albert and colleagues (2008) advocate a communicative turn in IR which highlights process over content and conceives of social reality as created in communication, rather than through the interaction of pre-existing units.

We can also find added value in constructivist theories that build on Habermas's (1984, 1987) theory of 'communicative action'. The main idea behind this theory is that social actors do not bargain to achieve the utilities they expect – as rational choice theory maintains. Rather, they engage in a discourse that helps demonstrate the validity of their arguments; this discourse in turn promotes collective understandings (Risse, 2000). So rather than studying instrumental bargaining and choice, constructivism focuses on the effects of social communication on social relations – for example, how debate and persuasion help promote shared understandings. Neta Crawford (2002), for instance, shows how centuries of ethical argumentation prepared the grounds for decolonization; Markus Kornprobst (2009) demonstrates that ending irredentism in Europe required normative change, which resulted from a combination of argumentation and compromise; and Corneliu Bjola (2011) uses the concept of 'deliberative legitimacy' to show that the use of force's international legitimacy is arrived at by means of a noncoerced process of deliberation. Nicole Deitelhoff (2009), in turn, develops a theoretical model of institutional change

that defines the conditions under which persuasion and discourse can affect collective decision making. Deitelhoff and Müller (2005) also suggest that arguing and bargaining frequently occur simultaneously, a point also made with regard to socialization in Europe (Checkel, 2007).

(4) The relationship among acting, communication, and *rationality* is critical for constructivists. Contrary to common belief, constructivists consider rationality and reason crucial for their explanations. However, constructivists cannot accept the notion that rationality means only instrumental rationality.¹⁸ Thus, they advance the notion of *practical or communicative rationality*, which, though sometimes calculating and choice related, is also based on practical reason, is sensitive and contingent to historical, social, and normative contexts, and emphasizes the communicative and persuasive logic in social theory. When scholars emphasize the role of norms, the logic that stands in contradistinction to rational choice is that of 'appropriateness' (March and Olsen, 1998; Finnemore, 1996). Accordingly, agents do not choose between the most efficient alternatives, but 'follow rules that associate particular identities to particular situations' (March and Olsen, 1998: 951). When scholars stress social communication, Habermas's notion of 'communicative rationality' suggests itself.

Regardless of the route we follow to characterize practical rationality, what stands out is the significance of intersubjective understandings – the capacity for rational thought and behaviour is above all a background capacity (Searle, 1998). Rationality lies less in choosing instrumentally on the basis of true theories than in behaving in ways that stand to reason, given people's background expectations and dispositions. It follows, then, that, because instrumental action is prompted by expectations and intentions, which are drawn from previously constituted social structures, constructivism subsumes rational choice under its more general principles. In other words, rational actors live and act in a socially constructed world, and

instrumental action takes place as a backdrop, not only to the knowledge that individuals share as individuals, but also to all institutionalized knowledge (such as norms). Although very few rationalists accept this argument, some of them (Bates et al., 1998; Fearon and Laitin, 2000; Schimmelfennig, 2003) have become more sensitive to the effect of discourses, narratives, identities, and norms on rational choice.

(5) Social communication and practical rationality depend on *language*, which is the vehicle for the diffusion and institutionalization of ideas, a necessary condition for the persistence in time of institutionalized practices, and a mechanism for the construction of social reality. Constructivism's added value, therefore, consists in spelling out the role of language in social life. To begin with, language is the medium for the construction of intersubjective meanings. The sense of right, obligation, and duty that political actors borrow from social structures depends on language that is oriented toward collective purposes. Second, 'speech acts' (e.g., 'this meeting is adjourned') have an 'illocutionary' dimension ('doing something by saying something'); hence, not only do they describe a reality, they also construct it (Kratochwil, 1989: 8; Waever, 1995). Third, and moving toward constructivism's 'strong programme', discourse – in Foucault's (1980) celebrated interpretation – is power, in the sense that 'it makes us understand certain problems in certain ways, and pose questions accordingly. It thereby limits the range of alternative policy options, and it enables us to take on others' (Diez, 1999: 603). Finally, if we start from the premise that language expressions represent a potential for new constitutions of reality (Derrida, 1978; Diez, 1999: 607; Hansen, 2006; Zehfuss, 2002), then discourse is also a source of change.

(6) With the exception of post-structuralists (Doty, 1996; Der Derian, 1987, 1990), constructivists neglected *power's* value added in the past, but it has become a centerpiece of constructivism's analytical and research concerns in recent years. This effort stresses

nonmaterial sources of power, such as speech acts (Onuf, 1998a), hegemonic discourses (Cox, 1986), dominant normative interpretations and identities (Checkel, 2001), and moral authority (Hall, 1999). It also includes the imposition of meanings on the material world (Bially Mattern, 2008), the capacity branded by social groups 'to provide an authoritative vision of the world' (Guzzini, 2000: 29), and Gramscian hegemonic power, which brings the interests of powerful groups into harmony with weaker groups and incorporates these interests into 'an ideology expressed in universal terms' (Cox, 1983: 168).

An influential recent study on power from a constructivist perspective (Barnett and Duvall, 2005) differentiates between four categories of power – compulsory, institutional, structural, and productive – which are widely used and debated in constructivist research. Bially Mattern (2005) has shown, for example, that representational rather than material force can be a compulsory form of power, and Krebs and Jackson (2007) discuss rhetorical coercion as a mechanism of compulsory power. Ian Hurd (2007), in turn, highlights the significance of symbolic institutional power in the functioning of the UN Security Council; Michael Williams and Iver Neumann (2000) show how the social power inherent in narrative structures affected how NATO's and Russia's identities were mutually reconstructed after the end of the Cold War. Neumann and Sending (2007), in turn, applying Foucault's concept of 'governmentality' to IR, show that liberalism can be interpreted as a particular rationality of governing whose practices and technologies of power shape subjects' possible actions. Also noteworthy is Guzzini's (2005) move to pragmatic linguistics, which argues that concepts of power are always embedded in a theoretical context, and that the attribution of power, because it suggests that things could have been otherwise, is itself a political act – in Onuf's terms, a speech act (1998a).¹⁹

(7) Building on the recent 'practice turn' in social theory (Schatzki et al., 2001), the study of international *practices* has gained

momentum with constructivists at the forefront of this development.²⁰ This includes post-structuralists who, building on Michel Foucault, conceptualized international relations as textual practices (Der Derian and Shapiro, 1989; Doty, 1996), and post-structuralists and modernist linguistic-oriented constructivists, who, inspired by Pierre Bourdieu, began highlighting practice as constitutive of social reality (Ashley, 1987; Guzzini, 2000). Other modernist linguistic constructivists expressed growing interest in 'deeds' (Onuf, 1989) and 'practical reasoning' (Kratochwil, 1989), but it was Neumann (2002), who first advocated 'returning practice to the linguistic turn'. Since then, an increasing number of scholars have taken the practice turn (Adler, 2005, 2008; Adler and Pouliot, 2011a, 2011b; Adler-Nissen, 2008; Büger and Gadinger, 2007; Pouliot, 2008, 2010).

Motivating this and other constructivist studies on international practices is an understanding that culture is not only in people's minds, discourse, and interactions; it is also in the very performance of practices. From that perspective, practices not only organize the world – they are also the raw materials that make it up. When states face each other for myriad reasons, their interaction is affected, indeed constituted, not only by the cost-benefit analyses leaders make, the ideas and knowledge people carry in their heads, and the discourse they use to communicate. Rather, what states do in relation to other states – the moves they make, the signals they give, and the language they speak – is constituted by the practices they share (Adler and Pouliot, 2011a). Practices, which are material and meaningful, structural and individual (agential), reflexive and based on background knowledge, and partake in both stability and change, acquire concrete and workable theoretical and empirical meaning in the concept of 'communities of practice'²¹ (Wenger, 1998; Adler, 2005, 2008; Adler and Pouliot, 2011a, 2011b). Practices develop, diffuse, and become institutionalized in such collectives. Most of the transnational communities

described in the IR literature, for example, epistemic communities (Adler and Haas, 1992), are, in fact, species of communities of practice (Adler, 2005). The concept of epistemic community, for example, makes little sense unless it is understood as a vehicle of new scientific interpretations that serve as the basis for the construction of new practices.

Substantive empirical contributions. Contrary to the still-common belief that constructivists avoid empirical research, there is a growing empirical constructivist literature about, for example, norms, identity, sovereignty, institutionalization, and international governance, which has already left a substantive mark on the field.

(1) *Norms* constitute social identities and give national interests their content and meaning. Constructivist research grounds the notion that how people apply norms to classify the world is relevant to the manner in which world politics unfolds. Katzenstein and his associates (Katzenstein, 1996), for example, have persuasively shown that states face security choices, and act upon them, not only in the context of their physical capabilities but also on the basis of normative understandings. Tannenwald (2007) illustrates this argument, showing that the non-use of nuclear weapons since 1945 can be attributed to a nuclear weapons taboo, and Finnemore (2003) demonstrates how the legitimate reasons for military intervention have evolved historically. Moreover, according to Finnemore (1996), international organizations 'teach' or help diffuse norms and thereby help constitute the national interests of states that adopt these norms. Klotz (1995), in turn, has shown that the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa became possible because of the emergence and institutionalization of a global norm of racial equality, whereas Barnett (2009) uses an evolutionary approach to analyze how the norm of political humanitarianism emerged. Similarly, Steven Bernstein (2001) employed a socio-evolutionary approach to understand the emergence of liberal environmentalism. Recent scholarship has also started to

emphasize the fundamental contestability of norms and the need for their continuous reinterpretation (Hoffmann, 2005; Wiener, 2008), as well as their diffusion (Acharya, 2004) and domestic influences (Cortell and Davis, 2005). Another recent trend in constructivist research on norms has been to focus on rights and their effect on world politics. Tal Dingott Alkopher (2007), for instance, shows how changing rights affect warfare practices and Reus-Smit (2011) traces the evolution of sovereignty to individual rights.

(2) *Identity* lies at the core of national and transnational interests. Consequently, it is crucial for an understanding of international behaviour, practices, institutions, and change. It is just as important for an understanding of international conflict and war as for an understanding of international cooperation. Constructivism's critics argue that though it may be true that identity lies at the core of people's interests, identities do not change as often as constructivists say they do, so there is a reason to assume that interests are fixed (Mearsheimer, 1994). Adler and Barnett (1998), however, have shown that the identities of national groups may expand across national borders and lead to the development of security communities. While the Middle East seems to be the area where realist thinking would take us the farthest, Barnett (1998: 15) has shown that 'Arab politics can be understood as a series of dialogues concerning the relationship between identities, norms, [and] regional order'. Jennifer Mitzen (2006), in turn, suggests that the intractability of the Israel-Palestine conflict could be explained by the actors' desires for securing identity or 'ontological security', and Marc Lynch (1999) shows that changes in Jordan's foreign policy are foremost changes in Jordan's identity. The regional construction of identity has also been recently scrutinized by Checkel and Katzenstein (2009), who explore a range of European outward- and inward-looking identities, and how different actors, through networks and other channels, bargain about,

reconstitute, and transform European practices and identities. Other studies have also shown how national identity affects foreign policy (Hopf, 2002). Finally, moving to the critical and post-structuralist side of the spectrum, Xavier Guillaume (2010) suggests that identity is constituted dialogically in interplay between the domestic and international politics of 'alterity,' and Heather Rae (2002) argues that the sovereign identity of the state itself has been constructed through practices of exclusion, which has taken extreme forms such as expulsion and genocide.

(3) Constructivism has made important contributions to the understanding of *sovereignty* (Bartelson, 1995; Biersteker and Weber, 1996; Bukovansky, 2002; Kratochwil, 2010; Reus-Smit, 2001; Walker, 1993; Weber, 1995). Constructivists, for example, have shown that the components of state sovereignty, such as territory, authority, and national identity, are not fixed but evolve with changing practices (Biersteker and Weber, 1996: 15; Philpott, 2001; Reus-Smit, 2001). Building on Ruggie's insight (1983, 1993b) about the transient nature of the Westphalian international system, constructivists have also been drawing attention to alternative constitutive norms – for example, human rights (Risse et al., 1999) – around which future systems might develop. Rodney Hall (1999) traced the social construction of national sovereignty in recent centuries and demonstrated its differential impact on interests (and thus behaviours), and, more generally, on international order and international systems. Moreover, constructivist analysis of sovereignty has shown how people collectively draw the boundaries between 'inside' and 'outside' (Walker, 1993) and how these boundaries are 'produced, reproduced, legitimated, contested, changed and naturalized' (Thompson, 1994: 13). Two other important avenues of constructivist research have explored, first, the relationship between rights and sovereignty (Reus-Smit, 2001), and second, the move of the 'responsibility to protect' principle from sovereign

states to international society (Bellamy, 2009).

(4) Constructivists understand *institutions* as reified sets of intersubjective constitutive and regulative rules that, in addition to helping coordinate and pattern behaviour and channel it in one direction rather than another (Ruggie, 1998a: 54), also help establish new collective identities, shared interests, and practices. For example, based on case studies of ancient Greece, Renaissance Italy, absolutist Europe, and the present international system, Reus-Smit (1999) has shown that societies are constituted by 'deep institutions' that result from beliefs about the moral purpose of the state, sovereignty, and the norm of procedural justice. Adler and Barnett (1998), Finnemore (1996), Johnston (2008), and Keck and Sikkink (1998) have shown that socialization, learning, and emulation may enable international institutions to establish, articulate, and transmit norms across nations, to define what constitutes legitimate behaviour, and to shape their members' identities. Barnett and Finnemore (2004), in turn, theorize international organizations as autonomous bureaucracies that exercise independent authority, which partly derives from the way they frame problems and deploy knowledge. Recently, Daniel Nexon (2009: 14), looking at the struggle for power in early modern Europe, argues that institutions bind 'social sites, relationships and large-scale processes to each other to produce historically variable outcomes'. Empirical work on the constitutive and regulative effects of international institutions has also emerged in the subfields of international political economy and international finance (Abdelal, 2007; Blyth, 2002; Hall, 2009).

(5) In recent years, it has become increasingly evident that various forms of international and transnational authority, conceived together as '*global governance*,' are helping order international relations (Hall and Biersteker, 2002). While no research tradition has primacy in explaining global governance dynamics, constructivists have already made important contributions. Among the first to leave a mark on the field were empirical constructivist studies that focused on new actors

on the global scene – such as epistemic communities (Adler, 1992; P. Haas, 1992), NGOs and transnational advocacy networks (Keck and Sikkink, 1998), and moral communities (Linklater, 1998). More recently, Barnett and Duvall (2005) have analyzed how different forms of power inform governance mechanisms, and Deborah Avant and colleagues (2010) focus on governing agents, or governors, who obtain their authority through diverse social relationships. Consonant with these ideas, Ian Johnstone (2005) found that an interpretative community, located in the UN Security Council, succeeded in determining dominant interpretations of international legal norms. Also, from a structural perspective, Lipschutz (2005) notes how global civil society is shaped by market mechanisms, and how liberal discourse and practices constitute actors' interests and identities. Adler and Bernstein (2005), in turn, claim that morally valuable global governance can be arrived at via a mixture of capabilities and knowledge, on the one hand, and fairness and legitimacy, on the other.

DEBATES WITHIN CONSTRUCTIVISM

The most salient constructivist debate in IR, which blends ontological, epistemological, and theoretical issues, has revolved around the 'agent-structure' problem. Four other epistemological debates have dealt with (1): constitutive vs. causal theory, (2) pragmatism vs. scientific realism, (3) explanatory vs. emancipatory cognitive interests, and (4) modernism vs. postmodernism. In addition, three debates about IR theory deal with (1) the nature of agency in IR, (2) the role of rationality in the construction of social reality; and (3) liberal constructivism and its discontents.

The agent – structure debate

The agent – structure debate focuses on the nature of international reality – more

precisely, whether what exists in IR, and the explanation for it, should revolve around actors, structures, or both. In order to avoid having to choose between agency and structure and to make it possible to deal with the nature of their relationship, Wendt imported Giddens's social structuration theory (1979) and Bhaskar's critical realist theory (1979) to IR. He argued that just 'as social structures are ontologically dependent upon and therefore constituted by the practices and self-understandings of agents, the causal powers and interests of those agents, in their own turn, are constituted and therefore explained by structures' (Wendt, 1987: 359). Similarly, Dessler (1989: 452) challenged Waltz's 'positional' model (1979) with a 'transformational' model of international structure in which 'all social action presupposes social structure, and vice versa'. Wendt's and Dessler's work on the agent-structure problem was a crucial moment for constructivism, but also the basis of a new agent – structure debate within constructivism itself.

Reacting to Wendt's claims, Hollis and Smith (1990: 1) used an epistemologically driven approach to the agent – structure problem, along with a 'level of analysis' argument, to suggest that, as far as the social world is concerned, there are always two stories to be told. One is about 'explaining' from the perspective of an outsider or observer, as in the naturalist approach to science. The other story is about 'understanding' – a hermeneutic inside view that involves getting to 'the point' or the meaning of things. This notion led to several interconnected subdebates, which were framed by a series of articles by Wendt (1992a, 1998) and Hollis and Smith (1994, 1996).

First, there is the question whether one should start from ontology (Carlsnaes, 1992; Dessler, 1999; Wendt, 1999) or from epistemology (Hollis and Smith, 1996: 111, 113). Second, this controversy directly impinged on Hollis and Smith's (1990) 'level of analysis' argument, according to which, at every level of analysis, one can explain or understand IR by proceeding either from system to unit or from unit to system. To avoid confu-

sion, Wendt (1992a: 185) suggested reserving the level-of-analysis discourse, as originally formulated by David Singer (1961), 'for questions about what drives the behaviour of exogenously given actors, and agent – structure talk for questions about what constitutes the properties of those actors in the first place'.

If Wendt thought that Hollis and Smith (1990) conflated the agent – structure problem and the levels of analysis problem, Carlsnaes thought that Wendt conflated agent and structure in ways that made it difficult to do empirical research. Building on Margaret Archer's (1989) early morphogenetic approach, Carlsnaes (1992) introduced the time dimension to the agent – structure debate. Others thought that adding the time dimension could actually make things worse, because morphogenesis means 'treating agents and structures as if they take turns affecting the social world' (Gould, 1998: 92; Hollis and Smith, 1994: 244).

Patomäki (2002), Wight (1999), and Patomäki and Wight (2000) entered the agent – structure debate with a critical realist argument based on the work of Archer (1995) and Bhaskar (1979). For example, Patomäki, (2002) took explanation as a mode of interpretation, reasons as causes, and actors and regulative and constitutive rules as involved in the production of reality. This realist position, however, did not sit well with Doty (1997) who, making a rare contribution to the agent – structure debate, argued that what matters is neither structures nor agents, but discursive practices.

Building on the Frankfurt school, Martin Weber (2005) more recently argued that because Wendt posits the existence of the units prior to their first encounter, his version of structuration precludes intersubjectivity. A similar critique of Wendt's work lies at the heart of Jackson and Nexon's (1999) 'relational' approach: they lament an excessive focus on the units of the international system, which comes at the expense of processes constitutive of actors, and more generally, social reality. Lebow's (2008) argument on behalf of a constructivist psychology of

identity can also be read as an implicit critique of Wendt's agent – structure perspective. He argues that while the fundamental motives driving human behaviour, such as spirit, appetite, and reason, are constant over time, culture drives the hierarchy of human values and their expression.

I doubt whether the agent–structure debate will ever be fully resolved. In a self-critical study, for instance, Wendt (2006) builds on quantum theory to suggest a process-oriented perspective that transcends the essentialist side of his previous studies. Because of the debate, however, we now have a much better understanding of the metaphysical and social-theory foundations of the relationship between agents and structures. While constructivists have disagreed markedly about the agent – structure relationship, there is much more in common in their work than they are aware of or care to acknowledge. The agent-structure debate can thus profit from some 'consolidation', by which I mean concentrating on the consensus already achieved and that still can be achieved, and then turning our efforts to translate the agent – structure metaphysical and social theory positions into theoretical and empirical propositions.

In particular, theoretical and empirical discussions of how social structures act on the subjective level and how ideas held by individuals become institutionalized and taken for granted seem to be a good place to restart the debate. Constructivists have started to pay attention to the micro-foundations of intersubjective phenomena and to the macro-foundations of reasoned acts and are beginning to search for mechanisms that link them. These mechanisms include ideational diffusion and learning (e.g., Adler, 1992; Checkel, 2007; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Wendt, 1999), socialization (e.g., Checkel, 2001; Gheciu, 2005; Johnston, 2008; Schimmelfennig, 2003; Wendt, 1999), social communication and persuasion (e.g., Lynch, 1999; Risse, 2000), and institutionalization (Adler and Haas, 1992; Legro, 2000; Ruggie, 1993a).

Searching for the mechanisms that can make social action more intelligible and make

the agent – structure problem more manageable, however, will require learning more about communities of practice and focusing on the dynamic aspects of agent – structure. Learning processes, for example, occur in people's heads, but their outcomes exist in practice(s), and in the intersubjective background knowledge that informs them. Thus, only when practices change as a result of reconceptualizing reality can multiple interacting actors and future actors draw upon these understandings and, thus, learn the same or similar lessons over time. And when people's collective knowledge is institutionalized, it becomes a building block of their reasons and the spring of subsequent social action.

The epistemological debates

A debate about causal vs. constitutive explanations, which deals primarily with what kind of knowledge constitution entails, took place between Wendt (1998, 1999) and his critics. In Wendt's view, causal theories 'answer questions of the form "why?"' and, in some cases, "how?"',²² whereas constitutive theories 'account for the properties of things by reference to the structures in virtue of which they exist'. Thus, for example, the factors that constituted the Cold War, which 'do not exist apart from a Cold War, nor do they precede it in time' (Wendt, 1998: 104–6), are not the same as its causes. Echoing linguistic and critical constructivist approaches, for Smith (2000: 157–8) the problem with Wendt's rendition of causal theory and constitutive theory is his Cartesian separation between ideational and material forces, according to which 'at some level material forces are constituted independently of society, and affect society in a *causal way*' (Wendt, 1999: 111). This is far from what Smith considers a hermeneutic strategy of rule- and language-constituting action. Kurki (2006), however, claims that constitution can be a particular form of causation. Hoping to bridge unnecessary paradigmatic divides, she builds on Aristotle's causation framework to

elaborate a broadened concept of causes, which transcends predominant conceptions of empirical causation.

Some of the differences between Wendt and his critics can be reconciled by pragmatic realism. Unlike Smith, we need a realist ontology 'about what it is that brings about changes in the world outside of the texts we are writing ourselves' (Patomäki and Wight, 2000: 229). Unlike Wendt (1999), however, we need a pragmatic epistemology that, without neglecting human agents, does not separate between the material (causation) and social structure (constitution). Pragmatic realism consolidates the two arguments by taking social constitution as the dynamic collective attachment of meaning, function, and value to material reality (Searle, 1995), and causal explanation as the identification of the mechanisms involved in the social constitution of institutions and practices. Expectations, for example, are intentional, and are thus part of the causal relation between mind and the world (Searle, 1998: 100–7). On the other hand, expectations are simultaneously drawn upon the background of intersubjective dispositions that constitute but do not determine human reasons.

Pragmatic realism may in fact suggest a compromise solution to a recent constructivist debate between pragmatism and scientific realism, which has pitted among others Kratochwil against Wight. Kratochwil (2003) argues that since centuries of epistemological theorizing have not led to the emergence of an uncontested foundation from which to evaluate knowledge claims, we should give up on the search for transcendental truths and go on with our research despite existing and unavoidable uncertainties. As an alternative to ontological realism, Friedrichs and Kratochwil (2009) suggest a philosophical pragmatist approach that takes knowledge generation as a socially constructed practice of scholarly communities (also see Bauer and Brighi, 2009). Katzenstein and Sil (2010) take pragmatism as the foundation of analytic eclecticism, a problem-oriented approach that cuts across paradigmatic

boundaries, and shows their complementarity (Katzenstein and Sil, 2010).

By contrast, building on scientific realism, Wight (2007) criticizes pragmatism for its lack of ontological focus and argues that the real world resists our theoretical models. Because the world is not constituted merely through language, it exists independently of our theorizing about it (Wight, 2006). In response, Kratochwil (2007) rejects the ontological foundations of scientific realism; epistemology and ontology, he argues, are always intertwined.

Ernst Haas and Peter Haas (2002) offer a compromise between Wight's and Kratochwil's positions that is consistent with pragmatic realism. While they acknowledge that both knowledge and the social world are socially constructed, they claim that the two are subjected to different social pressures. Hence, the social world exists partly independently of our theorizing about it, and researchers can make meaningful statements about the world, which are, however, always provisional. From a critical realist perspective, Patomäki's (2002) approach also provides a compromise solution which is consistent with pragmatic realism. Patomäki suggests that the world exists out there and depends only to a very small degree upon our theorizing about it. Knowledge claims, however, are socially produced because they rely on interpretation. Thus, while there is no unmediated access to reality, we still can make rational judgments about the appropriateness of theories.

The cognitive interest debate within constructivism has pitted modernist constructivists, who believe that explaining social reality is the main goal of social knowledge, and critical theory scholars, who believe that the main goal of social knowledge is emancipation from oppressive structures. Critical theorists say that there can be no explanations of the world as it is, if only because there is no world until we explain it. Thus, constructivists should take a normative and ethical stand (Inayatullah and Blaney, 1996) and use theory to improve the world; for example, advancing

democratic transnational community (Linklater, 1998), empowering women (Enloe, 1990; Tickner, 1992), and redefining security (Williams and Krause, 1997: xiv). Critical theorists also caution against a unified understanding of progress rooted in the Enlightenment (Rengger and Thirkell-White, 2007) and advocate granting the disadvantaged a greater voice (Hobson, 2007), as well as paying more attention to praxis (Linklater, 2007).

Modernist constructivists do not disagree with their critical counterparts about the occasional need to take a critical position against the social world and pursue normative agendas, or about the capacity of knowledge 'carriers' to help bring about changes in the social world. But they also believe that the best way to advance normative goals is not to take theory as an instrument for the emancipation of ideologically chosen underclasses but instead to produce systematic knowledge, including about how knowledge and political power interact. Critical constructivists retort that, in their zeal to provide contingent explanations of social reality, modernist constructivists legitimize the existing situation. Thus, they really are not constructivists at all, but liberals and positivists in disguise, who stick close to the precepts of rationalist theories (George, 1994).

Price and Reus-Smit (1997), two modernist constructivists with critical leanings, attempted to narrow the divide between the two types of constructivism. They maintain that modernist constructivists share some of the normative concerns held by critical theorists and that, in fundamental ways, modernist constructivists have been advancing a critical agenda. Price and Reus-Smit suggest that only through a dialogue between normative arguments and empirically informed accounts can we arrive at better and more ethical practices. Their point is that improving the world requires bringing the two cognitive interests together; without explanation there can be no emancipation.

More recently, Price (2008) argued that while constructivism does not have a defined ethical position, it can contribute to normative theorizing (Price, 2008) because of its

focus on empirical feasibility. Thus, for example, articulating a special form of modernist constructivism with critical leanings, Price (2008; see also Barnett, 2010) takes moral progress to occur as long as there are demonstrable human gains, even if those come at the expense of ideals and can create new moral dilemmas.

Finally, an attitude of mutual disengagement and benign neglect (rather than a debate) characterizes the relations between constructivists and post-structuralists. They differ about (a) the status of material reality, (b) the ontological status of unobservable mechanisms, (c) agency and especially reason, and (d) the notion that a *social* science, separate from the other sciences, is possible. As a consequence, constructivists have taken post-structuralism to lie outside constructivism's 'middle ground' (Adler, 1997). Post-structuralists, in turn, tend to regard constructivists as positivists in disguise, aiming to take interpretative action out of post-structuralism. Zehfuss (2002), for example, criticizes constructivism by saying that any claims at empirical reality foreclose possibilities. Do these differences mean that post-structuralists are 'inside' constructivism or 'outside' it? The question, of course, indicates that we are dealing with a social construct. Until recently, post-structuralists have explicitly chosen to remain on the outside. Calling themselves 'dissidents' (Ashley and Walker, 1990; George, 1994), they carried over to IR their deep suspicions about anything that looks like discipline and foundation and thus divorced themselves from other streams of constructivism. The 'middle ground' thesis, therefore, rather than aiming to exclude post-structuralists (Milliken, 1999: 227), echoed the fact that post-structuralists explicitly and self-consciously placed themselves beyond what Waever (1996: 169) called 'the boundary of negativity'. There is no 'essential' reason, however, why constructivists and post-structuralists cannot hold fruitful and constructive debates, aiming to achieve mutual learning. Lene Hansen (2011), for example, in her post-structuralist analysis of the role of discursive

practices in constructing the ‘Muhammad Cartoon Crisis’ in Denmark, shows that a fruitful dialogue with other constructivist, and non-constructivist, approaches is possible and useful.

Theoretical debates

The constructivist debate over the nature of agency in IR is about whether constructivists, following Wendt (1999), should theorize agency as the attribute of states, or whether, as other constructivists say, they should open constructivism to domestic politics, nonstate actors, and the possibility of state transcendence. Wendt (1999) defends his decision to focus on the state because his theory is about the interstate system, and states are real rather than ‘as if’ persons, in the sense that they act intentionally.

Wendt’s state orientation has been criticized within the constructivist camp (Guzzini and Leander, 2006). His critics argue that although constructivism is supposed to open structures to different understandings of world politics, Wendt’s theory, like Waltz’s, is conservative and consecrates the existing interstate system (Inayatullah and Blaney, 1996). Because Wendt brackets the domestic sources of state identity, he cannot explain the rise and decline of international societies (Reus-Smit, 1999: 166). Wendt may be able to explain change within systems, but not change between them.

Wendt’s critics say that, ontologically, as Bhaskar (1979) has shown, only individuals can express agency (Wight, 1999: 127). Wight (2006) argues that while states are ontologically real, they are structures rather than agents. From a relational constructivist perspective, Jackson (2004) makes the opposite claim: while states are not ontologically real, like people they are constituted through social processes and have no independent existence outside of social relations. Many of Wendt’s critics agree that although he may have articulated a ‘via media’ with regard to epistemology, mainly because of his reification of the state and his almost exclusive reliance on social structures for explanation, that middle path eluded him

when it came to ontology. As a constructivist, Wendt should have been aware that constructivist theories ought to leave room for new and unexpected structural possibilities. Instead, he offered a theory and a portrait of agency and the state that locks in politics as the study of interstate relations and ultimately gives up on bringing into the theory *the ultimate constructor of worlds*, by which I mean the thinking, often-reasonable, sometimes-surprising, and even at-times-creative human individual.

A more subdued dialogue within constructivism has taken place about how to approach rationality. In the background is the increasing realization that constructivism and rationalism are complementary rather than contradictory. Three factors catalyzed the dialogue. First was a debate that took place in the 1990s between rationalists and constructivists in the pages of the *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen* (ZIB, *Journal of International Relations*). A second factor was the lead article by Peter Katzenstein, Robert Keohane, and Stephen Krasner (1998: 680) in the fiftieth-anniversary issue of *International Organization*, with its thesis that ‘rationalism and constructivism are generic theoretical orientations that are complementary on some crucial points’. For example, constructivism may contribute to a better understanding of what rationalists call ‘common knowledge’²³ and of the role of norms in situations of multiple equilibria. The article also envisions a division of labour in which constructivists explain where alternatives come from and rationalists explain instrumental choice (Katzenstein et al., 1998: 680–2). The third factor has been the growing trend in the rationalist camp to develop theories of institutional behaviour (Young, 1998), rational-choice-based narratives (Bates et al., 1998), and ‘rhetorical entrapment’ (Schimmelfennig, 2003).

The debate within constructivism is thus whether and how to reconcile rationalism and constructivism, and on whose terms. I can identify four (preliminary and still vague) constructivist responses to the challenge to

integrate rationalist and constructivist approaches. The first 'response' is an unwillingness to contemplate the possibility that rationalism and constructivism might be compatible. Many critical and radical constructivists are cautious about such bridge-building endeavours, as they fear being excluded, co-opted, or dominated by more mainstream approaches (Zehfuss, 2002; but see Jacobsen, 2003).

Risse (2000) and a small but growing group of constructivists provide a second response, namely, that constructivists should confront the 'logic of consequentialism' not only with the normative 'logic of appropriateness' but also by adopting Habermas's (1984, 1987) concept of 'communicative rationality' and the 'logic of arguing'. More recently, Pouliot (2008) has suggested a 'logic of practicality,' highlighting practical knowledge as one of the main sources of social action, and Adler and Pouliot (2011a), building on Schelling's seminal works, show that social practices play an important role in the construction of rationality and strategic interaction.

Checkel (2001) suggests a third response, which is really about scope: in some circumstances, a rational approach is called for; in others, a constructivist approach is more suitable. For example, Checkel (2007) sought to identify the conditions of the use of rationalist and constructivist accounts of socialization in the European Union (see also Gheciu, 2005; Jupille et al., 2003; and Checkel's chapter in this volume). Following in the footsteps of Katzenstein, Keohane, and Krasner (1998), who take constructivism as a supplement to rational choice, Finnemore and Sikkink (1998: 911) offer a fourth response; namely, a 'staged analysis' that 'could run either way: one could model rational choice as producing social knowledge as easily as one could model social context as a background for rational choice, depending on the empirical question being researched'. Responses two, three, and four are consistent with the view that a synthesis between rationalism and constructivism is possible. A real synthesis, in my view,

would integrate rationalism and constructivism into a theory that ultimately transcends both.

Yet another dialogue has pitted liberal against nonliberal constructivist approaches. In general, constructivist scholars have been critical of liberal approaches (Steele, 2007), including post-structuralists (Ashley, 1987), critical constructivists (e.g., Cox, 1986), and feminist constructivists (Hutchings, 2005). Some modernist constructivists, however, while distancing themselves from liberal explanations (Moravcsik, 1999) and neoliberal explanations (Keohane, 1984), have nevertheless explicitly followed liberal research agendas, for example, about the democratic peace (e.g., Risse-Kappen, 1995), multilateralism (Ruggie, 1993a), and human rights (Sikkink, 2004). As we saw, realist constructivists have recently challenged the alleged liberal premises of early constructivism. Liberal constructivists have stuck to their guns, but a full debate between these two approaches that goes to the core issues under dispute still has to take place.

CONCLUSION: POSSIBLE FUTURE DEBATES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Making liberalism more compatible with constructivism without undercutting its meta-theoretical basis is an issue that needs to be debated in the future. A second topic for discussion would follow Onuf's (1998b) book, *The Republican Legacy in International Thought*, and address constructivism's Kantian and Weberian roots. A third possibility is a debate about the liberal agendas that most modernist constructivists follow. In this generally West-oriented discipline, such a debate could engender increased attention to the Third World, its culture, problems, agendas, and agency (e.g., Barkawi and Laffey, 2006).

Finally, while ontological, epistemological, and theoretical debates are important, it is time for constructivists to tone them down and concentrate more directly on building

constructivist IR theory. Recent constructivist theoretical and empirical work on power (Barnett and Duvall, 2005), identity (Checkel and Katzenstein, 2009), securitization (Buzan and Waever, 2003), international practices (Adler and Pouliot, 2011a, 2011b), and civilizations (Katzenstein, 2010) are steps in the right direction. The most important and pressing task of constructivist theory in future years, however, is developing a theory of politics that corresponds to a social theoretical understanding of the social construction of knowledge and the construction of social reality. Realist and liberal constructivists are flirting with such theory, without really getting near the goal. It should be clear by now that if the world is socially constructed, for better or worse, it is futile to argue whether realist or liberal constructivism is right – both are. Social reality is constructed on a daily basis, around the globe, albeit unevenly, not only by international institutions but also by war. So where do we start? By studying how both progressive and regressive knowledge enters in the construction of social practices, and the learning and institutionalization processes that transform micro and macro structures of social reality so that coercive and power-oriented practices give way to ‘best practices’ and a better and more benign human condition.

NOTES

1 My deep gratitude goes to Alena Drieschova, who not only provided superb research assistance in this chapter’s revisions, but also played a supporting role in the intellectual conception of the revisions. I also thank Vincent Pouliot for his insightful comments on this revised draft. Finally, I thank the editors, in particular Walter Carlsnaes, for their assistance.

2 *Positivism* is a metaphysical theory that holds (a) ‘a belief in the unity of science’ (it applies to the social as well as to the natural sciences); (b) ‘the view that there is a distinction between facts and values’; (c) ‘a powerful belief in the existence of regularities in the social as well as the natural world;’ and (d) ‘a tremendous reliance on the belief that it is empirical validation or falsification that is the hallmark of “real” enquiry’ (Smith, 1996: 16).

3 *Materialism* is the view that material reality exists, regardless of perception or interpretation, and that what we know is a faithful representation of what is ‘out there.’ Materialism informs functionalist and rational choice social theories, which are the basis, respectively, of neorealism and neoliberalism in IR.

4 *Idealism* holds that the physical is just a collection of ideas and that, therefore, the foundation for all knowledge is in the mind.

5 As a radicalized version of idealist philosophy, *post-structuralism* aims to deconstruct the dominant readings of reality; *postmodernism* aims to uncover the discourse and power structures that control practice. Both approaches agree that subjects are ontologically unimportant, reason is a chimera, no foundational point whatsoever exists, and that science is just power disguised as knowledge. Unless a distinction is necessary, I will refer to both approaches as post-structuralism.

6 *Nominalism* is the philosophical view that the world does not come already classified – it is human beings who classify it (Hacking, 1999).

7 *Metaphysics* studies the fundamental nature of reality and being, which is outside objective experience.

8 Although not a neo-Kantian, Emile Durkheim (1965) developed an objective method of explaining society that abandoned Weber’s methodological individualism and concentrated instead on a structural functionalist explanation of society, based on collective ideas and ‘social facts’.

9 *Hermeneutics* subordinates explanation and description to interpretation and understanding of meaning. ‘Objective hermeneutics’ refers to the perspective that ‘the study of human meaning can aspire to objectivity’ (Delanty, 1997: 41).

10 It treats ‘the event to be explained as an instance of a certain type of event, which is then shown to accompany or follow regularly from conditions of a specified kind’ (Dessler, 1999: 129).

11 By means of historical reconstruction, the ‘event is explained as the end-point of a concrete historical sequence, not as an instance of a particular type’ (Dessler, 1999: 129).

12 I borrow the language of strong and weak programmes in the social sciences from the sociology of knowledge, in particular the Edinburgh school’s ‘Strong Programme in the Sociology of Knowledge’ (Barnes, 1977; Bloor, 1976).

13 ‘The act of speaking in a form that gets someone else to act’ (Onuf, 1998a: 66).

14 Scientific realism subsumes events under causal mechanisms. According to scientific realists, therefore, causal investigations of natural and social orders presuppose a natural and social reality that exists prior to our descriptions of it. ‘Critical realism’ shares with constructivism the view that the social world is endowed with meaning and that, therefore, ‘observations are theory-dependent and ... we

cannot have pure access of the independent world' (Mingers, 1995: 88). Unlike idealists, however, critical realists believe that the natural world is not constructed by perception. Instead, reality includes the causal mechanisms and entities that compose it (Baert, 1998: 191).

15 My apologies to all those scholars who played a major role in developing the constructivist approach in IR whom I failed to mention (because of space constraints and my own shortcomings).

16 Giddens's (1979: 5) structuration theory incorporates the mutually constitutive relationship between irreducible and potentially unobservable social structures and intentional human agents into a dialectical synthesis that overcomes the subordination of one to the other (Wendt, 1987: 356).

17 For critical analyses of securitization theory, see, for example, Hansen (2000) and Williams (2003).

18 *Instrumental rationality* is 'the efficient pursuit of exogenously determined interests within the constraints of available information, the interests and strategies of other actors, and the distribution of power' (Reus-Smit, 1999: 159–60).

19 For an equally influential, mostly constructivist analysis of power, see the special issue of *Millennium* (33, no 3, 2005) edited by Felix Berenskoetter and Michael J. Williams.

20 This section draws on Adler and Pouliot, 2011b,

21 A community of practice is a configuration of a *domain of knowledge* that constitutes like-mindedness, a *community of people* that 'creates the social fabric of learning', and a *shared practice* that embodies 'the knowledge the community develops, shares, and maintains' (Wenger et al., 2002: 28–9).

22 'In providing answers to causal questions, in saying that "X causes Y", we assume three things: (1) that X and Y exist independent of each other; (2) that X precedes Y in time; and (3) that but for X, Y would not have occurred' (Wendt, 1998: 105).

23 Rationalists use the concept of 'common knowledge' to describe what players must know in order to be part of the same game.

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Critical Theory, Poststructuralism, and Postcolonialism

Maja Zehfuss

When international relations (IR) scholars talk of critical theory, they often have in mind a distinction made by Robert Cox in his influential 1981 article 'Social Forces, States and World Orders'. Cox observed that theory 'is always *for* someone and *for* some purpose' (1981: 128). This claim struck a chord with scholars wishing to highlight that the ways in which we think about the world are not divorced from our position in that world and our (power) relations with(in) that world; it has indeed become one of the most over-quoted lines in IR scholarship. Crucially, Cox proceeded to identify two kinds of theory distinguished by their different purposes. On the one hand is 'problem-solving theory', which takes a particular perspective as given and seeks to solve problems arising within it. On the other hand is 'critical theory', which reflects upon the process of theorising and therefore makes it possible to choose a different perspective and to create a different world. Put differently, critical theory 'stands apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how that order came about' (Cox, 1981: 129). It questions existing social and power relations. While critical theory in

Cox's sense makes 'a normative choice in favour of a social and political order different from the prevailing order' possible, it nevertheless takes account of the world as it currently is and 'limits the range of choice to alternative orders which are feasible transformations of the existing world' (1981: 130).

This sort of 'critical' covers a multitude of sins; it is often used as a catch-all category to characterise approaches that do not subscribe to the positivism that some argue was once the orthodoxy of the discipline of IR (see Smith, 1996). That is, such theories take seriously not least the problem that scholars studying the social world find themselves within the object of their inquiry. Yet those whose thinking is classified as critical may well not agree with Cox's scheme, which has some unfortunate implications. Most obviously perhaps, on a superficial reading it suggests that critical theory does not solve problems, giving rise to the unhelpful but popular idea that critical theories merely criticise. Moreover, some of those classed as critical theorists question whether we can speak of an 'existing world' as though we were all agreed on what that is in

the first place. Nevertheless, Cox's intervention powerfully challenged the exclusive legitimacy of a certain kind of theorising and his classification remains significant as a way in which theories are framed.

This is not to say that Cox single-handedly precipitated a critical turn in IR. Rather, his intervention coincided with other contributions to the debate about how to theorise international politics. Richard Ashley's 'Political Realism and Human Interests', published in the same year as Cox's article, was soon followed by Andrew Linklater's *Men and Citizens in the Theory of International Relations*. Numerous further articles drawing on critical social theory to challenge the IR orthodoxy came out in the 1980s. Crediting Cox with setting off the critical turn would also erase the contribution of feminists whose version of critical may be different, but who had questioned the prevailing order and thought of ways to overcome it for some time. Something similar might be said about postcolonial thought, confirming incidentally Cox's gist that the prevailing order looks like an unproblematic reality only to those who benefit from the status quo.

Whatever story we tell about its origin, from the late 1980s onwards there has been a veritable explosion of 'critical' work in IR (Rengger and Thirkell-White, 2007: 4). Retrospectively, it appears as though the complexity and uncertainty created by the end of the Cold War produced the critical turn. The soul-searching within IR occasioned by the collective failure to predict the peaceful demise of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact made it possible and necessary to look for alternative ways of thinking. Fundamental questions about the nature of the world we live in came to be seen as legitimate and significant in a discipline that had previously focused mainly on the practicalities of interactions between states. Critical theories address a changing social world, and suddenly their insights appeared significant.

However, while the end of the Cold War may have created the conditions for an increasing acceptance of such thinking in a previously theoretically unadventurous field,

it is significant that critical thinking in IR is part of a wider critique of positivism in the social sciences that was not related to the end of the Cold War and indeed preceded it. Such critical thinking started as a concern about the production of knowledge within scholarship. This is hardly particularly radical: one of the key issues in any academic work is – or at least should be – how knowledge, truth, or expertise is produced. This starting point meant, however, that critical scholars posed a direct challenge to existing theorising and its limitations. It is therefore not surprising that critical theorists' relationship with IR has always been fraught and remains ambiguous. They question the standards to which the discipline would hold them, and therefore their work can only ever appear as less scientific than that by those who define what counts as science in the first place (Smith, 2000). Critical scholars also do not recognise the limits of the discipline; they are not convinced that IR owns the study of international politics or is even particularly central to it. Hence, it might simply not be worth living up to the demands of this particular discipline. Interdisciplinarity is part of any critical understanding of international politics. After all, the contemporary politics of the globe is examined in a wide range of fields, including geography, anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, and international law.

Despite this difficult relationship with the discipline, critical theories are now very much part of the field. Outside of the United States, critical work is central. It would not be easy to find IR scholars in the United Kingdom, for example, who portray themselves as anything other than critical in some way. A 2007 special issue of *Review of International Studies* assessed and celebrated the impact of critical theory (Rengger and Thirkell-White, 2007): the field changed in the aftermath of the so-called critical turn. That international politics is part of a social world that is made and that thinking about this world invariably involves value judgements are now commonly held positions. Of course, 'criticism is the main way in which we attempt to attain warranted knowledge', even within 'normal science'

(Kratochwil, 2007: 28); being ‘critical’ is not the exclusive domain of critical theory. What remains a matter of debate, therefore, is how exactly critical theory is ‘critical’ in a way that other theories are not (Kratochwil, 2007).

It is immediately clear that, while ‘critical’ work may share some ideas, dispositions, and aims, there are also significant intellectual disagreements. This chapter sets out distinct approaches – Critical Theory, post-structuralism, and postcolonialism – before engaging with the question of convergences and divergences. Needless to say, this chapter cannot give a full account of work inspired by these three ways of thinking about the world; it can merely identify key themes and point towards some of the work. It also should be made clear from the outset that a vast range of critical work – basically anything that does not fall easily within these classifications – has been excluded in order to keep the subject matter manageable. This classification scheme leads to two particular exclusions that are worth mentioning. First, feminism is not considered; it is the subject of Chapter 7 in this volume. Second, this chapter does not explore critical theorists inspired by the work of Antonio Gramsci (Rupert, 2009). While the Gramscians’ concern with hegemony operating through the political power of consent rather than coercion is not dissimilar to some of the arguments explored here, Gramscian scholars, including Cox, are influential mainly in the study of the international political economy (see, for example, Gill, 1993; Cox, 1987; Bieler and Morton, 2006; Morton, 2007). Appropriately introducing their contribution would require an engagement with matters of political economy that is beyond what is possible within the confines of this chapter.

CRITICAL THEORY

IR scholars often make a distinction between critical theory and Critical Theory.

The former is – following Cox’s aforementioned classification, which recalls Max Horkheimer’s distinction between traditional and critical theory (Rengger and Thirkell-White, 2007: 6) – basically any theory that reflects upon its own assumptions and considers possibilities for change. Critical Theory is more specific. It refers to a theory derived from the Frankfurt School (Wyn Jones, 1999; Rengger, 2001; Rengger and Thirkell-White, 2007). That is, Critical Theory is in the tradition of Marxist thought associated with the Institut für Sozialforschung (Institute of Social Research) established in Frankfurt in 1923. Key thinkers in this tradition include the founder of the institute, Theodor Adorno, as well as Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, and Walter Benjamin. In IR, Critical Theorists mostly draw on the work of later Frankfurt School thinkers, chiefly Jürgen Habermas (see Crawford, 2009; Haacke, 2005). However, not everyone who draws on Habermas is necessarily seen to be a Critical Theorist (Rengger and Thirkell-White, 2007: 7). Critical Theory as examined here involves an emancipatory purpose (Linklater, 2001); work that chiefly explores Habermas’s theory of communicative action, without explicit reference to emancipation, is not considered (Risse, 2000; Deitelhoff and Müller, 2005).

Bringing habermas to IR

Habermas’s thought was first introduced to IR by Ashley, though Ashley himself came to draw on the work of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault and became one of the most influential poststructural IR scholars. Ashley used Habermas’s conceptualisation of the relation between knowledge and human interests. More specifically, he was ‘concerned with the deeper relation between realist concepts, knowledge claims, and modes of inquiry and grounding, on the one hand, and the world of social action that realism would inform, on the other’ (Ashley, 1981: 206–207). At this deeper level, Ashley contends, there are significant tensions within realism – then the dominant way of thinking

about international politics – that merit consideration. In particular, he identifies two aspects of realist thought – practical realism and technical realism – that assume different relations between realist knowledge and human interests that consequently lead to different modes of inquiry and ways of developing and validating arguments.

Ashley draws on Habermas's response to the problem 'that knowledge is always constituted in reflection of interests' (1981: 207). He outlines Habermas's categorisation of three knowledge-constitutive interests: the practical cognitive interest, the technical cognitive interest, and the emancipatory cognitive interest. Ashley examines the tension between practical and technical interests as expressed in practical and technical realism, taking Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Waltz, respectively, as representative. Ashley is, however, most interested in John Herz's work. Herz, he claims, 'can recognize that knowledge has a basis in interests' but 'cannot accord final, uncontested validity to norms, concepts, and knowledge claims solely because they serve (or are consistent with) the practical and technical interests in understanding and control that society consciously recognizes and endorses' (Ashley, 1981: 227). What the technical and practical aspects neglect is the human interest in autonomy and the related human capacity of self-reflection. Hence, Herz is interesting because he offers a 'transformational critique' (Ashley, 1981: 231) that brings together technical, practical, and emancipatory interests in a new synthesis emerging from realist dialogue.

Ashley uses Habermas's thought to question the possibility of objective knowledge; he highlights that knowledge reflects interests, challenging prevailing ways of thinking about international politics. He identifies as significant the erasure from international thought of humans' capacity to reflect upon their own condition and their interest in changing it. Put differently, Habermas is significant because of his argument that the dominance of positivism in the social sciences had led to human

problems being conceived of as technical problems, meaning that knowledge was seen as offering the possibility of control rather than of human emancipation (Diez and Steans, 2005: 129).

Linklater's critical international theory

Although Ashley was the first to explicitly bring Habermas's work to IR, it was Linklater who, in three related books, developed a post-Marxist and eventually Habermas-inspired Critical Theory of IR. At the core of Linklater's trilogy is an engagement with exclusion and its justification. Linklater is profoundly dissatisfied with traditional ways of thinking about political community because they fail to take the problematic of exclusion seriously. In *Beyond Realism and Marxism* (1990a: 6–7), Linklater observes that what 'has yet to be constructed is a critical theory which follows the spirit if not the letter of Marx's inquiry into capitalism – a critical theory, in other words, which identifies the prospects for realising higher levels of human freedom across society as a whole.' What is at stake is a theory that seriously engages the human capacity for and interest in emancipation.

Linklater builds on existing approaches to the study of international politics, principally realism and Marxism, and envisages a critical theory that would deal 'with the problem of power, the need for order and the possibility of human emancipation through the extension of human community' (1990a: 32). Such a theory is invariably committed to change. The issue is one of 'the extension of moral and political community' (Linklater, 1990a: 33). One of Linklater's key complaints about Marxist theory is its failure to 'recognise the need for an emancipatory politics which dealt directly with both the domestic and international dimensions of the state's use of violence' (Linklater, 1990a: 140). In the social sciences, the state had come to be recognised as a 'central problem' (Linklater,

1990a: 141), whereas IR still treated it as neutral or even the solution to the perceived problem of security.

In *Men and Citizens*, Linklater had already examined the tensions between different sets of obligations existing in the modern state-system: those based on citizenship and those rooted in the idea of a shared humanity. Although he argues that 'the idea of a morally or politically unified humanity cannot be revived in its classical form' (Linklater, 1990b: 202), this does not mean that particularism has won the day. On the contrary, Linklater seeks to show that 'notions of moral obligation are not exhausted by the demands of citizenship alone' (1990b: 207). Linklater's examination of the transformation of political community is a logical continuation of his project. He explores how communities function as systems of inclusion and exclusion and supports the cosmopolitan critique of the state system in order to argue for 'widening the moral boundaries of political communities' (1998: 2). Linklater is keenly aware that the 'unapologetically universalistic' thrust of his argument is confronted with the problem that a cosmopolitan ethics may be just as exclusionary as the explicitly particularistic versions of ethics it serves to critique. He recognises, moreover, that people are emotionally attached to particular communities (1998: 2). Yet Linklater seeks to alert us to how communities and their boundaries evolve over time, providing the space for a cosmopolitan ethic that questions why the nation should be the main reference point of our moral imaginary.

Linklater brings together Kantian normative argument and Marxist sociological analysis to make new conceptions of community possible and to help reconstruct the critical project in the aftermath of the new and at times violent particularism that followed the end of the Cold War. Crucially, this involves a praxeological analysis: critical theory must be cognisant of what political possibilities exist. That is, Linklater sees the new forms of political community as 'immanent within

existing forms of life and anticipated in their moral reserves' (1998: 5), though requiring change to be realised. Hence, Linklater defends the 'goal of dialogic relations with the members of systematically excluded groups' as a 'normative ideal' (1998: 85). For Linklater, it is not necessary that those involved in dialogue share a cultural background or political aims. The only requirement is that 'cultural differences are no barrier to equal rights of participation within a dialogic community' (1998: 85). Crucially, the outcome must not be predetermined. The 'hallmark of the communication community' is the 'willingness to engage wildly different human beings *qua* human beings, in a dialogue which assesses the rationality of the practices of exclusion' (1998: 87).

Linklater draws on Habermas's notion of discourse ethics. Discourse ethics stipulates that 'norms cannot be valid unless they are able to command the consent of everyone whose interests stand to be affected by them' (Linklater, 1998: 91). Therefore, a community committed to such an ethics will endorse the idea that 'the validity of the principles on which it acts can only be determined through a dialogue which is in principle open to all human beings' (Linklater, 1998: 91). Open dialogue as required by discourse ethics is only possible when participants are willing to learn from each other without knowing in advance who will learn from whom (Linklater, 1998: 92). They must be willing to subject their own positions to critique. They must be committed to being 'moved simply by the force of the better argument' (Linklater, 1998: 92). Discourse ethics determines procedures to enable such dialogue; it does not predetermine a substantive outcome. Systems of exclusion are of particular concern, however. Critical international theory therefore 'defends the triple transformation of political community by advocating dialogic communities which are cosmopolitan in orientation, respectful of cultural differences and committed to reducing social and economic inequalities, nationally and internationally' (Linklater, 1998: 109).

Critical international theory beyond Linklater

Linklater's is a grand project. His later work develops related concerns about harm in the international state system (Linklater, 2007). Yet despite Linklater's undoubted stature in the field, there does not seem to be a group of scholars following in his footsteps. Three reasons spring to mind. First, Linklater's faith in the possibility of open dialogue and emancipation and his optimism about reducing exclusion sat uneasily with events shortly after *The Transformation of Political Community* was published. A 'willingness to engage wildly different human beings *qua* human beings' seems in short supply from all sides in the current international climate, in what is represented as a struggle between the West and the non-West. Indeed, Western states have become, if anything, less welcoming to noncitizens. Linklater's optimism (Rengger, 2001: 96) has arguably proved unsustainable. Second, having been part of the vanguard that brought social theory to IR, Linklater has contributed to enabling scholars to draw on Habermas and other social theorists directly and in ways that differ from his own. Martin Weber has indeed argued that Habermas's critical social theory should be explored in more depth (Weber, 2005: 195). Third, Linklater's work does not lend itself to any straightforward 'application'. What is more, theorising as an activity separate from empirical analysis seems to have become unpopular, though there are examples of related and similarly abstract engagements with ethical questions (Shapcott, 2001). While Linklater's accomplishment as a theorist is beyond question, critical scholars have often engaged with more practical issues.

Richard Wyn Jones highlights addressing practical issues as significant to a critical security studies inspired by Critical Theory which would generate 'new maps – maps that can plot a way forward not only for a discipline but for society as a whole' (1999: 119). To achieve this ambitious goal, it is

necessary to draw on the more general project of critical theory and to offer concrete analyses of particular issues (Wyn Jones, 1999: 119–121). Such an approach thinks through possibilities for emancipation and how to realise them. A wide range of work brands itself as 'critical security studies', but Wyn Jones argues for developing Critical Security Studies rooted specifically in Frankfurt School thinking. His preferred conceptualisation of security is characterised by three elements: (1) eschewing statism, (2) recognising issues other than military threats, and (3) relating the theory and practice of security to a wider concern with human emancipation (1999: 5). This latter point is significant. Wyn Jones stresses that a concern with emancipation is what unites Critical Theorists (1999: 56). Emancipatory potential must exist for Critical Theory to make sense. In fact, emancipation is something of a mantra of the Critical Security Studies that Wyn Jones and others promote (Booth, 2005).

The centrality of emancipation raises questions, not least about what emancipation means and who gets to define it. In this context, it is worth considering Neta Crawford's carefully crafted book on the role of argument in the decolonization process. Crawford observes that reason 'is the process individuals go through in deciding how the world works and how they will act in it' (2002: 12). Because it is necessary to justify our actions, argument is significant. Crawford draws on Habermas's observation that lifeworlds restrict what may be perceived as a valid argument (Crawford, 2002: 69), but is careful not to buy into any simplistic notions of the value of reason. Indeed, she draws our attention to Habermas's point that 'Enlightenment faith in reason has been profoundly shaken by its own logic' (Crawford, 2002: 404). Since normative beliefs cannot rely on universally valid foundations, ethics is necessarily 'ambiguous and paradoxical' (Crawford, 2002: 405).

Crawford discusses Habermas's reference to intuition as a basis for normative belief.

On the one hand, this is appealing: framing human rights discourse – or, for that matter, Critical Theorists’ support for emancipation – as something that summarises our historically situated moral intuitions has a certain attraction. On the other hand, Crawford raises significant questions: ‘What if our “intuitions” are quite harmful to some individuals or classes of people? What if “intuitions” conflict?’ (2002: 407). Crawford is also concerned that the idea of intuition ‘glosses over the complexity of ethical reasoning, its situatedness in the experiences of individuals and cultures [...], and the relationship of ethical reasoning to ethical argument’ (2002: 407). She therefore rejects intuition as a ‘pseudo-ground’ (2002: 407) for normative beliefs. Intuition, she suggests, ‘is another word for ‘socialization, empathy, and conviction’ (Crawford, 2002: 408).

Like Linklater, Crawford turns to Habermas’s discourse ethics as a promising starting point for thinking through the problem of ethics in international politics, but her project is different in that she engages in detail with the practice of decolonization. Discourse ethics, she explains, starts from ‘the belief that for decisions and normative beliefs to be followed, they must be justified – they must be seen to be normatively good, they must be done for good reason, and all those affected by a decision must consent on some level’ (Crawford, 2002: 411). Approval becomes possible through a dialogue in which views can be articulated and consensus is sought. This relies on the possibility of an ideal speech situation, that is, a situation of uncoerced communication where only the force of the better argument counts. A range of conditions must hold for this to be possible, and this poses significant problems (Crawford, 2002: 411–417). Nevertheless, after considering these challenges in detail, Crawford suggests that ‘when we must interact with others and we find ourselves in conflict over ends or means, if we do not at first see an obvious way to act in matters that concern all of us, we can use discourse ethical principles to find that way’ (Crawford, 2002: 434).

Unlike those who see a lack of agreement and understanding as an obstacle to developing an ethical world politics, Crawford regards this situation as a virtue: ‘Because no one can presume understanding, it is obvious that we must work towards it’ (2002: 434). The commitment to a procedural ethics is then central to achieving this. The question of how to proceed in the face of a lack of agreement on what ethics might require sets apart the different approaches explored here, with both poststructuralism and postcolonialism less convinced that the procedural ethics proposed by Habermas is quite as benign as it might appear. This is an issue I will return to in the final section.

POSTSTRUCTURALISM

Poststructuralists are inspired by continental European – mainly French – thinkers. Foucault and Derrida often seem most influential (see Neal, 2009; Zehfuss, 2009a; Edkins, 1999), though Giorgio Agamben, Roland Barthes, Jean Baudrillard, Gilles Deleuze, Martin Heidegger, Emmanuel Levinas, Jean-Luc Nancy, Friedrich Nietzsche, Paul Virilio and many others are also significant (Edkins and Vaughan-Williams, 2009a). Although any generalisation about what poststructuralists do is problematic, one might say that they explore how the world comes to be represented as it is. They examine the changing social practices that make international politics so as to tease out the power relations they (re)produce. They also reveal how representations of the world always already fail or – in other words – deconstruct (Zehfuss, 2002, 2007b, 2009a). Crucially, thinking about the world is a (political) practice; theories are part of the world they claim to elucidate and must be studied in their own right. As scholars are unable to stand apart from the world they study, their ways of making sense of the world are inevitably political.

Starting points

Poststructuralists examine and question claims and assumptions that may be taken for granted by others. Starting assumptions – particularly those that appear to be common sense – limit how we may think about an issue and therefore support particular solutions. Highlighting the contingency of assumptions offers the possibility of thinking differently about the world, of creating thinking space (George, 1994). Poststructuralism reveals the contingent character of what appears to be given – what is represented as reality. It reveals the politics involved in producing this reality as commonsensical or even inevitable (Zehfuss, 2002).

Starting points are important but not given. Analysis might therefore start in a number of places. Some but by no means all the scholars who made early contributions from a poststructural perspective began by critiquing IR theories, particularly (neo) realism. Although this work is now dated as the dominance of realism has waned, it is instructive to look at some of these critiques, especially Ashley's (1981, 1984, 1989). Ashley introduced a critical attitude based on Foucault's genealogical method and Derrida's strategy of deconstruction. This means that he rejected the 'absolute dichotomies of identity and difference, depth and surface' (Ashley, 1987: 408). His aim was not to uncover some hidden, final meaning. Rather, from a genealogical standpoint, 'what catches the eye is motion, discontinuities, clashes, and the ceaseless play of plural forces and plural interpretations on the surface of human experience' (Ashley, 1987: 408). Put differently, meaning is not constant or fixed; rather, interpretations, which are all there is, compete and change. Interpretation is itself 'a practice of domination' (Ashley, 1987: 408). Therefore, history has to be understood 'in terms of the endless power political clash of multiple wills' (Ashley, 1987: 409).

Ashley thus engages with IR theory as a discourse that produces the problematic it

claims to name. He proposes to examine two questions in particular:

First, I want to ask *how* [the discourse of the anarchy problematique] works, *how* it gains significance in our culture, *how* it comes to be recognised as a powerful representation of a predicament so compelling and so self-evident that it seems to command attention. Second, I want to ask *how*, in the course of its development, this discourse has exposed its own rhetorical strategies and undermined the very foundations of the perspective it asserts, thereby opening up potentially productive avenues of inquiry hitherto closed off by it (Ashley, 1988: 228).

Ashley focuses on theory, though, of course, he treats theoretical debate as part of global life. Theories frame global politics and 'any form of framing constitutes praxis in its own right, with important ethical and political implications' (Vaughan-Williams, 2009: 158). Poststructural work also engages with actual existing practices of international politics. There are detailed studies of international practices such as diplomacy (Der Derian, 1987, 1992), foreign policy (Campbell, 1998b; Bulley, 2009), aid and famine (Edkins, 2000), popular dissent (Bleiker, 2000), war (Campbell 1993, 1998a; Shapiro, 1997; Der Derian, 2001; Dauphinée, 2007), borders (Vaughan-Williams, 2009), international finance (De Goede, 2005), and global health (Elbe, 2009, 2010).

Sovereignty and subjectivity

The conceptualisation of theory and practice as interrelated is apparent in analyses of sovereignty (Edkins et al., 1999, 2004). Sovereignty is central to discourses of modern politics that separate the domestic from the international. Ashley highlights that the realist understanding of international politics relies on this separation, in which the domestic is represented as characterised by sovereignty and the international by anarchy. This distinction in turn relies on a double move of reduction and deferment. That is, the question of community is conceived on the basis

of the dominant understanding of the issue in relation to domestic society, and as a result community is framed as not (yet) realized in the international sphere (Ashley, 1987: 413; see also Edkins and Zehfuss, 2005).

This theme is developed by R.B.J. Walker in *Inside/Outside*, which explores and highlights the 'limits of the modern political imagination' (1993: ix). Walker shows how, by relying on particular assumptions about space and time, the discourse of IR theory produces the international by distinguishing and opposing to each other the inside of the state (the realm of the possibility of the good life) and the outside (the realm of anarchy and struggle). Walker asserts that IR theories 'are interesting less for the substantive explanations they offer about political conditions in the modern world than as expressions of the limits of the contemporary political imagination when confronted with persistent claims about and evidence of fundamental historical and structural transformation' (1993: 5). Their assumptions and categories constitute constraints and limit our ability to think differently about politics. These theories offer little explanation of contemporary politics; they rather are in need of explanation (Walker, 1993: 6).

For Walker, these influential but historically specific understandings of space and time are most significantly expressed in the principle of state sovereignty (1993: 6). He examines how political subjectivity and sovereign authority are inextricably intertwined in the practice of modern politics (Walker, 2009). Sovereignty is a political practice that requires constant (re)enactment or performance. As Jenny Edkins and Véronique Pin-Fat point out in their examination of sovereign power, 'day-to-day social interactions' are 'productive of both power and subjectivities' (Edkins and Pin-Fat, 2004: 2). Therefore, the modern subject is centrally implicated in the production of sovereignty. Poststructural work questions the idea of the modern subject, the subject that, as Descartes had it, could be sure about its own existence, if about nothing else: 'I think therefore I am'.

This 'conscious, fully aware, rational subject' was central to Enlightenment thought: its expression demarcated the boundary between certainty and doubt (Edkins, 1999: 21). This view of the subject is, however, no longer appropriate: the subject is continuously produced and reproduced together with the social world of which it is a part (Edkins, 1999: 22). How humans are made subjects is central to Foucault's work. This is an important departure from Critical Theory, which generally treats the subject as a coherent and extra-discursive entity.

Significantly, subjectivity is invested not (merely) in individuals, but in the state. An assumption is made that states "as collectivities ... behave as subjects" (Odysseos, 2007: xxvii). The state is, problematically, produced as a recognizably autonomous entity capable of action. This has serious consequences when, for example, the state is then seen as able to fix problems abroad through military intervention. Odysseos considers the conception of subjectivity as given, atomised, independent of context to be problematic; "the effacement by modern subjectivity of its own constitution by otherness" (Odysseos, 2007: xxx) is particularly significant. Finding ways of thinking that are mindful of how subjects are produced by a discourse that simultaneously obscures this production and especially the role that otherness plays in it is crucial. Such an understanding of subjectivity poses significant analytical challenges, however, not least because as soon as we speak we identify a subject (Zehfuss, 2009b: 101–2).

Representation and violence

Roxanne Doty explains that she 'conceives of the field of North-South relations, in all its dimensions, as constitutive of these entities' (1996: 2). That is, North and South do not pre-exist our speaking and thinking about them. Rather, their representation as such is part of the issue. This approach does not 'deny the existence of a material world, but

rather suggests that material objects and subjects are constituted as such within discourse' (Doty, 1996: 5). Doty hence examines 'how certain representations underlie the production of knowledge and identities and how these representations make various courses of action possible' (Doty, 1996: 5). A 'discourse delineates the terms of intelligibility whereby a particular "reality" can be known and acted upon' (Doty, 1996: 6). Crucially, discourse involves relations of power. Doty is concerned with how 'power works to constitute particular modes of subjectivity and interpretive dispositions' (1996: 4). The systematic exclusion of 'Third World' voices as well as the failure to acknowledge the significance of race, she argues, leads to an unwitting perpetuation of dominant modes of representation and relations of power.

David Campbell's work equally draws attention to the political implications of representations and interpretations. In his *Writing Security*, he starts from the observation that danger 'is not an objective condition' (1998b: 1); it does not exist independently from those who may be threatened. While infectious diseases and political violence 'have consequences that can literally be understood in terms of life and death' (Campbell, 1998b: 2), only some risks come to be understood as dangers. Campbell thus draws attention to the 'indispensability of interpretation in the articulation of danger' (1998b: 4). Therefore, he focuses on 'historically specific modes of discourse' (1998b: 4–5), on how dangers are made. He starts 'from the position that social and political life comprises a set of practices in which things are constituted in the process of dealing with them' (1998b: 5). He offers a 'history of the present' in the sense suggested by Foucault (Campbell, 1998b: 5). From his examination of US foreign policy, Campbell draws a number of significant conclusions. He shows, for example, that the constant articulation of danger through foreign policy is 'not a threat to a state's identity or existence: it is its condition of possibility' (1998b: 13). Drawing on Judith Butler's

work (Masters, 2009), Campbell suggests that thinking in terms of performativity – in terms of how 'discourses constitute the objects of which they speak' (Bialasiewicz et al., 2007: 406) – enables us to understand security culture 'as a relational site for the politics of identity' (Campbell, 1998b: 221).

Campbell shows how performances of identity affect others. He argues that the 'imposition of an interpretation on the ambiguity and contingency of social life always results in an other being marginalized. Meaning and identity are, therefore, always the consequence of a relationship between the self and the other that emerges through the imposition of an interpretation' (Campbell, 1998b: 23). How the other is construed is significant. The subject is always already in a relation: there is no self as distinct from the social world within which it finds itself. Campbell has examined this further in his *National Deconstruction* (1998a), which explores the nexus of relations to the other and representations of violence. Campbell is particularly interested in the question of responsibility, something that I will turn to in the next section. First, I want to address the impact of representations that marginalise others and their concerns, an issue that is also highlighted by Doty's study of imperial encounters (1996).

Marginalisation is significant because it enables and authorises courses of action that have serious effects. Most obviously, it may legitimise violence against an Other portrayed as dangerous. Unsurprisingly, the so-called war on terror has been a focal point of poststructural work (Campbell, 2005; Reid, 2006; Jabri, 2007; Dillon and Reid, 2009). Jabri analyses the practices of violence that 'permeate the global arena' (2007: 1). She notes that the 'use of violence as a form of political practice is situated in contests over interests, values and resources' but that 'its enabling conditions stem from discursive and institutional continuities that are deep-rooted in social relations' (Jabri, 2007: 1). Jabri, who examines 'structures of domination' in their material and discursive dimensions (2007: 6), aims to offer an understanding of

the ways in which political violence and war are 'redefining politics and the sphere of the international' (Jabri, 2007: 7).

A key concern of recent poststructural work has been how violence against others in non-Western geographic spaces has become permissible and the effect this has had on politics and the international. This concern is often expressed as one about liberalism and the violence inherent in liberalism. Representations of the other as dangerous, backward, and irrational may serve to legitimise violence. What is less obvious is how an ostensibly benign attitude towards the other as expressed in the ideology of liberalism produces and supports such violence, an issue that postcolonial scholars have much to say about. Reid points out that despite the liberal idea of peace, liberal modernity has been defined 'not only by the recurrence of war, but by a gradual increase in military capacities among liberal societies for the violent destruction of human life' (Reid, 2006: 2). He argues that we need to conceptualise the war on terror 'as a struggle over the political constitution of life itself; specifically over the questions of *what human life is* and *what it may yet become*' (Reid, 2006: 13). That is, Reid and others formulate the danger of the war on terror in terms of biopolitics, that is, of power as concerning all aspects of life (Dillon and Reid, 2009; see also Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero, 2008). It is no longer enough to deter potential enemies from particular actions; rather, they have to be made to live in such a way that they pose no danger. They have to be made to live according to a Western liberal vision of what constitutes legitimate politics. The irony is that the level of control required to sort dangerous life from benign life and therefore apparently to prevent what is represented as violence is worrying and, of course, illiberal.

Responsibility and resistance

Poststructuralists are worried about such control. This expresses itself, for example, as

a concern about how certain actions are construed as technical fixes to problems rather than as political decisions. It expresses itself also as a concern about how certain actions, especially forms of protest, are disallowed as legitimate political practices and instead construed as illegitimate violence or indeed as expressions of irrationality or illness (Edkins and Pin-Fat, 2005). That is, poststructuralists are concerned about depoliticisation or, vice versa, about 'bringing the political back in' (Edkins, 1999).

A poststructural attitude therefore involves what Campbell calls an 'ethos of political criticism' (Campbell, 1998a: 4) and Jabri an 'ethos of critique' (Jabri 2007: 167). That is, it seeks not least to identify spaces for politics that we may currently fail to see. As Doty points out, 'the impossibility of ultimate closure together with the fact of partial fixation, is of key importance' (Doty, 1996: 6). A deconstructive ethos aims 'to show, no matter how established or settled a given frame appears to be, it is always produced in a limitless context of interpretation and reinterpretation, which necessarily denies the possibility of any sort of closure, finitude or totalisation' (Vaughan-Williams, 2009: 158–159). Dillon and Reid (2009) suggest that complete control is impossible. People do not exist for a particular purpose. They just live, and that alone can be a challenge to the system. People find ways to reclaim political spaces (Edkins, 2003). Yet control is an ever-present possibility and the question of how, if at all, resistance is possible is tricky (Edkins and Pin-Fat, 2005).

Scholarship is important because critique is significant to any possibility of resisting. Doty suggests that the political stakes raised by her analysis 'revolve around the question of being able to "get beyond" the representations or speak outside of the discourses that historically have constructed the North and the South' (1996: 170–171). The failure to examine representations is a 'perpetuation of the dominant modes of making meaning and deferral of its responsibility and complicity in dominant representations' (Doty, 1996: 171).

That is, as scholars we risk becoming complicit in the reproduction of dominant modes of representation. Producing knowledge is our business, after all, and there is no way to escape the power/knowledge relations entailed by this.

Jabri therefore considers the responsibility of writing on war. She argues that writing on war 'brings forth particular responsibilities, not least of which is the responsibility to recognise the impact of the writing in the construction of narratives that come from the uncertainties surrounding particular situations of violent conflict' (Jabri, 2007: 19–20). Doty (2007) and Elizabeth Dauphinée (2007) have raised the question of the violence of our writing itself, of whether we must strive to write differently in the face of our responsibility towards those about whom we write. There are two related issues here. One concerns the question of the relation to those about whom we write. The other is about the knowledge we produce and the status we claim for it. The first is a question of our ethical relation to others. James Der Derian explains that ethics 'begins with the recognition of the need for the other, of the need for the other's recognition. ... An ethical way of being emerges when we recognize the very *necessity* of heterogeneity for understanding ourselves and others' (1997: 58). A poststructural sensibility therefore supports an attitude of openness towards the other (Odysseos, 2007). Dan Bulley (2009) and Doty (2006) have thought this through in terms of hospitality. Hospitality is difficult, especially when the Other is not perceived as benign. As Dauphinée points out, we do not get to choose who we wish to be in a relation with: we are responsible to the Other and the Other is 'also the Serb – the one who has been made intolerable on the basis of his intolerance' (2007: 34). For Dauphinée this raises the question of the scholar's responsibility: her work explores her responsibility as a researcher towards those she professes to study.

I have examined related concerns in the context of the invocation of German memories of the Second World War to justify

different positions on the use of military force, often framed in terms of responsibility. I studied the articulation of memories in novels in order to discuss and challenge arguments deployed in political and public debate. Examining memories of the flight and expulsion of Germans from the East, the bombing of German cities, and the 'liberation' of Germany, I showed in particular that memory retrospectively produces a past while claiming merely to invoke it. Examining articulations of memory closely allowed me to draw out the complexities and contradictions within how truth, ethics, emotion, subjectivity, and time are conceptualised. This is significant because memories are often presented as a form of knowledge that may offer guidance with respect to political questions in the present, such as whether military forces should be deployed. The problem is, however, not just that memories are contested, but that knowledge cannot deliver the desired answer to what is an ethico-political question. Moreover, crucially, knowledge is always uncertain, and scholars must be attentive to this inadequacy of knowledge (Zehfuss, 2007b: 264). This again raises the question of scholars' responsibility, and I suggested that we need to write 'with less confidence that either we know or that knowing is actually the point' (Zehfuss, 2007b: 265), not least in situations where lives will be put in harm's way as in decisions about whether or not to use military force.

POSTCOLONIALISM

Postcolonialism analyses and challenges the complex power relationships between what is called the North (or West) and the South. According to Robert Young, postcolonialism involves 'first of all the argument that the nations of the three non-Western continents (Africa, Asia, Latin America) are largely in a situation of subordination to Europe and North America, and in a position of economic inequality' (2003: 4). Anticolonial

struggles of indigenous peoples within the West are also considered (Beier, 2005; Shaw, 2002, 2003). Postcolonialism thus draws attention to the extent to which today's world remains affected by colonial relations. Rita Abrahamsen notes that while 'the "post" in postcolonialism signifies the end of colonialism and imperialism as *direct* domination, it does not imply *after* imperialism as a global system of hegemonic power' (2003: 195). The 'post' in postcolonialism marks both a historical break and a continuity: the power relations established by colonialism remain significant in a range of ways, some of which are less visible than others. Crucially, postcolonialism challenges Western hegemony with regard to the production and dissemination of knowledge. The power relations postcolonial scholars highlight are not merely expressed in the inequality of military power and economic wealth but are rooted in how we think about the world. Western power is therefore to be challenged by exposing its epistemological basis or, rather, bias.

Challenging Western-centrism

Postcolonial scholars in IR draw on the work of Homi Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi, Ashis Nandy, Edward Said, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, among others. The heterogeneity of this list illustrates the diversity of this thought as well as the complexity of the issues involved. Some postcolonial work also uses ideas by thinkers such as Foucault, Derrida, and Jacques Lacan, though it would be a mistake to perceive postcolonialism as derivative of French thought (Manzo, 1997: 403). Indeed, many poststructural thinkers were influenced by the colonial experience (Ahluwalia, 2010). Postcolonialism involves a 'conceptual reorientation towards the perspectives of knowledges, as well as needs, developed outside the West' (Young, 2003: 6); understanding it as a development of a brand of Western critical thought misses the point. Yet postcolonialism cannot be separate from European

thought either. The West and the non-West are in a relation of mutual production, and Western thought and postcolonialism are thus inextricably linked. The point is to subvert the dominance of the West. This is illustrated in Dipesh Chakrabarty's proposal to 'provincialize Europe', that is, to consider how European 'thought – which is now everybody's heritage and which affects us all – may be renewed from and for the margins' (Chakrabarty, 2000: 16).

The discipline of IR is Western-centric. It is not only dominated by concerns and experiences of the West but also draws on traditions of thought and inquiry firmly rooted in a Western understanding of the world. Inayatullah and Blaney argue that IR has been limited significantly by its inability to address the enduring impact of colonialism and the situation of the Third World (2004: 1) and 'has few resources for addressing how the cultural impact of political and economic competition denigrates the varying forms of life of "non-Western" peoples' (2004: 2). Crucially, they claim that the 'current shape of IR' is 'itself partly a legacy of colonialism' (2004: 2). Hence, IR cannot afford to ignore postcolonialism, and the issue goes beyond the inability to grasp and analyse experiences in the Global South, though this inability is of serious concern, given that the discipline proposes to examine and indeed explain politics across the globe.

More broadly, the impact of colonialism and imperialism on how the West – including Western academics strongly opposed to any forms of neoimperialism – conceives of itself is both uncomfortable and not easy to see from the Western position. Philip Darby alleges not just that Western discourse 'marginalises the struggle of non-European peoples for economic justice and racial equality and discounts their historical experience of dispossession' but that 'established conceptions of the political underwrite Western dominance' (2004: 3). Young observes the dislike for term 'postcolonial'; he claims this is because it 'disturbs the order of the world' (Young, 2003: 7). Kimberley Hutchings

points out that in most standard accounts postcolonialism still ‘gets only marginal acknowledgement’ (Hutchings, 2007: 83). Siba Grovogui even speaks of ‘disciplinary contempt’ (2006: 62). Such lack of recognition or outright opposition is telling because postcolonial scholars have produced studies of a wide range of significant issues, including international law (Grovogui, 1996), the global economy (Blaney and Inayatullah, 2010), dependency (Darby, 2000), refugees (Soguk, 1999), state formation (Krishna, 1999), and the limitations of the discipline of IR (Inayatullah and Blaney, 2004; Beier, 2005; Muppidi, 2011).

Grovogui highlights that disciplinary narratives ‘reflect Eurocentric and Occidental understandings of the roles, actions, and intentions of actors, agents and subjects’ (2006: 27). Generally speaking, the ‘professed uniqueness of Europe was upheld by the Enlightenment and subsequent ideologies’ (Grovogui, 2006: 27). Grovogui is ‘particularly interested in disciplinary suppositions, first, that the West is the legitimate legislator and adjudicator of values, norms, and institutions for the “international community” and, second, that those (presumed) incapable of producing good government, good laws, and good morals should obey the moral order bequeathed to them by the West, as a matter of deference’ (2006: 31). These suppositions lead to disinterest in views from outside the West. Grovogui thus points out how debates within IR have ‘kept crucial regional perspectives, particularly non-Western and postcolonial ones, at arm’s length’ (2006: 6). Grovogui’s concern is not least that the lack of comparativism in IR breeds parochialism, though comparativism raises its own problems (Inayatullah and Blaney, 2004: 15).

Those studying international politics can, however, ill afford to ignore insights of postcolonial thinkers. Given the remit of IR, the failure to seriously engage with postcolonial analyses seems puzzling. Inayatullah and Blaney highlight that IR will remain unable to adequately study difference unless and

until it confronts its colonial legacy (2004: ix). Himadeep Muppidi traces how colonial forms of knowledge have impacted modern understandings of international relations and examines how such knowledge is translated and altered within postcolonial settings. Muppidi looks beyond IR at how we communicate about global politics, for example, in the press, cartoons, museums, etc. He focuses on ‘the protocols governing the narration of atrocities in international relations. These are protocols that consistently structure the cognition and representation of non-Europeans through a zoological modality while writing the self in the role of the zoo-keeper’ (Muppidi, 2011: 9). Muppidi starts from the observation that ‘death stinks’ (2011: 3) and asks what an IR able to take account of this would look like. He seeks to imagine a way of thinking about the world that would make it possible ‘for the smell of bodies to permeate and be part of our understandings’ (Muppidi, 2011: 7). His response to the widespread failure to remember the pain and horror of colonialism leads him to argue for an IR ‘that is anti-colonial rather than simply post-colonial’ (Muppidi, 2011: 8). He makes central the views and experiences of those positioned outside the implicit default situation in terms of their geographic locality and/or race. In part, what is at stake is to prevent the all too common replacing of ‘structural ethical and political questions with technical/instrumental issues of good and bad behavior towards others’ (Muppidi, 2011: 75–76).

Modernity and political alternatives

The colonial experience requires a response to difference. Inayatullah and Blaney point out that colonial discourse ‘slides between two polar responses: difference is translated as inferiority or a kind of equality is recognized, but at the expense of assimilation of the other to the self’ (2004: 163). Self and other are conceived as separate, and the best that can then be achieved is a ‘dialogue of unequals’

(Inayatullah and Blaney, 2004: 163). This problem has persisted beyond the colonial period and is expressed in the West's promotion of liberal democracy as the only acceptable way to organise politics. The West assumes that it owns modernity and hence fails to imagine or acknowledge either others' contributions to modernity or the possibility of alternatives. In this scheme, the only alternative to Western modernity is backwardness.

The alleged timelessness of Western political models has meant that the input of non-Western peoples is of no consequence (Darby, 2004: 19). In response, Grovogui's *Beyond Eurocentrism and Anarchy* focuses on African thinkers and experiences. Grovogui observes that 'few Western theorists assume that Africans, their modes of thought, ideas, and actions have been integral to the dramas of modernity' (2006: 8). This is a limitation that Grovogui proposes to remedy. In his view, 'African discussions of the inadequacy of modernity provide useful grounds for thinking differently about international relations, modern political forms, their modalities, and implications' (Grovogui, 2006: 11). Postcolonial criticisms in Africa have aimed to 'displace Europe from the center of history and consciousness in order to accommodate experiences of others'. This move 'necessarily required different ethical standards than those proposed by the extant Western ideologies of time and subjectivity' (Grovogui, 2006: 54). Grovogui explores, for example, the ideas of the general secretary of the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain Gabriel d'Arboussier, who envisaged a post-colonial order in which democratisation would go beyond formal processes and recognise people's aspirations of achieving an ethical life, thereby challenging French constitutional policy (2006: 172–193).

Mustapha Kamal Pasha similarly highlights how the political is conceived in what he calls Islamic cultural zones. He suggests that Islam, despite being construed as backward, 'presents an alternative vision to Western modernity' (Pasha, 2003: 116) that is in stark contrast to liberalism, though there

are 'considerable variations' within it. Islam offers an alternative view of relations between state and society, individual and community. Moreover, the 'hegemony of scientific reason without spirituality is contested' (Pasha, 2003: 117). This construction, Pasha argues, 'provides codes of conduct to appreciate interconnectedness and interdependence'. Furthermore, a 'conception of overlapping sovereignties in Islamic thought recognises contingency, dialogue, and negotiation in demarcating moral and political boundaries' (Pasha, 2003: 117).

Acknowledging the existence of alternative visions of politics has become particularly significant due to the so-called war on terror, and unsurprisingly postcolonial scholars have critically engaged with the war and its interpretations (Riley and Inayatullah, 2006; Shani et al. 2007). Pasha (2009) observes how quickly easy dichotomies have returned, with Islam as a significant form of Otherness. Islamic cultural zones, Pasha argues, 'remain distant, *modernizing perhaps, but not modern*' (2009: 528). Islam is regarded as exceptional, as beyond assimilation. Pasha therefore notes that the 'idea of civilizational superiority remains intact' (2009: 530), and this means that Islamic cultural zones can only be understood as involving a different *culture*, not a genuine political alternative (2009: 537).

The production of the West as in possession of rationality and the legitimate way of organising politics simultaneously legitimises Western violence and delegitimises non-Western armed resistance (Barkawi and Laffey, 2006). Postcolonial thought seeks to offer an alternative and one that recognises the capacity and right to define politics of those currently seen as problematic within the dominant Western vision of politics due to their cultural difference. As Darby puts it, 'the task must be to address how analyses and research might help clear a way for Iraqi and other subaltern peoples to escape from being pawns in games of power politics or forced to submit to living according to other peoples' designs' (2004: 13).

Hybridity and resistance

Postcolonialism is sometimes represented as generated or inspired by Said's *Orientalism* (1995; see also Duvall and Varadarajan, 2007; Varadarajan, 2009), first published in 1978. Said examines the Orient's 'special place in European Western experience' (1995: 1). The Orient, he argues, has 'helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience' (1995: 1–2). Orientalism then is the discourse that expresses or rather produces this 'special place' of the Orient for the West. Drawing on Foucault's work, Said claims that 'without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period' (1995: 3). The relationship between Occident and Orient is 'a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of complex hegemony' (Said, 1995: 5). Orientalism involves the production of Europe and European ideas as superior (Said, 1995: 7). Said explains that his 'real argument' is that Orientalism is 'a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with "our" world' (1995: 12).

Said's powerful critique of Western discourse, however, possibly overestimates the role of the West or at least oversimplifies the relation between the West and the East, producing both as quite homogenous. Spivak (1988; see also Kinnvall, 2009) has drawn attention to the heterogeneity of the colonised subject, while Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1988) similarly objected to the representation of 'Third World women' as a homogenous category by Western feminists. The problem with the simple dichotomising between the modern West and the backward non-West is not least that such representations also fail to recognise the interpenetration

of both. Coloniser and colonised were never independent of each other and neither are the ex-coloniser and the decolonized (Memmi, 1967, 2006). This is illustrated, in the context of Pasha's concern, by the number of Muslims who live in the West. As Pasha points out, the '*Islamic world is not somewhere else*' (2009: 542). In this lies the opportunity, John Hobson suggests, for a post-racist IR (2007).

Meanwhile, race plays a significant, if unacknowledged, role in conceptions of the international world (Grovogui, 2001; Muppidi, 2006, 2011; Riley and Inayatullah, 2006; Doty, 1996). The abuses at Abu Ghraib constituted an unwelcome reminder of such dynamics and more broadly, for Muppidi, 'each encounter in the invasion/occupation/liberation of Iraq by the United States merely serves to galvanize the scarcely rested specters of colonialism' (2006: 52). The problem is not least that 'the subject of colonial modernity, the human, was mapped onto a particular body – male, elite, and especially European 'white' – the epidermis of which was then rendered transparent so that the socially situated experiences that accompanied this particular body could be made universal and hence representative of humanity' (Shilliam, 2009: 122).

There is no pure, authentic non-Western subject to be found, however. As Inayatullah and Blaney observe, 'the postcolonial "hybrid" other may find a partly modern, liberal self within' (2004: 184). The relationality between West and non-West such that it makes no sense to even think of one in separation from the other is significant (Barkawi and Laffey, 2006). What must be analysed are not two discrete entities, but their relation. Ling suggests that postcolonialism 'accepts postmodernism's critique of Enlightenment thinking but traverses it in order to examine the hybrid, simulated, and mimicked *relations* that result when colonizer and colonized, agent and structure, subject and subjectivity interact' (Ling, 2002: 67). This is illustrated by Fanon's famous observation that the 'Negro is not. Any more than the white man' (2008: 180). Subjectivity

always derives from a range of sources and is therefore never stable or pure, but rather hybrid. This is highlighted in Muppidi's observation that he cannot interrogate imperialism 'without interrogating myself, the postcolonial in-between' (Muppidi, 2011: 20). Hybridity implies that the other is not as different as it might appear. By highlighting the significance of the realm of the everyday, Darby shows that 'other life worlds are seldom entirely other and that there is more ambiguity and fluidity about the processes of domination and resistance than we often like to think' (2004: 31). Within such an understanding of the complex interrelationships of identity and difference, it then becomes possible to regard 'difference as a resource for internal self-reflection and social criticism' (Inayatullah and Blaney, 2004: 49).

While from some perspectives – notably those supporting nationalism – hybridity is a problem because it implies the impossibility of pure identity, for postcolonial thinkers, hybridity is 'not inherently bad' (Abrahamsen, 2003: 205). Instead, Homi Bhabha's reading of hybridity (1994) shows that the colonised were not merely passive victims of colonial authority and as such constitutes a critique of Said's representation of the West's capacity to produce the Orient. Bhabha sees hybridity as a 'potential site of resistance and subversion' (Abrahamsen, 2003: 205); it undermines the possibility of the clear differentiation between coloniser and colonised that is necessary to colonial power. Hybridity 'signifies the failure of colonial power to fully dominate its subjects, and shows their creativity and resilience' (Abrahamsen, 2003: 205).

According to Abrahamsen, a 'preoccupation with resistance is a defining feature of postcolonial literature' (Abrahamsen, 2003: 207). Yet resistance is not simple, not least because that which is to be resisted may not be entirely outside of those who are resisting. Ashis Nandy notes that the West has become a 'psychological category' because what he calls the second colonization colonised not just bodies, but minds; it is 'now everywhere, within the West and outside; in structures

and in minds' (1983: xi). This second colonization is significant in contemporary politics because even those who fight against the first colonialism that conquered the colonies 'often guiltily embrace the second' (Nandy, 1983: xi). Nandy hence cautions us 'that conventional anti-colonialism, too, could be an apologia for the colonization of minds' (1983: xi) and argues that colonialism must be 'defeated ultimately in the minds of men' (1983: 63).

The problem of resistance also raises the question of anticolonial violence as a response to (post-) colonial violence (Fanon, 1967; Muppidi, 2008; Shilliam, 2009: 130–131). From a postcolonial perspective, the ease with which Western violence is construed as acceptable is troubling, especially in view of the outright condemnation of violence used by those at the receiving end of the 'war on terror'. More broadly, the question of resistance highlights ethical issues central to the postcolonial endeavour. Postcolonialism envisages a world in which the formerly colonised peoples would no longer suffer from injustices. Kate Manzo shows that to 'try to think beyond racial/colonial categories, is a moral and political project' (1997: 404), while Inayatullah and Blaney remind us that 'critical inquiry occurs against a complex backdrop of values, aspirations, and desires – a situation of ethical complexity exhibiting less a common sense of ethical valuation and more a substantial incommensurability among alternative visions and traditions' (2004: 8). Nevertheless, postcolonialism has a relatively defined agenda in that it 'claims the right of all people on this earth to the same material and cultural well-being' (Young, 2003: 2), while drawing attention to the reality of inequality. The question, then, is about how we might get from here to there.

SCHOLARSHIP AND THE POLITICS OF ETHICS

This chapter has concerned itself with three distinct ways of thinking about international

politics seen to share a critical attitude towards the world. The brief summaries provided cannot do justice to the complexities and richness of the work at issue. Nevertheless, such exercises in simplification at the same time as doing violence to those reduced to exemplars for imagined traditions may throw some light on affinities as well as significant differences. In this final section, I want to use the question of scholarship and the politics of ethics in order to examine these.

All three perspectives object to and go beyond positivist ways of conceiving the world. Put differently, they share a concern with the problematic of our involvement in the world that we analyse and the political and ethical issues that arise from this interconnectedness. This leads to at least two sets of concerns, first, about how we may study the world that we are a part of and, second, about how we should act within this world, given that we might be able to change it. The latter question is explicitly one of ethics, and ethics is therefore inextricably part of any analysis of international politics from any of these three perspectives. It is also obvious that from any such perspective scholarship – or how we study international relations – is an ethical issue (Smith, 2004). Yet their attitudes to ethics are often seen as setting them apart, or at any rate as distinguishing Critical Theory from poststructuralism, with postcolonialism occupying an ambiguous position.

Critical Theory is obviously and explicitly about ethics. The aim of emancipation – in Linklater's preferred conceptualisation the overcoming of exclusion – is central. Put differently, the point of Critical Theory is to find ways of creating a better world. Sophisticated versions of such thinking do not offer any simplistic visions of the good, however. For Critical Theorists, values are contingent, even if they remain wedded to the Enlightenment and its celebration of reason. Of course, things are anyway more complicated since Habermas himself points out how trust in reason has been shaken by the very logic of the Enlightenment (Crawford, 2002: 404). Linklater is well

aware of the problems any ethics faces in a pluralistic international world. Nevertheless, he sees a process-oriented ethics inspired by discourse ethics as a potential resolution to the problem. For him the 'openness to dialogue with all other human beings as equals is [...] one of the most advanced moral themes in modern ethical and political discourse in the West and elsewhere' (Linklater, 1998: 89–90).

Prima facie, then, postcolonial scholars should be in broad agreement with Linklater's project. After all, Linklater seems to offer equality to those traditionally not invited along to conversations about how the world should be organised politically. Yet Inayatullah and Blaney see his work as 'unpromising' (2004: 122); the problem, they suggest, is that Linklater 'imagines the problem of difference as exclusively one of discriminatory exclusion' and therefore he appears, despite his protestations to the contrary, 'unwilling to accept the risks and uncertainties attendant upon a genuine confrontation with difference' (2004: 122). He cannot accept, they think, that others may wish to live apart and differently. Relatedly, Grovogui alleges that Linklater misconstrues postcolonial criticisms as merely an issue of exclusion but that they 'involve considerations of the very terms of the constitutional order – the implicated political imaginaries, juridical and moral systems, and their base-notions of communities and obligations – as mechanisms of exclusion' (2006: 48–49).

Popular wisdom has it that, in sharp contrast to Critical Theory, poststructuralism either does not or cannot do ethics. It is true that poststructuralism does not endorse universal ethical principles. Yet the allegation of poststructuralism's inability to engage with ethical questions is ironic as, from a post-structural point of view, there is no way of avoiding ethics: life is unavoidably ethical (Campbell and Shapiro, 1999a; Zehfuss, 2009b; Lawler, 2008). The issue is the very impossibility of separating ethics from politics: the moment ethical questions are separated out, things have already gone wrong.

This is a different way of thinking ethics. It is not just that ethics is, as Walker has pointed out, ‘not a repository of principles awaiting application; it is an ongoing historical practice’ (Walker, 1993: 51). Ethics is also conceived of as relational. Thus, the poststructural critique of ethics is not so much a rejection as a re-articulation (Zehfuss, 2009b).

Poststructural scholars prefer to talk in terms of responsibility. They seek to ‘investigate the contingencies involved in specific, historically situated encounters’ (Campbell and Shapiro, 1999b: IX). This is, Campbell and Shapiro argue, ‘an affirmative position designed to foster the ethical relation’ (1999b: XI). One way of fostering an ethical relation is to welcome the other. Therefore, scholars within this tradition have sought to explore the issue of hospitality (Bulley, 2009; Doty, 2006). Given that theory and practice, scholarship and politics, are conceived as inseparable, the question of the responsibility of intellectuals and scholars is also significant (Edkins, 2005; Zehfuss, 2007b). We have already seen that Campbell calls for an ‘ethos of political criticism’ (Campbell, 1998a: 4), and Jabri highlights the ‘ethos of critique’ (Jabri, 2007: 167). Dauphinée engages in detail with how her research in Bosnia has ‘attenuated her to the fact that [she is] responsible, all the time and for everything’ (Dauphinée, 2007: 13). None of these conceptualisations are simple. In particular where there is talk of encounters between self and other, it is important to remain attentive to the implications of relationality. As I argue elsewhere, ‘the question of ethics, of how we should relate to others, is in danger of obscuring the way in which we are always already related to them’ (Zehfuss, 2007a: 70).

This brings us to another aspect of the affinities and distinctions between the three approaches discussed here. If one were to be flippant, one might observe that Critical Theorists believe that it is always good to talk, and accordingly they get criticised for their undue optimism. Poststructuralists are less persuaded by the merits of dialogue for a

range of reasons to do with the pervasiveness of power relations, the inevitable failures of communication, and indeed the questionable privileging of ‘rational communication’ over other ways of making a political stand. What is more, they might be seen to observe that we are always already talking to each other anyway. The issue is then one of recognising the multiple ways in which we are always already in communication as well as their inevitable failures (Zehfuss, 2009a). The point is to examine how issues are produced in these conversations, what the power relations are, and how we may resist dominant discourses. Postcolonial thinkers, meanwhile, might be wondering whether anybody is actually listening. Whatever appears to be unconstrained dialogue to the Critical Theorists does not necessarily present itself as such to those not authorised to decide the conditions for rationality, knowledge, and indeed politics.

Thomas Diez and Jill Steans point out that the ‘distinctiveness of Critical Theory lies in its desire to foster an inter-subjective “conversation” aimed at mutual understanding and communication free from ideological domination’ (Diez and Steans, 2005: 134). From both poststructural and postcolonial positions, this looks more like the problem than the solution. There is no such thing as domination-free communication, and the genuine and well-intentioned desire to foster such conversation therefore merely serves to obscure the power relations that are inevitably at work. Linklater requires openness to dialogue unconditionally, that is, even when the other is not someone one might wish to talk to. Yet he does not appear to explore this issue in any detail, and does not tell us how we are to deal with the dilemmas of this requirement. What if the potential interlocutor is intolerable to us? This is Dauphinée’s problem: the problem of how to respond to perpetrators.

This highlights another difference. While Linklater may be willing to talk to anyone, Critical Theory clearly values rational debate over the use of force. Some postcolonial thinkers are, however, unwilling to condemn the use of violence, given especially that

Western violence comes to be construed as acceptable and as somehow not violence at all. Poststructuralists might add that the line between violence and nonviolence is much harder to identify than it might appear. There is violence in representations of the world that empower some over others. As Steve Smith points out, ‘all engagement is partial, all engagement carries with it a set of ethical consequences that rest, in the final analysis, on violence’ (2004: 504).

Because of the violence of our understandings of the world, the idea of dialogue is suspect from a postcolonial position. Diez and Steans point out that ‘Habermas seemingly invokes a “universal” – read liberal? – subject that might be incomprehensible to members of other cultural groups’ (2005: 135). What is more, although there may well be a lot of talking going on, it is much less clear that anybody is actually listening to the voices from the South or, more correctly, the voices that do not speak within the Western grammar. Spivak (1988) famously asked whether the subaltern is able to speak, highlighting that beyond the inappropriateness of Western intellectuals speaking for others, even post-colonial self-representation is problematic. Nicholas Rengger and Ben Thirkell-White point out that some theorists ‘see others as having overly closed emancipatory projects’ (Rengger and Thirkell-White, 2007: 15). Poststructuralists are clearly sceptical about Critical Theorists’ emancipatory project. Despite attempts to leave defining emancipation to those who are to be emancipated, it is difficult to avoid the impression that Critical Theorists think that they know what is good for others. For poststructuralists as well as postcolonial scholars, what comes to be construed as ethics is invariable political.

Not least because politics does not stop at the boundary of what might traditionally be defined as such, critical scholars sometimes study aspects of the world that have not previously been conceived to be within the realm of politics, such as the phenomenon of SUV sales in the US (Campbell, 2005),

political imaginaries as expressed in films (Shapiro, 2008), or the artefacts people leave at memorials (Edkins, 2003). But while studying material that may previously have been beyond the gaze of IR is important, the key is not *what* is being examined – it is perfectly possible to study, say, government documents ‘critically’ – but *how*. Critical scholars are attentive to the problematic that we are part of the world, subject to power relations within it, and that our thinking is not independent of this relationality. We cannot step out of this world in order to objectively study ‘the evidence’. The precise techniques for conducting research under these circumstances vary but, crucially, discovering the real behind the representations that are examined cannot be the aim (though Critical Theorists trust in reason and thus remain attracted to an illusive desire to establish a truth); rather, it is to understand how what comes to be seen as reality is being produced through the representations in question, not only by way of argumentation but through appeals to affect and imagination as well. It is important to engage with the logic or grammar of representations themselves (Pin-Fat, 2009). Moreover, for post-structuralists at least, that representations are bound to not quite work is significant. The production of the modern subject that is so central to our political imagination, for example, necessarily fails as the subject cannot achieve the kind of wholeness imagined for it (Zehfuss, 2009b). Representations are also continuously threatened and in flux because, while some may speak from a privileged position – say, the government on matters of ‘national security’ – there is always more than one voice. People have views, and they find ways to express them – sometimes in unusual ways as in the case of Abbas Amini, who sewed his own eyes, ears, and mouth to protest the UK government’s treatment of asylum seekers (Edkins and Pin-Fat, 2005: 1–2). While poststructuralists may be less keen than Critical Theorists and, to some extent, postcolonial scholars to promote clear political alternatives on the basis of

their examinations of discourse, all critical scholars aim to seek out alternative representations and hear multiple voices.

All of this brings us to a final area of agreement. In their different ways, all of the critical theories examined here are committed to ‘politics as if people mattered’ (Tétreault and Lipschutz, 2009). Critical Theorists may talk in terms of emancipating humanity while postcolonial scholars explore the everyday situations of those we too often fail to see and listen to and poststructuralists vex about how to relate to others without denying their difference. Postcolonial and poststructural scholars are concerned with historically contingent practices. The devil is, for them, in the detail, while Critical Theorists may be more willing to theorise in the sense of abstracting. But all of them are in one way or another interested in the people who both make international politics and are subjected to it. All of them care about people and their situations. All of them also wish to think about and challenge the effects of power on people. As Hutchings points out, although ‘critical theory takes many different forms, it always distinguishes itself from other forms of theorising in terms of its orientation towards change and the possibility of futures that do not reproduce the patterns of hegemonic power of the present’ (2007: 72). Different thinkers have different views of change, start from different places, and envisage the role of scholars in promoting change differently (Rengger and Thirkell-White, 2007: 23), but critical theorists seem to share enough of an interest to be able to speak to each other, even if at times this dialogue may well be more of an argument.

CONCLUSION

IR is often represented as involving a range of different approaches, theories, and perspectives. This handbook is no exception. Such a representation tends to standardise and then highlight differences between different

approaches, while obscuring disagreements between scholars working within the same tradition. Often, the theoretical distinctions are silently dropped before we get to the substantive issues, raising questions about the usefulness of such a framing in the first place. The distinctions we draw in classifying IR theories have never failed to remind me of Foucault’s use of a passage in Borges that refers to a ‘certain Chinese encyclopaedia’ that divides animals into ‘(a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification’ (Foucault, 1989: xvi), and so on. Foucault notes his amusement and wonder at this taxonomy, ‘the exotic charm of another system of thought’ (1989: xvi). Of course, we tend to consider our own categorisations to be entirely rational, though I have doubts on the matter. Whatever may be the case, categorisations serve not to compare in neutral ways but prioritise, rank, and exclude. It is clear, for example, that I have left out ‘stray dogs’ – critical scholars who fail to fall easily within any of the approaches I have chosen to explore. Categorisations may, moreover, overdraw distinctions and lead us to focus on them. Some recent projects have instead highlighted ‘interconnections’ (Edkins and Vaughan-Williams, 2009b: 1) or moved away from classifications into distinct theoretical traditions altogether in order to explore the significant questions that make scholars interested in global politics in the first place (Edkins and Zehfuss, 2008). After all, our disagreements over the big questions of how we should live together make international politics such an interesting subject (Zehfuss, 2008).

Raymond Duvall and Latha Varadarajan have suggested that ‘to be “critical” should mean to ask: what would happen if there were room for self-irony, doubt, and messiness within the critical theoretical perspectives that would claim our allegiance’ (2007: 94). Messiness is also a significant feature of our world. Perhaps the most significant outcome of the critical turn is the

increasing willingness of scholars working in the discipline to recognise different points of view. The multiplicity of perspectives that, moreover, we cannot always distinguish and classify as easily as we may wish to – in other words, the theoretical messiness – is hence the best aspect of the discipline towards which many scholars studying international politics retain an ambiguous – or rather critical – attitude.

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Feminist Perspectives on International Relations

Laura Sjoberg and J. Ann Tickner

INTRODUCTION

In the twenty years since feminist theorizing entered the field of international relations (IR),¹ feminist scholarship has proliferated in measurable ways. During the first decade of this century, panel presentations for the Feminist Theory and Gender Studies Section of the International Studies Association have risen 400%; journal publications, books, and other scholarly outputs reflect both greater participation in the discipline by women and greater interest in gender issues. In 1999, the first IR feminist journal, *The International Feminist Journal of Politics*, began publication. Indicators that the discipline has come to take feminism seriously can be found in the increasing recognition of feminist scholarship as a paradigmatic approach to IR (Maliniak, Oakes, Peterson, and Tierney, 2009), increasing inclusion of feminist scholarship in IR introductory texts (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2010; Steans, Pettiford, and Diez, 2005; Baylis, Smith, and Owens, 2007; Weber, 2009; Dunne, Kurki, and Smith, 2010),² and in the publication of a feminist

special issue of the journal *Security Studies* (Sjoberg, 2009a).³

The development of feminist theorizing in the discipline parallels the growing concern with gender issues in global politics and the global economy. Policy-makers are increasingly talking about gender issues, and doing so with increasing sophistication (Hafner-Burton and Pollack, 2007). The United Nations Security Council (see Basu, 2009), the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) (see Tremblay, 2008), and Human Rights Watch (see hrw.org 2009) have all embarked on substantial projects promoting gender equity. The collective message of these international organizations, across the security, democracy, political economy, and human rights domains, is increasingly clear: gender equality should be a political priority not only because it is an important end in and of itself, but also because it will improve the chances of reaching other important political and economic goals.

In spite of all these positive developments, women remain underrepresented in the IR discipline, a discipline that is still shaped by

men and norms associated with masculinity (Sjoberg, 2008), especially at the senior levels (Maliniak, Oakes, Peterson, and Tierney, 2008). Feminist scholars (Sylvester, 2007; Zalewski, 2007; Sjoberg, 2009a; Tickner, 2005) continue to puzzle over the marginality of their work to the perceived “core” of the discipline. And, as the second decade of the new millennium begins, indicators of vast gender inequality in global social and political life remain. Women are still the majority of the world’s poor and underpaid relative to men (UNIFEM, 2009); the majority of civilian victims in war are women, and women are often subject to sexual violence (Al-Ali and Pratt, 2009). Less than 20% of elected political leaders in the world are women (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009). IR feminist theory has been concerned with bringing these inequities to light, helping us to understand what causes them, and thinking about ways to end them.

In order to introduce the intellectual foundations of IR feminist perspectives, we begin this chapter with a brief discussion of feminist theory and the meaning of gender. We then provide a brief history of the development of feminist research in the discipline, followed by an overview of feminist ideas about epistemology and methodology for studying global politics. We then outline some of the questions that IR feminists ask in their research, questions that often expand the traditional boundaries of the discipline. In order to illustrate how feminists are going about answering the questions they pose, we conclude by focusing on security and the global economy, two issue areas with which recent feminist research has been centrally concerned and which are also important to international policy concerns.

FEMINIST THEORIZING AND THE MEANING OF GENDER

Feminist theories are multidisciplinary; they draw from the social and natural sciences as

well as the humanities and philosophy. They include a wide variety of epistemological and methodological approaches. The key concern for feminist theory is to explain women’s subordination or the unjustified asymmetry between women and men’s social and economic position and to seek prescriptions for ending it. However, feminists disagree on what they believe constitutes women’s subordination as well as how to explain and overcome it.

Feminist theories have been variously described as liberal, Marxist, radical, socialist, psychoanalytic, standpoint, postcolonial, and postmodern (Tong, 2008). Generally committed to a positivist epistemology, liberal feminists believe that the removal of legal obstacles can overcome women’s subordination. However, post-liberal approaches, to which a majority of IR feminists subscribe, see deeply rooted structures of patriarchy, which cannot be overcome by legal remedies alone. While psychoanalytic traditions look for causes of women’s subordination in socialization practices of early childhood, radicals, Marxists, and socialists look for explanations in structures of patriarchy which “naturalize” women’s subordination, or in the labor market with its gender discriminations and divisions between public (paid) and private (unpaid/domestic) work. More recently, postcolonial and postmodern feminisms have emphasized the need to take into account a variety of structures of oppression associated with race and class, as well as gender. They stress the need to be aware that it is not possible to generalize about women’s various subordinations. All these post-liberal feminist approaches question the claim that women can simply be added to existing theoretical frameworks that have historically excluded knowledge about and by women, and seek to construct bodies of knowledge that do not rest on androcentric foundations.

While many IR theorists think of “gender” as a descriptive category, for most feminists, it is an analytical tool. If “sex” is perceived membership in the biological categories “male,” “female,” or “other,” gender is the

expected characteristic associated with perceived membership in those categories, understood as “masculinities” and “femininities.” Feminists define gender as a set of variable but socially and culturally constructed characteristics; those such as power, autonomy, rationality, activity, and public are stereotypically associated with masculinities. Their opposites – weakness, dependency/connection, emotionality, passivity, and private – are associated with femininities. “Gender, then, is a system of symbolic meanings, where “gender symbolism” describes the way in which masculine/feminine are assigned to various dichotomies that organize Western thought” (Wilcox, 2007: 8). Different feminists have different understandings of the operation of gender symbolism in global politics – as a social construction (Locher and Prugl, 2001), a performative mechanism (Butler, 2006), sociobiological (Fausto-Sterling, 2005), or systemic (Sjoberg, 2012), but feminist scholars generally agree that gender is conceptually, empirically, and normatively essential to studying global politics.

Gendered social hierarchy is, in feminist terms, a “structural feature of political and social life ... that profoundly shapes our place in, and view of, the world” (Wilcox, 2007: 8). Still, it would be unrepresentative to characterize a “gendered experience” as if there were “something measurable that all men or all women shared in life experience” (Sjoberg and Gentry, 2007: 16). Instead, characteristics associated with gender(s) vary across time and culture but they serve to support male power and female subordination in most societies (Connell, 1995; Hooper, 2001; Zalewski and Parpart, 1998, 2008). Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan (2010: 76) have associated the subordination of minority groups with the gendering of global politics, explaining that dominant groups use feminization to devalorize marginal groups. Importantly, definitions of masculinity and femininity are relational and depend on each other for their meaning; masculinities do not exist except in contrast to femininities. While definitions of masculinity and femininity

vary across time and space, they are almost always unequal; therefore, gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power (Scott, 1986: 1069; Chowdhry and Nair, 2002; Youngs, 2004).

Feminist international relations, the end of the Cold War, and the “third debate”

Feminist attempts to make gender and genderings in IR visible began in earnest in the late 1980s and early 1990s, in the context of a larger shift in the discipline. Following the end of the Cold War, there was a moment in IR when the discipline’s focus shifted. This so-called “third debate” proclaimed the beginning of a “postpositivist era” in international relations; drawing on interdisciplinary work from sociology, history, and political philosophy, postpositivists began to question the search for objective, universal explanations (Lapid, 1989; Wendt, 1999: 47; Walker, 1993). Some of these scholars have pursued explicitly normative emancipatory goals (Booth, 2007; Cox, 1986). It is no coincidence that feminist theory came to IR at the same time as a fundamental questioning of the epistemological foundations of the discipline.

Even though scholars on both sides of this debate have been slow to introduce gender into their analyses,⁴ the work of scholars on the critical side of the third debate opened up space for feminist perspectives in a way that previous IR debates did not. Coming out of hermeneutic, historically based, and humanistic methodologies, feminist theorists, like critical scholars, draw on philosophical traditions outside the social sciences. Asking different questions from conventional IR and motivated by different normative concerns, feminists generally look at global politics through “gendered lenses” (Peterson and Runyan, 2010).

Since feminist IR diverges from both the mainstream of the discipline and the critical side of the third debate, “awkward silences and miscommunications” have plagued

feminist interactions with IR more generally, and “feminist theorists have rarely achieved the serious engagement with other IR scholars for which they have frequently called” (Tickner, 1997: 628). Despite these struggles with communication, IR feminists have, over the last twenty years, developed a thriving research program that extends the boundaries of the discipline, asks different questions, and listens to unfamiliar voices from the margins. Besides shedding new light on traditional topics such as conflict and security, these investigations are taking IR feminists far from the conventional discipline in terms of both subject matter and ways of understanding.

Feminist methodologies and methods in international relations

The goal of feminist research is “making the invisible visible, bringing women’s lives to the center, rendering the trivial important, putting the spotlight on women as competent actors, and understanding women as subjects rather than objects” (Reinharz, 1992: 248). In pursuit of feminist research questions, scholars have used hermeneutic, historically contingent, sociological, ethnographic, narrative, and cross-cultural methodologies (Tickner, 1997, 2005). Feminists study discourses of global politics (Mohanty, 2003; Naples, 2003); silences in these global political discourses (Kronsell, 2006; Charlesworth, 1999); interview material from fieldwork (Kleinman, 2007); and art and other representations of politics (Sylvester, 2009; Heeg, 2010).

Feminists claim that there is no single standard of methodological correctness for one’s research (Reinharz, 1992: 243), and they do not see it as desirable to construct one. Many describe their research as a journey, or archaeological dig, that draws on different methods appropriate to the goals at hand rather than to a prior methodological commitment more typical of IR social science (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991: 102; Reinharz, 1992: 211). Brooke Ackerly and

Jacqui True conceive of feminist methodologies as involving self-conscious reflection on the purpose of one’s research, one’s conceptual frameworks, one’s ethical responsibilities, one’s method’s choices, and one’s assumptions about what it means to know rather than just believe something (Ackerly and True, 2010: 6).

Regardless of which methods and methodological perspectives they choose, feminist scholars agree that gender matters in what we study, why we study, and how we study global politics (Ackerly, Stern, and True, 2006). An important goal for feminist research is to challenge and rethink what we mean by “knowledge.” Knowledge constructed in terms of binary distinctions such as rational/emotional, objective/subjective, global/local, and public/private, where the first term is privileged and associated with masculinities, automatically devalues certain types of knowledge, often associated with femininities. Claiming that IR’s bias toward men and values associated with masculinity seriously undermines claims to objectivity and universality, feminists are deeply skeptical about claims to universality of knowledge that, in reality, are largely based on certain men’s lives and men’s experiences. Questioning the social scientific quest for “objectivity,” feminists investigate in whose interests existing theories have been constructed. Feminist methodologies seek to uncover the limitations of approaches that do not consider gender when making claims to objectivity. Claiming that all knowledge is situated and, therefore, political, many feminists believe that striving for objectivity has important and often negative consequences for research.

Unlike “the view from nowhere” to which empirical social science aspires, most feminists insist that the inquirer be placed in the same critical plane as the subject matter. Most IR feminists agree that, as social scientists, we are part of the world we are trying to understand and that that world is always changing and affected by the way we study it (Ackerly and True, 2010: 3). Much of

feminist research is reflexive. Reflexivity has a long history in the social sciences more generally. The capacity of human beings to reflect on their own situations has served as the foundation for separating the social from the natural sciences. Human beings, unlike inanimate objects, have cultures and identities, and volitions and, therefore, cannot be studied in the same way as inanimate objects. The knowing subject is located in a variety of hierarchical social structures, such as race, class, and gender, and knowledge of the world begins with the socially situated self, not with a world that can ever be independent of the researcher. Knowledge of the social world begins, therefore, not with the world but with the self (Jackson, 2011: 157–60). One of the goals of reflexive knowledge is emancipation: therefore, one of the measures of success for feminists in this tradition would be that their knowledge claims contribute in some way to transforming the social conditions, such as gender hierarchies, that they highlight.

For these reasons, feminist approaches have different epistemological and methodological orientations from conventional IR. Rather than looking for testable hypotheses, causal explanations for state behavior, or the development of Lakatosian progressive research programs, many feminists argue that knowledge is political and must reflect the relationship between the knower and the known. These scholars argue that the difference between feminists and other IR scholars is that feminists are explicit about the political commitments in their scholarship (Brown, 1988; Tickner, 2001). These political commitments include gender emancipation, transforming unequal power relationships, and understanding the world from the perspective of the political margins (see Whitworth, 1994; Tickner, 2001).

A number of feminist scholars have suggested that feminist critique of disciplinary epistemological boundaries must be accompanied by conceptual and methodological reformulation (Steans, 1998; Sjoberg, 2006a; Tickner, 2005). These scholars think of

theorizing as a verb rather than a noun; theorizing is something people do as they go about solving practical problems of everyday life (Zalewski, 1996: 346–7). While different feminists research different subjects and do so using different methods, “what makes scholarship ... feminist is the research question and the theoretical methodology and not the tool or particular method used” (Ackerly, Stern, and True, 2006: 5).

Revisioning IR's questions

A question with which feminists often begin their research is, “where are the women?” To ask this is to question whether we have taken as given whose activities in the international realm are deemed important for understanding IR. Acknowledging that we need to look in unconventional places, not normally considered within the boundaries of IR, to answer this question, Cynthia Enloe has asked whether women’s roles, as secretaries, clerical workers, domestic servants, and diplomats’ wives, are relevant to the business of international politics (Enloe, 1989: 8; see also Enloe, 2000). Feminists have looked for women, not only in the halls of state power and issues having to do with “high politics,” but also in social movements (Naples, 2009), migration politics, peace negotiations (Confortini, 2009), environmental politics (Sapra, 2009; Detraz, 2009), information technology, global health issues, and terrorist organizations (Alison, 2009; Sylvester and Parashar, 2009; Sjoberg, 2009a; Sjoberg and Gentry, 2007), to name a few.

Locating women in these diverse places includes placing them within gendered structures. Typically, feminist research questions have to do with investigating how the international system and the global economy contribute to the subordination of women and other subjugated groups. This may involve rethinking traditional concepts such as security; investigating how global structures and processes constrain women’s security and economic opportunities requires

asking what difference gender makes in our understanding and practices of IR. What kind of evidence might further the claim that the practices of international politics are gendered? Through what mechanisms are the types of power necessary to keep unequal gender structures in place perpetuated? Does it make any difference to states' behavior that their foreign and security policies are often legitimated through appeals to various types of hegemonic masculinity? These are empirical questions that can only be answered with reference to concrete historical instances, taking into account that women are differently located in terms of race, class, and nationality. Addressing them may enable scholars to see that what is so often taken for granted in how the world is organized, in fact, is legitimating certain social arrangements that contribute to the subordination of women and other disadvantaged groups.

Questioning the way we have come to understand the world, as well as the forms of power necessary to sustain dominant forms of interpretation, demands quite different methodologies from those generally used by conventional IR. In order to answer the kinds of questions outlined above, feminist research looks both up and down; looking up enables the investigation of how structures of political and economic power as well as dominant forms of knowledge are created, upheld, and legitimated. Looking down involves investigations based on the lives of those not normally considered as bearers of knowledge; this type of research may involve looking in strange places for people and data or "lower than low politics" (Sylvester, 1996: 264). Investigating the legitimation of structural power and recovering the experiences of subjugated people demands methods more typical of history, anthropology, and sociology than of political science. Given these types of questions and research goals, feminist perspectives on security and the global economy are going to be quite different from conventional national security studies and international political economy (IPE).

GENDERING SECURITY

Questioning the role of states as adequate security providers, many feminists have adopted a multidimensional, multilevel approach to security. Feminists' commitment to the emancipatory goal of ending women's subordination is consistent with a broad definition of security that takes the individual, situated in broader social structures, as its starting point. Feminists seek to understand how the security of individuals and groups is compromised by violence, both physical and structural, at all levels. Adopting gender as a category of analysis, feminists investigate how unequal social structures negatively impact the security of individuals and groups.

Claiming that the security-seeking behavior of states is described in gendered terms, feminists have pointed to the masculinity of strategic discourse and how this may impact understanding of, and prescriptions for, security. Feminists have examined the valorization of war through its identification with a heroic kind of masculinity that depends on a feminized, devalued notion of peace seen as unattainable and unrealistic. Taking a bottom-up approach and analyzing the impact of war at the micro-level, feminist scholarship has been particularly concerned with what goes on during wars, especially their impact on women and civilians more generally. Feminists seek to understand the interrelationship between all forms of violence and the extent to which unjust social relations, including gender hierarchies, contribute to insecurity broadly defined.

In rethinking the nature of security, feminists have analyzed traditional concepts and theories and have "demonstrated the gender bias in security's core concepts, such as the state, violence, war, peace, and even security itself, urging redefinition in light of that bias" (Sjoberg, 2009b: 892, citing Tickner, 2001; Peterson, 1992; Pettman, 1996). Feminist scholars have also introduced new empirical and theoretical insights into the field by analyzing the various roles of women and gender in conflicts and in conflict resolution processes.⁵

Feminist research in the area of security has addressed issues such as gender mainstreaming, peacekeeping, the movement of people, noncombatant immunity, terrorism, women's violence, human security, environmental security, genocide, transitional justice and postconflict resolution, peace advocacy, militaries and militarism, and the theory and practice of security more generally.⁶ In the next section, we briefly discuss two of these research themes: feminists' challenge to the myth of protection and the gendered nature of war and peace.

Challenging the myth of protection

Challenging the myth that wars are fought to protect women, children, and others, stereotypically viewed as "vulnerable," feminists point to the high level of civilian casualties in contemporary wars. Despite the widespread myth that wars are fought, mostly by men, to protect "vulnerable" people, a category to which women and children are generally assigned, women and children constitute a significant proportion of casualties in recent wars. During the twentieth century, there was a sharp increase in the proportion of civilian casualties of war – from about 10% at the beginning of the century to 90% in the mid 1990s (United Nations, 1995: 45) – a figure that has not changed much since. Women and children constitute about 80% of the total refugee population, a population whose numbers increased from 3 million to 27 million between 1970 and 1994, mainly due to military conflict, particularly ethnic conflict (United Nations, 1995: 14). When women are forced into refugee camps, their vulnerability increases. Distribution of resources in camps is conducted in consultation with male leaders so women often get left out of the distribution process. These gender-biased processes are based on liberal assumptions that refugee men are both the sole wage earners in families and actors in the public sphere (Baines, 1999: 249).

Feminists have observed that the gendered civilian immunity principle is often evoked as a key part of the moral structure used to

legitimate war. As Iris Young (2003: 2) explains, "the role of masculine protector puts those protected, paradigmatically women and children, in a subordinate position of discipline and obedience." At the same time, the "protection" given to these (perceived) civilian women is assumed in definitions of the making and fighting of wars, and often not guaranteed in practice (Sjoberg, 2006b). As many feminists have observed, many of the ways in which protection falls short in practice are gendered. For example, feminists draw our attention to issues of rape in war. It is estimated that 20,000 to 35,000 women were raped during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Pettman, 1996: 101). There are around 200,000 rape survivors in post-genocide Rwanda, and it is unknown how many rape victims died in the conflict (Newbury and Baldwin, 2000: 4). Systematic rape has been documented in recent conflicts in Darfur, Chechnya, Sierra Leona, Kosovo, and East Timor. In these and other conflicts, rape is not just an accident of war but is often a systematic military strategy and a weapon of war (see Card, 1996).

Cynthia Enloe has described social structures in place around most army bases where women are kidnapped and sold into prostitution; this system of militarized sexual relations has required explicit American policymaking (Enloe, 1993: 19–20). Katherine Moon provides an example of the role of sexual relations in security policy-making. In her study of prostitution around US military bases in South Korea in the 1970s, Moon has shown how these people-to-people relations were actually matters of security at the international level. Cleanup of prostitution camps by the South Korean government through policing of sexual health and work conduct of prostitutes was part of its attempt to prevent withdrawal of American troops that had begun under the Nixon Doctrine of 1969. Thus, military prostitution interacted with US–Korean security politics at the highest political level. Crossing levels of analysis, Moon demonstrates how the weakness of the Korean state, in terms of influencing the US

government, resulted in authoritarian sexist control at the domestic level. In other words, national security translated into social insecurity for these women (Moon, 1997: 151–160). Moon's stories locate women in places not normally considered relevant to IR and link their experiences to wider processes and structures crucial to national security.

Feminist research has shown that the myth of protection is not only problematic in its capacity as a justificatory narrative for war or in the failure of belligerents to actually offer women protection as they make and fight wars. It has also shown that women should not be seen only as victims but also as agents. For example, during wars, women's responsibilities often rise. Women have more control over their households, are more likely to work outside the home, and sometimes participate in military conflict. In conflict situations, women often acquire new roles and a greater degree of independence that, frequently, they must relinquish when the war is terminated.

Some of the new roles that women acquire during war and conflict are that of soldier, insurgent, terrorist, or war criminal – participants in the violence. Sometimes, women are not the civilians who need protection but the militants from whom civilians ought to be protected or the soldiers perceived as responsible for the protection of civilians (see Parashar, 2009; Lobasz, 2008). Nevertheless, these women do not participate in military organizations and insurgent groups that have suddenly shed their gendered understandings of strategy, security, and political life (Enloe, 1993). Instead, women are included in fighting groups that maintain their biases toward behavioral characteristics and standards associated with masculinity (Enloe, 2000). When women break out of traditional understandings of their peacefulness, audiences tend to question both whether “women” are capable of deciding to commit violence *and* whether violent “women” are really women at all (Sjoberg and Gentry, 2007).

Feminist studies of the complexity of women's roles in war and the impacts of war on women help to illuminate the conceptual

and practical interdependence of the concepts of war and gender. Revealing social practices that support war, and which are variable across societies, suggests that war is a cultural construction dependent on the gendered myth of protection rather than an inevitability. Evidence about women in conflict situations severely strains the protection myth; yet, such myths have been important in upholding the legitimacy of war and the impossibility of peace. Looking more deeply into these gendered constructions can help us to understand not only some of the causes of war but also how certain ways of thinking about security have been legitimized at the expense of others, both in the discipline of IR and in political practice.

The gendered nature of war and peace

Feminists argue that gender can link together scholarship on the meaning, causes, and consequences of war that emphasizes different causal factors, different levels of analysis, and different eras in history by showing the continuity of gender as a variable, a constitutive force, and an analytic category. The association between masculinity and war has been central to feminist investigations.

In their gendered critique of the discipline, IR feminists have examined the stories on which realism and neorealism base their explanations of, and prescriptions for, states' national security behavior. They have argued that these explanations are based on masculine interpretations of how individuals function in society. If realist notions of how war works are derived from the Hobbesian state of nature, feminists (e.g., Grant, 1991), have argued that if life were to go on in the state of nature for more than one generation, the “war of everyman against everyman” would have to make space not only for women, but also for childbirth and childrearing. The conceptual and empirical absence of women in the stories foundational to IR's war analyses creates a source of gender bias

that extends into IR theory (Grant, 1991: 9–17). For example, feminists have argued that the fact that states' national security policies are often legitimated by appealing to masculine characteristics, such as power and self-help, means that certain types of foreign policy behaviors – standing tall rather than wimping out – are seen as more legitimate than others (Tickner, 2001; Cohn, 1993).

While the manliness of war is rarely denied, militaries must work hard to turn men into soldiers through misogynist training thought necessary to teach men to fight (see Goldstein, 2001). Importantly, such training depends on the denigration of anything that could be considered feminine; to act like a soldier is not to be “womanly.” “Military manhood,” or a type of heroic masculinity that goes back to the ancient Greeks, attracts recruits and maintains self-esteem in institutions where subservience and obedience are the norm (Segal, 1987: 187; Enloe, 2007; Eichler, 2006).

It is not only in the question of who is fighting a war that feminists find the gendering of war; feminists see many components of war, both conceptually and in practice, as gendered. Definitions of war as state action omit many issues that concern women and other feminized members of the state (Sylvester, 2002: 116). Feminists call attention to suffering that security analysis normally ignores, including the impacts of war on individual women and men's lives. While conventional interpretations of security see it as zero-sum, feminist scholarship on security argues that there are other paths to security besides the competitive use of force. As a result, they see a relationship between the sort of violence traditionally understood as war and unsafe working conditions, unemployment, foreign debt, structural violence, ethnic violence, poverty, and family violence (Tickner, 2001).

If women have been largely excluded from the world's militaries, they have been well represented in a variety of peace movements. All-women peace groups have frequently drawn upon maternalist imagery to relay

their message (El-Bushra, 2007). Drawing on feminine characteristics such as caregiving and connectedness, many women in these movements see themselves as different from men (Cockburn, 2007; Hunt and Posa, 2001). Such movements have ranged from protesting the nuclear confrontation between the great powers during the Cold War to organizing against the repressive activities of states on their own populations. Movements like the Women's Strike for Peace (Swerdlow, 1990), the Women's Peace Camp at Greenham Common (Kirk, 1989), Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo (Hernandez, 2002), the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers in Russia (Gerber and Mendelson, 2008), and Another Mother for Peace in the United States (Gibbons, 2007) have drawn explicitly on maternal or womanist imagery to craft their strategies.

Feminist peace researcher Betty Reardon has argued for the need for “feminine” values that she sees as morally superior in a nuclear world (Reardon, 1985). Drawing on psychoanalytic object relations theory and influenced by the work of Carol Gilligan (1982), Sara Ruddick has argued for the affinity of a politics of peace with maternal thinking. While Ruddick is careful not to say that women are more peaceful than men, she does claim that there is a contradiction between mothering and war (Ruddick, 1989: chs. 4 & 5).

While these maternal images have often been quite successful in motivating women's peace movements, they have made many feminists, including many IR feminists, uncomfortable. The association of men with war and women with peace reinforces gender hierarchies and false dichotomies that contribute to the devaluation of both women and peace; this allows men to remain in control and continue to dominate the agenda of world politics, while women's voices are often seen as inauthentic in matters of foreign policy-making. The essentialist association of women with peace has led to excluding women from politics (see Fukuyama, 1998), denying women agency in political violence (Sjoberg and Gentry, 2007), restricting the tools

available to women's movements, and questioning women's capacity to serve as political leaders (Sjoberg, 2009c; Bennis, 1999).

Feminist research on peace has tended to shift away from an essentialist position that assumes women's potential peacefulness, to studying the ways that characteristics traditionally associated with femininity can be used (by both women and men), to reduce conflict in global politics. Studies have found that although characteristics associated with masculinity are valued in the political arena, characteristics associated with femininity can be useful choices for those interested in decreasing or ending (particularly intransigent) conflicts (McEvoy, 2009; Hudson, 2009). Feminists have also looked at the ways in which women's peace movements have used values traditionally associated with femininity in order to get political leverage (Confortini, 2009; Yablon, 2009).

Feminist studies of peace, peacemaking, and peacekeeping have looked at women's inclusion in peace processes (Hudson, 2009; Youngs, 2008; McEvoy, 2009), the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (Basu, 2009; Cohn, Kinsella, and Gibbins, 2004), the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Confortini, 2009), women's peace movements, the question of the gendered nature of the lingering impacts of conflict after peace is declared (Walsh, 2009), gender in transitional justice (Campbell, 2007; Bell and O'Rourke, 2007), and the gendered dimensions of post-conflict reconstruction (MacKenzie, 2009). These feminists' insights about the broad nature of war and the particularly gendered difficulties with the concept of peace have led feminists to rethink, and re-theorize, the meaning of security.

Feminist redefinitions of security

Feminists are suspicious of statist ontologies that define security in zero-sum terms associated with binary distinctions between

anarchy and order. Many feminists define security broadly in multidimensional and multilevel terms – as the diminution of all forms of violence, including physical, structural, and ecological (Peterson and Runyan, 1999; Pettman, 1996; Sharoni, 1993; Tickner, 1992). Since women have been marginal to the power structures of most states, and since feminist perspectives on security take human security as their central concern, most of these definitions start, at the bottom, with the individual or community rather than the state or the international system. According to Christine Sylvester (1994: 183), security is elusive and partial and involves struggle and contention; it is a process rather than an ideal in which women must act as agents in the provision of their own security. It is important to emphasize that women must be (and are) involved in providing for their own security; as discussed earlier, notions of security that rely on protection reinforce gender hierarchies that, in turn, diminish women's (and certain men's) real security.

Though feminists approach security from a number of different perspectives, feminist scholarship on security can be seen as having a number of common tenets (Sjoberg, 2009b). First, feminists have a broad understanding both of what counts as a security issue, and to whom the concept of security should be applied. Second, feminists share an understanding of the gendered nature of the values prized in the realm of international security. Third, feminist scholars see gender as playing a broad and diverse role in the theory and practice of international security – as a causal variable and a constitutive factor in the creation and perpetuation of international security. Finally, feminists argue that the omission of gender from conventional research in international security does not mean that this work is gender-neutral; it means that it is neglecting existing gender dynamics.

Starting at the micro-level and listening to the experiences of women, feminists base their understanding of security on situated knowledge rather than on knowledge that is decontextualized and universal. Speaking from the

experiences of those on the margins of national security, feminists are sensitive to the various ways in which social hierarchies are variably constructed. Striving for security involves exposing these different social hierarchies, understanding how they construct and are constructed by the international order, and working to denaturalize and dismantle them. Gender and other social hierarchies have effects, not only on issues of national security, but also on the workings of the global economy and the uneven distribution of economic rewards which also affect individual security, particularly the security of those at the margins of global politics.

GENDERING THE GLOBAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

While there are obviously enormous differences in the socioeconomic status of women depending on their race, class, nationality, and geographic location, women share a certain commonality since they are disproportionately located at the bottom of the socioeconomic scale in all societies. While figures vary from state to state, on an average, women earn three quarters of men's earnings even though they work longer hours, many of which are spent in unremunerated reproductive and caring tasks. Of the 1.3 billion people estimated to be in poverty today, 70% are women: the number of rural women living in absolute poverty rose by nearly 50% from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s (UNIFEM, 2009).

Feminist perspectives on international political economy (IPE) are investigating the extent to which these disturbing figures are attributable to the gendered effects of recent trends in the global economy. Women who work in the wage sector are generally the most poorly paid, and women make up a disproportionate number of those working in the informal sector or in subsistence agriculture, areas of the economy that are often ignored by conventional economic analysis

(Beneria, 2003). Women have not been left outside global restructuring; they are participating while remaining invisible (Marchand, 1996a: 585). Feminists are investigating the reasons for this invisibility that exists, not only in the global economy itself, but also in the field that studies it.⁷ Silence about gender occurs because it is invisible in the concepts used for analysis, the questions that are asked, and the preference for state levels of analysis typical of conventional IPE (Marchand, 1996b: 257). Rather than trying to understand under what conditions economic cooperation between states is more or less likely, feminists are seeking to explain the causes of women's and other marginalized groups' various economic insecurities and investigating conditions under which they might be alleviated. Rather than taking the state as a given, feminists seek to understand how state policies and structures in their interactions with the global economy have differential effects on individuals; making visible gendered power relationships can help us to understand how women and men may be rewarded differentially as the state pursues gains from the global economy.

Feminists have examined how hierarchical structures of class, race, and gender cross and intersect with national boundaries as well as the interactive effects of these hierarchies on the workings of the global economy (Krause, 1996; Peterson, 1996). Often starting at the local level, they have investigated issues such as the importation of overseas domestic servants and the activities of home-based workers, most of whom are women, within the context of local, national, and global structures (Chin, 1998; Prugl, 1999). In so doing, they draw on sociological analysis rather than on rationalist methodologies based on microeconomics. Feminist scholarship in political economy has traced the gendered nature of development, analyzed the global gendered division of labor, and attempted to reformulate understandings of globalization based on the tenets of feminist theory.

Gendered development

Issues related to gender in development began to be recognized in the international policy world in the 1970s. Under pressure from women's NGOs, and aiming to focus attention on the status of women, both within the UN and in its member states, the UN General Assembly declared 1975 as International Women's Year, the year that marked the beginning of the United Nations Decade for Women (Pietila, 2007: 38). Three United Nations' Conferences on Women were held during the Decade (in 1975, 1980, and 1985). In order to get a better picture of inequality and discrimination against women, the UN requested governments to provide data disaggregated by sex (Pietila, 2007: 43). International organizations began constructing projects to better integrate women into the development process. Initially, gender issues appeared on the policy agenda under the label "Women in Development," or WID. WID classified development projects under three approaches: the welfare approach, which was designed to assist women in their roles as mothers and housewives; the antipoverty approach, which aimed to reduce women's poverty by focusing on basic needs; and the efficiency approach, which sought to integrate women more fully into the economy as workers (Tickner, 2001: 90). Feminists' focus on efficiency was a strategic choice in order to persuade those looking to pursue "normal" development goals that including women and women's issues would increase the likelihood that these goals would be met. While this strategy resulted in the direction of a fair amount of development resources toward women, arguments for gender equality were both secondary and dependent on the success of more general development goals. The WID framework was associated with liberal feminism; it claimed that gender inequality could be attributed largely to women's exclusion from the processes of development and market economics. In other words, the "problem" was seen as women's insufficient participation in a benign and gender-neutral development process.

Critics of the WID approach were concerned with the focus on the instrumental role of women; they also argued that the development process itself was not gender-neutral. Under the weight of these critiques, WID strategies, in the late 1970s and 1980s, gave way to strategies labeled "Gender and Development" (GAD). Growing out of socialist feminist ideas of the 1970s, GAD developed from critiques of mainstream liberal development theory and its feminist offshoot WID (Waylen, 2006: 155). GAD approaches focused on both women and men and how hierarchically structured gender relations between them must be changed if women were to be empowered (Tickner, 2001: 90). GAD approaches looked to consider gender at every level of the analysis of development. Some of the goals that GAD scholars and practitioners articulated included recognizing gender equality and women's empowerment as human rights, emphasizing women's participation in democratic governance, reducing women's poverty both generally and relative to men's, providing women safe environments in which to live and work, and providing reasonable health care specific to women's needs. Rather than fitting women into existing structures, achieving these goals required finding ways to reduce the hierarchical gender structures that GAD scholars believed were responsible for women's relative deprivation.

Beginning in the 1980s, feminist perspectives on development also emphasized the importance of knowledge emanating from the Global South. Drawing on postmodern critiques of modernization, certain scholars questioned the representation of the South as backward and needing salvation from the developed North. This, they claimed, reinforced the authority of northern development agencies and provided the rationale for development policies that were designed to incorporate the South into a northern-dominated world (Parpart, 1995: 222).

An important feminist critique of Western development models has also taken place within DAWN (Development Alternatives

with Women for a New Era). Founded in 1984, DAWN is a network linking feminist researchers from the South to provide guidelines for action based on research and analysis growing out of southern women's experiences. Southern feminists recognize that southern women face multiple subordinations based on sex, race, and class; to alleviate these subordinations, DAWN has promoted women's self-reliance and empowerment (Tickner, 2001: 92).

Most feminists concerned with development see a doubled-edged sword: poverty disproportionately affecting women exacerbates inequality, and gender inequality inhibits development. Therefore, they have claimed, ignoring gender comes at great cost, not only to women, but also to men and to the development project more generally. In 1997, in response to this concern, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) articulated its *Agreed Conclusion on Gender Mainstreaming*, a strategy for "making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all [UN] policies and programs" (Pietila, 2007: 89). While, in many respects, gender mainstreaming has fallen short in its implementation, all UN agencies are required, in theory at least, to operate under its mandate. Consistent with gender mainstreaming goals and GAD strategies, examples of policies designed to empower women have included micro-credit loans for women, investing in girls' education, focusing on economic needs previously understood as home-based or in the private sphere, and re-titling land in the names of women as well as their husbands.

In spite of examples of progress, many feminists have noted that there are numerous difficulties in implementing gender-sensitive policies. While the effects of poverty on women are clear, the effects of development strategies on women (whether or not they are directly aimed at helping them) are rife with contradictions. Aid often redresses poverty issues for women, but it also complicates domestic relationships, clashes with local

customs and laws, and disrupts familial balances of power. The notion that advanced, industrial, Western-style capitalism is the appropriate goal of development economics, and that "developed" societies should look like the United States or Western Europe sits poorly with a number of postcolonial feminists, who express concern that persons being "developed" against their will, or toward goals with which they have not agreed, perpetuates and mirrors gender subordination (Marchand and Parpart, 1995).

A globalized, gendered division of labor

As they seek to explain women's disproportionate representation at the bottom of the socioeconomic scale in all societies, feminists have drawn attention to a gendered division of labor that had its origins in seventeenth century Europe when definitions of male and female were becoming polarized in ways that were suited to the growing division between work and home required by early capitalism (Beneria, 2003). The notion "housewife" began to place women's work in the private domestic sphere as opposed to the public world of the market inhabited by rational economic man (Peterson, 2009; Beneria, 2007). Gendered constructs, such as "breadwinner" and "housewife" have been central to modern Western definitions of masculinity, femininity, and capitalism and have been evoked at various times to support the interests of the state and the economy (May, 1988; Fraser, 2008). Even though many women work outside the home, the association of women with gendered roles, such as housewife, caregiver, and mother, has become institutionalized and even naturalized, thereby decreasing women's economic security and autonomy (Pande, 2007; Bergeron, 2009). While postcolonial feminists have cautioned against imposing Western categories on women in the South (Mohanty, 2003), Western forms of patriarchy spread to much of the rest of the world through imperialism,

where “civilized” behavior was often equated with the behavior of Western men and women, particularly behavior based on appropriate gender roles (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005).

When women enter the workforce, they are disproportionately represented in the caring professions or in “light” manufacturing industries, vocations or occupations that are chosen, not on the basis of market rationality and profit maximization alone as liberal economic theory assumes, but because of values and expectations that are often emphasized in female socialization (Browne and Braun, 2008). Expectations about appropriate roles for women help to explain why women are disproportionately represented in the caring professions such as education, nursing, and social work. Cynthia Enloe has claimed that a “modern” global economy requires traditional ideas about women, ideas that depend on certain social constructions of what is meant by femininity and masculinity (Enloe, 1989: 174; see also Elias, 2008). However, in spite of these assumptions about appropriate gender roles, which characterize women as supplemental wage earners, estimates suggest that between one-third and one-half of all households are headed by women, about half of which are in the South, a fact that is frequently obscured by role expectations based on the notion of male breadwinners (Moghadam, 2003).

Socialist feminists particularly have emphasized how gender ideologies and structures, as well as market forces, lead to low wages and double burdens. In the export processing zones (EPZs) of Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the 1980s, more than 70% of the workforce was female (Enloe, 1989: 162; Runyan, 1996: 240). Certain feminists claim that women provide an optimal labor force for contemporary capitalism because, since they are defined as housewives rather than workers, they can be paid lower wages on the assumption that their wages are supplemental to their family’s income. Women’s cheap labor dates back to the first Industrial Revolution in Britain and is particularly

predominant in textiles and electronics and what are termed “light” industries (Burnette, 2008). Companies favor hiring young unmarried women who can achieve a high level of productivity at a lower wage; these women are frequently fired if they get married or pregnant. Because of expectations associated with traditional gender roles, there is a belief that women possess “nimble fingers,” have patience for tedious jobs, and sew “naturally;” thus, this kind of work is not seen as skilled and is remunerated accordingly. Moreover, political activity does not go with female respectability; employers hire women on the assumption that they will provide a “docile” labor force unlikely to organize for better conditions.

Even in cases where women do benefit from entry into the workforce, they continue to suffer in all societies from the imposition of a double or even triple burden. In addition to their paid work, women continue to carry most of the responsibility for household labor and unpaid community work that is seen as an extension of women’s domestic role. It often goes unnoticed that these reproductive tasks can often constrain women’s opportunities for paid work. The narrow definition of work as work in the waged economy tends to render invisible many of the contributions women do make to the global economy.

Most feminists believe that women continue to be disadvantaged relative to men by this global division of labor which relegates them disproportionately to unremunerated subsistence and household tasks or to low-paying waged jobs, roles which are responding to new demands for flexible labor but which are effectively subsidizing global capitalism. While these roles change in response to international competition and the needs of states trying to compete in the face of forces of economic globalization, they are not necessarily contributing to individuals’, particularly women’s economic security. Feminists are particularly interested in the local/global dynamic. Using analysis that starts from the local level, they have examined the extent to

which global economic forces penetrate as far down as the household and how activities in the local arena sustain and support global capitalism, often at the expense of those on the margins.

Suspicious of universal arguments about economic rationalization, feminists claim that the negative effects of the gendered division of labor on women cannot be understood without an analysis of the complex social relations in which the lives of all individuals are embedded; many feminists believe that women's subordination is caused, not by impersonal market forces alone, but by processes that result from conscious political, economic, and social choices, choices that are often based on assumptions about gender. Feminists writing about the contemporary global economy claim, therefore, that only when these processes are revealed and understood through forms of knowledge that come, not from those at the center of the system, but from the lives and experiences of those on the margins can progress be made toward substantially reducing these gendered boundaries of inequality and insecurity.

Feminist reinterpretations of globalization

Feminist scholarship has made a number of critical and empirical observations that contribute to reformulations of conventional understandings of globalization. Feminists have offered an alternative picture of globalization which they describe as "global restructuring," a process that is (partially) breaking down an old order and attempting to construct a new one (Marchand and Runyan, 2000). Marchand and Runyan suggest that it is necessary to look at cultural and ideational aspects of globalization as well as economic ones. They believe that feminist IR is in an ideal position to bridge the gap between the materialist and the ideational, thereby producing a more inclusive analysis of globalization. However, the addition of cultural and material factors is not enough; it is also

imperative to demonstrate that gender is fundamentally constitutive of processes of globalization (Marchand and Runyan quoted in Waylen, 2006: 157).

Several feminist scholars have used these gender-based observations of globalization as the foundation for new theorizing about political economy. Proposing broader frameworks that include ideational as well as material factors and encompass spheres other than those typically described as "productive," Peterson (2003) has divided the global political economy into productive, virtual, and reproductive economies that are intrinsically interlinked. In Peterson's terms, the "productive" economy is what we usually think of as globalization – corporate interactions, production of goods and services for market exchange, and international trade. The "virtual economy" – financial markets and cyberspace – "is made up of the exchange of symbols: primarily money ... but also information ... and 'signs'" (Peterson, 2003: 113). The "reproductive economy" is the place where "human life is generated, daily life maintained, and socialization produced" (Peterson, 2003: 79). As Peterson tells us, although these three economies are analytically distinguishable, they must be understood not only as overlapping but also as mutually constitutive and always dynamic (Peterson, 2002: 5). As Angela McCracken explains, "taken together [Peterson's] three faces of globalization capture more depth and breadth ... than a solely economic, social, or cultural approach" (McCracken, 2011).

Elaborating on the reproductive economy, Isabella Bakker and Stephen Gill (2003: 5–7) focus on the ways that the reproductive economy – the "biological reproduction, reproduction of labor power, and social practices connect to caring, socialization, and the fulfillment of human needs" – impacts global politics. Specifically, Bakker and Gill study the governance of the reproductive economy, the crises and contradictions in social and economic reproduction, and the relationship between human insecurity and the global political economy, concluding that it is

impossible to understand global economics without seeing it as an economics of reproductive labor.

Feminists have also argued that, in addition to neglecting women in general, conventional political economy has underestimated differences among women and women's agency in globalization (McCracken, 2011; Gibson-Graham, 2006; Bergeron, 2001). There have been a number of analyses of women's economic organizing in the workplace as well as studies of poor women's organizing at the community level in the face of economic hardships resulting from Structural Adjustment Processes (SAPs) (Waylen, 2006: 161). Facilitated by the development of new technologies, women's organizing is increasingly taking place at the international level. Groups, such as Women's Eyes on the Bank, have lobbied international organizations such as the World Bank and the UN Women's conferences, discussed above, and have acted as an important motivator for transnational organizing at the global level (Waylen, 2006: 161).

These reinterpretations of the global political economy have led feminist scholars to look in unconventional places for knowledge about the global economy, including but not limited to the individual household, the flows of human migration and trafficking, and the sex trade (Pettman, 1996; Beeks and Amir, 2006). Feminists have combined bottom-up analyses (e.g., Bakker and Gill, 2003) with structural theorizing (e.g., Peterson, 2003) to argue that gender and even intersectional analysis is crucial to obtain an adequate understanding of the economics and politics of globalization.

THE MANY FEMINISMS IN IR AND RESEARCH CHALLENGES LOOKING FORWARD

Up to this point, this chapter has talked about the general directions of the feminist research program in IR, noting its divergences but

focusing on its commonalities. This treatment has not been incidental, but purposive, following John Hoffman's (2001: 9) understanding that divergent feminisms in IR are best seen not as in tension or in conflict, but as a "momentum concept" – different streams of the same river flowing in the same direction, looking to end gender hierarchy in the discipline of IR and in global politics more generally. This section, while keeping with that spirit, discusses some of the areas of divergence among feminist theorists in IR and research challenges going forward.

As we mentioned early in this chapter, there is not just one "feminism" but many "feminisms" in IR. Rather than being a paradigmatic alternative to many of the other IR "isms" featured in this handbook, feminisms cross those divides. Just as there are realisms, liberalisms, constructivisms, critical theories, poststructuralisms, postcolonialisms, and postmodernisms in IR, there are feminist critiques, reformulations, reinterpretations, and engagements of and with each of these approaches. While the overall direction of feminist work is critical of gender subordination, these many different feminisms go about that critique in very different ways, which sometimes produce tensions between feminist theories themselves. For example, liberal feminisms often look to redress gender subordination through women's rights activism or legislation, often looking to Western, liberal definitions of women's needs to accomplish those goals (e.g., Caprioli and Boyer, 2001; Inglehart and Norris, 2003). Postcolonial feminists (e.g., Chowdhry and Nair, 2002) argue that this is not only a narrow and problematic way of understanding gender subordination, but one which ultimately does violence to women outside the West, on whom Western values are often imposed without dialogue and discussion. Constructivist, poststructuralist, and critical feminisms are often cognizant of the unrepresentativeness of dichotomous notions of gender, and the differences between sex and gender (e.g., Steans, 1998; Shepherd, 2008; Sylvester, 2002). They are, therefore, often

critical of liberal feminists' frequent use of the word "gender" to mean "sex," and dichotomous representation of men and women (e.g., Hudson et al., 2009). There are debates between poststructural and constructivist feminists on the nature of gender; for example, is it a social construct? a performance? discursive or "real"? or sociobiological? While we believe (and hope) that feminist IR is headed in the direction of taking account of the complexities of sexes, genders, and their constituent parts, we remain concerned that the disciplinary mainstream will (continue to) select for theoretically problematic and empirically inaccurate notions of gender. Regardless, the question of what feminisms "are" and how to go about studying gender will remain a research challenge for feminist IR as it develops in coming years.

Relatedly, feminist IR faces the research challenge of, if, and how to engage the discipline of IR. IR feminists have generally looked to contribute to the (usually gender-blind) field of IR. Recently, however, feminists have begun to ask how comfortable (or uncomfortable) IR is as a home for feminist research about global politics. Feminists have noted that IR often excludes and misinterprets feminist work (see Tickner and Sjoberg, 2011) and all too often, [the mainstream's] claims of gender neutrality mask deeply embedded masculinist assumptions' (Tickner, 1997: 614). Feminist IR scholars draw not only from IR/political science, but also from anthropology, sociology, geography, biology, philosophy, and history (see Tickner, 2005). While feminist IR is increasingly international, that internationalism is not the system-level, macro-political "international" familiar to IR, but a "bottom-up" globalism as interested in the margins of global politics as its sites of power. Making feminist sense (Enloe, 2010) of global politics often involves asking very different questions from the ones that IR typically asks, and going about answering them with very different methodologies than are typically used in IR. This often leads to IR ignoring, marginalizing, or misinterpreting feminist

work. Some feminists (e.g., Zaleski, 2007) increasingly wonder if engaging IR (especially on its terms) holds feminist research back, while others remain committed to the claim that one cannot think about IR without thinking about gender, and without recognizing the transformative potential of feminist IR for the discipline (Tickner and Sjoberg, 2011).

Even putting aside the differences among feminisms and feminist IR's uneasy relationship with IR as a discipline, a number of research challenges remain for feminist work looking forward. We will discuss two briefly: where men and masculinity fit in feminist analysis and thinking about intersectionality,

Feminist scholarship has long thought about the role of masculinities in global politics (see Zalewski and Parpart, 1998; Hooper, 2001), noting that a hegemonic ideal-typical masculinity in any given sociopolitical context often sets the standard to which all men (and women, who will by definition fall short) should aspire, and which shapes gender hierarchies beneath it. Nevertheless, some who study masculinities (e.g., Jones, 2009) insist on looking at what happens to men ignoring the context of gender hierarchy in global politics more generally. Others (inadvertently or not) use "femininity" as a synonym for "good" and "masculinity" as a synonym for evil (see discussion in Sjoberg and Gentry, 2007), misrepresenting and oversimplifying complex feminist analyses of gender subordination, and its impacts on men and women alike. At their best, feminisms are attentive to the vulnerabilities and variances in masculinities (Eichler, 2011), to the complex relationships between masculinities and femininities *within and among* gender hierarchies (Zalewski and Parpart, 2008), and the ways that *people* are affected by (and complicit with) gender hierarchies in global politics. While much feminist IR work is pursuing these interesting and important directions, the challenge of not resorting to reductionist interpretations of masculinities (or genders more generally) is likely to continue.

Another research challenge for feminist IR is thinking about, and through, intersectionality.⁸ Though some feminist work is hostile to diversity among women/feminisms, other feminists saw feminist IR as intersectional from the beginning; looking at global politics at the margins (Tickner, 1988) or identifying social inequality wherever it might be found (Brown, 1988). Still, feminists have been accused of “privileging gender” over racial, class, religious, cultural, and temporal dynamics and contexts in global politics (Mohanty, 2003; Chowdhry and Nair, 2002). Feminist research (e.g., Peterson and Runyan, 2010: 45) has noted that gender, race, and class identity markers interact, rather than being “just additive, merely descriptive, or politically and socially neutral.” Similarly, while gender hierarchies have been a constant feature of social and political organizations throughout recorded history, the particular masculinities and femininities within those hierarchies, and the relationships between them, vary across cultures and change over time. Feminists have begun, increasingly, to read, think, research, and write intersectionally *through gender lenses*. This way, feminists have been able to read “feminization” in global politics on the basis of race, culture, nationality, and/or religion – subordinating people, political entities, or ideas by associating them with values perceived as feminine (Peterson, 2010). Understanding how gender relates to other axes of hierarchy and discrimination across the levels of analysis in global politics in an increasingly complex and diverse international arena will be another challenge for feminist IR research going forward.

CONCLUSION

There are many feminisms in IR, with a number of different ontological and epistemological concerns, and they face a number of challenges as feminist IR continues to develop as a research program. Using examples of

feminist research in the areas of security and IPE, we have demonstrated that IR feminists are reframing the questions that IR asks and are answering them in different ways. They are also motivated by normative concerns different from those of traditional IR researchers. For these reasons, their work often seems disconnected from a discipline, grounded in political science and rationalistic methodologies, which can appear as inhospitable terrain for gender analysis. Feminist perspectives differ from both conventional IR and much of critical IR in that they hold gender as a central category of analysis. As they move on from revealing and critiquing the gendered foundations of the discipline toward establishing their own research programs, IR feminists are drawing on tools, such as discourse analysis and ethnography, more typical of history, sociology, and anthropology than of political science. Often, their research begins at the local level and is grounded in the experiences of people’s everyday lives. Working within an ontology of social relations and making connections between the local and the international involves methodologies which are not typical of IR as conventionally defined.

Feminist scholars have argued that, in this way, feminist IR theorizing is necessarily discipline- and world-transforming; anything less shows “a limited reading of feminist IR and the contribution of feminism to IR” (Steans, 2003: 437). Marysia Zalewski (2007: 302) has identified feminism as a destabilizing force for IR. Sarah Brown (1988: 472) explains that this is because feminist IR seeks to develop an understanding that threatens the division of knowledge that presently defines the discipline. The implication of this claim is that, if feminist IR were accepted as transformative for IR, the discipline would need to reexamine its fundamental ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions for hidden genderings and deconstruct the power dynamics between its theoretical camps. Still others argue that feminism should not lament its inability to transform IR, because its work should be

aimed at understanding global politics independent of and around IR as a discipline (Zalewski, 2007: 207–8; Squires and Weldes, 2007).

In spite of these considerable differences of opinion, we continue to believe that it is important that IR feminists stay connected to the discipline, particularly at a time when, as we stated in the introduction, there is a growing concern with gender issues in the world of global politics. Even if they do not accept the transformative potential of feminist scholarship for the field, feminist IR provides IR scholars with a lens through which to see new issues in new ways as well as to reconsider how we view traditional ones. Listening to the voices of those on the margins has allowed feminists to uncover different worlds and begin to build the kind of practical knowledge necessary to construct a more democratic global politics. Moving toward a global politics built on foundations where gender is no longer a system of oppression is a goal to which such knowledge can contribute. Critical questioning of the founding assumptions of IR and the raising of the kinds of issues discussed in this chapter are crucial if IR is to contribute to building a more peaceful and just world, goals that have motivated the discipline since its founding.

NOTES

1 For example, Tickner, 1988; Brown, 1988; Goetz, 1988; Newland, 1988; Whitworth, 1989.

2 This is in addition to some of the early textbooks that included gender, including but not limited to Art and Jervis, 1996; Smith, Booth and Zalewski, 1996.

3 See also the extensive database concerning the security and situation of women in over 170 countries which is located at Brigham Young University and is freely accessible at <http://www.womanstats.org>.

4 See Sylvester, 2007, arguing that the C.A.S.E collective manifesto laying out the fundamental tenets of critical security studies neglects gender issues, despite theoretical affinity with feminist approaches that provide the framework for a useful conversation.

5 For example, Cohn, 1987; Whitworth, 2004; Enloe, 2007; Golan, 1997; Card, 1996.

6 For gender mainstreaming, see, e.g., True, 2003; Cohn, 2008; for work on peacekeeping, see, e.g., Mazurana, Raven-Roberts and Parpart, 2005; Hudson, 2009. For work on the movement of people, see, e.g., Lobasz, 2009; Yuval-Davis and Werbner, 2006. For work on the noncombatant immunity principle, see, e.g., Carpenter, 2005; Sjoberg, 2006a; Sjoberg, 2006b; Kinsella, 2005. For work on terrorism, see, e.g., Sylvester and Parashar, 2009; Sjoberg, 2009b; Sjoberg and Gentry, 2007; Brunner, 2005; McEvoy, 2009; Brown, 2008. For work on women's violence more generally, see Alison, 2009; Parashar, 2009; MacKenzie, 2009. For work on human security, see, e.g., Hudson, 2005. For work on environmental security, see, e.g., Detraz, 2009. For work on transnational justice and post-conflict reconstruction, see, e.g., Handrahan, 2004. For work on peace advocacy, see, e.g., Confortini, 2009; Cockburn, 2007. For work on wartime rape, see Card, 1996; Hansen, 2001. For work on militaries and militarism, see, e.g., Jacoby, 2007; Stiehm, 1982; Cockburn, 1998; Cohn and Ruddick, 2002; Cohn, 1993). For work on the theory and practice of security more generally from a feminist perspective, see Sjoberg, 2009a; Shepherd, 2008; Tickner, 2001; Enloe, 2004; Enloe, 2000; Sylvester, 1994; Hansen, 2000; Peterson, 1992; Blanchard, 2003; Cohn, 2000.

7 Georgina Waylen (2006:146–47) asserts that neither conventional nor critical IPE have integrated gender into their analyses in spite of her claim that critical IPE and feminist IPE share similar ontologies and normative goals.

8 Intersectionality is a methodology of thinking about the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relationships, subject formations, and discriminations (see Crenshaw, 1989; McCall, 2005).

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Psychological Explanations of International Decision Making and Collective Behavior

Janice Gross Stein

Psychological explanations of international politics focus on the impact of cognition and emotion on choice. Through the analysis of decision making, political psychologists explore a wide range of topics that are central to international politics: the onset of war, nuclear strategy, nuclear proliferation, deterrence and reassurance, signaling and bargaining, conflict management and conflict resolution, and peace. Social psychologists examine the impact of collective emotions and shared identities on violence and on conflict resolution.

Psychological explanations have a long history in the study of international politics. From ancient times, scholars have debated the role of “reason” and “passion” in the conduct of war and the making of peace. In the last century, psychobiography explored the impact of a broad range of psychological factors on the development and performance of political leaders. Scholars used characteristic traits to develop personality types of political leaders and explain their political behavior.

The most significant development of the last century was the cognitive revolution in psychology which returned cognition to a central role in the explanation of choice. Political psychologists drew heavily on this work to explain the role of perception and misperception in international politics, in decisions to go to war, in deterrence and compellence, in conflict management and resolution, and in war termination. Early in the twenty-first century, neuroscience is bringing emotion back into theories of individual choice and collective moods and transforming understanding of decision making, with significant consequences for the analysis of foreign policy and international politics.

In the first part of the chapter, I begin by reviewing the contribution of cognitive psychology to the explanation of processes of decision making typical of policy challenges in global politics. I examine next the contribution of prospect theory, a theory of risk and the leading alternative to theories which model choice as subjectively expected

maximizing decisions. I then review the significant research of the last decade on the importance of emotions, research which is revolutionizing our understanding of decision making and changing our understanding of the way leaders approach risk. Finally, I explore the contribution of social psychology to the explanation of collective decisions. Many foreign policy decisions are made in the context of a small group, functioning either as a collective chooser, or as advisers to a leader with final executive responsibility.

In the second part of the paper, I examine the contribution of social psychology to the analysis of collective behavior, looking particularly at the role of emotions in collective behavior and then at ethnic conflict. In the third part, I look briefly at psychological approaches to conflict resolution and conclude the chapter with the outlines of the rich research agenda that lies before scholars interested in psychology and international politics.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS OF CHOICE

Cognitive explanations of choice

Forty years ago, psychologists started a “cognitive revolution” as they rejected simple behaviorist models and looked again at the way cognition shaped the choices people made. Although this was not its main purpose, the cognitive revolution can be understood largely as a commentary on the limits of rationality. Much of the work accepted rational choice as the default position and then demonstrated deviations from the norm. Research has now cumulated to show that people rarely conform to the expectations of the rational model and that these deviations are not random but systematic.

Cognitive psychology has demonstrated important differences between the expectations of rational decision models and the processes of attribution, estimation, judgment,

and choice people frequently use. It explains these differences by the need for simple rules of information processing and judgment that are necessary to make sense of environments that are both uncertain and complex. People have a preference for simplicity, they are averse to ambiguity and dissonance, and they misunderstand fundamentally the essence of probability. Together, these attributes compromise the capacity for rational choice.

There is no single cognitive theory of choice, and cognitive psychologists have identified no dominant decision rule. The absence of well-specified decision rules makes it harder for scholars looking to explain important choices in global politics. Instead, psychologists have specified and categorized the filters through which people process information, and the simplifying mechanisms they employ to help them make sense of the world. Political psychologists, drawing on research done in cognitive psychology, see leaders as cognitive managers struggling to manage inherent uncertainties and complexities through typical cognitive “short-cuts.” Although cognitive psychology provides no unified theory of choice, it explains why people deviate from ideally rational choice and alerts the analyst of international politics to a menu of systematic strategies of simplification leaders are likely to use.

When they look to the past to learn about the future, political leaders tend to draw simple one-to-one analogies without qualifying conditions. In 1991, President George H. Bush called Saddam Hussein “another Hitler,” with little attention to what was different either about the two men or about Iraq in 1990 and Germany in 1938. Fitting Saddam into an existing frame through use of analogical reasoning gave the president a readily accessible script about how to respond to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait.

Cognitive psychology has demonstrated that people’s prior beliefs strongly affect information processing (Grayson and Schwartz, 1999; Larson, 1997; Sanbonmatsu et al., 1997; Wegener and Petty, 1998). Individuals seek to maintain the consistency

of their “belief systems” against discrepant information in ways that lead them to depart from norms of rational inference and choice. Indeed, surprisingly, exposure to contradictory information frequently results in the strengthening of beliefs as people dig in their heels to defend what they believe. This perhaps explains the frustration of many policy advisers who present information that contradicts a leader’s choice and find their advice rejected out of hand. The discount rate of information that is inconsistent with organizing beliefs is systematically higher than rational norms would dictate, and people tend to choose options whose anticipated outcomes are consistent with established beliefs.

In international politics, leaders can be expected to discount systematically new information and resist change in fundamental beliefs (Little and Smith, 1998). President George H. Bush, for example, required a consistent stream of evidence over a protracted period of time before he changed his belief about Mikhail Gorbachev. Indeed, even a consistent stream of evidence was insufficient; it took the destruction of the Berlin Wall to overcome his resistance. Discounting has also been used to explain the success of strategies of deception and the consequent strategic surprise experienced by intelligence officials. The failure by American intelligence to detect Japanese intentions before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the failure of Israel’s intelligence to predict the Egyptian and Syrian attack in 1973, the failure to predict Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and the failure by American intelligence officials to predict the attacks of 9/11 have all been explained not by the absence of good evidence but rather by the tendency of officials to discount systematically evidence that was inconsistent with prevailing beliefs. Political leaders in the United States were generally resistant to changing their beliefs about the Soviet Union after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power with a reform agenda. Three years after he became General Secretary, senior policy-makers were arguing that his strategy was to lull the West while the Soviet Union

recovered and therefore the United States should continue to be both skeptical and cautious. Analyses of a wide range of political leaders, working in divergent political systems, suggest that very similar processes of discounting information that is incompatible with belief systems are at work.

Common heuristics and biases can impair processes of rational revision and judgment as well (Kahneman et al., 1982; Nisbett and Ross, 1980; Von Winterfeldt and Edwards, 1986; Suedfeld and Tetlock, 1977). Heuristics are rules people use to test the propositions embedded in their schema, convenient shortcuts or rules of thumb for processing information. Three of the best documented heuristics are availability, representativeness, and anchoring. People tend to interpret ambiguous information by what they most easily remember, to exaggerate similarities between one event and a prior class of events, and to estimate a magnitude or degree by comparing it with an “available” initial value (often an inaccurate one) as a reference point and making a comparison (Fiske and Taylor, 1984: 250–256, 268–275).

All three heuristics help explain crucial errors in estimation and judgment by mapping the effects of prior mental states. Availability and representativeness provide a convincing account for the tendency of Israel’s leaders to relate Arab threats to the Nazi holocaust, despite differences in capacity and context. These heuristics affect not only estimates of probability but also the representation of the problem Israel’s leaders use.

Cognitive processes of attribution can also confound policy-making. People exaggerate the likelihood that the actions of others are the result of their own prior behavior and overestimate the extent to which they are the target of those actions; cognitive psychologists call this pattern of attribution the “egocentric bias.” One of the most pervasive biases is the fundamental attribution error, where people exaggerate the importance of dispositional over situational factors in explaining the disliked behavior of others but explain their own behavior by the situational

constraints that they face. When explaining behavior that they like, they simply reverse the pattern of inference (Fiske and Taylor, 1984: 72–9; Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky, 1982; Nisbett and Ross, 1980). When the government of North Korea makes a concession in the talks about its nuclear program, for example, leaders in Washington see that concession as a function of the constraints Pyongyang faces, but explain their own willingness to participate in the talks as evidence of their search for a peaceful compromise.

The fundamental attribution error makes it more likely that the leaders will attribute hostile intentions to others and that they will discount the constraints other leaders face. This kind of reasoning can fuel mutual perception of intentional hostility that is unwarranted by behavior, exacerbate security dilemmas, and spur arms races and escalation to violence. It can also deepen hostile representations of others' intentions, and make conflict escalation more likely and conflict resolution more difficult.

Much of the work of cognitive psychology has been done in the laboratory with students. Experts have quite reasonably questioned how well such results travel into the political world. That question was largely put to rest by a study of political forecasts in different cultures, where experts on foreign policy generally continued to defend their forecasts, even though what they expected did not happen (Tetlock, 2005). The study confirmed the same kind of biases in argumentation among political experts that cognitive psychologists have documented in the laboratory. When foreign policy experts most needed to revise their judgments, they were least open to revision.

There is some encouraging evidence, however, that comes from the close analysis of differences among foreign policy experts in their willingness to entertain the possibility that they were wrong. Drawing on Isaiah Berlin's famous distinction, foreign policy experts were classified as "foxes" or "hedgehogs." Hedgehogs know "one big thing" extremely well and extend what they know

into other domains of foreign policy analysis. Foxes, on the other hand, know many small things, are generally skeptical of grand overarching schemes, stitch together explanations with different threads of knowledge, and are skeptical of prediction in world politics. In foreign policy analysis, hedgehogs tend to be deductive generalists in confronting evidence, while foxes are likely inductive pragmatists, more likely to search for new information and more open to new information. The evidence shows that the foxes do much better at short-term forecasting within their broad domain of expertise than do hedgehogs. The hallmark of the foxes was their more balanced style of thinking about the world. When leaders who are foxes are in a position of political responsibility, foreign policy is likely to adapt to new information, while hedgehogs are more likely to drive policy in a consistent direction (Tetlock, 2005). George Bush clearly was closer to a hedgehog in his decision-making style, which relied heavily on intuition, while Barack Obama more closely resembles a fox in his thorough and balanced approach to foreign policy decision making.

People are generally poor at estimating probabilities. They depart systematically from what objective probability calculations would dictate in the estimates they make. Foreign policy experts are no exception, in part because they tend to think causally rather than pay attention to the frequencies with which events occur. Experts tend to overestimate the likelihood of war, for example, because they can easily imagine the causal pathways to war, a highly salient but infrequent occurrence. To make matters worse, likely states of the world are very difficult to estimate because there are few repeated trials with large numbers in world politics.

Framing effects and prospect theory

Foreign policy decision makers, like most people, are generally not neutral about risk.

They tend to be loss averse, generally protective of what they have (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979). Cognitive psychology has generated robust evidence that loss is more painful than comparable gain is pleasant and that people prefer an immediate smaller gain rather than taking a chance on a larger longer-term reward. These propositions about risk have held up across a wide variety of cultures and situations.

The most important corrective to the subjective expected utility variant of rational choice theory, prospect theory maintains that choice is influenced by how a decision problem is framed (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979). Framing describes the way in which a choice can be influenced simply by the order in which options are presented or the language that is used to describe the options. Research suggests strongly counterintuitive results: choice can be manipulated by the order and presentation of the options available, without changing the substance of the problem. That simple frame changes can elicit changes in preferences violates one of the most fundamental axioms of rational choice. The policy implications for the management of international conflict are obvious and strong. When, for example, US Secretary of State James Baker had tried, with no success, to persuade Palestinian Chairman Arafat to join the Madrid peace negotiations with Israel in 1991, he finally cautioned him to think not about what he would gain if he came to the table, but what he would lose if he stayed away. Arafat agreed to participate.

Baker intuitively recognized an important proposition put forward by prospect theorists. People frame problems around a reference point and consider options from its vantage. When the options they identify are in the domain of gain, people tend to be risk-averse, and when the options they identify are in the domain of loss, people tend to choose the risky option. In prospect theory, risk is not a function of individual predisposition, but of the framing of problems (Bazerman, 1986; Farnham, 1990, 1992; Levy, 1992; Tversky and Kahneman, 1981).

The impact of loss aversion on foreign policy decision making is considerable. Leaders tend to be risk averse when things are going well and relatively risk-acceptant when things are going badly, when they face a crisis in which they are likely to lose or have lost something that matters to them. Leaders are also likely to take greater risk to protect what they already have – the “endowment effect” – than to increase their gains. They are also likely to take greater risk to reverse losses, to recapture what they once held, than they would to make new gains. And when decision makers suffer a significant loss, they are far slower in accommodating to these losses than they are in incorporating gains. Finally, leaders reverse their preferences and make different choices when problem are reframed as losses rather than gains.

These general findings apply directly to foreign policy choices (Levy, 1992; Farnham, 1997; McDermott, 1998). President Sadat of Egypt, for example, never “normalized” for the loss of the Sinai to Israel in 1967. Even though Israel had an obvious advantage in military capabilities, Sadat was undeterred and, highly motivated to recapture the Sinai, he designed around Israel’s military strengths and launched a war in 1973. It also explains Yasir Arafat’s decision to escalate the violence in October 2000 and to start the second Intifada. He was in the domain of loss and underweighted the probability of loss from a return to violence in comparison to the certain loss of full sovereignty over East Jerusalem that would be part of any peace agreement. Here too, threat-based strategies appear to have reinforced risk propensity and contributed to escalation.

Prospect theory provides a decision rule embedded within the cognitive frames leaders construct and suggests propensities to risk acceptance that can have serious consequences for escalation and dampening effects on the likely success of bargaining and negotiation. When leaders view their own concessions as losses, and those of their opponent as gains, they will tend to

overvalue the weight of their own concessions and underestimate those of their opponents (Jervis, 1989). This kind of dynamic makes negotiated agreements more rather than less difficult and is one candidate explanation of why leaders engaged in international conflict so often leave value on the table when they are bargaining. Similarly, when leaders fear loss, they are more likely to choose options that risk escalation (Levy, 1992).

The predisposition to loss aversion under specified conditions is a powerful explanation of the escalation of international conflict and can be usefully integrated into the systematic design of strategies of conflict prevention. It holds promise especially because it locates risk-taking propensity in attributes of the situation rather than in characteristics of the individual leader. An emphasis on the framing of the problem complements the expected consequences of the fundamental attribution error where leaders tend to overweight personality and undervalue situational determinants of choice (McDermott, 1998: 165–86).

Emotions and decisions

Cognitive psychologists and prospect theorists, despite their evidence-based critique of models of (micro-economic) rationality, have moved only one degree away from the fundamental assumption of utility maximizing rationality. They continue to set rationality as the default and then explore the consequences of systematic “errors” and “deviations,” of “constrained” or bounded” rationality. These “deviations” from rationality only make sense against a background of a narrowly conceived microeconomic concept of rationality as an accounting of probability and value. Two decades of research in neuroscience have reshaped our understanding of the relationship between emotion and cognition and revolutionized our understanding of decision making. Across the social and the behavioral sciences, new understanding of

neural processes, of the way human beings feel, think, and choose, is opening up exciting new areas of research and application.

New research in neuroscience is revolutionizing the understanding of the relationship between emotion, cognition, and decision. Two results stand out. First, many decisions seem not to be the result of a deliberative thought process, but preconscious neurological processes. The brain can absorb about 11 million pieces of information a second but can only process 40 consciously. The unconscious brain manages the rest. Second, emotion is primary and plays a dominant role in choice. Research on emotion is having a significant impact on the analysis of a wide range of global issues: the logic of deterrence (Mercer, 2005, 2010), nuclear proliferation (Hymans, 2006), the war on terror (Bennett, 2002; Blieker and Hutchinson, 2008; Crawford, 2009; Saurette, 2006), revenge, anger, and humiliation as motives for war (Gries, 2004; Löwenheim and Heimann, 2008; Saurette, 2006.); patterns of ethnic and civil conflict (Kaufman, 2001; Petersen, 2002), conflict resolution and post-conflict reconciliation (Edkins, 2003; Hutchison and Bleiker, 2008), and political identity formation (Campbell, 1998; Hutchison and Bleiker, 2008).

What is emotion? Surprisingly, there is widespread theoretical dispute about the conceptualization of emotion. The most inclusive definition is sensitive to the complex siting of emotion at the interface of structure and action, material and psychological processes, and neurological and sociopolitical processes: “Emotion is a large set of differentiated, biologically-based complex[es] that are constituted, at the very least, by *mutually transformative interactions* among biological systems (e.g., cognition, physiology, psychology) and physical and sociocultural ones” (McDermott, 2004: 692).¹

Neuropsychologists, who begin by emphasizing the materiality of emotions, reject a separation between cognition and emotion as untenable. The one is embedded within the other. And by extension, rationality and

emotion are interdependent, not opposite to one another. In seminal research, Damasio (1994) demonstrated that patients who sustained injuries to those parts of the brain that are central to the processing of emotion were incapable of making *rational* decisions. His work ignited a research program on the relationship between cognition and emotion, a program that confirms that behavior is strongly influenced by finely tuned affective systems (LeDoux, 1996; Panksepp, 1998; Rolls, 1999). "When these systems are damaged or perturbed by brain injury, stress, imbalance in neurotransmitters, or the "heat of the moment," the logical-deliberative system – even if completely intact, cannot regulate behavior appropriately" (Camerer, Loewenstein, and Prelec, 2005: 11). Rationality, in short, presupposes and indeed requires emotion.

Scientists now make a very strong – and startling – claim. There is growing consensus that emotion is "first," because it is automatic and fast, and that it plays a dominant role in shaping behavior. We know now that emotion operates in part below the threshold of conscious awareness (LeDoux, 1996; Winkielman and Berridge, 2004). Contrary to conventional wisdom, we generally feel *before* we think and, what is even more surprising, often we act *before* we think. There is widespread consensus that the brain implements "automatic processes" which are faster than conscious deliberations with little or no awareness or feeling of effort (Bargh et al, 1996; Bargh and Chartrand, 1999). Not surprisingly, the conscious brain then interprets behavior that emerges from automatic, affective, processes as the outcome of cognitive deliberations (Camerer et al., 2005: 26).

The human brain affectively tags virtually all objects and concepts, and these emotional tags come to mind automatically when these objects and concepts are evoked (Bargh, Chaiken, Raymond, and Hymes, 1996; De Houwer, Hermans, and Eelen, 1998). People trust their immediate emotional reactions and only correct them through a comparatively

laborious cognitive process after the fact (Gilbert and Gill, 2000).

There is an ongoing heated debate about how we understand emotions and how we conceive of the impact of emotion on action, the fundamental concern of political psychologists who want to know how emotion affects action in the world. Evolutionary psychologists see emotions as adaptive programs of action that have evolved over time to ensure survival and then reproduction (Frijda, 1988; Berkowitz, 1999). They understand emotions as superordinate programs that gather information from the environment and organize the raw data of experience prior to the conscious processes of thought. Emotions serve as switches, turning on and off depending on the environmental demands of the moment (Tooby and Cosmides, 2003: 116). When the lion approaches, for example, these switches turn sadness off and activate the fear program that is adaptive for survival.

Political and social psychologists see evolutionary arguments as necessary but not complete. What, they ask, governs these switches, beyond the imperative of physical survival? It is social context which makes emotions meaningful (Saurette, 2006: 507–508)? It is only with a shared sense of what constitutes appropriate social behavior that a person, a people, or a government feels humiliated at all. When the flag of one nation is burned by another, the humiliation and anger that follows flow from a shared understanding that the burning of a flag is a deliberately insulting and hostile act. Physiological processes are layered by social knowledge which shapes the appropriateness of anger, fear, and happiness. It is in this sense that emotions need to be conceived not only as an individual but also as a social process (Ross, 2006).

A useful way of thinking about emotion and cognition is to see affective processes as those that address the go/no-go questions, the questions that motivate approach-avoidance, while cognitive processes are those that answer true/false questions (Zajonc, 1980, 1984, 1998; Camerer et al., 2005: 18). Choice clearly

invokes both kinds of processes. Establishing truth claims about states of the world is usually not enough for people to make a choice. What matters to me, what I value, is an emotional as well as cognitive process, and is important in what I decide to do, whether I go, or I don't, whether I approach or I avoid. Whether or not I am treated fairly is an emotional as well as a cognitive judgment and, in this sense, emotion carries utility.

This impact of emotion on the choice whether or not to intervene has swirled heatedly for the last decade, in the wake of the genocide in Rwanda and the adoption of the doctrine of the "Responsibility to Protect" by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005. The doctrine argues essentially that the sovereignty of states is not unlimited, that in exceptional circumstances when a government is about to commit genocidal actions against its own citizens, the international community has a right to intervene, even with force, to protect those who may lose their lives at the hands of their own governments. The government of Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe repeatedly used force against the opposition as did President Gbagbo of the Ivory Coast. Yet there was little talk of intervention, despite the clear violation of democratic processes and the killing of hundreds of civilians. Analysts speculate that there is little emotional engagement with either of these two countries by governments in the West.

The new field of "neuro-economics" is beginning to conceive utility as something one experiences subjectively (Kahneman and Krueger, 2006). In this sense of emotion as lived experience, it is illogical to urge people to take the emotion out of their decision making. Of the five basic emotions – anger, sadness, happiness, fear, and disgust – the impact of fear is the most widely studied. Fear has been central to the study of foreign policy and international politics. From Thucydides, the great student of the Peloponnesian Wars, to Hobbes, who wrote about the state of anarchy that induced fear, to Morgenthau, the twentieth-century classical realist, who started his analysis of

international politics with a Hobbesian analysis of international anarchy that generated fear and an unending search for power, realists have premised their analyses of international politics on the ubiquity of fear. In these realist and rationalist accounts, however, fear remains an assumption, unexplored, rather than a dynamic process that is experienced.

Neuropsychologists and behavioral economists treat fear very differently. Fear is conditioned in part by our evolutionary makeup and is frequently evoked by crude or subliminal cues. Fear typically peaks just before a threat is experienced and is highly dependent on mental imagery and vividness. It is, of course, highly adaptive; fear heightens attention and vigilance, and prepares people to respond to what they perceive as imminent danger. Neuroscientists have now demonstrated that fear conditioning, however, may be permanent, or at least far longer lasting than other kinds of learning. "To the extent that these differences exist between the calculus of objective risk and the determinants of fear, and to the extent that fear does play an important part in risk-related behaviors," argues Loewenstein and his colleagues, "behaviour in the face of risk is unlikely to be well-described by traditional consequentialist models" (2008: 280). Fear, in other words, lasts longer than the threat and can become a learned response that is embedded over time.

It is not surprising then that a decade after 9/11, fear of a terrorist attack remains high and shapes foreign and domestic policy in the United States. This is so even though no major attack has succeeded in the decade that followed. That several attacks have been aborted is undoubtedly a part of the continuing public and political focus on terrorism. But fear conditioning is also part of the explanation. Through repeated practice and institutionalization, a self-sustaining climate of fear was created in the United States (Crawford, 2009). The fear lasts longer than the threat and helps to explain the prevalence of protracted conflict. Once a threat is perceived, it becomes self-perpetuating, and it consequently

becomes far more difficult to wind down well-established patterns of conflict.

It is not only the powerful, long-term consequences of fear that matter to foreign policy decision making and international politics. Emotions also help to explain patterns of risk-taking in foreign policy. Prospect theory, formulated originally as a correction to rationalist accounts of decision making, nevertheless implies more than the argument that the propensity to take risk is a function of situation and thinking; it is also about feelings. People *feel* more pain from losses than they *feel* pleasure from equivalent gains. It is this asymmetry in feeling which underlies decision makers' efforts to avoid loss. Fear is such a powerful emotional experience in part because the pain of loss is commensurately greater than the pleasure of equivalent gain. It is this kind of dynamic, for example, that has led decision makers to use their weapons early – sometimes starting a war – rather than risk the loss of these weapons later on. This is the most dangerous dynamic of escalation that scholars have identified, a dynamic that is very difficult to control until leaders feel reassured that their military capabilities will survive a debilitating first strike. This logic of fear underlay the dangerous early decade of the Cold War, which then took decades of effort and billions of dollars of investment in hardening missile sites to wind down. This same incendiary dynamic of fear, loss aversion, and risk acceptance underlies nightmare scenarios with Iran and North Korea and makes the management of these relationships so dangerous and so delicate. Remove fear from the equation, and both relationships become far less prone to escalation.

Emotion is a core driver in theories of decision making, with significant consequences for the understanding of foreign policy decision making, theories of deterrence, escalation to war, and conflict resolution. The well-known “ultimatum game” highlights the cognitive and emotional elements at play in decision making. The game comes out of economics but has direct relevance to international politics.

In the game, Peter offers Sheila only a small part (10%) of the available assets. If she accepts this “unfair” offer, she walks away with her small share but if she rejects the offer, they both get nothing. Rational models would dictate that she accept whatever she is offered, because “something is always better than nothing” in a one-play game. But participants in multiple experiments do not play that way; they overwhelmingly reject offers that are much below 50%. In a series of games where subjects agreed to fMRIs (functional magnetic resonance imaging, which highlights brain activity as it occurs), the insula cortex that encodes pain and odor disgust was activated when subjects received an unfair offer (Sanfey et al., 2003). That emotional response likely preceded conscious calculation and the decision to reject the offer.

That emotional response likely explains in part why leaders reject offers on global issues that they consider unfair or humiliating (Fattah and Fierke, 2009). One party – a state – has access to a given resource – wealth, vast natural resources, highly sophisticated military technology – and can propose how the resource should be split. If the other party – an indigenous community – accepts the proposal, then the resource is divided as they have agreed. If the split is rejected, neither receives anything and the game is over. Conflict likely follows. As we have seen, the second party should accept anything that they are offered, because anything is clearly better than nothing. And again, the first party, knowing that for the other anything is better than nothing, should rationally offer as little as possible. The game has been played across a wide range of situations and cultures, with a remarkably consistent outcome. Contrary to what rational models would expect, offers of less than 40% of the total are generally rejected out of hand. Why? Perhaps those who rejected the offer were worried about their bargaining reputation for the next round, as rational deterrence theory says they should. But they responded the same way even when reputational effects

were removed from consideration, when they were told that they would play the game only once. When asked why they rejected an offer that would give them something, they responded that the offer was humiliating and unfair. They responded quickly and intuitively to an offer which gave them something, but humiliated them in the process. Their rejection was driven by a strong negative emotional response embedded in social norms of fairness and justice.

Psychological models have long informed the study of deterrence (Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, 1985; Lebow and Stein, 1994), but building emotions into the explanation is shedding new light on old problems. The credibility of signals, an essential component in theories of deterrence, compellence, and bargaining, is not only a property of the sender, as some formal models of signaling suggest, but also a function of the beliefs of the receiver (Mercer, 2010). These beliefs are not only cognitive but emotional as well. The emotional cues that signals evoke – fear, anger – matter insofar as these emotions then prompt beliefs and action in turn. Research demonstrates that fear prompts uncertainty and risk-averse action, while anger prompts certainty and risk acceptance. Threats that evoke fear, unless they evoke loss avoidance, are likely to prompt hesitancy and a risk-averse response; indeed, that is the purpose of most deterrent threats. Frightening threats are less likely to be successful, however, when they are designed to compel adversarial leaders to act.

Threats that humiliate are likely to evoke anger and provoke the risk-acceptant response that a threat-based strategy is designed to avoid. The attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon were deliberately designed to humiliate the United States, by attacking its visible symbols of power, by piercing its sense of invulnerability, by violating its sense of self-respect and honor. President Bush, humiliated and angered, lashed out, first against those who gave al-Qaeda shelter but then inexplicably against Saddam Hussein in Iraq, in a campaign

described as “shock and awe” to demonstrate American power (Saurette, 2006).

Research also demonstrates that credibility, a fundamental component of theories of action in international politics, is emotional as well as cognitive. Credibility is not simply a function of either the cost of the signal or past behavior, as some theories of bargaining claim. It is an emotional belief that is held by its intended receiver. In the aftermath of the violent conflict between Russia and Georgia, Russia’s credibility is not only a function of what its leaders say and do, but of what Georgia’s leaders think Moscow will say and do. What they think Moscow is likely to do is in large part a function of how Georgia’s leader *feel* about Moscow; emotion and cognition are inseparable. Psychological explanations call into question reputational models based only on past behavior of states or on the costliness of signal (Mercer, 2010). They give theoretical weight to the pattern of inference leaders make and build in emotion as the primary driver of assessment in the early stages of decision making. Building emotions – fear, anger, humiliation – into the analysis illuminates the complexity of designing threat-based strategies that are subtle and calibrated to likely emotional responses.

Group decision making and collective emotions

Social psychology, through its analysis of small group dynamics, helps, under specified conditions, to explain important decisions about international conflict. These kinds of explanations are useful when decision problems are complex, when a single small group is at the apex of the policy-making process, or when policies develop out of the interplay among a number of groups (t’Hart, Stern, and Sundelius, 1997).

Of particular interest is how groups arrive at a collective representation of a decision problem. Groups may tend toward “simple conformity,” where collective discussion

works to minimize differences in order to construct a shared representation of a problem and undifferentiated analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of alternatives. They may do so, for example, through a process of “anticipatory compliance,” the tendency of those lower down in the political or administrative hierarchy to adopt problem representations that conform to the real or perceived predispositions of senior decision makers (Stern and Sundelius, 1997). They may also do so to preserve group solidarity and maximize group cohesiveness.

This kind of collective decision making is especially likely to occur when policy-makers feel threatened and are under stress. It produces pathologies in policy-making: inadequate attention to alternative problem representations, unduly short search for information, and discounting of inconsistent information. Pressures to conform within groups reduce their capacity to develop differentiated representations of problems, debate values, and resolve conflict. Although key explanatory variables are frequently difficult to operationalize and measure in real-world policy-making systems, the expected “flawed” processes have been widely documented across a variety of crisis decision-making contexts, in diverse political systems, across cultures. Decision making in the White House of Lyndon Baines Johnson, a strong authoritarian president, pushed group members to suppress their doubts at key decision points over the Vietnam war. Much the same was true in the run-up to the war against Lebanon under Prime Minister Olmert in 2006 (Löwenheim and Heimann, 2008).

Not all groups develop these kinds of tendencies toward conformity. A central differentiator is whether or not leaders intervene actively to establish norms and processes that actively promote debate about alternative representations of a problem and, more generally, signal their tolerance of dissent, especially at the early stages of decision making. A culture of deliberation and argument generally flourishes when leaders actively promote debate and differentiation.

The group context of the decision may also mitigate or accentuate individual biases. Group processes can reinforce and strengthen the tendency to discount inconsistent information, by appealing to group solidarity, or deliberately structure processes that allow and indeed encourage early challenges to prevailing beliefs (t’Hart, Stern, and Sundelius, 1997). Transparent systems, which allow for scrutiny and accountability, can help to reduce the impact of some of these biases by forcing inconsistent information into the system in a timely manner (Tetlock and Lerner, 1999; Lerner and Tetlock, 1999). A political system where powers are shared helps to reduce these kinds of biases by leaders, while the kind of isolation characteristic of leaders of authoritarian states reinforces biases. Generally, balanced critical deliberation tends to be associated with more open, pluralistic, and facilitative leadership styles that are more likely to be found in democratic cultures that emphasize norms of accountability. These kinds of deliberations are especially likely to occur when there is a rough balance of power and policy-making resources among group members. When access to and control of information is roughly evenly distributed, group membership is heterogeneous rather than homogeneous, and expertise is not the monopoly of one or two members, pressures to conformity are likely to be less (t’Hart, Stern, and Sundelius, 1997).

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS OF COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Emotion and collective behavior

Psychology is useful not only in the explanation of choice, but also in the understanding of collective behavior, which in turn can be one important influence on policy-makers’ choices. In the last decade, scholars in international relations have paid attention to how emotions become collective, how they are shared, and whether we can speak of, for

example, the “mood” of a nation (Ross, 2006; Saurette, 2006; Hall and Ross, 2011). At least two explanations of the creation of collective emotion are plausible.

First, epidemiological and viral models help to explain the diffusion of emotion from an individual to a larger group. Emotion is an individual property, but the individual is embedded in a social context, picks up cues from her environment, reacts emotionally to those cues, and diffuses emotion back to others. The spread of basic emotions from one individual to another is similar to other contagious processes where physical proximity matters (Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson, 1993). One can “catch” an emotion very much like one can “catch” a cold (Neumann and Strack, 2000; Ilies, Wagner and Morgeson, 2007; Hatfield et al., 1993). The direct “spread” of emotions explains diffusion within a small group, but cannot provide an account of the collective emotions that are shared by large publics that are not physically proximate. Even if we allow for the impact of electronic and digital media, where messages laden with emotion can go “viral,” a contagion model does not adequately explain why we are not continuously in a heightened state of arousal as we pick up the emotional cues of others.

An alternative approach suggests that emotions spread through processes of social appraisal. Emotions are spread “based on social appraisal [that] occurs because someone else’s perceived affect carries information that alters our appraisal of the emotional meaning of what is happening ...” (Parkinson and Simons, 2009: 1071). Some emotions are likely to be contagious because they signal threats and opportunities in the social environment, while others require some shared social understanding or shared identity (Ross, 2006). Humiliation, for example, implies an understanding of the social norms that set social standards of appropriate behavior, for without that shared understanding, it is impossible to design strategies that humiliate.

A third approach speaks directly to shared social identity. Intergroup emotions

theory (IET) holds that intergroup emotions are experienced by an individual when they identify strongly with a group, making that group part of their psychological self. People have different levels of the self, both individual and collective (Smith, Seger, and Mackie, 2007). These group-level emotions are distinct from the emotions that occur primarily at the individual level; they depend on the person’s degree of group identification, are socially shared within a group, and contribute to regulating both intra- and intergroup attitudes and behavior. Experimental evidence suggests that group emotions may be important contributors to large-scale social change. All three of these mechanisms work through the individual’s set of social relationships and connections to society, its norms, and its understandings.

A second-order explanation puts the collective at the center and argues that collectivities experience emotions. This is a difficult argument, because it attributes to the collective what is an embodied individual experience. “... states are not gigantic calculating machines,” argues Jacques Hymans, “they are hierarchically organized groups of emotional people” (2010: 462). It is difficult to conceive, some argue, that the fear after 9/11 that was widely shared in the United States was transmitted from individual to individual. Rather, fear was a collective experience, evoked by trauma, enabled by political leaders, echoed over and over by the media, reinforced by practices designed to safeguard aircraft from hijacking and a system of public alerts, and institutionalized through the creation of new processes and practices. In this sense of shared institutions and practices, scholars claim, a collective climate of fear was created (Hall and Ross, 2011). Communities feel.

Collective emotions are central to workings of the international order. Confidence and trust, for example, are emotional states, an indicator of optimism about the future. They are also cognitive, one person’s sense of how confident others are and their perceptions of how confident still others are.

An individual's mood is in part a function of the mood of others and, in this sense, it is as reasonable to speak of a collective mood as it is to speak of shared norms. Psychological models speak to both collective beliefs and to collective moods. Emotions, political psychologists argue, constitute feelings and moods that can be powerful spurs to choice and action in global politics or can lead to panic and withdrawal.

Nationalism is one such emotional belief, an attachment to one's society that is evoked by emotional cues and expressed through emotional identification with the collective (Mercer, 2010). Mobilizational appeals to nationalist loyalty for both constructive and destructive purposes are emotional, phrased as "love of the motherland [or fatherland]." Ex-Yugoslav's President Milosevic's appeal to Serb nationalism in the early 1990s, for example, invoked past humiliations and grievances in an effort to mobilize anger and support for action. The onset of ethnic war in the former Yugoslavia cannot be understood without referencing the "emotional entrepreneurship" of the Serbian political leader against a background of nationalism and collective emotional attachment.

Asset bubbles and panic selling in the global economy are also products of collective emotional states. Confident – or optimistic or trusting – investors buy homes or stocks or tulips when the price is increasing in the expectation that it will continue to rise. Other investors, seeing the price rise, begin to buy as well in the expectation that it will go higher. Their buying creates a self-reinforcing feedback loop, a "price-to-price feedback." So far, the account of bubbles is purely individual and rationalist and needs no emotional overlay. But as the loop continues, prices are supported by expectations that they will continue to increase and, through amplifying feedback between the asset prices in the bubble and the real economy, the bubble grows in a process of "irrational exuberance." As the bubble in housing prices grew in the United States in the last decade, people consumed more and saved less in part because they [thought they]

had an asset that was growing in value. Their home was their savings. The increase in asset prices fuelled public confidence and generated a "price-to-emotion-to-price" loop that fed into other mutually reinforcing streams. Eventually, of course, the bubble burst with destabilizing consequences through multiple chains connected in these same feedback loops on the way down, with profound consequences that spread throughout the global economy and global society. Emotional buying and selling was the primary driver of the volatility in global markets in the first decade of this century.

Collective moods can influence international politics in one of two ways. In "nervous markets," individual investors, influenced by a climate of fear, can make decisions which cumulatively create enormous public policy challenges for political leaders. Collective moods can also set the context against which political leaders make their choices. Aware of the wave of public anger over the inaction of his government after North Korea shelled the island of Yeonpyeong in 2010, killing 4 civilians and wounding more than forty, President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea escalated his response through large military exercises, provoking threats of retaliation from North Korea in return. Here, the collective "mood," monitored in public opinion surveys and interviews and echoed and fueled in newspapers, was one of the factors which contributed indirectly to the highest level of tension on the Korean peninsula in 60 years.

Group identity and conflict

International conflict grows not only out of the interaction among states and their leaders, but increasingly out of the violence among ethnic groups that spills across international borders. In the last several decades, far more people have been killed in civil wars than in interstate wars, and it is civil wars that have provided the greatest challenge to international institutions struggling to manage

conflict. Social psychology addresses the dynamics of conflict among groups and processes of conflict management, reduction, and resolution. It connects individuals' cognitive and emotional processes to their collective identities and pays particular attention to incompatible group identities as a permissive context of conflict.

Some scholarship within international relations challenges the importance of intergroup differences and incompatible group identities as significant contributors to violent conflict. Structural explanations of conflict generally give little attention to the processes that mediate between attributes of the environment and behavior. Realist accounts that focus on competition for scarce resources or changes in patterns of alignment assume that conflict can be explained independently of the collective identities of contending groups. These collective identities are constant and cannot explain either the eruption of civil war or its termination.

Others build in emotion and cognition as assumptions and use rational choice models to explain the resort to violence as an optimal choice to collective fears of the future (Lake and Rothchild, 1996; Posen, 1993). As groups begin to fear for their safety, strategic dilemmas arise that are exacerbated by information failures and problems of credible commitment, and, fueled by political entrepreneurs, conflict explodes into violence. Ethnic activists deliberately play on fears of collective insecurity, which are in turn magnified by political memories and anxieties. Violence becomes a rational response to strategic dilemmas fueled by fear. Here, rational choice explanations are compatible with psychological explanations insofar as they develop the intervening mechanism that transforms fear into violence (Fearon and Laitin, 2000).

Social psychology addresses the origins and triggers of the collective fears that prepare the ground for violence. Converging streams of evidence from social psychology, cultural anthropology, international relations, and comparative politics suggest that individuals and groups are motivated to form

and maintain images of an enemy as part of a collective identity even in the absence of solid, confirming evidence of hostile intentions.

Enemy images can be a product of need or identity and the dynamics of group behavior. Social psychologists have identified a fundamental human need for identity – the way in which a person is, or wishes to be known by others; it is a conception of self in relation to others. One important component of individual identity is social identity, or the part of an individual's self-concept which derives from knowledge of his or her membership in a social group or groups, together with the value attached to that membership (Tajfel, 1981: 255). Social psychologists suggest that people satisfy their need for positive self-identity, status, or reduction of uncertainty by identifying with a group (Hogg and Abrams, 1993: 173). Group membership also satisfies emotional needs that respond to shifts in identity (Smith, Seger, and Mackie, 2007). These needs lead to bolstering and favorable comparison of the "in-group" with "out-groups" (Brewer and Schneider, 1990: 169–184; Hogg, 1992; Messick and Mackie, 1989; Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel and Turner, 1986: 7–24). Membership in a group leads to systematic comparison and differentiation, and often, though not always, to derogation of other groups (Brewer, 1999).

The most striking finding of social-psychologists is that social differentiation occurs even in the absence of material bases for conflict. This need for collective as well as individual identity leads people to differentiate between "we" and "they," to distinguish between "insiders" and "outsiders," even when scarcity or gain is not at issue. In an effort to establish or defend group identity, groups and their leaders identify their distinctive attributes as virtues and label the distinctiveness of others as vices. This kind of "labeling" responds to deep social-psychological needs and can lead to the creation of enemy stereotypes. An examination of massive state repression leading to group extinction, for example, concluded that

genocides and politicides are extreme attempts to maintain the security of one's "identity group" at the expense of other groups (Harff and Gurr, 1988).

Ethnocentrism draws on myths that are central to group culture and breeds stereotyping and a misplaced suspicion of others' intentions (Booth, 1979; Eberhardt and Fiske, 1996; Fiske, 1998). Strong feelings of self-group centrality and superiority, however, do not necessarily culminate in extreme or violent behavior. The critical variables are the kinds of environments in which groups seek to satisfy their needs and the norms that they generate and accept. Certain kinds of international and domestic conditions facilitate the collective formation of enemy images (Taylor and Moghaddam, 1987).

Social identity and differentiation do not lead inevitably to violent conflict. If they did, conflict would occur at all times, under all conditions. First, personal and social identities are often in tension with one another. By identifying strongly with a group, people inevitably de-emphasize their individual identity, and those with a strong sense of individual identity give less weight to their group identities. Human rights activists, for example, characteristically identify less with a particular group and more with norms of individual responsibility. Second, people also generally identify with several groups and typically identify with a group whose importance is salient in a given situation (Turner et al., 1987). They hold multiple collective identities, and which identity is activated is situationally specific.

The critical question is, under what conditions are identity and violent conflict related? Why are relationships among some groups so much more competitive – and violent – than among others? Hutus and Tutsis have engaged in violent conflict, including genocide six times since 1962 while Québécois and Anglophones in Canada, despite important and deep differences in the collective identities of the two groups, have not fought for over 200 years. Moreover, substantial numbers of Québécois also share multiple

identities, including strong and positive identification with Canada. What explains why strong group identity precipitates violent conflict only in some situations?

The answer lies at least in part in the variability of identity. Social identity is not given; social learning theorists and constructivists argue that it is constructed through interaction with others (Bandura, 1973; Harre, 1986). The patterns of identity formation and mapping are critical. Conflict does not develop when the sources of identities or the identities themselves are compatible. When the identity an individual chooses is incompatible with the identity imposed by others or the social context in which identity is constantly being recreated, conflict can develop. Muslims living in Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, defined themselves as Serbs or Croats until the 1970s, when the Serb and Croat identities began to be recreated to exclude Muslims. Only then did they begin to define themselves as Bosnian Muslims with a distinct political identity. Even then, however, incompatible political identities may not be sufficient to create violent conflict. To return again to the Canadian example, some Québécois see fundamental incompatibilities between being Québécois and Canadian, but do not consider a resort to force. They do not because they are committed to norms of fairness and due process, and they expect these commitments to be reciprocated by their counterparts in English Canada (Stern, 1995).

Several important conditions have been identified that sharpen identity and prepare the terrain for violent conflict. The first set of factors operates between groups with incompatible identities, while the second set is internal to the groups. Ethnic or national identity intensifies during periods of social, economic, or political crisis, when uncertainty grows and the mechanisms in place to protect one group from another lose their credibility (Lake and Rothchild, 1996: 43). As central authority declines in the context of socioeconomic or political crisis, fears about physical security grow, and groups invest in

measures to protect themselves, making the violence they fear more likely (Posen, 1993). State weakness, its perceived incapacity to protect one group from the anticipated violence of another, is an important trigger of violence among groups with incompatible identities.

Identity conflict is often a competition for ownership of the state and control of its resources. States can stand above and attempt to mediate conflict – by, for example, giving representation to different groups, as in Lebanon, where different religious groups have specific entitlements to the presidency, the office of the prime minister, and the speaker of parliament – or be the creature and the instrument of one exclusive group (Brass, 1995; Gurr, 1993). The expropriation of the identity, symbols, and resources of the state by one group to the exclusion of others is a strong predictor of the likelihood of violence.

Conflict can trigger violence among groups under conditions of scarcity. Some evidence suggests that culturally and physically similar groups can generate hostility and aggression toward one another due to competition for scarce resources (Sherif, 1966). Some analyses of civil violence similarly conclude that relative deprivation is the most important condition for participants in collective violence (Gurr, 1970: 12–13). As the gap grows between material expectations and assets, aggression toward those perceived as the cause of relative deprivation grows and intensifies. The competition for scarce resources is exacerbated when the state actively controls the distribution of important resources. In the former Yugoslavia, for example, Slovenians and Croatians actively resented federal redistribution of resources to poorer regions of the country. Loss aversion is likely to intensify when groups compete for scarce resources in a context of decline: when expectations remain stable, but capabilities decline, prospect theory expects that people who are experiencing a decline in their assets or “loss,” are especially likely to make risky choices. Competition for resources and relative

deprivation, a sharpened version of competition, cannot satisfactorily account, however, for violence among groups with differentiated and competing identities.

Conflicts of identity are likely to escalate to violence when group members consider that recognition of another’s identity can compromise their own, when they perceive the granting of rights to the other as an abdication of their own identity, and when they fear that the other group may move preemptively to make gains at their expense. Throughout much of its history, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict has been this kind of existential conflict; because both identities are tied to the same territory, leaders on both sides long felt that acknowledgement of the other’s identity would fundamentally compromise their own (Kelman, 1982: 61). When one group has attempted, for example, to seize territory and establish a presence on contested ground, violence has resulted. When the state is too weak or unwilling to constrain preemptive action by one group, the other becomes more fearful, loses confidence in institutional arrangements, deepens the perception of the hostility of their ethnic rival, and prepares for violence. The intense violence between Palestinians and Israelis in 2000 did not erupt after the failure of bargaining, but when the Palestinian leadership perceived that Israel was tangibly asserting sovereignty over holy places in East Jerusalem. It had never normalized for the loss of sovereignty, and Israel’s position accentuated the Palestinian sense of loss.

Leaders of ethnic groups manipulate group fears to solidify their positions within their own ethnic community. Ethnic activists, with a strong need to identify with their ethnic group, manipulate identities and fears to produce a rapid and spontaneous process of social polarization that heightens emotional tension and magnifies hostility and fear among groups (Deng, 1995; Prunier, 1995). As polarization proceeds, members of an ethnic group are pressured by their leaders – and by the reciprocal intensification of hostility in the other group – to identify only

with their ethnic group and to break any cross-cutting ties. The opportunism of elite politicians is central to the story of repeated communal violence in India (Brass, 1997). In the former Yugoslavia, despite a high degree of social integration among Croats and Serbs, ethnic activists were able to initiate a process which broke apart families and forced members to self-identify with a single group. In a related process, "political entrepreneurs," who see opportunities for political gain, may take advantage of a process of social polarization to achieve political ends. They deliberately reinterpret histories and traditions to sharpen ethnic differentiation, heighten grievance, and increase fear. Slobodan Milosevic was both an ethnic activist and a political entrepreneur: he exaggerated Croatian violence against Croation Serbs and the Muslim threat to Serbia in Kosovo as a pretext to consolidate and expand the political power of the Serbs when the state structure of Yugoslavia weakened following Tito's death.

"Spoilers," or militant ethnic activists have also fomented social polarization when new political arrangements that would cut across ethnic cleavages seem likely. After the moderate Hutu and Tutsi reached a painful compromise on new arrangements for political leadership in Rwanda, the militant Hutus, anticipating their exclusion from political power and marginalization, deliberately planned the assassination of the moderate Hutu leadership and a genocidal campaign of violence against Tutsis. The Rwandan genocide is often mistakenly explained as the result of competition for scarce resources, or the weakening of the state structures, or a primordial rivalry between the two dominant ethnic groups. None of these is a sufficient explanation of the outburst of genocidal violence. Militant leaders who feared marginalization and loss from institutional arrangements that would have dampened polarization chose to execute others rather than accept a diminished political status. They were able, however, to mobilize support for genocidal action because they

expertly played on long-standing ethnic fears (Prunier, 1995). Entrepreneurial leaders or elites whose domestic support is uncertain or threatened can manipulate identities to bolster political loyalty.

To gain public support, parochial interest groups that benefit from militarist or imperialist policies create strategic rationalizations or "myths." Over time, some elites come to believe the myths that they have learned, making these images extraordinarily resistant to change. A process of myth-making that perpetuates hostile imagery is most likely when concentrated interest groups trade and logroll (Snyder, 1991: 2-6, 31-49). Each group benefits from the shared myth and trades for specific advantage in perpetuating hostile imagery and a threatening environment. The salience and intensity of identity myths are closely tied to the perceived stakes of ethnic relations (Esman, 1994, 1986). The greater the gap between expectations and capabilities, the more important the values that are endangered by declining capabilities, and the smaller the range of other satisfactions that can compensate for the loss in assets, the more receptive populations are to elite attempts to manipulate identities (Gurr, 1970: 59).

Differences in domestic political conditions make some kinds of populations more receptive to elite manipulation than others. In controlled political regimes, leaders and elites who dominate the instruments of communication can more easily manipulate identities and mass images. Not only the kind of regime but also the organization of society has an impact on the creation of hostile imagery. The hallmark of a deeply divided society that is likely to sustain significant hostile imagery and experience violent conflict is the presence of separate structures, organized on the basis of identity, that infuse every aspect of society. In Lebanon, for example, political office from the center to local levels traditionally has been allocated on the basis of religious identity. In these kinds of societies, creation and maintenance of ethnic stereotypes and enemy images is easily done.

This analysis suggests that differentiated identities are not themselves a cause of violent conflict. Even when incompatible identities are present, violence is likely only when it is triggered by the exclusionary acts of leaders, either by monopolizing the resources of the state against groups within their own societies, or to press claims against those within others. Leaders and elites evoke threats to political identity that then provoke stereotyping and contribute to violence.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Hostile identities and imagery must change if enduring conflict is to be reduced and resolved. Interstate conflict has been managed and routinized without modification in elite, much less public images, but recurrent civil violence as well as protracted interstate conflict cannot be resolved unless images change, identities are constituted in new ways, and leaders and publics learn. The process must also be reciprocated. Once leaders or groups begin to change their image of their adversary and are interested in resolving their conflict, they must change the image their adversary has of them if conflict reduction is to be institutionalized.

Some scholars, primordialist in orientation, have treated social and political identities as fixed. Such a pessimistic assumption is rejected by the constructivist tradition of scholarship in international relations, by social psychology, and is not supported by the evidence (Fearon and Laitin, 2000). Research in social psychology suggests that individual stereotyping can be overcome, but at times educational and social processes can inadvertently reinforce bias (Fiske, 1998; Lopez et al., 1998; Malo and Olson, 1998; Petty et al., 1998; Slomczynski and Shabad, 1998). This strain of research supports the impact of processes and practices that are put in place in the wake of violent conflict. Others argue that identity is not given, but

that it is socially reconstructed as interactions develop and contexts evolve (Teske, 1997). Benedict Anderson (1991) observed that nations, unlike families and clans where individuals can know the others, are “imagined communities,” whose past, tradition, and connections are interpreted and reinterpreted through time. Nations are also “felt communities,” layered with attachment and emotion. Political identities depend on imagined and felt communities whose traditions are constructed and reinterpreted. Identities can consequently be reshaped and reconfigured as leaders and communities restructure their relationships.

Identities are complex emotional and cognitive structures, with components that emphasize shared communitarian traditions and norms that usually include emphasis on protection of the weak, social responsibility, generosity, fairness, and reciprocity as well as honor, reputation, and vengeance. Emotional attachment to these different norms varies with the situation. Skilled mediators have emphasized the positive values of responsibility, fairness, and compassion as important elements of honor and reputation. Appeal to the “best” in the tradition of an identity may shift the emphasis within an “imagined community” to create the emotional and cognitive space for fairness and reciprocity which can ultimately change images, reshape interests, and culminate in tolerance and recognition of others’ identities. Attention to emotional as well as cognitive processes is central to the design of effective strategies of conflict resolution.

Strategies of conflict resolution that focus only on competing interests will likely not be sufficient to provoke the learning that is fundamental to the change of hostile imagery and identity conflict. In both enduring interstate rivalries and bitter ethnic conflict, interests are shaped by images and beliefs, which in turn are partially shaped by emotion and identity. What we see as a threat is a function in large part of the way we see the world, what we value, and who we think we are. Reconciliation requires a deliberate

strategy to engage with the emotional as well as the substantive context of threatening and threatened identities (Hutchison and Bleiker, 2008). If threatened identities facilitate the creation of hostile imagery and contribute to violent conflict, then securing these identities is a fundamental component of conflict resolution.

The sequencing and timing of attempts to address the emotional content of conflict and the reconstruction of identities that were reconstituted in violence is not clear. Some scholars argue strongly that attention to emotions in the wake of the trauma of violent conflict is an essential early step in a process of reconciliation. Indeed, trauma creates an opportunity to reconstitute social identity through the sociopolitical processes that follow (Edkins, 2002). Peacemakers who confront bitter civil wars or enduring state rivalries should address interests in the broader context of images, emotions, and identity (Hutchison and Bleiker, 2008).

The evidence is inconclusive, in large part because few comparative studies have been done, and analysts rely largely on cases. In the former Yugoslavia, the conflict was first managed temporarily by territorial partition and safe havens. These steps were necessary precursors to the formal agreements that followed later. Although no hard evidence is available, it is likely that identities changed only after agreements were in place, the violence reduced, the conflict stabilized and time had elapsed. In striking contrast was Egyptian President Sadat's recognition of Israel's legitimacy through a personal visit to Jerusalem in 1979, before any formal negotiations began. His visit was the critical key that challenged the hostile imagery of Egypt that had hardened in Israel over 30 years of intermittent war, led to public debate and questioning among Israel's elite and masses about Egypt's intentions, provoked emotional reactions among a public that was deeply skeptical that peace was possible, and unlocked the first phase of the long and difficult peace process that followed between Israel and Egypt. In one case, negotiation

preceded the reconstitution of identity and the foregrounding of emotional issues through political and legal processes. In the other, addressing emotion and identity made negotiation possible when it had been impossible.

Civil conflicts may be more difficult than interstate conflicts to resolve, because of the proximity of clashing identities and the intensity of fear and emotion (Crawford, 2000: 150; Stedman, 1988). Manipulation of fear and anger is common in post-conflict societies, and these feelings can become deeply embedded, spilling over into broader social space. New, more conflict-prone identities and emotions can be produced, making another round of violence more likely (Hutchison and Bleiker, 2008: 391).

Fractured states have been reconstructed through political separation and mutual recognition of competing identities, through a "consociational" or group building-block approach, where elite leaders accommodate and groups remain distinct with constitutional guarantees, or through an integrative approach, which seeks to forge multiethnic coalitions with cross-cutting ties (Sisk, 1995).

Mutual recognition and political separation is the most far-reaching strategy of conflict reduction. In 1989, after a brutal civil war that lasted over a decade, leaders of Lebanese religious groups modified the fundamentals of their prewar consociational bargain. Instead of privileging the Maronite Christian community, Muslims and Christians now share power equally. The bargain still provides for a Maronite Christian president, a Sunni Muslim prime minister, and a Shi'a president of the National Assembly. Political decisions are still made by leaders at the top while their communities remain distinct and largely apart.

The forging of multiethnic coalitions with cross-cutting ties is yet another strategy. This was the principal demand of the Muslim leadership of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The agreement reached in Dayton honored a multiethnic Bosnia in principle, but in its political arrangements provided for de facto

separation of Bosnian Serbs from Muslims and Croats. In all these cases, conflict reduction required more than reciprocation of small concessions in a gradually building process.

Societies emerging from the trauma of violence can easily reconstitute and perpetuate the identities that gave rise to the conflict. It is very likely that anger, fear, and a desire for revenge are heightened after an episode of intense violence, and it is in this context that negative emotions run especially high and existing identities are reinforced. It is for this reason that scholars argue that extraordinary efforts must be made by skilled intermediaries in the wake of trauma to elicit empathy, to put in places processes and practices that deal explicitly with the emotional consequences of violence as well as the substantive issues at stake, and to build solutions that address central fears through shared leadership.

CONCLUSIONS: A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR PSYCHOLOGY AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Never has there been a more exciting time for those who are interested in the explanation of judgment and choice. For the first time, as a result of advances in imaging technology, we no longer have to speculate or hypothesize about how people think and feel under different conditions. In the controlled conditions of the laboratory, we can actually see them do so. It is extraordinary. The black box that was the human brain is opening. Although the technology is still too slow to capture our cognitive and emotional processes, the neuroscientific research that we already have is revolutionizing our understanding of our most basic processes of inference and choice.

What have we learned? Most important, rationality depends on emotion. The two are not separate or orthogonal to one another, as philosophers have speculated for centuries. Rather, they are co-constitutive and complementary. Emotions *are* a form of judgment

and a source of information which makes rational choice possible. This new understanding moves our models of rational choice in radically new directions. Scholars have long insisted that we need to understand and identify the informational inputs to rational decision making. Now we know that centrally important are the feelings people have about what they consider important; these feelings are critical to any explanation of thinking and choice.

This new evidence opens a vast new research agenda for scholars of psychology and international politics. First, much of the work that has been done in the past will need to be revised to incorporate the emotional content of political choice. We will need to go back and look for evidence of emotion in the choices leaders made and in the collective contexts which influenced the way leaders thought and felt about big international challenges. Whether it is the analysis of the outbreak of World War I, or another look at the genocide in Rwanda, or the civil war in the Ivory Coast, scholars will have to go back and look again at the evidence from a radically different perspective. Our descriptive models, in other words, will have to fill in the glaring gaps as we bring emotion back in to the analysis of international politics.

Second, scholars will have to grapple with better explanations of collective emotions, whether it is in small groups or large ethnic, religious, or national communities. As I argued, emotions are embodied experiences. We feel them physically, often before we are fully aware, but we feel them as individuals. How emotions move from the individual to the collective is still inadequately explained. Constructivists offer one set of arguments, as do sociological institutionalists and political psychologists, but we will need more tightly reasoned and better-supported explanations, supported by evidence, if we are to avoid the fallacy of attributing to the group the properties of the individual. Groups, after all, do not feel or think; individuals do. How emotions become social and how collectivities build shared emotional experiences as they build

shared norms is one of the principal theoretical and methodological challenges as this rich research agenda moves ahead.

Third, scholars in international relations ask: how important is the psychology of emotion and choice in comparison to other explanations of war, deterrence, cooperation, conflict resolution, or nuclear proliferation? To ask this question is to ask a larger question: how important is agency in the explanation of these kinds of international outcomes? Once we move away from exclusively structural explanations and acknowledge a role for human agency, then any explanation of choice encompasses the analysis of thinking and feeling as essentials, as the core constitutive elements. The interesting question then becomes: what kinds of emotions have what kinds of impact on choice? When, for example, does fear lead to loss aversion and risky behavior, and when does it lead to retreat and risk-averse behavior? When does humiliation provoke anger and revenge, and when does it lead to retreat and passivity? Answers to these kinds of questions are absolutely critical to theories of all threat-based strategies. Scholars need to specify how emotion would modify existing theories as well as the range and types of emotions that matter.

Finally, what counts as evidence in the psychology of international politics? The exciting new research is coming from work done with individuals subject to imaging technology under controlled laboratory conditions. How can these arguments be examined and refined in the political world? How can they inform the big research questions that have long preoccupied scholars of international relations? How can they bump up against other arguments so that they are refined and sharpened? These are difficult but not impossible challenges, challenges that political psychologists have long grappled with.

Thinking and feeling outside the laboratory cannot be directly observed, but scholars can draw on archives, documents, diaries, leaked cables, interviews, and polls to assess indirectly what leaders and publics know,

what they think, and what they feel. Scholars working with this kind of evidence have long known that no one source is determining, that multiple streams of evidence increase confidence, and that the interpretative skills of the trained scholar will always matter.

More challenging will be integrating psychological theories into broader theories of international relations. Realism, which assumes fear but generally pays little attention to agency, can deepen its explanation of war and peace, deterrence and collaboration, by putting flesh on the skeleton of its emotional account of international politics. Liberals can enrich their rationalist explanations by building in an account of the impact of feeling as well as thinking. And constructivists who see agency and structure as co-constitutive can deepen their account of the social with a story of the psychological (Hymans, 2010). The essential first step in the integration of the revolutionary new findings of neuropsychology into all the approaches to international politics is to leave behind, once and for all, an understanding of psychology as an explanation of deviation from rational choice. What we have learned in the last two decades is that without emotion, there is no rationality. It is this fundamental change in our understanding of judgment and choice, of individual and collective behavior, that informs the research agenda of the next decade.

NOTE

1 The concepts "emotion," "affect," "feelings," and "moods" are not identical, and their ontological and metaphysical foundations are disputed. The disputes arise partly because of the wide range of disciplines that are deeply interested in emotion. I use "emotion" as an umbrella term to include the experience which is rooted in physiological changes in the body and the awareness of that experience. Emotion is embodied experience in the moment. I may experience fear, for example, as a pulsating heartbeat and sweating with no conscious awareness yet that I am frightened, much less what is frightening me. A feeling refers to the conscious awareness that I am afraid of something specific, while "mood" generally refers to a more diffuse and unfocused experience.

Affect is defined more precisely as "positively or negatively valenced subjective reactions that a person experiences at a given moment in time" (Camerer et al., 2005: 39). It is the way people represent the value of things as good or bad and, so technically, is one dimension of emotion (McDermott, 2004). The two are nevertheless often used interchangeably.

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Theoretical Pluralism in IR: Possibilities and Limits

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The other chapters in Part 1 of this volume outline and review theories about, approaches to or issues within international relations – postmodernism, historiography, rational choice, normative theory, and the like. This essay takes a different tack, instead asking what happens when we bring insights from two or more theories to bear on a particular problem, a strategy one might call theoretical pluralism or bridge building.¹ Whatever the name, this pluralistic approach has become an IR cottage industry over the past decade. Scholars have combined elements of different social theories (rational choice and constructivism), different research programs (the management and enforcement schools in compliance), and even different types of theory (problem-solving and critical/normative).

Such work has reached a critical mass, as evidenced by numerous panels at meetings of professional associations, entire books devoted to the topic (Katzenstein and Sil, 2010b), its endorsement by presidents of the International Studies Association (Lake, 2011), and – not least – the endless ways in which the central metaphor of bridge

building has by now been deconstructed. What is the bridge spanning? A (theoretical) divide? A (meta-theoretical) chasm? Does it have just one lane, or is ‘traffic’ possible in both directions? Do we build a bridge to understand better what’s on the other side? Or is the goal simply to meet somewhere in midstream?

Metaphorical deconstructions aside, this chapter argues that the bridge builders have largely done their job well. The landscape of contemporary IR looks different thanks to their efforts. We understand more fully the effects of international institutions, the workings of various international regimes (human rights, environmental), the concept of rationality, the role of language in international affairs, the relations between norms and interests, between the material and social worlds – to give just a few examples. At the same time, efforts at pluralism have lost steam in recent years, while criticism of it has increased.

To capture this mixed picture, the chapter proceeds as follows. I begin by placing the move towards theoretical pluralism in context, asking why one saw an upsurge of

interest in it only beginning in the mid-1990s. The chapter then offers a net assessment of these efforts in three areas: international institutions, normative theory, and studies of civil war. In each case, the analysis details the ways in which and the extent to which theoretical pluralism has come to define a particular subfield. I argue that contemporary IR does look different – and better – due to bridge building; yet, at the same time, it faces challenges that were not there in the early 1990s and are a direct consequence of the turn to pluralism. In the conclusion, I highlight two such challenges – theoretical cumulation and meta-theory – and argue that they should be at the heart of a reinvigorated pluralist research program, one where theory is taken seriously and epistemological divides are transgressed.

FROM MONISM TO (SEMI-) PLURALISM

Why did the explosion of interest in bridge building occur only in the mid-1990s and not earlier? The answer is partly external events (see also Schmidt, Chapter 1 in this volume). The end of the Cold War, intensified globalization, and deepening integration in Europe placed a premium on capturing – theoretically – complexity. However, equally important were dynamics internal to the discipline, where more and more favoured an end to paradigm wars and embraced an attitude of let's just get on with it.

To appreciate these changes, one needs first to set the stage, by considering IR theory circa 1990. It would not be much of a caricature to say that IR – especially in America – was characterised by a world of 'isms' that did not much talk to each other. Partly this was a function of national traditions and geography (Wæver, 1998); however, theoretically monist paradigms played an even more important role.

For sure, this state of affairs had advantages, with one seeing theoretical advances

within paradigms. Consider the debate between neorealists and neoliberals. What began as a shouting match became – over time – a nuanced and increasingly rigorous discussion of key issues separating these scholars – for example, the specific role and scope conditions of relative and absolute gains in world politics (Baldwin, 1993). Within constructivism, one saw a healthy debate over the relation between critical and substantive theory – in particular, the extent to which empirical findings needed to be accommodated within critical/normative approaches (Price and Reus-Smit, 1998).

Yet, such achievements came at a price. Conversation across paradigms was limited, and closed citation cartels dominated. For example, the degree of exchange between constructivists and neorealists/neoliberals could be captured in set-theoretic notation: the null set. Instead, meta-debates and a dialogue of the deaf too often were the norm (Schmidt, in this volume; Wight, in this volume). Moreover, some theorists favoured a gladiator approach, where – like a Roman warrior on his chariot – one perspective went forth and slayed all others, with the latter presented in highly simplified form.²

This theoretical monism had real-world costs, undercutting efforts to explain better key features of international politics (see also Katzenstein and Sil, 2010a: 412–13). Language is a case in point. It is ubiquitous and in many ways the foundational fabric and medium through which politics works. In the early and mid-1990s, two exciting research programs addressed its role. One viewed language as an act of information exchange or signalling, where social agents stand outside of and manipulate it (Fearon, 1997); the other theorized language as deep structures of discourse and meaning that make agency possible in the first place (Doty, 1993). From a practical perspective, the problem was that such research – by not combining insights – missed a very large part of how language actually did and does work in the international realm, be it through deliberation, persuasion, arguments, rhetoric, and the like.

The change

By the late 1990s, change was afoot, with important publication outlets and key theorists – in both Europe and North America – signalling a turn to pluralism. In 1997, the premier journal of European IR, the *European Journal of International Relations*, published a conceptual essay by a leading IR theorist (Adler, 1997). It advocated a bridgeable midpoint between rational choice and constructivism; indeed, the article's title – 'Seizing the Middle Ground' – captured well its pluralist instincts.

A little over a year later, *International Organization* – arguably the most prestigious IR journal in North America – published a special issue dedicated to its 50th anniversary. After internal deliberation and debate, it was agreed not to structure the issue around particular substantive theories (realism, say), but around the social theories – rationalism and constructivism – underlying them. Furthermore, it was decided that the special issue would cautiously raise the topic of theoretical pluralism.³ It was thus briefly addressed in the introduction by Katzenstein, Keohane, and Krasner (1998: 678–82), and in two of the remaining 11 essays (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; March and Olsen, 1998). However, the pluralism on offer had clear epistemological limits. In particular, building connections to more radical forms of constructivism was deemed a bridge too far (Katzenstein, Keohane, and Krasner, 1998: 677–78).

Taken together, the Adler article and the *International Organization* 50th anniversary issue heralded an important change. Most important for my purposes, a window was now ajar for those in favour of promoting theoretical pluralism. Indeed, in 2002, two prominent IR theorists returned to and elaborated on the theme of pluralism. Writing in the first edition of this handbook, James Fearon and Alexander Wendt (2002) analyzed a number of concepts and issues – logics of action, norms, preference formation – where both rationalism and constructivism could be applied. Their conclusion is worth

quoting at length, as it nicely captures the gist of bridge building.

This prompts a concluding suggestion: that the rationalism-constructivism issue be seen not as a debate but as a conversation ... Rather than a dialogue of the deaf in which each side tries to marginalize or subsume the other in the name of methodological fundamentalism, the challenge now should be to combine insights, cross boundaries and, if possible, synthesize specific arguments in hope of gaining more compelling answers and a better picture of reality (Fearon and Wendt, 2002: 68).

Due to both the quality of their arguments and positions within the field, the theorists surveyed above largely set the parameters for how IR would tackle the issue of pluralism. In this regard, it is worth highlighting two points. First, and perhaps understandable given the agenda-setting nature of these early commentaries, most attention was on legitimating the idea of pluralism. An empirically oriented bridge builder could read Fearon and Wendt's inspiring words, but at the same time get precious little advice on how actually to do it. What exactly would be the result when one 'combines insights' and 'crosses boundaries'? To do this well, were particular methods or research designs necessary?

Second, questions of epistemology and meta-theory received little attention. More carefully put, epistemology was controlled for in that most of these early proponents of pluralism subscribed to some form of positivism. While this shared starting point allowed scholars to develop ideas about theoretical bridge building without having to worry about meta-theory, it also had unfortunate side effects. For one, it means the 'conversation' proposed by Fearon and Wendt has overwhelmingly been between proponents of rational choice and one particular form of constructivism – the conventional type – that subscribes to positivism; missing are the interpretive variants (Adler, Chapter 5 in this volume; Zehfuss, Chapter 6 in this volume; Sjoberg and Tickner, Chapter 7 in this volume). And given the dominance of conventional constructivism in the United States, efforts

at pluralism have taken on a decidedly American flavour (Checkel, 2007a).⁴

More important, this bracketing of meta-theory has led bridge builders to neglect foundational issues. Are there philosophical limits to the exercise? If the goal is to gain more analytic leverage on the world around us, is there any obvious stopping point in an epistemological sense? On the one hand, all would agree that efforts at pluralism combining a deeply anti-foundational perspective with game theory make little sense (see also Zehfuss, Chapter 6 in this volume). Yet, short of this extreme, what guidance or rules do we have to structure a bridge-building exercise that might transcend epistemological divides?

Summary

Since the mid-1990s, one has seen an increase in the theory and practice of pluralism. Bridge-building submissions to key publications have grown – for example, from zero to 10% at *International Organization* – while journals have devoted entire special issues to the topic (Caporaso, Checkel, Jupille, 2003a; Checkel, 2007b).⁵ A further testimony to this interest is a growing literature that explicitly criticizes bridge building along a number of dimensions – disciplinary, practical, and meta-theoretical (Guzzini, 2000; Nau, 2011; Roundtable, 2009; Smith, 2003; Zehfuss, 2002).

Yet, such trends must be kept in perspective. The heading for this section, after all, was ‘From Monism to (Semi-) Pluralism,’ and that semi- needs to be stressed. Entire IR research programs have shown little interest in building theoretically plural arguments – consider work on open economy politics within American IPE scholarship (Oatley, 2011) or on discourse and textual analysis in the United Kingdom and continental Europe (Milliken, 1999; Hopf, 2007). It is also not clear to what extent – if at all – such topics are covered in graduate seminars or upper-level undergraduate courses.

The TRIPS survey – Teaching and Research in International Politics – developed and conducted by the College of William and Mary offers additional evidence in support of this mixed picture. In its 2008 edition, 44% of the respondents – 2,700 IR scholars from 10 different countries – felt that rationalism and constructivism should remain distinct explanations, while 40% thought they could be ‘usefully synthesized to create a more complete IR theory’. Moreover, in their ranking of the most influential IR theorists of the past 20 years, only one bridge builder – Peter Katzenstein of Cornell University – made it into the top ten, and then only in ninth place (Jordan et al., 2009: 42–44).

More recently, the scholars associated with the TRIPS project have supplemented their surveys with an analysis of articles published in 12 leading IR journals between 1980 and 2007.⁶ This is an important extension, for if surveys capture what we say, examining journal publications reveals what IR as a community *does*. Yet, this turn to actual practice does not change the picture sketched above.

Despite a growing enthusiasm in IR for synthesis or ‘eclectic theorizing’ ... only a small number of articles advance theories that explicitly marry elements of two or more distinct paradigms. The overwhelming majority of articles engage in competitive theory testing, where hypotheses derived from two or more competing theories are pitted against each other to see which better explains an empirical pattern (Maliniak et al., 2011: 448).

Putting this in numerical terms, 163 out of 2,806 total coded articles – or 6% – qualified as attempts at theoretically plural bridge building.⁷

PLURALISM AND BRIDGE BUILDING IN PRACTICE

Whatever inroads it has made in the field, has bridge building delivered? The current section addresses this issue and does so by first

conducting a net assessment of such efforts in two subfields – international institutions and normative theory – detailing the ways in which and the extent to which theoretical pluralism has come to define them. The issue is value added: Would we be worse off if there had been no such efforts? In counterfactual terms, would contemporary IR theory look any different absent this turn to pluralism? To avoid oversampling on my ‘dependent variable’, the section also considers a vibrant contemporary research program – on civil war – where bridge building has not been the norm. What has it gained – and lost – in comparison to the bridge builders?

I set the stage for my assessment by first defining theoretical pluralism in more detail and then offering two strategies for carrying it out.

Theoretical pluralism: concept and strategies

To define theoretical pluralism, it is helpful to delimit its scope. It is not about subsumption, where one theory is parasitic on and a special case of another; nor is it about synthesis, where one puts together different entities (theories, in this case) to make a whole that is new and different (see also Katzenstein and Sil, 2010b: 17).⁸ Yet within these broad bounds, there is quite some scope for specification. I thus define theoretical pluralism as an explicit effort to utilize insights and variables from two or more theoretical approaches to make better sense of a real-world problem. ‘To utilize insights’ means to borrow explanatory variables from different theoretical approaches and bring them together in a single explanation, with ‘theoretical approaches’ including both specific theories (say, offensive realism) as well as the underlying toolkits (instrumental rationalism, say) upon which broader families of theories are built. ‘To make better sense’ means to capture a greater amount of the analytic/causal complexity at work in a given puzzle or problem than would be the case if a single theory was used.

How, then, might one recognize a theoretically plural argument if it were to walk through the door? It would be an argument seeking to explain and understand a real-world problem by combining explanatory variables from two or more theoretical approaches to capture complexity. Consider a real-world problem of the early years of the new millennium: the ongoing civil conflict in and around the Democratic Republic of Congo. One puzzle – for both theory and policy – was the continuing ability of rebel groups to (re-)mobilize in this conflict. An important part of the answer was the civil war there was anything but an affair internal to Congo; it had critically important transnational dimensions. Thus, a theoretically plural argument seeking to capture the causal complexity behind rebel group mobilization might combine socialization variables from transnational theories (Wood, 2010) with control and hierarchy variables stressed in principal-agent accounts (Gates, 2002).

Several comments on the above are in order. First, the definition leaves important issues unaddressed – what ‘combining’ means in an operational sense and what kind of theory results from such an argument. Second, it builds upon the ambitions articulated so nicely in Fearon and Wendt’s agenda-setting essay in the first edition of this handbook: to ‘synthesize specific arguments in hope of gaining more compelling answers and a better picture of reality’ (Fearon and Wendt, 2002: 68). Third, my understanding of theoretical pluralism is consistent with those offered by other scholars seeking to promote it – including the ‘analytic eclecticism’ of Katzenstein and Sil (2010b: 10, 19) or of Lake (2011: 466, 472), or the ‘theoretical synthesis’ of TRIPS (Maliniak et al., 2011: 448).⁹

At the end of the day, though, we do – as IR *theorists* – need to ask what kind of theory results from pluralism. Given its emphasis on analyzing complexity, the logical choice would seem to be middle-range theory, as it captures causal complexity – usually invoking several independent variables – over a

spatially or temporally delimited frame (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; George, 1993). Recently, proponents of bridge building have indeed explicitly embraced this theoretical goal (Katzenstein and Sil, 2010a: 415; Katzenstein and Sil, 2010b: 21–22; Lake, 2011; see also Bernstein, Lebow, Stein and Weber, 2007: 234–35).

This is both a progressive and troubling move. It is progressive because bridge builders now have a clear theoretical goal. It is troubling because pluralists use the term in much the same way as many others in contemporary scholarship – as a buzz phrase lacking operational content. As a result, weaknesses associated with middle-range theory – over-determined outcomes, noncumulating lists of causal mechanisms (see also Bennett, 2010) – are not addressed, points to which I return in the chapter's last section.

Turning from the end point of bridge building – middle-range frameworks – to the actual construction of these theoretically plural bridges, we need to give operational content to the phrase 'combining explanatory variables from two or more theoretical approaches'. In this context, what does combine mean? Here, there is less clarity in the literature. For some, combine simply denotes 'conscious bridge building between or among the theories' (Maliniak et al., 2011: 448). Of course, this begs what 'conscious bridge building' entails. For Katzenstein and Sil (2010b: 10), it means to examine how diverse mechanisms from differing theories 'might interact with each other, and how ... they can combine to affect outcomes.'

These quotes have clear intuitive appeal. After all, the idea of pluralism is – at some level – about combinatorial possibilities and interaction effects. The devil, though, is in the details, for these same quotes do not tell the aspiring bridge builder how actually to do it. However, two operational strategies for building theoretically plural frameworks do emerge from earlier work: domain of application and temporal sequencing (Caporaso, Checkel, Jupille, 2003b: 21–23).

The domain of application strategy strives for a minimal pluralism in the sense that,

while two theories might appeal to completely independent explanatory factors, when combined they could increase our ability to explain the empirical world. Any theory has scope conditions – when and under what conditions do we expect it to be applicable. The domain strategy works by identifying the respective turfs and 'home domains' of each theory, by specifying how each explanation works, and finally by bringing together each home turf in some larger picture. Each theory is specified independently, and the result is an additive theory that is more comprehensive than the separate theories.

Scholars have advanced a number of domain-of-application propositions. For example, we might imagine that high substantive stakes invite rational calculation, while relatively low stakes allow for noncalculative decision making (March and Olsen, 1998: 952–53). Or we might postulate that the more routine the behaviour, the more easily it is institutionalized (backgrounded). In organizational theory and general systems theory, for example, those parts of the environment that can be mapped in some stable sense are hardwired into the organization and become part of its lower (administrative) functions. Less stable, less easily mapped aspects of the environment remain on the strategic agenda.

The key to this strategy is properly to specify the scope conditions of each theory, what its domain is, and how it relates to other theories. If one theory provides some value-added to the other, we can improve our efforts by this approach. Admittedly, this works best when multiple theories focus on similar explananda, when explanatory variables have little overlap, and when these variables do not interact in their influence on outcomes.

A second strategy relates closely to the first, but adds a time dimension, suggesting that each theory depends on the other temporally to explain a given outcome. Where domain-of-application approaches posit different empirical domains within one frame of time, sequencing means that variables from both approaches work together over time

to explain a given domain. Legro's (1996) cooperation two-step, in which a culturalist account of preference formation precedes a rationalist account of conflict and cooperation, provides a clear example (see also Katzenstein, Keohane and Krasner, 1998: 680–81; March and Olsen, 1998: 953).

One problem with such division-of-labour arguments is that the pluralism on offer is even weaker than in the domain-of-application strategy. Each theory works in isolation from the other, at a particular point in time. The possibilities of intellectual-theoretical cross fertilization are minimal if not nil; each theory and scholar does what he or she does, and then passes things on to the next (see also Fearon and Wendt, 2002: 64).

With these conceptual and operational nuts and bolts in hand, the important question to ask is how a turn to theoretical pluralism has enriched IR.

International institutions

The study of international institutions and organizations (IOs) has been a central IR concern since the early years after World War II (Martin and Simmons, 1998). The literature here is rich and deep, ranging from sociological/organizational studies of IO learning (Haas, 1990), to the rational-choice/contractualist approach of neoliberal institutionalism (Keohane, 1984), to contemporary studies that apply credible commitment theory to the International Criminal Court (Simmons and Danner, 2010). Much of this research is excellent and has provided the IR community with a trove of insights on the multiple roles institutions and IOs can play in world politics (Acharya and Johnston, 2007; Barnett and Finnemore, 2004, for example). Neoliberal institutionalism in particular is a model of a progressive research program, with scholars coherently and cumulably building upon earlier work.

At the same time, work in this subfield made few efforts to build plural arguments on IOs. Instead, scholars might speculate on

dynamics not captured by their theories, such as state interests changing over the long term (Keohane, 1984), or report untheorized empirical findings inconsistent with their approach. On the latter, Wallander's book (1999) on institutions and Russian/German security cooperation is exemplary, reporting results (changing interests, nonstrategic behaviour) inconsistent with her rational-choice framework. In neither case, however, is there any effort to build a plural framework that captures this causal complexity.

Since the start of the new millennium, this state of affairs has changed. Several theorists and research projects – taking a problem-driven approach to the study of international institutions – have sought to capture their multiple roles through bridge-building efforts. Far from an afterthought, theoretical pluralism has been a guiding principle from the start. In this case, it meant capturing both rationalist understandings of institutions (as strategic environments where instrumentally rational actors bargain in defence of existing interests) and constructivist views (institutions as social environments where communicatively rational actors argue and learn new interests).

The role institutions play in changing core properties of states and state agents – specifically through socialization – has been a theme in the literature for over 30 years. In 1979, Kenneth Waltz invoked socialization as a mechanism via which states responded to system imperatives (Waltz, 1979); the English School often spoke of the socializing power of international society (Alderson, 2001); more recently, constructivists accorded socialization a central role in their studies (Price, 1998).

Building upon this work, Checkel (2007b) and collaborators sought to build theoretically plural arguments on socialization. Using international institutions in Europe as their laboratory and a domain of application bridge-building strategy, they theorized the mechanisms of institutional socialization – *from the start* – as a product of both rational-choice and constructivist dynamics.

Contributors theorized scope conditions for particular socialization mechanisms – when and under what conditions they expected them to be applicable. Thus, Alexandra Gheciu, in a study of NATO, deduced conditions (noviceness, insulation, teacher–pupil relation) when persuasion ought to be successful; their absence then indicated when rationalist mechanisms such as cost-benefit calculations would be at work (Gheciu, 2005; see also Checkel, 2003; Johnston, 2008).

The end result was a study that captured causal complexity and provided more complete explanations of how international institutions could socialize states and individuals (see also Kelley, 2004). Theoretical pluralism was achieved via a strategy that stressed the development of scope conditions. Compared to either a pure rationalist or constructivist argument, there was value added – both theoretically and empirically.

Theoretically, the project demonstrated that socialization – once broken down into its component mechanisms – required insights from both rationalism and constructivism to be properly understood. Empirically, it showed that international socialization – even in the most likely case of contemporary Europe – was trumped by national dynamics. And those national variables were only fully captured by the use of both rational choice and constructivist theorizing. In sum, and to employ Fearon and Wendt's criteria, Checkel and collaborators had delivered, providing 'more compelling answers and a better picture of reality' (Fearon and Wendt, 2002: 68).

What kind of theory emerges from such an exercise, however? How do others build upon these findings in a cumulative way to advance the theoretical frontier? To ask – and begin to answer – such questions, alerts one to a trade-off. Acquiring a 'better picture of reality' complicates the development and refinement of theory. At issue here is not that old war-horse parsimony. Rather, it is what body of theory emerges from mid-range bridge-building work? Checkel and collaborators (2007b)

theorized three causal mechanisms with certain scope conditions. Others might then follow by theorizing additional causal mechanisms, or by testing their mechanisms on different empirical material (outside Europe), or by refining the scope conditions. These are all plausible ways to proceed, but it is not clear how the parts add up to a whole.

A second example of an explicit bridge-building effort in the area of international institutions is a project on human rights led by Thomas Risse, Stephen Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink (1999). It sought to develop a generalizable model explaining the process through which international norms have effects at the national level. More important for my purposes, the model was conceived from the beginning as a plural one integrating insights from both rational choice and social constructivism.

To accomplish the latter, Risse et al. employed a temporal-sequencing bridge-building strategy, with the common domain being the domestic impact of international norms. Their five-stage model works as follows. Its starting point is a situation where elites in rights-violating states are entrapped by a vice of transnational and domestic pressure generated by a broad array of agents. In phase 2, norms further mobilize such actors, who engage in processes of shaming and moral consciousness-raising. During the early parts of phase 3, compliance with human-rights standards occurs – if at all – through tactical concessions, that is, shifts in the behaviours and strategies of state elites; their preferences do not change. Towards the end of this third phase, however, the interaction between state officials and social actors shifts. The former now rethink their core preferences as they engage (phase 4) in argumentation and dialogue with the latter. Finally, during phase 5, these newly learned preferences become internalized.

Put differently, it is the combination of different theoretical approaches, working at different times, that explains the outcome. Instrumental adaptation predominates during phases 1, 2, and part of 3; argumentative

discourse comes to the fore during phases 3 and, especially, 4; and institutionalization dominates Phase 5. In more formal terms, a change occurs from the instrumental rationality preferred by rational choice, to the Habermasian argumentative rationality of constructivists, and then, finally, to the rule-governed behaviour of institutional theory.

Using this theoretically plural frame, the volume's empirical studies provide structured and rich evidence that compliance with international prescriptions is not just about learning new appropriate behaviour, as many constructivists might argue. Nor, however, is it all about calculating international or domestic costs. Rather, by combining these insights, Risse and collaborators provide scholars with a richer picture of the multiple causal pathways through which norms matter. The resulting explanation is complex, while at the same time not degenerating into a kitchen sink argument where everything matters (see also Keck and Sikkink, 1998). It is a middle-range account incorporating interactions among multiple mechanisms and logics – what Katzenstein and Sil (2010b: 19) label a central marker of eclectic scholarship.

The value added here comes from the theoretically plural starting point. It allowed Risse et al. to advance a multi-causal model that mapped very closely into the real world of international human rights, where even the most casual observer will appreciate that change comes from both arm-twisting and threats *and* the normative power of the ideals of human dignity. Prior to the publication of this book, academic scholarship had tended to stress one side of the story or the other.

Whether the five-stage model is generalizable is another matter. Large and economically powerful states with poor human-rights records such as China and Russia seem immune to the dynamics sketched by Risse et al. (Mendelson, 2002). In the first decade after its publication, few studies sought to replicate the volume's approach. Moreover, recent work hailed as the cutting-edge on international institutions and human rights

avoids complicated, theoretically plural models, instead offering a largely rationalist take on the subject matter (Simmons, 2009).¹⁰ None of this is to diminish the accomplishments of Risse and collaborators; rather, it is again to point to an apparent trade-off between theoretical pluralism and theoretical cumulation.

Two final comments are in order regarding these examples of bridge building. For one, meta-theory is not an issue. There may be some bridge building at the level of social theory – between rational choice and conventional constructivism – but at the more foundational level of epistemology, no bridges are crossed. Positivism or its close relation scientific realism (Wight, in this volume; Wight, 2006) is the philosophical starting point for all involved.

In addition, and as noted earlier, IR has not done a good job theorizing the multifaceted ways in which language shapes international politics. We had one group of scholars talking about signalling and another about discourse. Now, however, and as a direct consequence of the theoretically plural efforts outlined above, IR has a vastly richer set of tools for studying language's multiple roles, including work on persuasion (Johnston, 2008), arguing (Risse, 2000), rhetorical action (Schimmelfennig, 2003), social learning (Checkel, 2001), and social influence (Johnston, 2001).

Normative theory

Normative theory is about ought and not necessarily the why of substantive, problem-solving approaches. Bridge building means to 'synthesize specific arguments in hope of gaining more compelling answers and a better picture of reality' (Fearon and Wendt, 2002: 68). Yet, normative theory is not always about reality. Moreover, as previously noted, bridge building has gained its most forceful advocates in the United States, while normative theory has deeper roots in Europe (Hurrell and Macdonald, in this volume; Waever, 1998).

At first glance, then, arguments about theoretical pluralism and normative theory might seem misplaced. Yet, the rise of an empirically oriented constructivism since the mid-1990s has led to a situation where the interests of a growing number of scholars with substantive research foci intersect with the concerns of normative/ethical/critical theory (Price and Reus-Smit, 1998; Reus-Smit, 2008). If – above – the bridge building was in the context of shared research interests – the role of international institutions in global politics, say – here it is between different types of theory: normative/critical and problem solving.

In this latter case, bridge building has not resulted in specific operational strategies for gaining a better picture of reality. Rather, it is about utilizing empirical, problem-solving theory ‘to think through the normative-empirical gap, thereby offering an avenue for grounding ethical claims in an additionally rigorous way’ (Price, 2008a: 199; see also Price, 2008b: *passim*). Such a bridge-building exercise would have benefits in both directions – also alerting empirical theorists of their underspecified use of insights from normative-ethical theory.

As an example, consider Habermas’ work on deliberation and discourse ethics and its influence in contemporary IR. In a conceptual and normative sense, this impact has been wide ranging, from the role of deliberation in global and European governance (Eriksen and Fossum, 2000), to new normative criteria for identity and democracy in a globalized/Europeanized world (Eriksen, 2009), to the power of arguments in global politics (Mueller, 2004; Risse, 2000), and international negotiations (Risse and Kleine, 2010). Yet, to paraphrase Price, ‘an empirical-normative gap’ has appeared in the more operational applications of Habermasian insights.

This gap is seen in numerous ways. Some scholars worry that – empirically – it is almost impossible to measure the role that arguments play in the real world of diplomacy (Deitelhoff and Mueller, 2005).

Others suggest that Habermas’ proposals on post-national citizenship and democracy simply fall short when integrated with a world where politics still (often) works via conflict and tough, self-interested negotiation (Castiglione, 2009).

Still others claim that when one studies deliberation empirically, it is not – contra Habermas – arguments that play a central role; rather, arguing is an underspecified concept that is parasitic on deeper, underlying social mechanisms such as persuasion (Checkel, 2001, 2003; Johnston, 2001). The latter problem seems pervasive in the IR literature seeking to apply Habermas empirically. An all too typical pattern is to start the analysis with a reference to Habermas and his discourse theory, and then to operationalize the argument by turning to the concept of persuasion (Deitelhoff, 2009: 35, *passim*, for example).

The response to such concerns should not be a collective IR dismissal of Habermasian theory and concepts. Rather, it should be to engage in bridge building, in two different senses. From a normative-ethical-critical perspective, such gaps demand greater attention to ‘what additional ethically justifiable strategies might be available’ to augment ‘the elusive ideal speech situation’ (Price, 2008a: 202). For empirical scholars, the bridge to be built involves integrating the social theory of Habermas with research methodologies (process tracing, discourse analysis, agent-based modeling) and substantive, empirical theory (social-psychological work on persuasion; constructivist work on identity). This will allow them to offer operational arguments that, while no longer susceptible to the label ‘utopian’ (Price, 2008a: 200–3), deliver far more than standard strategic choice accounts.

Holzscheiter’s work on the rights of children in international politics is a good example of the payoff of such a move. Noting that discourse and arguing have become ‘the catchiest of catchwords’ in contemporary IR (Holscheiter, 2010: 6), she goes on to develop a theoretically plural argument combining (structural) discourse and (processual) arguing. More important, it is an operational and

empirical framework that draws upon the methodology of critical discourse analysis to capture how language – in various forms – played a key role in shaping the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child (Holzscheiter, 2010: chapters 1–3). Holzscheiter's argument is anything but utopian – largely because its decidedly operational nature leads it to depart quite significantly from the core of Habermasian theory.

In sum, with normative theory, one sees less concern with or efforts at bridge building. It is worth briefly addressing possible reasons for this state of affairs. Earlier, I argued that bridge building in this area means to integrate insights from normative and problem-solving theory. This is correct, but it actually understates what is occurring, as these two types of theory rest on differing philosophical foundations. The former is interpretive in a critical sense, while the latter has long been associated with positivism (on these distinctions, see Wight, Chapter 2 in this volume).

Bridge building then means not just developing scope conditions for when, say, rationalist or constructivist mechanisms prevail, but translating across very different philosophical commitments (Reus-Smit, 2008: 70–81). Consider again the case of Habermasian theory. It is really any surprise that his insights are not amenable to easy empirical operationalization? After all, this is Juergen Habermas, a founder of the Frankfurt School of critical social theory. Further complicating efforts at bridge building, many scholars who draw upon his insights, although they occasionally make reference to the empirical, are at heart deeply committed to a critical project that promotes progressive change in global politics (Eriksen, 2006; Sjørnsen, 2006, for example). There is nothing wrong with such engagement; however, it does severely circumscribe the possibility of or interest in bridge building.

Civil war

Civil war has become the dominant mode of organized violence in the post-Cold War

international system. Depending upon the counting rule employed, such wars have afflicted from a third to a half of all nations; this type of warfare is not just extremely common, it is persistent, with 20% of nations experiencing at least ten years of civil war since 1960 (Blattman and Miguel, 2010: 3–4; see also Walter, Chapter 26 in this volume). If one did nothing more than read newspaper coverage of such conflicts, the possibilities for theoretical pluralism would seem limitless. The casual reader would quickly discover that civil wars are: caused by the strategic calculations of manipulative political elites; the result of deeply embedded social and cultural norms; all about greed and looting; all about emotions; driven by senses of community that transcend state borders; inflamed by external actors seeking materially to weaken one side in the conflict; and dominated by rebel groups who maintain their cohesion by socializing recruits, or by terrorizing them, or through the exercise of charismatic leadership.

Despite such headlines, this is an academic subfield where bridge-building arguments are notable mainly by their absence. Leading proponents of pluralism in the abstract adopt – for reasons unclear – a position of theoretical monism when writing on civil war (compare Fearon and Wendt, 2002, with Fearon and Laitin, 2003, 2011). In addition, the constructivist turn that has opened possibilities for bridge building in other IR subfields has received little play among students of civil war.

Contemporary studies of civil war are thus an interesting case for contextualizing my arguments on pluralism. What have these scholars gained and what have they lost by being more the gladiator than the bridge builder? I begin the analysis with a brief review of this literature, and then focus on an aspect of civil war particularly relevant for IR – its transnational and international dimensions; in both instances, my concern is the presence or absence of efforts at pluralism.

By contemporary, I refer to the vibrant research program on civil conflict that emerged in the mid-1990s, after the end of the

Cold War. Scholars working in this area have researched all phases of civil wars, the various factors and actors that influence their conduct, and the role of the international community in post-conflict peace building (Blattman and Miguel, 2010; Tarrow, 2007, for overviews). The research has been progressive and cumulative, with later work building upon earlier findings, methods, or data.

For example, after realizing that early data collection efforts were cast at too aggregate a level – thus missing the key role of many sub-state variables – scholars devoted considerable effort to developing new geo-referenced datasets (Buhaug and Gates, 2002; Buhaug and Rød, 2006). In another instance, a leading scholar criticized work on civil war for its excessive reliance on quantitative methods (Sambanis, 2004); researchers responded by adding a rich qualitative, case-study component to subsequent work (Autesserre, 2010; Weinstein, 2007; see also Wood, 2003).

A book by Stathis Kalyvas (2006) is emblematic of the progressive nature of this research program. In a literature that too often measured cause via correlation and statistical techniques, Kalyvas sought to capture the causal mechanisms of violence and their (varying) roles in civil war. He theorized them at a micro-level, and then tested the argument on a wealth of data drawn from the Greek civil war. The book has rightly been praised as a major advance in our understanding of the dynamics of civil war (Tarrow, 2007).

At the same time, Kalyvas makes no pretence that his book is a work of theoretical pluralism. Instead, it is solidly anchored in a rational-choice framework, one that at best makes a weak nod to the role of social factors. As Kalyvas notes, because his ‘theory uses a rationalist baseline, its predictive failures may be a way to grasp the work of non-instrumental factors, such as norms and emotions’ (Kalyvas, 2006: 13).

In later work, Kalyvas again turns to the role of socially constructed factors in civil war, in this case, identities. Despite a passing reference to constructivism, there is no real

engagement with it, and the overall analysis is limited by its theoretical monism (Kalyvas, 2008). On the one hand, Kalyvas should be commended for making identity a variable, one that is endogenous to civil conflict – moves that had long been resisted by most others working on civil war. On the other, his failure to theorize in a plural way results in a very truncated understanding of exactly how identity is constructed.¹¹ To be fair, Kalyvas is in good company, as researchers across the civil war literature have shown little interest in developing plural frameworks to explain its dynamics (Annan et al., 2009; Blattman, 2007; Fortna, 2004; Gates, 2002; Gleditsch and Salehyan, 2006; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2007; Toft, 2007; Weinstein, 2007).

Exploring the transnational aspects of civil war is another area where one sees progress and value added. In early work, there was an inclination ‘to treat civil wars as purely domestic phenomena’ and a consequent neglect of ‘transborder linkages and processes’ (Cederman, Girardin and Gleditsch, 2009: 404). More generally, the analytic starting point was a closed polity approach, where individual states were treated as independent entities (Gleditsch, 2007; Salehyan, 2009: 8).

Cognizant of this limitation, several scholars spearheaded a move to develop more disaggregated databases, where the attributes of nonstate conflict actors are coded (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, 2006). This has allowed them to document the impact of new actors and interactions across state boundaries in a wide array of cases. Work of this sort is important, not only advancing the civil-war research program, but also – by adopting an open polity perspective – aligning itself with the bulk of IR scholarship. It has allowed scholars to offer a more nuanced picture of civil conflict, including its transnational dimensions (Salehyan, 2009).

Yet, like the broader civil-war literature, this work on its transnational dimensions shows little interest in developing theoretically plural frameworks. The social theory

on offer is rational choice, with transnationalism typically only viewed through the lens of cost/benefit calculations, bargaining games, or strategic interaction (Gleditsch, 2007; Salehyan, 2009: *passim*). Moreover, very few connections are made to the rich and varied literature on transnational relations in world politics (Cederman, Girardin, and Gleditsch, 2009; Gleditsch and Salehyan, 2006; see also Risse, Chapter 17 in this volume). This matters because it deprives the civil-war transnationalists of a ready-made roster of causal mechanisms – both instrumental and noninstrumental – for theorizing the transnational–local nexus (Bob, 2005; Cooley and Ron, 2002; Price, 1998; Shain and Barth, 2003; see also Checkel, 2013). As Cederman et al. argue, ‘additional research is needed on the details of the border-transgressing bond, especially as regards the nature of the actor-specific mechanism’ (Cederman, Girardin, Gleditsch, 2009: 433).

In sum, students of civil war have not been bridge builders. In spite of this fact, or more likely *because of it*, cumulation – theoretical and otherwise – is clearly evident, with scholars building upon each other’s insights in nontrivial ways to advance the knowledge frontier. Consider perhaps the most important actor in civil conflicts: rebel groups. If early work constructed a ‘black box’ around them, the opposite is the case today, with theorists advancing increasingly sophisticated political economy (Gates, 2002; Weinstein, 2007) or sociological accounts (Wood, 2003, 2010) to explain their behaviour.

Yet, there is a trade-off involved in these theoretically monist advances, especially at the level of explanatory richness. As seen, work on international institutions – because of a focus on bridge building – has offered increasingly rich, multi-causal explanations that advance scope conditions for the multiple roles they play in global politics. The same is not evident in studies of civil war. Above, I used examples that demonstrated what this research lost by failing to theorize

noninstrumental dynamics. In fact, a smaller group of scholars theorizes the latter, but then fails to build bridges to instrumental mechanisms.

Consider two examples. Autesserre (2009, 2010) advances an intriguing argument on how discursive frames shape the way in which international actors intervene in the wake of civil wars. While she briefly addresses instrumental and materialist variables (Autesserre, 2009: 272–75), these are treated as alternative explanations that are shown to come up short in her case. There is nothing wrong with this strategy, and it is quite the norm for the journal – *International Organization* – where she published. However, more ambitiously, she could have theorized the scope conditions for her argument, as a part of a domain-of-application bridge-building exercise. Are there locales, settings, and times when frames do not matter and instrumental dynamics come to the fore?

Elisabeth Wood examines an earlier point in civil conflict, asking what leads to group mobilization in the first place. Her argument is that norms and emotions play a central role (Wood, 2003). Thus, like Autesserre, she sees noninstrumental dynamics as key. However, also like Autesserre, she does not develop a plural theoretical argument, instead treating instrumental dynamics as alternative explanations that fail to explain fully the outcome at hand (Wood, 2003: 10–16, 243–46, Appendix).

The end result for students of civil war is theoretical progress, but it is largely *within* research paradigms, be the starting point political economy or sociology/constructivism. Their designs are meant to facilitate competitive theory testing, and not the construction of theoretically plural arguments. There is absolutely nothing wrong with this work. And, indeed, scholars like Autesserre and Wood are in good company within IR, where ‘the overwhelming majority of articles [continue to] engage in competitive theory testing’ (Maliniak et al., 2011: 448).

Summary

The answer to the counterfactual posed at the beginning of this section is thus a cautious ‘yes, contemporary IR does look different due to bridge building’. We have more nuanced and richer explanations for a number of actors and factors in global politics – from the role of international institutions and organizations, to the relation between critical-normative and substantive theory. In quite a change from the early 1990s, one now sees a good bit of productive discussion and exchange between rationalists and (conventional) constructivists (Zuern and Checkel, 2005, for example). Scholars have thus risen to the challenge posed by early proponents of bridge building; we do now have a better picture of reality.

At the same time, it is clear that developing and empirically testing theoretically plural arguments is nowhere near the norm among IR scholars. Moreover, its practice and execution over the past 15 years have created a new set of challenges and dilemmas, ones that need to be addressed in any future bridge-building efforts.

BUILDING BETTER BRIDGES

If bridge building is not to become another IR fad whose time has passed, then two issues need further attention: theoretical cumulation and meta-theory. The first points to limitations in the current practice of pluralism, while the second highlights the potential of a future, bolder form of it.

Taking theory seriously

To begin, it is useful to recall Fearon and Wendt’s rallying cry for bridge building: ‘to combine insights, cross boundaries and, if possible, synthesize specific arguments in hope of gaining more compelling answers and a better picture of reality (Fearon and

Wendt, 2002: 68). Here, theory – those ‘specific arguments’ – is clearly at the service of empirics, giving us better answers that map closer into the world as it really is. This rank ordering makes sense, given the context and disciplinary history to which bridge builders were responding.

Yet, as my review indicates, it is not clear what kind of theory results from efforts at pluralism. At best, one gets a middle-range argument, where several variables, in combination, explain an outcome. In principle, there is nothing wrong with such theory; it has long had influential advocates, from Robert Merton in the early years after World War II to Alexander George in recent decades (George, 1993). However, middle-range theory has three potential drawbacks about which bridge builders should be aware. I illuminate these by returning to work on international institutions, an area where we have seen considerable efforts at pluralism.

First, middle-range theory – of international institutions, in this case – will often be over-determined. That is, with several independent variables in play, it is not possible to isolate the causal impact of any single factor. For example, in their work on international institutions and socialization, Checkel and collaborators theorized and convincingly documented three different variables producing socializing outcomes at the state-individual levels (Checkel, 2007b). However, as critics have noted (Zuern and Checkel, 2005), they had much more difficulty parsing out the independent causal role of each one.

One way to address and minimize this problem is by emphasizing research design at early stages of a project (Johnston, 2005). This may sound like ‘Grad Seminar 101’ advice, but it needs nonetheless to be stressed. Many of those interested in bridge building are seeking to understand better a particular problem by bringing together analytic tools from different theories or paradigms. Yet, to combine theories and causal variables quite clearly puts a premium on

carefully crafted research designs. Absent this effort, there is a danger that the aspiring bridge builder will produce eclectic mush.

Second, when large parts of a research program are characterized by bridge building, the production of cumulative theoretical knowledge may be hindered (see also Bennett, 2010). Again, consider work on international institutions, where the various middle-range efforts described above are not coalescing into a broader theoretical whole. Instead, we have proliferating lists of variables and causal mechanisms. Contrast this with neoliberal institutionalism – a paradigm-based, nonplural body of theory on the same topic, international institutions (Keohane, 1984). Here, there has been theoretical advance and cumulation, as later efforts build upon earlier work – for example, by adding process and domestic politics variables while still keeping a rational-choice core (Martin, 2000; Martin and Simmons, 1998; Simmons, 1993; Wallander, 1999).¹²

Third, there is a tendency with middle-range approaches to adopt a micro-focus, where one theorizes (interacting) causal mechanisms in some temporally or spatially delimited frame (Haas, 2010: 11). The danger is then to miss the macro-level, where material power and social discourses – say – fundamentally shape and predetermine the mechanisms playing out at lower levels. This is precisely the trap into which Checkel and collaborators fell in their project developing theoretically plural, middle-range theories of European-level socialization. A global search of the resulting volume reveals virtually no hits for either ‘power’ or ‘discourse’ (Checkel, 2007b: *passim*). More generally, and as Nau has argued, middle-range theories ‘inevitably leave out “big questions” posed from different or higher levels of analysis’; they may thus ‘not get rid of “isms” [but] just hide them and make it harder to challenge prevailing ones’ (Nau, 2011: 489–90).

To be fair, prominent advocates of pluralism show growing awareness of these problems. For example, Katzenstein and Sil argue

that theory cumulation deserves more attention as a next step, following the arguments articulated in their 2010 volume on analytic eclecticism (Katzenstein and Sil, 2010b). In particular, once IR has a critical mass of plural/eclectic scholarship, the goal should be ‘to compare eclectic middle-range theories in terms of how plausible the interconnections between general mechanisms are, and how consistently the combined effects of a particular configuration of mechanisms are evident in a given context or environment’ (Katzenstein and Sil, 2011: 20). Perhaps this is sufficient. For the time being, IR should downplay theory development/cumulation and instead ‘speak to concrete issues of policy and practice’ (Katzenstein and Sil, 2010a: 412).

A different response is to embrace this turn to policy and practice, but *also* to argue that we can do better theoretically. Here, one promising possibility is typological theory, or theories about how combinations of mechanisms interact in shaping outcomes for specified populations. Compared to middle-range approaches, this form of theorizing has several advantages. It provides a way to address interactions effects and other forms of complexity (missed, for example, in Checkel, 2007b); stimulates fruitful iteration between cases, the specification of populations, and theories; and creates a framework for cumulative progress. On the latter, subsequent researchers can add or change variables and recode or add cases while still building on earlier attempts at typological theorizing on the phenomenon (Bennett and George, 2005: chapter 11).¹³

Taking meta-theory seriously

My analysis confirms Ole Waever’s (1998) finding, but now at the level of bridge building: There is no global community of IR bridge builders. Rather, with important exceptions in Canada and Germany, the debate over pluralism has largely been an American one. Perhaps this is no surprise.

For several decades, much of American IR has been organized around paradigms and ‘isms’ (Lake, 2011); it was thus primed for a debate over pluralism. Consistent with this fact, my review of efforts at theoretical pluralism has emphasized questions at the core of American social science – causation, causal mechanisms, and theory development. Put differently, the divide being bridged is theoretical – and not meta-theoretical. The latter, it would seem, is a bridge too far.

This state of affairs leads to three observations. First, it means we build bridges where we can control for epistemology. For an American IR community with a strong – and apparently growing (Maliniak et al., 2011: 455–56) – commitment to positivism, this has meant that the debate over theoretical pluralism has largely ignored possible contributions from interpretive IR. Thus, one unintended consequence of bridge building may be theoretical closure (Zehfuss, 2002: chapters 1, 6), as interpretivists are effectively placed outside the debate and conversation over pluralism. For example, in the most comprehensive stock taking of theoretical pluralism to date, none of the 15 works reviewed are interpretive (Katzenstein and Sil, 2010b: chapters 3–5). Indeed, the tools of interpretive IR – discourse analysis, narratives, textual approaches, practice, genealogy – are notable mainly for their absence.¹⁴

Second, despite the imbalance seen in this chapter, it *is* possible to build theoretically plural bridges over meta-theoretical divides. Earlier, I reviewed Price’s tentative efforts to do so in the realm of ethical/normative theory (Price, 2008a, b); here, I provide one other example. In a masterful work on Soviet and Russian foreign policy, Hopf (2002) combines interpretive textual analysis – to recover inductively Soviet/Russian identities – with case studies employing causal process tracing, to show how those identities influence the choice of foreign allies. Essentially, he operationalizes theoretical pluralism via a temporal sequencing strategy, where factors from different approaches

work together over time to explain a given domain – Soviet/Russian foreign policy in his case. Hopf is clearly ‘synthesiz[ing] specific arguments in hope of gaining more compelling answers and a better picture of reality (Fearon and Wendt, 2002: 68). Why then is a book like this the exception that proves the rule, with theoretically plural arguments that transcend the positivist-interpretive divide, so rare?’¹⁵

This leads to a third and final observation. Proponents of theoretical pluralism can no longer bracket and put aside philosophy. It is true that such efforts typically lack ‘the kinds of epistemic norms and uniform standards that enable research traditions to evaluate individual contributions and proclaim some degree of internal progress.’ And developing ‘cross-epistemic judgments’ to address this problem is surely the best way forward (Katzenstein and Sil, 2010a: 425). Yet, the magnitude of the latter task should not be underestimated, especially given the often narrow nature of graduate training in philosophy of science and methods (Bennett et al., 2003) and professional incentive structures that, at early career stages, militate against pluralism (Lohmann, 2007).

In arguing that students of IR pluralism need to return to questions of meta-theory, my purpose is not to reinforce and reify (antagonistic) philosophical positions that are in principle not bridgeable. Rather, to develop ‘cross-epistemic judgments’ requires operational knowledge of both positivism and interpretivism, and of alternative philosophical positions more amenable to the pluralist enterprise. Here, I have in mind the renewed interest in scientific realism with its mandate of epistemological pluralism (Chernoff, 2002; Wight, 2006) and efforts to revitalize a pragmatist ethos that minimizes reliance upon rigid foundational principles (Hellmann, 2003; Johnson, 2006; Katzenstein and Sil, 2008).

The point of this meta-theoretical bridge building should be twofold. First, it should articulate and justify the analytic utility of a

conceptual middle-ground between strong versions of positivism and interpretivism. Second, it should reflect on the theoretical and empirical application of this middle ground to develop *clear, operational standards* for what counts as rigorous, plural IR research that occupies it. The first issue is in fact now receiving increasing attention (Jackson, 2010; Katzenstein and Sil, 2010b: 43–48). However, to avoid charges that the move to pluralism promotes eclectic mush and an attitude of anything goes, the standards issue requires attention as well. As Hurd has noted, the move to pluralism does not resolve problems of philosophy and epistemology, but reflects a bet that they can – temporally – be put aside. But this very same bet ‘carries the obligation to eventually return to these questions and reflect on what the research says about them’ (Hurd, 2010: 182).

At a practical level, this exercise will not be easy and will require familiarity with and training in theories and methods from diverse philosophical traditions. Yet, the payoff – that ‘better picture of reality’ – would be high. It would reinvigorate efforts at pluralism, spurring IR scholars to link interpretive practice and causal process in security policy (Pouliot, 2010); to theorize how ethnography and causality can be linked to produce better theories of conflict and power (Wood, 2003; Schatz, 2009); to connect process tracing, discourse analysis, and counterfactuals through common evaluative criteria (Lupovici, 2009); and more generally to explore the interface between interpretive and positivist IR (Hopf, 2007).

The result would be a literature on theoretical pluralism both richer and more challenging to execute – one deeply indebted to the pioneering efforts of the scholars reviewed above. For despite the many critical observations in this chapter, it is thanks to them that paradigm wars, gladiator approaches, and dialogues of the deaf are far less dominant forces in the discipline. And that is very good news indeed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For helpful comments on earlier versions, I thank Nicole Jackson, Andrew Mack, Thomas Risse, Beth Simmons, Martha Snodgrass, Srdjan Vucetic, and – especially – Walter Carlsnaes.

NOTES

1 I use these two terms interchangeably in what follows.

2 Thanks to Michael Barnett for suggesting the gladiator metaphor.

3 Personal Communication, Peter Katzenstein, June 2010.

4 Decidedly but not entirely. Several German IR scholars – Gunther Hellmann, Harald Mueller and Thomas Risse – have played important roles in the debate over pluralism.

5 Personal Communication, Emanuel Adler, Co-Editor, *International Organization*, June 2010. Checkel, 2007b was originally published as a special issue of *International Organization* 59 (4).

6 For a list of the journals, see Maliniak, *et al*, 2011: 441.

7 These TRIPS numbers are especially insightful in my case, as they operationalize theoretical pluralism in the same manner as this chapter. See below.

8 Thanks to Walter Carlsnaes and Andy Mack for discussions on these points.

9 Synthesis is the word used by the TRIPS team. For reasons noted earlier, its use in this particular context is unfortunate.

10 Among other achievements, Simmons’ book was awarded the 2010 Stein Rokkan Prize for Comparative Social Science Research of the International Social Science Council.

11 For excellent and pluralist overviews of the multiple ways identity can be theorized, see Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston, McDermott, 2009; and – specifically in the context of civil war – Wood, 2008.

12 Of course, the same trade-off as noted earlier is at work here. The neoliberal institutionalists can claim theoretical advance and cumulation, but it is the bridge builders who have captured causal complexity.

13 Bennett, 2013, applies these insights to transnationalized civil war, demonstrating that typological theorizing is one way to promote cumulation, even in the hard case of midrange, theoretically plural accounts.

14 I am not criticizing Katzenstein and Sil for their choice of cases. Rather, it simply demonstrates

that bridge building – to date – has largely been a positivist-inspired enterprise.

15 I know of only two other works advancing theoretically plural arguments that are also meta-theoretically plural – and one is again by Hopf (2012). See also Holzscheiter, 2010.

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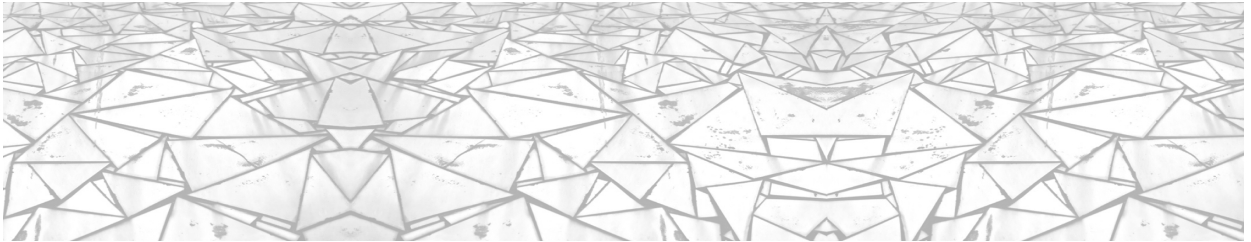
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PART TWO

Structures and Processes of International Relations



State, Sovereignty, and Territory

Thomas J. Biersteker

The concepts of state, sovereignty, and territory are central to the study and practice of international relations (IR). For generations of scholars, the concept of the state has dominated theoretical debates and defined the principal subject and unit of analysis in international politics (Mearsheimer, 2001; Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1979). The construct of sovereignty has provided one of the central bases for order in IR (Hinsley, 1986), and disputes over territory have figured in virtually every major interstate war of the last two centuries (Agnew, 1998; Mackinder, 1904).

However, forms of state, meanings of sovereignty, and conceptions of territoriality are neither fixed nor constant across time and place. The absolutist states of the seventeenth century are profoundly different from the liberal states of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The meaning of the sovereignty of states that prevailed prior to the French Revolution bears only a limited resemblance to assertions of sovereignty today. The formidably armed territorial boundaries that separated the major states of Europe throughout the first half of the twentieth century were fundamentally redefined within the European Union by the beginning of the twenty-first century.

One of the most important analytical and conceptual challenges for scholars of IR is to identify different meanings of state, sovereignty, and territory, and to understand their origins, comprehend their changes of meaning, and analyze their interrelationships. The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate important changes of meaning of these central concepts over the course of the last century and to suggest some ways of thinking about them.

The concepts of state, sovereignty, and territory are each socially constructed. They are defined, and redefined, by the rules, actions, and practices of different agents, including in the case of states, by themselves. An examination of the contestation of different practices, resistances, rules, norms, legal challenges, and public justifications provides important insights into the changing composition and definitions of state, sovereignty, and territoriality. It is for this reason that this review has a decidedly constructivist orientation.

State and sovereignty are mutually constitutive concepts. As F.H. Hinsley observed, "In a word, the origin and history of the concept of sovereignty are closely linked with the nature, the origin and the history of the

state” (Hinsley, 1986: 2). States define the meaning of sovereignty through their engagement in practices of mutual recognition, practices that define both themselves and each other. At the same time, the mutual recognition of claims of sovereignty is an important element in the definition of the state itself (although there is a school of thought within international law that maintains that states can exist without formal recognition by other states) (Shaw, 1997: 146–7). Both the concepts of state and sovereignty also have territorial conceptions associated with them. The idealized “Westphalian state” has distinct boundaries, and until recently, its ideal of sovereignty emphasized the right of nonintervention and the inviolability of borders.

The modern state and sovereignty have been co-determining since their common origins as concepts and associated practices in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While they have always been closely associated, however, they have not remained constant or been mutually constitutive in the same ways over time (Bartelson, 1995). Different forms of state have constituted different meanings of sovereignty and been associated with different conceptions of territoriality over time and across place.

Broad generalizations and timeless categorizations of forms of state, types of sovereignty, and concepts of territory are highly problematic. Thus, it is important to ground – to historicize and to contextualize – this discussion with consideration of different twentieth and twenty-first-century forms of state, sovereignty, and territory. It is easy to demonstrate changes of meaning over a broad span of time, contrasting the sixteenth-century absolutist state with the late twentieth-century liberal state, for example. However, it is also important to illustrate changes of meaning over a more limited time span. This is a harder test of the claim that our core concepts change in their meaning. If we can see significant changes of meaning over the course of a single century, it should sensitize us further to the importance of historicizing and contextualizing the concepts over longer time periods.

This characterization of changes in meaning over the course of the last century is being made for illustrative purposes. There is no unitary directionality to the changes described in the next sections or any rejection of the possibility of dramatic reversals, change, or transformation. Indeed, there was evidence during the first decade of the twenty-first century of states forcefully reasserting elements of their sovereignty and simultaneously accepting the idea that responsibilities accompany the claims of rights traditionally associated with sovereignty. By illustrating qualitative changes in meaning of core concepts across time and place, we are in a better position to comprehend and apply them.

HISTORICIZING AND CONTEXTUALIZING STATE, SOVEREIGNTY, AND TERRITORIALITY

Forms of state

It is common for scholars and practitioners of IR to employ concepts of state (or to invoke lessons from the history of state practices) as if the term described a fixed and unchanging institutional phenomenon. This tendency was especially evident during the mid-twentieth century, when scholars first began to articulate the need for “a scientific approach” to the subject (Carr, 1939; Morgenthau, 1948), a movement that was developed further by the behavioral scientific “revolution” that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s (Kaplan, 1962; Singer, 1961). Neorealists writing in the 1970s and 1980s are commonly associated with broadly positivistic assertions about states and about state behavior across time and place (Gilpin, 1981; Waltz, 1979). For Kenneth Waltz, the enduring anarchic character of international politics accounts for the “striking sameness” in the quality of international life over the millennia (Waltz, 1979: 53). While for Robert Gilpin, states “throughout history” have had as a principal

objective “the conquest of territory in order to advance economic, security, and other interests” (Gilpin, 1981: 23).

The tendency to treat states as fundamentally similar units across time and place is by no means restricted to neorealist analyses. It is also found among liberal institutionalists (Keohane, 1984), quantitative analysts of war and conflict data (Gleditsch, 2008), and even among some constructivists (Wendt, 1999: 8–9). Not every scholar consistently employs the word “state” to describe the core units of IR. Although he is commonly associated with state centrism, Hans Morgenthau wrote more about “nations” than about “states” in his classic text *Politics Among Nations*. Nevertheless, the Weberian roots of his core unit of analysis – the state – are both clearly recognizable and firmly grounded in Morgenthau’s classic work (Smith, 1986: 15–16).

While scholars of international relations commonly recognize the presence of a great variety of state forms over time, an explicit analysis of the variation and its implications rarely figures prominently in their theories or empirical research. The lure of positivist generalization either proves too seductive, or the complexity of differentiation turns out to be too difficult.

The literature on the nature of the state typically distinguishes between its origins and absolutist forms in the sixteenth century (Bodin, [1576] 1962; Hobbes, [1651] 1958; Machiavelli, 1965) and variation in its modern forms. This includes variations from the era of popular sovereignty to the nineteenth-century liberal state, the twentieth-century totalitarian state, and what some have described as the late twentieth-century “post modern” state (Held, 1983). Perry Anderson (1974) has chronicled the origins and functions of the absolutist state, while Charles Tilly (1975), Anthony Giddens (1985), and Michael Mann (1988) have each described the role of war in making the modern state. Douglass North (1981) emphasized the early state’s critical role in establishment and enforcement of property rights, central to the development of capitalism.

The relationship between the absolutist state and the functioning of the classical European balance of power system has also been examined extensively in the literature (Claude, 1989; Holsti, 1992; Little, 1989; Schroeder, 1989). The absolutist nature of the state in the sixteenth and seventeenth century was highly correlated with the diplomatic practices of the period, especially the ease with which diplomats and heads of state were able to settle disputes with the division, redivision, and allocation of territory. This absolutist residue is a characteristic of the balance of power system that has troubled democratic leaders of the liberal state throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. Woodrow Wilson abhorred the political immorality of the balance of power system that he held responsible for the origins of the First World War and therefore preferred open diplomacy to secrecy, and self-determination over the “unconscionable bartering of helpless and innocent peoples” (Wilson, 1918; see also Brailsford, 1916). The tension between the illiberal practices of balance of power diplomacy and the proclivities of democratic liberal states has persisted throughout the twentieth century (Craig and George, 1995).

The definition of the modern state has generated extensive scholarly and political debate. Max Weber’s conception of the state as an institution that possesses a monopoly over the legitimate means of coercion and the ability to extract tax revenues in a given territorial space has been widely utilized throughout the scholarship of IR, either explicitly or implicitly (Weber, 1949). The Weberian conception of the state has been particularly influential on political realism (Smith, 1986). Indeed, Weber’s construct of the state is central to all of the works of the classical, postwar realists, from E.H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau, to John Herz, Reinhold Niebuhr and Henry Kissinger.

Alternatives to Weberian conceptions of the state were provided by scholars working within the Marxist tradition. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels anticipated the eventual

withering away of the state, and in some of their early work the state is characterized as little more than the executive committee of the ruling class, with no autonomous role independent of the interests of the bourgeoisie (Marx and Engels, [1848] 1978).

There is enough ambiguity in the broader corpus of Marx's early work to ensure the emergence of other interpretations of the state within the Marxist tradition. Nicos Poulantzas argued that the state could theoretically work against the ruling class, if it served the broader purpose of preserving capitalism as a system (Poulantzas, 1975). Peter Evans and many Latin American dependentistas argued that the state could, in some instances, act relatively independently of dominant social forces and serve its own material interests (Evans, 1979; Cardoso and Faletto, 1979) – a point shared by statist scholarship from outside the Marxist tradition (Evans et al., 1985; Wade, 1987). There have been significantly different conceptions of the state construct over time to render problematic the tendency within much of IR to assume the constancy of the state as a core analytical unit across time and space.

Discussions of the modern state sometimes conflate the concepts of state, nation, and nation-state. The three are analytically separable, and the chapter by Lars-Erik Cederman in this volume explores them at some length. While there is no unanimity on the definition of the state, both the Weberian and Marxist conceptions of the state regard it as a set of institutions and relationships of governance closely connected to, but analytically distinct from, society. Nations consist of peoples, typically with a shared language, history, memory, identity, and aspirations, who might find themselves contained within states, divided between them, or granted self-determination over their own affairs in the form of the nation-state. The coincidence of nation and state in the form of the nation-state has more often than not proved to be an ephemeral phenomenon, however, as many European countries have recently discovered (Koslowski, 2000).

It is one thing to establish changes in the form, meaning, and conceptualization of the state over time, but another to establish their implications for our analysis of IR. The basic affinities between the absolutist state and the operation of the classical European balance of power system have already been suggested. Martin Wight identified relationships between the emergence of other forms of state – revolutionary, democratic state forms – and the international systems that developed in later periods (Wight, 1977). Mlada Bukovansky illustrated how the French and American revolutions produced new forms of state that challenged the dynastic principles that governed the international system during the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries (Bukovansky, 1997, 1999).

Changes in the meaning of the modern state and the modern states system are evident when contrasted with their counterparts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Hall, 1999). We can also illustrate changes in the meaning of states with more contemporary illustrations drawn exclusively from the twentieth and early twenty-first century. The great powers and their imitators were more than mere states at the beginning of the twentieth century: they were empires. It was not until the middle of the twentieth century that the nation-state was truly globalized as an idealized, universal form of territorial political organization, following decolonization (Reus-Smit, 2011). By the century's end, there was evidence of both "failed" states in Africa and the emergence of a distinctly different kind of polity in Europe. Thus, while states have remained central to international politics throughout the course of the twentieth century (as we are reminded in interminable scholarly debates about the centrality or diminishing salience of the state in international affairs), the meaning of "state" has not remained fixed in either time or place.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, empires were the "natural" state form of political organization for the great powers. The British, French, Austro-Hungarian,

Ottoman, and Russian empires governed most of the world, while Germany, Japan, and the United States aspired to empires of their own. According to J.A. Hobson, it was an era “of competitive forms of imperialism” (Hobson, 1902). World maps reflected empires as the principal units in territorial terms, and the language of geopolitics and imperialism tended to take the imperial state for granted. Sir Halford Mackinder worried in 1904 that if Russia, the preeminent land power, were to ally with Germany, “the empire of the world would then be in sight” (Mackinder, 1904: 436). Advocates of imperial expansion, from Jules Ferry in France to Cecil Rhodes in England, asserted the economic, political, and strategic benefits of imperialism, along with the moral imperative of assuming “the selfless burden of empire” (Kipling, 1903). Imperial expansion was natural and unproblematic, and primacy was given to the physical occupation and possession of territory. The “hierarchy of civilizations” ensured that the world was very much a European world, and there was widespread belief in the benefits to be derived from the historically progressive aggregation of political units, from nations to states to empires. Adam Watson described this in terms of “the worldwide expansion of European international society” (Watson, 1992).

The primacy of the nation-state form is most strikingly apparent during the middle decades of the twentieth century, from the 1930s through the 1970s. The “welfare state,” the “territorial state,” the “national security state,” and the “developmental state” are all prominent constructs of the middle part of the century. Decolonization following the Second World War distributed the nation-state form throughout the territories of the former empires. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Sir Halford Mackinder commented on the significance of the end of the age of exploration that had begun with Columbus and the emergence of a period where “there is scarcely a region left for pegging out a claim of ownership” (Mackinder, 1904: 421). Most of this remaining territory

was claimed by empires, a fact that prompted Lenin to observe that this would inevitably lead to conflict over the division and redivision of territory, since wars between rising and declining capitalist imperial powers would recur (Lenin, 1916, 1939). By the middle of the twentieth century, virtually all the empires were on the decline, and the world was increasingly divided into nation-states. Where new states contained more than one nation, “nation-building” efforts became the new challenge (Bendix, 1964).

One of the best ways to illustrate the change in the meaning of the state in the twentieth century is to examine changing norms about the legitimate role of the state in the economy and in the provision of security. Between the First and the Second World Wars, there was a genuine contestation between radically different forms of the state, from the welfare-nationalist state to the alternatives of the fascist state and the socialist state (Cox, 1987). Each of these three different state forms entailed substantial increases in the degree of the state’s intervention in the economy (Gerschenkron, 1962; Polanyi, 1957), a development decried at the time by some (Hayek, 1944). It was not until the concluding decades of the twentieth century that there were significant initiatives to reverse the degree of state economic intervention in the economy (Biersteker, 1995).

The struggle between different state forms, resulting in the defeat of fascism during the Second World War, and subsequently the defeat of socialism at the end of the Cold War, led to substantial increases in the security apparatus of the twentieth-century nation-state, what Lasswell termed “the garrison state” (Lasswell, 1941). These increases have proved more resilient than increases in state economic intervention, particularly in much of the developing world. The imitative behavior of the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War led to replications of each other’s tactics, behavior, and strategies, although in the case of the United States it was tempered by its anti-statist tradition (Friedberg, 2000). Toward the end of the

Cold War, both the United States and the Soviet Union were spending significant amounts on the maintenance of the national security apparatus of the state. The United States continued this tendency in the post Cold War “unipolar moment.”

Another indication of the predominance of the nation-state form at the middle of the twentieth century is contained in the Charter of the United Nations. The UN Charter is founded on the principle of nonintervention in the affairs of member nation-states, and its goal is terminating interstate aggression. The United Nations has, since its founding in 1945, been strongly associated with asserting the rights and defending the concerns of its member states. It is a profoundly statist institution.

Although the nation-state form was universalized during the second half of the twentieth century, not every observer viewed this development as benign. The intense nationalism associated with fascism and the origins of the Second World War also contributed to a search for institutions that would transcend the nation-state construct, from an interest in regional and functional integration (Deutsch et al., 1957; Haas, 1958, Mitrany, 1948) to the expansion of global institutions more generally (Ruggie, 1993a).

By the end of the twentieth century, the intense statism associated with its middle decades began to decline. There were substantial reductions in the degree and nature of state intervention in the economy, beginning in the late 1970s. By the early 1990s, this transformation was virtually universalized, as the global expansion of capitalism was achieved under the banner of “economic reform” and the emergence of the neoliberal state. The national security state was increasingly challenged by the transparency and speed of the Internet and the spread of communications media such as mobile phones, but the state was doing its best to defend itself by enhancing its surveillance capacity, tendencies that accelerated rapidly after 9/11 (Bigo, 2008). It was already apparent that governance was becoming increasingly

complex by the end of the twentieth century (Held, 1995).

Globalization, the spread of new technologies, and the challenges they both create have contributed to an extended debate about the continued salience of the state as the primary institutional form in contemporary global governance. Rosenau and Czempiel posed an important challenge to the primacy of the state in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, in their pioneering volume on “governance without government” (Rosenau and Czempiel, 1992). Others explored the emergence of private, nonstate authority, first in the realm of the economy (Cutler, Hauffler, and Porter, 1999) and later in international security (Hall and Biersteker, 2002). An important corrective was provided by scholars drawing on Foucault’s concept of governmentality (Foucault, 1978, 1991), who argued that rather than challenge or displace the state, nonstate actors both shape and perform governmental tasks, sometimes as “allies” of the state (Sending and Neumann, 2006). These insights have been developed further with the application of “security assemblages” to the emerging realm of private security providers in Africa (Abrahamson and Williams, 2009). The debate is far from over, as Joseph provides another important qualification, arguing that governmentality itself needs to be contextualized and “can only usefully be applied to those areas that might be characterized as having an advanced form of liberalism” (Joseph, 2010: 224).

At the same time, the failure of the nation and state-building projects of the postcolonial era was becoming increasingly apparent in many parts of Africa by century’s end. The considerable promise of postcolonial development and nation building was replaced by recurring crises of development and the specter of state incapacity. The virtual collapse of functioning states in some places on the globe (not just in Africa) was increasingly equated with a sense that the developing world itself was becoming a source of contemporary global security challenges – be they the spread of disease, transnational

crime, piracy, or terrorism. To respond to the challenge, peace building became the new priority. Given the universalization of the state as form, one response to contemporary security challenges was to strengthen state capacity and/or (re)build states to address them. The United Nations created a peace-building architecture in 2005 to facilitate the process (Jenkins, 2010). What began as an enormous project of liberal social engineering (Paris, 2004) has subsequently been scaled back to the more modest goal of “good enough” governance (Barnett, 2006) within the form of the modern state.

While state building was the priority for the developing world, Europe, the birthplace of the nation-state, was moving away from the sharply delineated nation-state form, in the direction of a polity whose definition remains ambiguously situated between a collection of nation-states and a single super-state (Biersteker, 1999; Murphy, 1996; Wallace, 1983). Complex forms of multi-layered governance have clearly emerged in the European Union (Hooghe and Marks, 2001), where an increasing number of decisions are being made authoritatively at the Community level, rather than at the level of individual European states (Schmitter, 1996).

In terms of forms of state, regionalism has made a strong resurgence in recent years, with the publication of important works on pluralistic security communities (Adler and Barnett, 1998), regional security complexes (Buzan and Waever, 2003), and regional organizations (Fawcett and Hurrell, 1995). As a functioning political form, however, Europe remains the exception in the development of a regional form of state. More striking is theoretical exploration of the possibility of the formation of a state at the global level (Cabrera, 2010). Alex Wendt has theorized about the inevitability of a world state (Wendt 2003), Dani Rodrik has speculated about the need for federal global government to realize fully the benefits of global economic integration (Rodrik, 2000), while Daniel Deudney has emphasized the growing lethality of

weapons of mass destruction and the imperative of exploring republican forms of governance at the global level (Deudney, 2007). While there is no consensus on a label for the modal state form at the beginning of the twenty-first century, candidates range from the neoliberal or postmodern state to the defective (“states at risk”), collapsing or “failed” state.

Up to this point, most of the discussion about different forms of state has focused on its change of meaning over time. The form of the state has changed significantly across the centuries. However, not only does the form of the state change over time, but also with location. The salience, importance, and meaning of state economic intervention and the nature of the relationship between state and society are profoundly different in different places on the globe at the same point in time. The differences are most apparent when we compare the salience of the state in contemporary Western Europe with its salience throughout most of the developing world. The contrasts between the state in Europe and in most of Asia are equally striking, regardless of level of development. These contextual differences have implications for how we understand the nature of state economic intervention and the nature of the relationship between state and society (Katzenstein, 1978).

In the final analysis, why should differences between twentieth-century forms of state – between the imperial state and the nation-state, for example – be of interest to students of IR? State forms matter, because they provide a basis for political identity, around which people mobilize, identify, create justifications for killing others, and commit their lives. The defense of empire is far more abstract and qualitatively different from the defense of the nation-state. State forms also play a critical role in the construction of the culture of IR. During the era of empires, balance of power geopolitics and competitive imperialisms were significantly different from the culture of IR during the high point of the nation-state, with its

imperfect and inconsistent norms of nonintervention and multilateralism. Different state forms can also define the likelihood of international conflict. This is especially the case, if advocates of the democratic peace hypothesis are correct about their assessment of the probability of conflict among democratic states (Russett and Oneal, 2001).

It may often seem convenient to ignore differences in state form across time and place, in an effort to increase the number of historical cases from which to generalize about IR. However, gains in terms of increased sample size may not justify losses in terms of the misunderstanding of important international phenomena and qualitative transformational change, a point to which we will return in the conclusion of this chapter.

States of sovereignty

Stephen Krasner has characterized sovereignty as “organized hypocrisy” (Krasner, 1999: 42). Krasner argues that although the institution of sovereignty affirms the principle of nonintervention in the affairs of other states, intervention has always been a feature of international affairs. Organized hypocrisy refers to a stable game-theoretic solution to the contradictory practice of asserting the inviolability of territorial boundaries and intervening in the affairs of others. According to Krasner, the informal understanding that states are sovereign, yet subject to constant intervention, is best characterized as organized hypocrisy.

Krasner is basically correct, as far as he goes with his analysis. In constructivist terms, the practices of states serve to define the operational meaning of sovereignty, and these practices are by no means consistent. States are hypocritical and have always intervened in each other’s affairs. The ideal of sovereign nonintervention has always been just that: an ideal. As Daniel Deudney has suggested, “although the Westphalian system of authority and power has been hegemonic in modern world politics, it has not been universal” (Deudney, 1996: 191).

The principal limitation with Krasner’s conceptualization of sovereignty is that it is essentially a static one. It does not help us comprehend the possibility of change in the meaning of sovereignty, and it does not suggest (or even allow for) a typology of the different forms and meanings of sovereignty over time and across place. Like the tendency to treat states as fundamentally like units, Krasner’s conceptualization of sovereignty is essentially fixed and unchanging.

In this sense, it is similar to other classic twentieth-century works on sovereignty. For Carl Schmitt, “[S]overeign is he who decides the exception” (Schmitt, 1985: 5). For F.H. Hinsley, sovereignty is “the idea that there is a final and absolute political authority in the political community” and that “no final and absolute authority exists elsewhere” (Hinsley, 1986: 26). For Alan James, sovereignty is defined in terms of constitutional independence, an authority derived from a state’s constitution, “which exists in its own right” (James, 1986: 40) and is subordinate to none. While each of these works defines the essence of the concept of sovereignty, like Krasner, they concentrate on its transcendent characteristics rather than its variation in form and change in meaning across time and space. We need a framework to help us understand this change, something developed later in this chapter.

Like the discussion of changing forms of state, it is possible to illustrate changing states of sovereignty across time and place. While it would be easier to demonstrate the changes by contrasting the sovereignty of the absolutist state with that of the contemporary state, important, qualitative transformations in the operational meaning of state sovereignty can be observed over the past century. One of the best ways to track important changes in the meaning of sovereignty is by examining the criteria articulated by states when they decide to recognize other states as sovereign. Practices of recognition show important variation over the course of the twentieth century.

To be recognized as a sovereign state, effective control over territorial space is

usually a prerequisite. Article I of the 1933 Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States identifies a defined territory, along with a permanent population, government, and a capacity to enter into relations with other states as minimal criteria for statehood under international law (Shaw, 1997: 140). Although there can be important differences in the criteria for recognition across different states, a focus on changes in US recognition criteria will be used to illustrate important changes in the meaning of sovereignty over time.

When he was first confronted with the question of the new republic's criteria for the recognition of another state, Thomas Jefferson, the first American Secretary of State, employed a conception of legitimacy borrowed from the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In response to an inquiry from the American Minister to Paris in 1792 about recognition during the course of the French Revolution, Jefferson wrote: "It accords with our principles to acknowledge any Government to be rightful which is formed by the will of the nation, substantially declared" (Hackworth, 1931: 120). In practice, the particular form of governance did not matter, and the United States recognized both monarchies and fledgling republican democracies. The crucial point for recognition purposes was that the state should have effective control over territory and that it be accorded some form of popular legitimacy reflecting the will of the people.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, an additional criterion for recognition was added to the list. States were recognized if they were also capable of fulfilling their international commitments and obligations, especially with regard to property rights. This criterion was applied to Colombia in 1900, to Honduras and the Dominican Republic in 1903 and to Haiti in 1911 (Hackworth, 1931: 122–3). The addition of this criterion is an important illustration of American convergence with established European criteria and is indicative of changing concerns once the United States began to

emerge as a major power, with substantial economic interests of its own. The concern with a state's ability to fulfill international commitments and obligations was especially prominent in the 1920s debate over the recognition of the revolutionary regime that had assumed control in Russia. The revolutionary ideology of the new regime was not viewed as consistent with the standards of the major powers of the time and is one of the reasons it took the United States until the 1930s to recognize the Soviet Union.

During the 1920s, the United States experimented with the idea of adding the criterion of democratic governance (and rejection of nonconstitutional changes of regime), at least with regard to five Central American states. This principle was not generalized to the rest of the world, however, until the end of the twentieth century. During the immediate post-Second World War period, the United States generally followed the lead of former European colonial powers when it came to recognizing the many new states formed out of the process of decolonization. During the Cold War, recognition became a standard tool of superpower competition. A semblance of territorial control, fulfillment of international obligations (especially economic contracts) and Cold War alignment mattered more than the presence of a democratic regime when it came to recognition of the Congo, South Korea, and South Vietnam.

By the end of the twentieth century, particularly after the Cold War, democratic governance and the treatment of minority populations became general prerequisites for state recognition. In its 1991 declaration on "Guidelines on the Recognition of New States in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union," the European Community noted that recognition required commitments with regard to the rule of law, democracy, and human rights, as well as guarantees for the rights of ethnic minorities (Shaw, 1997: 301). Similar ideas were adopted by the United States in the "new world order" proclamations of the George H.W. Bush administration and by the rhetorical and diplomatic

practices of the Clinton administration during the 1990s. The George W. Bush administration pursued the ideas with even greater vigor, particularly in its fateful efforts to reconfigure the Middle East during the first decade of the twenty-first century. When Croatia and Bosnia were first recognized in 1991, neither possessed firm territorial control, but they agreed to intrusive internal institutional arrangements that were not required of countries in the middle of the century.

Changes in recognition criteria have been, and will continue to be, contested and challenged by states. It is best to think of the meaning of sovereignty in terms of a continual contestation of practices, with some actors pushing the boundaries of legitimate practice, and others resisting at every point. The important point here is that the norms of recognition have changed significantly over time, again, even over the course of a single century. Whether they are moving in one particular direction is less important than the fact that they are not fixed in meaning in time and place. There is, however, growing evidence that the international community has been increasingly intruding into areas once considered to be essentially under the domestic jurisdiction of states (the choice of political form, the extension of rights, and the treatment of minorities). There is also evidence of an increase in the number of criteria required for recognition over time.

Elements of the territorial state are basic to recognition: from territorial control, to Weberian ideas about legitimate means of coercion and an ability to extract resources. This is a very limited, "territorial" form of sovereignty. Alliance relationships were critical during the Cold War and often dominated other criteria for recognition during the highly statist middle of the twentieth century. The establishment of democratic forms has only recently become a norm for recognition, and has been reinforced by the UN's considerable efforts at peace building and oversight of the political process in the southern Sudan. The reasons for this are many, but a

democratic polity reinforces the likelihood that the state is an expression of the general will, something that could reinforce adherence to international commitments. Finally, the recent relaxation of the requirement of firm territorial control in some instances suggests a potentially significant departure from historical practices of recognition (as well as a new means of external intervention), should it be sustained. Thus, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, sovereignty appeared to be increasingly "contingent."

When we examine the history of changes in recognition criteria over the past century, there is evidence of an increase of intrusion into what was previously considered the domestic affairs of states. The path has been uneven, inconsistent, resisted, and occasionally reversed. Neither Russia nor China has shown much interest in promoting democratic polities. Nevertheless, not only has there been an important qualitative change in the operational meaning of sovereignty over time (as indicated by changing recognition criteria), but there has also been a directionality to that change.

Among the most significant developments associated with the changing meaning of state sovereignty in recent years is the emergence of the idea of "responsibility to protect" (R2P). The conception of sovereignty that prevailed during the statist period in the middle decades of the twentieth century focused almost exclusively on the rights of state sovereignty – the right to nonintervention, the right to noninterference in domestic affairs (defined rather broadly), the right to nationalization and expropriation, the right to permanent sovereignty over natural resources, and the right to development. There was very little attention given to the responsibilities associated with those rights. The idea of responsibility to protect has African origins, in some of the pioneering work of Francis Deng, who first brought international attention to the plight of internally displaced persons, or IDPs (Cohen and Deng, 1998). Because they did not cross international boundaries, IDPs had no rights or standing in

international law as refugees and could not benefit from the conventions, norms, or international institutions associated with refugee protection. This left a great many people at risk, and given the post-Cold War increase in the number of intrastate, as opposed to interstate, wars and conflicts, a majority of those in need of external assistance in humanitarian crises globally were IDPs. They were individuals who were not protected by their own states and for whom the international community had no legal basis to intervene. The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty addressed the issue of under what conditions international intervention might be justified in cases of humanitarian crisis and titled its report *The Responsibility to Protect* (ICISS, 2001).

In a major departure from its historical resistance to external intervention, the African Union adopted provisions that endorsed the concept of responsibility to protect (R2P) early in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Not long thereafter, following up on the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, the United Nations adopted the idea in its World Summit Outcome Document in 2005, endorsed by both the UN General Assembly and the Security Council. R2P remains a contested norm in practice (Badescu and Weiss, 2010), but it has been invoked and acted upon in immediate post-conflict and preventive actions in Kenya in 2009 and 2010 and in Libya in 2011. The idea of R2P is not a radical departure from the history and practice of sovereignty. As Glanville argues, sovereign authority has entailed evolving responsibilities since it was first articulated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Glanville, 2011). The reason it seems to be such a radical departure is because it stands in stark contrast to the particular meaning of sovereignty articulated and practiced in the middle decades of the twentieth century.

Similar to change in forms of state, change in states of sovereignty is not restricted to change over time. There are also important differences in the operational meaning of

sovereignty in different places on the globe at the same moment in time. It is no accident that those who have historically borne the brunt of external intervention in the developing world have been among the most ardent defenders of statist conceptions of sovereignty, the inviolability of state borders, and the importance of the principle of nonintervention (Sha, 1995). China and Russia are reluctant to accept the idea that a democratic regime or claims for self-determination are important criteria for state recognition. In the contemporary period of highly contingent sovereignty, only the remaining superpower, the United States, has the capability to resist most forms of external restraint and assert an unconditioned form of sovereignty with any degree of credibility, although this too may be waning, given the emergence of other powers (not to mention new forms of power) at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Changing states of sovereignty have important implications for IR. Because the norms of sovereign recognition determine who are allowed to be players in international affairs, changes in these norms have important implications for the nature of the states themselves. It is no longer sufficient just to maintain territorial control and fulfill international obligations. To be recognized as a sovereign state, one increasingly has to possess democratic institutions (or a plan to consolidate them). Indeed, this may even be more important than territorial control in some instances. This changes the very definition of what it means to be sovereign.

Changes in the form of sovereignty also have significance for justifications for external intervention. Just as discursive justifications serve to define the meaning of sovereignty (Weber, 1995), so too do different forms of sovereignty enable (or undermine) different justifications for intervention. During the middle part of the twentieth century, the nature of the polity in control of territory generally did not matter, and non-democratic states were not only recognized as legitimate, but were also often protected by the institution of sovereignty. At the

beginning of the twenty-first century, the maintenance of democratic institutions, the defense of universal human rights, or failures in the responsibility to protect could be used to justify external intervention.

Finally, if the form of highly contingent sovereignty prevalent at the beginning of the twenty-first century remains in place for an extended period, along with the operational practices of recognition associated with it, there could be important systemic implications. If the advocates of the democratic peace hypothesis are correct, the prevailing practices of recognition and peace building could serve to extend the democratic form of state, hence transforming the nature of international politics and the likelihood of international conflict itself.

Conceptions of territory

Border changes are neither new nor particularly out of the ordinary. From the age of the absolutist states through the Napoleonic wars of the early nineteenth century, the boundaries defining the great powers have experienced dramatic changes (Kratochwil, 1986; Sahlins, 1989). The same is true if we glance at any map of Europe over the course of the twentieth century. We can readily see tangible evidence of the emergence and disappearance of states over the course of the century. The decade of the 1990s alone witnessed the breakup of the former Soviet Union, the former Yugoslavia, the division of the former Czechoslovakia, and the unification of Germany. The first decades of the twenty-first century have seen the emergence of new states and the relatively peaceful divisions of existing ones in Africa and Europe. However, like forms of state and states of sovereignty, the salience of territory and the meaning of “the border” that separates territories are neither fixed nor constant across time and place. There are important variations both in the salience of physical territorial possession and in the degree of permeability of borders, the functions of

borders (Kratochwil, 1986), or what some have described as the degree of “hardness” or “softness” of boundaries (Andreas and Biersteker, 2003; Mostov, 2000).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was an obsession with physical possession and control of territory, along with generally unchallenged assumptions about the benefits to be derived from that control. The nineteenth-century scholar of geopolitics Friedrich Ratzel developed the concept of the organic theory of the state, “which treated states as competitive territorial entities vying with one another for control over parts of the earth’s surface” (Murphy, 2001: 2). Control over physical territorial space was vital for Sir Halford Mackinder (Mackinder, 1904), while for Captain A.T. Mahan, it was dominion of the seas that produced control of distant countries, the possession of colonies, and (dependent on these colonies) the potential for an increase of wealth. According to Mahan, even in instances where land forces were outnumbered, as was the case with the English forces in India during the eighteenth century, “the mysterious power ... was not in this or that man, king or statesman, but in that control of the sea which the French government knew forbade the hope of maintaining that distant dependency against the fleets of England” (Mahan, 1895: 278).

Assumptions about the virtues and benefits of territorial acquisition predominated when Norman Angell forcefully challenged them in 1910, with the publication of the first edition of *The Great Illusion*. Angell described how widespread these views were at the turn of the century in both Britain and Germany, and he defined the “great illusion” as the idea that territorial acquisition would provide a basis for prosperity and affluence (Angell, 1910: 30–1). For Angell, territorial conquest and acquisition were futile, since the conqueror acquired liabilities along with the assets of the conquered populace. He contended that the basis of wealth was not to be found in the physical possession of territory, but in the use to which that territory was put.

During the middle decades of the twentieth century, when the nation-state emerged as the predominant state form and the principle of nonintervention was widely proclaimed (if not always practiced), the boundaries between states became increasingly sharply drawn. The Covenant of the League of Nations (1919) bound its members to respect the territorial integrity of its members, while the Charter of the United Nations (1945) similarly asserted the principle of nonintervention in the affairs of member states (James, 1992). Given the sheer levels of destruction caused by state aggression in the twentieth century, the territorial integrity norm was particularly strong in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War (Anstis and Zacher, 2010: 319). The movement of peoples, widespread during the nineteenth century, became increasingly difficult, as state after state raised barriers to entry. In the economic realm, national capital controls and international monetary agreements protected national currencies from the destabilizing influences of international market forces (Ruggie, 1982). Alliances guaranteed the security and territorial integrity of their members, whether they were allied with the United States or the Soviet Union.

It was only after the advent of the nuclear age that states began to recognize their strategic vulnerability, and their increased reliance on the symbolic territorial protection provided by nuclear deterrence (Deudney, 2007). The change in thinking about the salience of territory is striking. Hans Morgenthau described the importance of having a large physical territory to guarantee the survival of a country from a potential nuclear attack. When he pointed out to a group of British military strategists that it would take only four well-placed nuclear weapons to destroy the United Kingdom, they protested vehemently, insisting that it would actually take six (Morgenthau, 1970). Over the course of the past fifty years, major powers have grown accustomed to (if not comfortable with) this vulnerability. American efforts to develop a national missile defense shield could be

interpreted as an attempt to reconstruct a hard, physical boundary around the United States, a development that prompted strong objections from allies and potential adversaries alike.

By the end of the twentieth century, both the salience of physical territory and the significance of borders appeared to be on the decline, with the major exception involving the movement of people. There has been “a subtle shift away from the state as the spatial unit within which problems are assumed to be most appropriately confronted” (Murphy, 1999: 235) and a belief that growing challenges to the state “will direct attention to the nature and meaning of the changing spatial organization of politics” (Murphy, 2001: 18). De-territorialized legal regimes (like human rights) have emerged on a global scale (Benhabib, 2007), just as the “systems of rule” over currencies has become delinked from state territories (Agnew 2005). Control of networks – of finance, of information, of raw material flows, of cyberspace – is increasingly more important than control of physical, territorial space. This is an observation made by geographers (Agnew and Knox, 1994; Murphy, 2001), and political scientists (Luke, 1991; Strange, 1996) alike. As sociologist Saskia Sassen reminds us, all transactions take place on some territorial space, but the precise location of those transactions is increasingly ambiguous, and they tend to be located in different places for different purposes (Sassen, 1996).

Following the end of the Cold War, the emerging European world order has been associated with a declining desire for territory (Tunander, 1997). Carl Schmitt’s distinction between “Friend” and “Foe,” where major powers are defined in terms of their conflicts with each other, no longer seems to prevail in a system “characterized by all the major powers aiming for participation in the same system, none of them defining each other as an enemy in the radical sense” (Waever, 1997: 84). While there is plenty of differentiation and “othering” going on, the “other” as enemy has largely disappeared from great

power politics in the post-Cold War world. "The decreasing importance of territory hinges on whether states define the Other as enemy" (Waever, 1997: 84). The definition of the boundaries of contemporary Europe is best characterized as "variable" or "unfixed." (Vollaard, 2009), while its perception of many contemporary threats to security – terrorism, transnational crime, disease, environmental degradation – are de-territorialized.

Beyond changes in the salience of territory, the meaning and significance of boundaries had also changed by the end of the twentieth century. With the expansion of interdependence, innovations in communications and information technologies, and the advent of globalization, political geographers started "raising questions about the changing nature and function of boundaries" (Murphy, 2001: 13). Julie Mostov distinguished between "hard" and "soft" boundaries to describe the phenomenon, arguing that a real alternative to the traditional discourse of external sovereignty and hard borders "would be to 'soften' the boundaries of the state and radically rethink notions of internal sovereignty, self-determination and citizenship rights" (Mostov, 2000: 6–7). Shalini Randeria described the "unbundling of certain features of citizenship and the partial decoupling of some rights, together with certain aspects of political participation, from nationality" (Randeria, 2007: 38).

Late twentieth-century increases in the flows of finance, of goods, of information, and in some employment sectors, even of people, have rendered boundaries increasingly porous. This development has been resisted by some state actors and politically mobilized populations, and the tendency is by no means consistent or uniform across different activities. It is still much easier for finance to move across political boundaries than for people to move across them. Nevertheless, it is striking to observe how states emerging out of East and Central Europe were willing to forego traditional territorial prerogatives of the sovereign state in exchange for the opportunity to join Europe. They appeared eager to

transfer authority to Brussels, accept greater institutional transparency, and allow increasingly porous borders.

Changes in the organization of global finance have "rendered ambiguous" the traditional territorial imagery of international political economy (Rosow, 1994), and some have suggested that we need to "unbundle" our concept of territoriality altogether (Ruggie, 1993b: 171). Control over flows and over networks is becoming more important than hierarchical control over physical territorial space (Luke, 1991). Most large corporations have grown far beyond the territorial confines of the state in which their headquarters is located. The emergence of the "region-state" – economic zones with integrated industrial investment and information systems that straddle national boundaries in an increasingly borderless world – is yet another manifestation of this blurring of traditional conceptions of territoriality (Ohmae, 1995: 79–82).

Thus, like forms of state and states of sovereignty, there have also been important changes in conceptions of territory – both in the salience of territorial possession and in the meaning of boundaries – over the course of the last century. Once again, change over time is not the only important variation. There are also important differences in salience of territory and the meaning of boundaries across different locations on the globe at any particular moment. States lagging behind in the technological breakthroughs of the late twentieth century have tried to deny (or to retard) the shift to control over networks and flows rather than over physical territory. They have also tried to disrupt communications flows when threatened by revolutionary mass mobilizations and challenges to their rule. However, they are not well equipped to stem the flows of finance, goods, ideas, or even people across their frontiers.

Changes in the salience of territory and in the meaning of borders have important implications for international relations. The declining importance of direct, physical territorial

possession and control has removed one of the principal sources of great power conflict. Symbolic attachments to specific places remain, but the means to hegemony is no longer through territorial acquisition, but through involvement in and control over networks, be they financial, informational, or technological.

At the same time, the use of the border to protect and insulate a population from external influences has been replaced with the belief that, in many arenas, greater openness rather than closure may be the most effective way to advance the interests and provide for the security of a population. Although the United States reacted to the attacks of September 11, 2001, with an immediate closure of its borders, it quickly realized the economic consequences of its action, of “imposing an embargo on itself” (Flynn, 2003). While there have been recurring efforts to reverse the acceptance of nuclear vulnerability (the ultimate in soft boundaries), national missile defense has yet to prove capable technologically of restoring a hard boundary in national security.

Tables 10.1 and 10.2 provide a summary of the examples presented up to this point about important changes in meanings of state, sovereignty, and territoriality over time and across place. The categories in the table should be considered central tendencies rather than absolutes. There is not a perfect correspondence between the different periods and a particular state form, state of sovereignty, or conception of territoriality. The Portuguese empire persisted until the mid-1970s, and there was early evidence of a failed state in Lebanon during the same decade. However, while the imperial state as a legitimate state form was the norm in 1900, it was universally delegitimated by the end of the century. The direction of change over the course of the twentieth century is fairly clear, but it is by no means irreversible. As already suggested, there are plenty of resistances and efforts to reverse some trends, particularly when it comes to the variety of different ways in which states are constantly negotiating their sovereignty. It is also important to stress once again that this summary characterization is not intended to imply

Table 10.1 Historicizing conceptual change

| | <i>Early 20th century</i> | <i>Mid-20th century</i> | <i>Early 21st century</i> |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|
| State forms | Imperial state (great powers with colonies) | Nation-state (welfare state, national security state, developmental state) | Conditioned state (neoliberal state, “failed” state, postmodern state) |
| States of sovereignty | Territorial sovereignty | Statist sovereignty | Highly contingent sovereignty |
| Territory | Physical control and occupation are paramount | Hard boundaries with nuclear vulnerability | Soft boundaries, control over networks, the “region-state” |

Table 10.2 Contextualizing conceptual change in the contemporary era

| | <i>Advanced, post-industrial states</i> | <i>Developing states</i> |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| State forms | Conditioned, neoliberal state, authoritarian capitalist state | Neoliberal, authoritarian, and failed states |
| States of sovereignty | Intervention is legitimate to secure peace | Intervention in domestic affairs is exceptional |
| Territory | Control networks (soft borders) | Control physical territory (hard borders) |

that we are moving inexorably in a single, irreversible direction or toward some certain goal or endpoint.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ANALYSIS OF IR

Given important, qualitative changes of meaning in some of our core concepts within IR, how should we best incorporate them into our analyses? First, we should avoid making sweeping generalizations that are insensitive to either time (historicization) or place (contextualization). Second, as elaborated at greater length below, we should redirect our analytical attention to the practices that redefine our core concepts.

The changes in meaning of our core concepts of state, sovereignty, and territory should make us cognizant of the limitations of sweeping generalizations about the state or the state system. It should also sensitize us to the pitfalls of relying on history as a uniform database for evaluating our theories and insights. This suggestion is not meant to imply that we should retreat entirely into history or avoid evaluating hypotheses with empirical data derived from historical or comparative analysis. However, it is important that we do so with careful attention to when and how the meanings of some of our core concepts are undergoing significant change. We should not assume uniformity across long expanses of time and place, and need to take qualitative changes of meaning into consideration when we evaluate hypotheses and make valid inferences about patterns in IR.

Changes in meaning of our core concepts should also encourage us to redirect our focus to an analysis of the practices that produce different forms of state, states of sovereignty, and conceptions of territoriality. Not only will this give us insight into the nature and direction of change, but it will also help us solve some of the persistent analytical challenges associated with our core concepts.

This general point can be illustrated with reference to the theoretical and conceptual literature on sovereignty.

Authority claims and the changing meaning of sovereignty

The “Westphalian ideal” of state sovereignty – where states claim absolute and final authority over a wide range of issues, national identities are largely unproblematic, and territorial control is paramount and boundaries are clear and unambiguous – was extremely far from the actual meaning and practice of sovereignty for most countries during the last several decades.

Despite this, much of the theoretical literature on sovereignty has concluded that sovereignty’s central role as an organizing principle is essentially undiminished (Hinsley, 1986; Jackson, 1990, 1999; James, 1986; Krasner, 1999; Werner and de Wilde, 2001). Many of these authors fail to accommodate qualitative changes or variation in the meaning of sovereignty into their analysis. However, by redirecting our focus to the practices of making and recognizing claims of authority, it is possible to gauge significant change in the meaning of sovereignty and to move beyond sterile debates about whether sovereignty is eroding. It also enables us to consider how to recognize when different states of sovereignty have emerged.

It is helpful to begin with a conception of sovereignty as a social construct. Social construction links identity with practice (Biersteker and Weber, 1996: 278), and sovereignty is an inherently social concept. States’ claims to sovereignty construct a social environment in which they can interact, “the international society of states” (Bull, 1977), while at the same time the mutual recognition of each other’s claims to sovereignty is an important element in the construction of states. Moreover, each of the core components of sovereignty – authority, identity, and territory – is also constructed socially.

To assess the changing meaning of sovereignty, we do not need to search for an alternative to the system of sovereign state authority that already exists, or is about to emerge. It is not necessary to identify a new global authority or imagine a return to the heteronomy of the Middle Ages, to comprehend emerging states of sovereignty. It is more fruitful to focus on variation in claims of authority.

Power and authority are closely related, but authority is used here to refer to institutionalized or formal power. What differentiates authority from power is the legitimacy of the claim (implying both the rights of some authority and obligations on the part of subjects of that authority). Legitimacy implies that there is some form of consent on the part of the regulated or governed. This consent itself may be earned, or it may be generated by the rhetorical practices of political leaders. Consent is the product of persuasion and trust, rather than overt coercion or material incentives.

Sovereignty entails the external recognition (by states) of claims of final authority made by other states. However, like the institution of private property, these claims are not absolute (Kratochwil, 1992). The authority claims made by states vary from one issue area to another and are not fixed over time. This is the key to understanding the changing meaning of sovereignty. The question is not whether sovereignty exists as a unitary condition or state of being, but how claims of authority are issue-specific and change over time. This approach allows us to move beyond static, essentialist notions about the timeless nature of sovereignty.

Many scholars have differentiated between the internal and external dimensions of sovereignty. The internal dimension refers to the consolidation of the territory under a single authority and the recognition of that authority as legitimate by a population, while the external dimension refers to recognition by other states. This distinction between internal and external dimensions of sovereignty can be used to illustrate the issue-specific nature

of sovereignty. That is, both the number and range of authority claims has changed (the traditional “internal” dimension of sovereignty), as have the number and range of claims that are externally recognized as legitimate (the “external” dimension). The changing criteria for recognition discussed earlier in this chapter illustrate change in the external dimension of sovereignty, while the idea that sovereignty entails both rights and responsibilities illustrates change in the internal dimension.

Since the range of authority claims is variable, where does the authority over specific issues previously claimed or recognized by states go? Does it disappear? If not, who or what inherits the authority that states no longer claim or are recognized by others to possess? There has been a significant dispersal in the location of authority in the global system in recent years, what Susan Strange called a “diffusion of power in the world economy” (Strange, 1996). The state is no longer the predominant location of authority on a growing number of issues, and it faces challenges from other locations. In some cases, the state no longer claims to have authority, in other instances, it is no longer externally recognized by others as possessing authority in certain domains, and in still other cases, it faces competing claims and challenges from nonstate actors. This can be illustrated with examples of each of these three types of challenges to mid-twentieth-century state authority claims.

Ceding claims of final authority

States may cut back on the range of claims of final authority they make. The ceding of competences over certain issue domains from individual states to the European Union is a good illustration of reducing claims of authority. International institutions have also been ceded authority. States created and willingly abide by the strictures of these institutions. For example, the United Nations has authorized humanitarian interventions in

a growing number of countries since the end of the Cold War, and the idea of responsibility to protect has also been acted upon by the UN. The operative issue is no longer one of whether these interventions are justified, but whether the UN can accommodate the large demand for action in so many different locations at the same time.

There has also been a significant increase in the frequency, the extent, and the apparent acceptability of conditionality by international financial institutions. This includes the International Monetary Fund's enhanced surveillance, its continued demands for institutional reform, and its criticism of military spending in member countries. The political conditionality of the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, or the World Bank's interest in environmental (or green) conditionality are other examples. The growing recognition and use of the dispute resolution mechanisms of the World Trade Organization provides an even more significant illustration, where even the United States has delegated its authority over bilateral trade disputes.

Similarly, the International Court of Justice has begun to hear cases that apply the principle of harms in transborder pollution cases. More significantly, international war crimes tribunals and the International Criminal Court have taken litigation into the previously sacrosanct realm of (head of state) sovereign immunity. Issues that were once unambiguously "inside" the realm of state responsibility or under the sole prerogative of the state have been ceded to "outside" institutions. The boundary separating inside and outside has moved, and dramatically far, in some instances.

Changing norms of external recognition of authority claims

There have been important changes in the external recognition, both by other states and by international institutions and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), of some claims previously made by states. For example,

states are no longer recognized as legitimate final authorities when it comes to the violation of the human rights of individuals or groups located within their territory. Shortly after it was first promulgated in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights could be dismissed as just another United Nations proclamation, with no effective international enforcement mechanism. The influence of the declaration was contingent on the backing of major powers, primarily the United States, which applied it when convenient during the Cold War, but ignored it when a critical alliance partner was involved. Today, however, ideas about the universalization of human rights have been institutionalized to the extent that they have begun to challenge some of the prerogatives of traditional state sovereignty. Heads of state can no longer legitimately claim they are suppressing the rights of subject populations in their territory in the name of maintaining stability and internal security, as Idi Amin did in the 1970s. It is also more difficult for states to deny the right of self-determination in the name of territorial integrity. While there are important regional variations in conceptions of human rights, not to mention a good deal of legitimate debate about their scope, from narrow applications to individuals to broader applications to groups (Hurrell, 1995), there is a global acceptance of the discourse of human rights. Virtually everyone constructs their arguments in terms of a discourse of different forms of legitimate human rights (Sikkink, 1993). This is as significant for the global development of democracy as was the extension of suffrage throughout the world earlier in the twentieth century.

At the same time, as discussed above, there have been important changes in the norms of recognition for new states. States seeking recognition today require democratic institutions, consideration of the rights of minority populations, and sometimes even liberal management of the economy. International institutions have withheld recognition of some of the claims of states not just with regard to the actions of coercive

agents of the state against subject populations, such as torture or fundamental violations of individual rights, but also with regard to the protection of other aspects of the lives of private individuals within states. The emergence of third party human rights law has extended the range of international law to issues like racial discrimination in housing, gender employment, and relationships within the family (previously considered part of the domain of the “private”). Other international institutions such as the World Trade Organization have begun to extend their intrusiveness into the previously sacrosanct domain of the “domestic” by criticizing labor policies, consumer product safety standards, or environmental accords as non-tariff barriers to free trade.

Emergence of competing locations of authority

Competing claims of authority have begun to emerge from nonstate actors in the world system: from individuals, from firms, from NGOs, from religious authorities, from private organizations, and even from markets. Individuals now have rights to challenge the actions of states and international institutions in the European Court of Human Rights, at the World Bank’s Inspection Panel, or the before the UN’s Ombudsperson for Security Council designations under the 1267 sanctions regime. In the case of the European Court, individuals have the right to appeal to a supranational institution with jurisdiction over nation-states. There are very specific circumstances under which individuals can appeal, but the arrangement establishes a competing location of authority to the state. In the case of the World Bank Inspection Panel, any two individuals who can claim a significant material harm from a World Bank project can initiate a quasi-independent review of investment decisions taken by the bank. Although the Inspection Panel is located within the bank, it is technically independent of it and has succeeded in

reversing bank decisions in some instances. Not only do individuals have the power to initiate a review of bank decisions, but their intervention can lead to the termination of a project. The individuals who initiate the review do not need the backing of their own government, reinforcing the principle that individuals are recognized as legitimate agents by both states and by the intergovernmental institutions. The same is true of the UN’s Ombudsperson. Prior to the creation of the position in 2010, individuals had to secure the backing of a UN member state before they could challenge their designation by the organization.

Equally significant are the actions of transnational advocacy networks that operate in the domains of human rights and the global environment (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). The global acceptance of human rights has been facilitated by the increased visibility of NGO networks operating across the globe. Traditional state claims of sovereign authority are increasingly competing with other sources of legitimate authority in the international system, especially the moral authority of expertise represented by transnational issue networks, which some observers have described as evidence of a global civil society (Lipschutz, 1996) or a global public domain (Ruggie, 2004). NGO actors in global civil society set standards of international behavior that increasingly constrain the actions of individual states. The weight of global public opinion is such that states increasingly have to be concerned about the reactions of other states, of the publics of those states, and of NGOs, in order to avoid being labeled a pariah state, to gain entry into the society of states, to obtain access to conditional resources, or to enter regional common markets such as the European Union.

Finally, the globalization of finance and the emergence of integrated global financial markets can be said to discipline all states, even the most powerful. There has been a major shift away from sharply demarcated national financial boundaries – with effective currency controls in place – toward increased financial

liberalization, the elimination of exchange controls, and the increased ease of cross-border financial transactions. This tendency toward financial liberalization has facilitated the emergence of new financial actors (bond traders, currency traders, portfolio investors, hedge fund managers) who have developed global strategies and operate on an around-the-clock and around-the-globe basis.

This network has itself become a location of authority, with the ability to reward (and to discipline) countries that pursue policies it deems prudent or unsustainable. It operates, in effect, like a global “hard budget constraint” on the behavior of economic and financial decision makers who have ceded informal authority to the markets through both their public statements and their practices. When a finance minister or head of state begins to believe and declare that markets have the power to discipline their actions, they signal their consent and participate in empowering markets as legitimate authorities within certain domains. Even the “great recession” of 2007 did not reverse the long-term trend toward market empowerment. The financial crisis should have been the hard test of financial globalization that some skeptics have anticipated for years (Pauly, 1997; Wade, 1996). The profoundly national and interest-based responses of a number of states at the outset of the crisis seemed to confirm their hypothesis that what states had allowed (global financial liberalization), they could reverse. Yet, despite their initial interventions, most of the moves were temporary gestures on the part of the state. In the wake of some regulatory adjustments such as higher capitalization requirements negotiated in Basel in 2010 and cautionary warnings about the use of abstract financial instruments, global financial market integration appears to be continuing.

Each of these sets of practices – ceding of final authority to other institutions, changes in external acceptance of final authority, and the emergence of competing locations of final authority – are indicative of, and participate in the construction of, important

changes in the meaning of sovereignty. At some point, the cumulative impact of these incremental changes in practices could lead to a situation in which the authority claims of states become increasingly hollowed out. As that occurs, we may begin to comprehend an alternative to sovereignty as an organizing principle of the international system. If we do not focus on changes of practices over time, we are not likely to comprehend the qualitative transformation of sovereignty as a generative principle of the international system, when it occurs.

We could extend this analysis of changes in the meaning to other conceptual changes considered earlier (forms of state and conceptions of territoriality), by looking for other practices that indicate and produce change. With regard to forms of state, the scope of state economic intervention, increases in surveillance, and/or justifications for international intervention would indicate the sources of variation in state forms. With regard to changing conceptions of territoriality, the degree of attention to physical control of territory and/or the porosity of borders would be indicative and constitutive of change.

AGENDAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are a number of issues raised, and left unresolved, by historicizing and contextualizing core concepts such as state, sovereignty, and territoriality. This chapter is intended to serve as a stimulus to further reflection and research on core concepts of IR, rather than an attempt to reach closure on them. Thus, this conclusion will attempt to identify some promising areas for further research, and suggest where contemporary research might be taking us.

Emerging forms of state

As already suggested, there is no consensus on how best to characterize the emerging

forms of state. While the concept of “failed state” has received a great deal of attention (Herbst, 2000; Risse, 2011), others have suggested the emergence of the “postmodern state” (Harvey, 1989), the “defective state” (Strange, 1995), or the “self-restraining state” (Schedler et al., 1999). Some of the most creative efforts to think about contemporary state forms have been stimulated by efforts to characterize the polity emerging in the wake of the deepening and the widening of the European Union (Hooghe and Marks, 2003; Jorgensen, 1997; Schmitter, 1996; Wallace, 1999). More conceptual work could also be done on unbundling aspects of citizenship and decoupling rights from nationality (Benhabib, 2007; Randeria, 2007) or on historicizing ideational and material aspects of state formation (Mitchell, 1999; Vu, 2010).

Another important area of contemporary research is found in the globalization literature. In a return to many of the familiar issues associated with the debate over interdependence and the role of the state during the 1960s and 1970s (Nye and Keohane, 1977), the globalization debates have pitted those who emphasize the magnitude of the phenomenon and its implications for the changing role of the state (Dicken, 1992; Kobrin, 1997; Mittelman, 2000; Strange, 1996) against those who are highly skeptical about the significance of the phenomenon (Wade, 1996; and Hirst and Thompson, 1996; Pauly, 1997; Weiss, 1998). There are also important works that attempt to stake out a middle ground in the debate (Rodrik, 2000; Sassen, 1998). More empirical analysis of the claims suggested by applications of the idea of governmentality to the relationship between nongovernmental actors and the state could also be pursued further. The analysis has been limited thus far to relatively few examples (Sending and Neuman, 2006) that may prove to be either exceptional or applicable to only certain types of state (Joseph, 2010).

Another promising area of research on the state would be to invert the pessimism of the “failed state” literature and explore the domain of state capacity and state building

(Barnett, 2009; Paris and Sisk, 2009). In many ways, this is a return to the classic literature on nation-building during the 1960s (Bendix, 1964), a literature that was initially driven by the practical concerns stemming from the process of decolonization. State-building entails practical and normative decisions about the sequencing of different programs (whether to prioritize security, economics, or judicial processes) and is of contemporary relevance for the peace-building activities of the United Nations. Thirty years ago, the subject of state-building would have seemed esoteric, applicable only to the few remaining colonial territories, trusteeships, and to states such as Lebanon. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is an agenda relevant to international interventions and to post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts in Africa, Asia, and parts of Europe.

Finally, important work could be done on emerging political forms of confederation within multi-ethnic states, which have become the modal form of state in the world today (Koslowski, 2000). Creative work on the norms of recognizing claims of self-determination, and the construction of new institutional forms capable of addressing the legitimate interests of minorities within states, have important theoretical as well as practical significance (Lustick, 1993). One of the best ways to channel the grievances of groups engaged in the commitment of acts of terrorism is to find ways to engage them in legitimate, competitive politics (Kurth-Cronin, 2009).

States of sovereignty

The crisis in the Balkans, the collapse of states in Africa, and the unresolved status of the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza have led to controversial calls for the reinstatement of forms of trusteeship by the international community (Indyk, 2003; Lyon, 1993). In a sense, this has already emerged in several post-conflict situations, including

Kosovo and East Timor. However, the normative implications of this development have yet to be explored. It is also likely to be an extremely difficult undertaking, one that raises questions about the credibility, capability, and legitimacy of international institutions. Moreover, while this may be an important development from a practical standpoint, it is likely to be only a transitory phenomenon.

Not only is sovereignty a social construct, but so too are each of its constitutive elements (authority, identity, and territory). There is a wealth of literature exploring the construction of identity and authority, as well as some important research on the emergence of nonstate (or private) forms of authority in the global public domain (Cutler, Hauffler, and Porter, 1999; Hall and Biersteker, 2002; Ruggie, 2004). Most of this research has been confined to the realm of the international political economy (Cutler et al., 1999), but there has also been important research on the moral authority exercised by NGOs (Lipschutz, 1996), by groups engaged in the commitment of acts of transnational terrorism (Juergensmeyer, 2002; Stern, 2003), and on private security assemblages (Abrahamson and Williams, 2009).

The emergence of new locations of authority in the international system has given rise to concerns about their democratic accountability. There are serious normative questions about the accountability of NGOs, institutions that are accountable to their members but have an influence over (and make claims on behalf of) a far broader range of potential subjects. There are also under-examined normative issues raised by the extension of the global human rights regime, particularly the extent to which values are universally shared, as well as the scope and domain of the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, and conflict-specific criminal tribunals (such as the ICTY or the ICTR). Within the realm of international political economy, there are important questions about the accountability of private market actors, and/or the lack of transparency in the manner

in which authority has been transferred to some of them (Sassen, 1998). This has led to increased calls for countervailing movements to bring public (state) scrutiny and participation to bear on market actors.

Finally, there have been some important issues raised by theorists about the delinking of state and sovereignty and moving beyond the concept of state sovereignty itself (Hoffman, 1998), research that has significant implications for both sovereignty and for political theory more generally. As already suggested, empirical research on the making, ceding, and recognition of claims of authority by states and nonstates alike holds great promise for our understanding of the changing meaning of sovereignty.

Conceptions of territoriality

As control over physical territorial space has become less salient over the course of the past century, control over networks has increased (Kobrin, 1997; Strange, 1996). However, much important research is needed on the operational meaning of networks within different issue domains, since there is considerable variation in their scope and salience. There are important questions about how networks emerge, how they function, how they are sustained, how they are regulated, and how they might be transformed (Deibert, 1997; Hafner-Burton, Kahler, and Montgomery, 2009).

There are also a number of questions about how to conceptualize alternatives to the system of states. There is an important conceptual debate about whether we are witnessing the emergence of a globalization or a regionalization of the world economy. For some scholars, the movement away from the nation-state as the principal market unit is leading to the rise of regional economies, rather than to an integrated, global one (Ohmae, 1995; Storper, 1997; Storper and Scott, 1992).

There is also a great deal of promising research on the salience and meaning of boundaries themselves (Andreas, 2000;

Mostov, 2000). Anthropologists and writers of literature have increasingly drawn our attention to the importance of understanding border culture, a syncretic cultural conception that stresses the role of borders in constructing various forms of identity, as well as the multilayered nature of that identity (Donnan and Wilson, 1999; Santos, 1999).

CONCLUSION

No concept or analytical framework is ever complete, or entirely adequate for all situations or phenomena. Future research on the concepts of state, sovereignty, and territoriality, like research of the past, will be driven by the dialectical interplay between events and theoretical efforts to interpret, comprehend, and understand them. The limitations and contradictions contained within existing theoretical concepts, frameworks, and explanations will be tested by their adequacy to explain, to understand, and to influence contemporary events. At the same time, they will also play a role in the shaping of those events themselves. It is for this reason that it is so important to understand the origins, changes of meaning, and transformations of the central concepts of state, sovereignty, and territoriality in IR.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Walter Carlsnaes, Helle Malmvig, Thomas Risse, Beth Simmons, and John Tomasi for their insightful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter. Ashley Thornton provided superb research assistance, locating texts and tracking down numerous sources, and Walter Carlsnaes deserves special thanks for his patience in waiting for the second edition of this chapter. Finally, I would like to acknowledge a long-standing intellectual debt to my colleagues on a related project: the late Hayward Alker, Tahir Amin, Ijaz Gilani, and Takashi Inoguchi.

Although they have not read this chapter in advance of its publication, they will understand that it could not have been written without our many discussions and debates over the last 30 years.

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Power and International Relations

David A. Baldwin

Most definitions of politics involve power. Most international interactions are political or have ramifications for politics. Thus, it is not surprising that power has been prominent in discussions of international interaction from Thucydides to the present day. The long history of discussions of the role of power in international relations, however, has failed to generate much agreement. Scholars disagree not only with respect to the role of power but also with respect to the nature of power. Hans J. Morgenthau (1964: 27n) suggests that “the concept of political power poses one of the most difficult and controversial problems of political science.” Kenneth N. Waltz (1986: 333) notes that power is a key concept in realist theories of international politics, while conceding that “its proper definition remains a matter of controversy.” And Robert Gilpin describes the concept of power as “one of the most troublesome in the field of international relations” (1981: 13) and suggests that the “number and variety of definitions should be an embarrassment to political scientists” (1975: 24). There is, however, widespread

consensus among international relations scholars on both the necessity of addressing the role of power in international interactions and the unsatisfactory state of knowledge about this topic (Guzzini, 2000; Barnett and Duvall, 2005; Berenskoetter and Williams, 2007).

Although it is often useful to distinguish among such power terms as power, influence, control, coercion, force, persuasion, deterrence, compellence, inducement, and so on, it is possible to identify common elements underlying all such terms. Robert A. Dahl (1957) has suggested that underlying most such terms is the basic intuitive notion of A causing (or having the ability to cause) B to do something that B otherwise would not do. (In the discussion that follows, “A” refers to the actor having or exercising influence; while “B” refers to the actor being, or potentially being, influenced.) Although alternative definitions of power abound, none rivals this one in widespread acceptability. In the following discussion, the term “power” will be used in a broad generic sense that is interchangeable with such terms as

“influence” or “control” unless otherwise indicated. This usage is not intended to deny the validity or the utility of distinguishing among such terms for other purposes.

POWER AND THE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

International politics has been defined in terms of influencing “major groups in the world so as to advance the purposes of some against the opposition of others” (Wright, 1955: 130). Although the term “power politics” has unsavory connotations for some, such a definition implies that the term is redundant (Carr, [1939]1946; Morgenthau, [1948]1960; Sprout and Sprout, 1945; Spykman, 1942; Wright, 1955). From this perspective, all politics is power politics in the sense that all politics involves power. This is not to say that politics is *only* about power.

Traditionally, the study of international politics assumed the existence of national states with conflicting policies, placing a high value on maintaining their independence, and relying primarily on military force. The states with the most military power were designated “Great Powers,” and the “game” of international politics was “played” primarily by them (Spykman, 1942; Sprout and Sprout, 1945, 1962; Wight, 1946). Noting that only a few states possessed the military capabilities to support their foreign policies effectively, an influential text in the 1930s averred that “these alone constitute the Great Powers” (Simonds and Emeny, 1937: 28.¹)

In the eighteenth century, “the power of individual states was conceived to be susceptible of measurement by certain well-defined factors” (Gulick, 1955: 24), including population, territory, wealth, armies, and navies. In the ensuing years, this approach evolved into the “elements of national power” approach to power analysis reflected in Hans J. Morgenthau’s influential textbook *Politics Among Nations* ([1948] 1960; see also Sprout and Sprout, 1945).

States were depicted as seeking to maximize power relative to each other, thus producing a “balance of power” or as seeking to produce a balance of power (Claude, 1962; Gulick, 1955; Haas, 1953; Morgenthau [1948] 1960). Each version of balance of power theory shared the assumption that it was possible to add up the various elements of national power, sometimes called “power resources” or “capabilities,” in order to calculate the power distribution among the Great Powers. Modern versions of this approach are found in Waltz’s *Theory of International Politics* (1979) and John J. Mearsheimer’s *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (2001).

THE POWER ANALYSIS REVOLUTION

The “elements of national power” approach depicted power as a possession or property of states. This approach was challenged during the last half of the twentieth century by the “relational power” approach, developed by scholars working in several disciplines, including psychology, philosophy, sociology, economics, and political science (Baldwin, 1989; Barry, 1976; Cartwright, 1965; Dahl, 1957, [1963, 1984] 1991, 1968; Frey, 1971, 1985, 1989; Harsanyi, 1962; Nagel, 1975; Oppenheim, 1981; Simon, 1957; Tedeschi and Bonoma, 1972). Some would regard the publication of *Power and Society* by Harold Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan (1950) as the watershed between the old “power-as-resources” approach and the new “relational power” approach, which developed the idea of power as a type of causation. This causal notion conceives of power as a relationship (actual or potential) in which the behavior of actor A at least partially causes a change in the behavior of actor B. “Behavior” in this context need not be defined narrowly, but may be understood broadly to include beliefs, attitudes, preferences, opinions, expectations, emotions, and/or predispositions to act. In this view, power is an actual or potential relationship between two or more actors

(persons, states, groups, etc.), rather than a property of any one of them.

The shift from a property concept of power to a relational one constituted a revolution in power analysis. Despite the ancient origins of the study of power, Dahl maintains that “the systematic empirical study of power relations is remarkably new” (1968: 414). He attributes the “considerable improvement in the clarity” of power concepts to the fact that “the last several decades have probably witnessed more systematic efforts to tie down these concepts than have the previous millennia of political thought” (Dahl, [1963, 1984]1991: 27–8; Dahl and Stinebrickner, 2003: 12).

Dimensions of power

The relational power perspective views power as multidimensional rather than monolithic and unidimensional. This allows for the possibility that power can increase in one dimension while simultaneously decreasing in another. Among the more important dimensions of power are the following:

Scope Scope refers to the aspect of B’s behavior affected by A. This calls attention to the possibility that an actor’s power may vary from one issue to another. Thus, a country like Japan may have more influence with respect to economic issues than with respect to military issues; and the reverse may be true of a country like North Korea.

Domain The domain of an actor’s power refers to the number or importance of other actors subject to its influence. In other words, how big is B; or how many B’s are there? Thus, a state may have a great deal of influence in one region of the world, while having little or no influence in other parts of the world. The domain of influence of Russia today is smaller than that of the former Soviet Union.

Weight The weight of an actor’s power refers to the probability that B’s behavior is or could be affected by A (Dahl, 1957; see also Deutsch, [1968]1988; Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950). Thus, a country that has only a 30% chance of achieving its aims in trade negotiations is less

powerful than one with a 90% chance, *ceteris paribus*. This dimension could also be labeled the “reliability” of A’s influence.

Costs Both the costs to A and the costs to B are relevant to assessing influence (Baldwin, 1989; Barry, 1976; Dahl, 1968; Harsanyi, 1962; Schelling, 1984: 268–90). Is it costly or cheap for A to influence B? Is it costly or cheap for B to comply with A’s demands? Some have suggested that more power should be attributed to an actor that can exercise influence cheaply than to one for whom it is costly (Harsanyi, 1962). If A can get B to do something that is costly for B, some would contend that this is indicative of more power than if A can only get B to do things that are cheap for B. Even if A is unable to get B to comply with its demands, it may be able to impose costs on B for noncompliance. Some have argued that this should be viewed as a kind of power (Baldwin, 1985; Harsanyi, 1962; Schelling, 1984: 268–90).

Means There are many means of exercising influence and many ways to categorize such means. One scheme (Baldwin, 1985) for classifying the means of influence in international relations includes the following categories:

1. Symbolic means. This would include appeals to normative symbols as well as the provision of information. Thus, one country might influence another either by reminding them that slavery is bad or by informing them that AIDS is caused by HIV. It would also include what Thomas Risse (2000: 33) has called “communicative action” – “arguing and deliberating about identities, interests, and the state of the world.” Discourses, propaganda, framing, and narratives could also be considered symbolic means of influence.
2. Economic means. Augmenting or reducing the goods or services available to other countries has a long history in world politics.
3. Military means. Actual or threatened military force has received more attention than any other means in international relations.
4. Diplomatic means. Diplomacy includes a wide array of practices, including representation and negotiation.

Which dimensions of power should be specified for meaningful scholarly communication? There is no single right answer to this question. The causal concept of power,

however, does imply a minimum set of specifications. The point is well put by Jack Nagel (1975: 14):

Anyone who employs a causal concept of power *must* specify domain and scope. To say "X has power" may seem sensible, but to say "X causes" or "X can cause" is nonsense. Causation implies an X and a Y – a cause and an effect. If power is causation, one must state the outcome caused. Stipulating domain and scope answers the question "Power over *what?*"

The idea that a meaningful specification of a power relationship must include scope and domain is widely shared by power analysts committed to social scientific inquiry (Barry, 1976; Dahl, 1991, 1968; Dahl and Stinebrickner, 2003; Deutsch, [1968] 1988; Frey, 1971, 1989; Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950).

The multidimensional nature of power makes it difficult to add up the various dimensions in order to arrive at some overall estimate of an actor's power. Although there are some similarities between political power and purchasing power (Baldwin, 1989), one important difference is the lack of a standardized measuring rod for the former. Whereas money can be used to measure purchasing power, there is no comparable standard of value in terms of which to add up the various dimensions of power so as to arrive at an overall total. For this reason, estimates of an actor's "overall power" are likely to be controversial.

Faces of power

One of the most famous debates in the literature on power during the last half of the twentieth century is known as the "Faces of Power" debate (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962; Isaac, 1987; Lukes, 1974). The debate was triggered by reactions to Dahl's study of governance in New Haven, Connecticut (1961). The methodology adopted for the study of power in New Haven identified three issue areas and attempted to determine who could successfully initiate policy

proposals in decision making with respect to these issue areas.² Bachrach and Baratz (1962; 1963) argued that Dahl's approach neglected a second "face" of power represented by the suppression of some issues, thus, in effect, keeping them from being considered, that is to say, keeping them off the agenda of the decision makers. A decade later, Lukes (1974) introduced the idea of yet another face of power – the "third face." He pointed out that one way for A to get B to do something B would not otherwise do is to affect B's preferences, wants, or thoughts.

Each of these so-called faces of power has some relevance for the study of international relations. The first face, focused on decision making with respect to specific issues, is on view anytime the foreign policy makers of one country try to influence decision making in another country.³ The second face is illustrated whenever an agenda item is suppressed by some countries despite the desires of other countries. And an example of the third face might be the (alleged) ability of the United States to get other countries to embrace the "Washington consensus" or "neoliberal economic views." This third face of power is closely related to Nye's concept of "soft power" and to Antonio Gramsci's idea of "hegemony" (Lukes, 2005, 2007).

The significance of the three-faces debate is easily and often exaggerated. Contrary to the understanding of many, the three faces do not imply a need for fundamental reconceptualization of power. Lukes himself admits that the three views "can be seen as alternative interpretations and adaptations of one and the same underlying concept of power," in which B is affected by A (Lukes, 1974: 27).⁴ The one fundamental difference between Dahl's concept of power and that of Lukes was the latter's insistence that power be defined as detrimental to the interests of B. In the second edition of his book, however, Lukes admits that this view was a mistake and adopts a position closer to Dahl's (Lukes, 2005: 12–13; 2007).

INTERNATIONAL POWER ANALYSIS

Although many political scientists have contributed to the power analysis revolution during the past fifty years, very few have been students of international relations (Baldwin, 1971b; Singer, 1963). Harold and Margaret Sprout, who had been proponents of the elements of national power approach in their early work (Sprout and Sprout, 1945), later repudiated that approach and were among the first international relations scholars to call for incorporation of the relational power approach into the study of international politics (Sprout and Sprout, 1956, 1962, 1965). Despite the efforts of the Sprouts and others, however, the elements-of-national-power approach is still deeply embedded in the international relations literature (e.g., Mearsheimer, 2001; Waltz, 1979). This situation has given rise to several problems in the analysis of power in the international arena, some of which are discussed below.

The potential power problem

The elements-of-national-power approach to power analysis is a variant of the power-as-resources approach. In this approach, power resources are treated as if they were power itself. One problem with this approach is that what functions as a power asset in one situation may be a power liability in a different situation. Planes loaded with nuclear bombs may be worse than useless in a situation calling for planes with conventional weapons with insufficient time to unload the nuclear weapons and reload the planes with conventional ones. And the same stockpile of arms that is useful for deterring one country may trigger an arms race with another. Similarly, what constitutes a “good hand” in card games depends on whether one is playing poker or bridge.

Discussions of the capabilities of states that fail to designate or imply a framework of assumptions about who is trying (or might

try) to get whom to do what are comparable to discussions of what constitutes a good hand in cards without specifying which game is to be played. The Sprouts called this set of assumptions a “policy-contingency framework” (1965, 1971). Focusing on the capabilities of states is simply a way of drawing attention to their potential power. It makes no more sense to talk about state capabilities in general than to talk about state power without (explicitly or implicitly) specifying scope and domain. If one wants to estimate the potential power of Guatemala, it helps to know, nay, it is imperative to know whether it concerns a border dispute with El Salvador or a trade agreement with the United States.

Although it is sometimes suggested that insistence on specification of the scope and domain of potential power relationships makes prediction and or generalization nearly impossible (Guzzini, 2000; Keohane, 1986), this is not true. Specification of scope and domain (or policy-contingency frameworks) need not imply atheoretical empiricism. Policy-contingency frameworks may be defined more or less broadly to suit the purpose of the analyst. As Nagel (1975: 14) observes, “domain and scope need not be particularistic or unique. Depending on one’s purpose and the limits imposed by reality, the outcome class may contain a few similar members or many diverse elements.” It is, of course, possible to make predictions or generalize about the potential power of Guatemala (or similar states) without reference to Guatemala’s goals and without reference to the goals or capabilities of other states; but it is not clear why one would want to do so.

Power resources are the raw materials out of which power relationships are forged. Although it might seem that the predictive value of power resource inventories is impaired by insistence on prior specification of scope and domain, the opposite is true. The accuracy of one’s estimate of whether an architect has adequate raw materials to complete his or her project is likely to improve if one first ascertains whether the architect plans to build a birdhouse or a cathedral.

Although it is common practice to refer to the “power resources” or “capabilities” of a state as if they were possessions of the state, this practice can be misleading. Strictly speaking, the power resources of a state are not attributes of the state in the same sense that population and territory are attributes. To designate something (time, reputation, weaponry, money, oil, and so on) as a “power resource” is to imply something about its usefulness in getting others to change their behavior – and thus to imply something about the value system and capabilities of these others. (Threats do not work very well against masochists.)

The fungibility problem

“Fungibility” refers to the ease with which power resources useful in one issue-area can be used in other issue-areas. Money in a market economy is the prototypical fungible resource. Indeed, fungibility (that is, liquidity) is one of the defining characteristics of money.⁵ In a market economy one does not usually need to specify the scope or domain of the purchasing power of money because the same euro (yen, dollar, etc.) can be used to buy a car, a meal, a haircut, or a book.

It is sometimes suggested that power plays the same role in international politics that money does in a market economy (Deutsch, [1968]1988; Mearsheimer, 2001; Wolfers, 1962). Political power resources, of course, do vary in degree of fungibility. Money, time, and information tend to be more fungible than most other power resources in that they are useful in many different situations. To the extent that the power–money analogy leads to ignoring the need to specify scope and domain, however, it can be quite misleading for the political power analyst (Baldwin, 1989).

Some scholars have suggested that the fungibility of power resources increases as the amount increases (Art, 1996; Waltz, 2000). Thus, power is said to be more fungible for powerful states than for weaker states.

It is not clear what this means or why it might be true. It is, of course, true that more power resources allow one to do more things, that is, influence more actors and/or more issues. This implies nothing about the fungibility of any particular power resource. Fungibility refers to the uses of a *given* amount of a power resource, not to the uses of varying amounts. In the economic realm, rich people can buy more things than poor people; but this is not because a rich person’s dollar is more fungible than a poor person’s dollar. The contention that fungibility increases with the amount of power resources is based either on a confused concept of fungibility or on a logic that has yet to be spelled out (Baldwin, 1999; Guzzini, 1998).

The problem of intentions

Max Weber (1947: 152) defined power as “the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests.” This definition clearly makes the intentions of actor A an important part of the concept of power. Many of the most interesting and important questions in international relations concern the ability or inability of governments to realize their goals. Can the Allies win the Second World War? Can the United States get other countries to join the United Nations? Can Japan get the members of the United Nations to let it join? Can Russia get the approval of member countries to join the World Trade Organization? Can the poor countries get trade preferences from the rich? All such questions involve the ability of countries to realize their goals.

But what about unintended effects? When the United States Federal Reserve system raises interest rates, it usually intends to affect the American domestic economy; but the actual effects are likely to reverberate around the world. There is no question about the reality or importance of unintended effects in international politics (Guzzini,

2000; Jervis, 1997; Strange, 1988). The question is whether the conventional concept of power can account for such phenomena. Although intentions are often built into the causal concept of power, for example, the Weberian version, they need not be. It is quite possible to differentiate between situations in which A intentionally causes a change in B's behavior and situations in which A does so unintentionally (Baldwin, 1989; Frey, 1989). Relational power analysis is historically indebted to the Weberian formulation, but it is not logically bound by it. Thus, there is no need for a fundamental reformulation of the concept of power in order to account for its unintended effects.

Those who call for more attention to the unintended effects of power tend to imply that these unintended effects are detrimental to the interests of those affected (Barnett and Duvall, 2005; Guzzini, 2000; Strange, 1988). This is not necessarily so. The unintended effects can also be beneficial to the interests of those affected. When the United States encourages trade with other countries, it does so primarily with the intention of improving its own economic welfare; but this may have the unintended effect of improving the welfare of its trading partners also. When the United States took steps to deter Soviet nuclear attack on North America during the Cold War, it did so primarily with the intention of providing for its own security; but this action had the unintended effect of providing for Canadian security also.⁶ Whether the unintended effects of the actions (or inactions) of powerful states tends to be beneficial or detrimental to the interests of those affected is an empirical question. It should be answered by research, not by definition or assertion.

The measurement problem

Before one can measure power, one must first have a concept of power. In the field of international relations, the desire to measure power on a single dimension that would

allow states to be ranked often gets in the way of – or even precedes conceptual analysis. Frey (1989) has pointed out that the difficulty of measuring power often leads researchers to redefine it so as to make operationalization easier. “In this fashion, power has frequently been defined in terms of supposed resources – e.g., the ability to mobilize resources, possession of resources, and other forms of what Elster (1976: 252) calls “generalized fetichist theories,” that is, theories that attempt to regard relations as properties” (Frey, 1989: 7–8). Dahl (1984: 21) identifies “confounding power with resources” as a fallacy in power analysis, and another writer labels it as “the vehicle fallacy” (Morris, 2002: 18–19).

As noted above, there is no political counterpart for money. There is no standardized measure that facilitates reducing the various dimensions of power to a single dimension. Yet the desire to measure power makes this an inconvenient fact:

The search for an index of national power has been largely ... based on the assumption that it is possible and desirable to find a *currency* of politics. As economists view economic transactions of all sorts and at all levels in terms of a standardized unit of currency ... so, the assumption runs, must the political scientist find an absolute scale along which to evaluate the “power” of nation-states (Merritt and Zinnes, 1988: 142).

It is the desire of international relations scholars to rank the overall power of states from highest to lowest that generates the most difficult measurement problems. This requires comparing different dimensions of power relations without any agreed-upon way to do this. Some scholars contend that the question of “Who’s number one?” is as useful in international relations as it is in sports (Ray and Vural, 1986). It is not clear, however, that it is either meaningful or useful to ask this question even in the realm of sports. Assessing athletic ability without reference to a specified set of athletic activities is akin to assessing power without reference to scope and domain. How is one to compare a golfer, a swimmer, an archer, a runner, and

a weightlifter? As Dahl ([1963, 1984], 1991: 27) has pointed out, “it is difficult enough to estimate relative influence within a particular scope and domain; it is by no means clear how we can “add up” influence over many scopes and domains in order to arrive at total, or aggregate, influence.” This is equally true of attempts to “add up” and compare athletic accomplishments in different sports.

Most indices of overall national power rely primarily on GNP, but are sometimes supplemented with demographic and military measures (Merritt and Zinnes, 1988). The best known of these is that developed by the Correlates of War Project (Singer, 1988). Such measures can be useful if they are set in an appropriate policy-contingency framework. What makes the Correlates of War power index more useful than most such indices is that it was developed and has usually been applied in a military context. It should be noted, however, that even military capabilities may vary greatly from one policy-contingency framework to another. Nuclear weapons, for example, may be useful for deterring attack but may have little or no relevance to prevailing in a counter-insurgency situation.

Although resources should not be confounded with power, they can be useful in measuring it. Countries with large gross domestic products (GDPs), for example, are likely to be able to influence more people with respect to more issues than countries with smaller GDPs (*ceteris paribus*). Other measures of the power of A with respect to B (domain) and with respect to C (scope) can be made on the following dimensions: (1) the probability of B’s compliance; (2) the speed with which B complies; (3) the number of issues included in C; (4) the magnitude of the positive or negative sanction provided by A; (5) the costs to A; (6) the costs to B; and (7) the number of options available to B (Dahl, 1968; Frey, 1985, 1989). If international relations researchers were to give up the search for a universally valid measure of overall national power, much useful research could be focused on measuring the distribution of power within specified scopes and domains.

POWER IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY

“The proposition that the nature of international politics is shaped by power relations” is often listed as a “defining characteristic of Realism” (Wendt, 1999: 96–7). As Wendt (1999: 97) points out, however, this is not a *unique* characteristic of realism. Neoliberals, Marxists, postmodernists, constructivists, dependency theorists, globalists, and feminists all think power matters. No attempt will be made here to survey the treatments of power relations in all of these theories. The discussion will confine itself to three well-known and influential theories: the balance of power, neorealism, and offensive realism.

Classic balance of power theory

The “balance of power” was used by Thucydides to explain the onset of the Peloponnesian War, was the subject of an essay by David Hume (1742) in the eighteenth century, and continues to fascinate international relations theorists even today (Brooks and Wohlforth, 2008; Claude, 1989; Guzzini, 2000; Kaufman, Little, and Wohlforth, 2007; Little, 2007; Moul, 1989; Nexon, 2009; Paul, Wirtz, and Fortmann, 2004; Schweller, 2006; Walt, 1987; Waltz, 1979). Although many different theories carry the “balance of power” label, the term itself “implies that changes in relative political power can be observed and measured” (Wright, 1965: 743).

The question of precisely what is being observed and measured, however, has remained elusive. In the nineteenth century, Richard Cobden argued that the term “balance of power” could “be discarded as fallacious, since it gives no definition – whether by breadth of territory, number of inhabitants, or extent of wealth – according to which, in balancing the respective powers, each state shall be estimated” (quoted in Gulick, 1955: 27). Pollard (1923: 58) concluded that the term “may mean almost anything; and it is

used not only in different senses by different people, or in different senses by the same people at different times, but in different senses by the same person at the same time.” Morgenthau (1960: 167) discussed the balance of power at length, but admitted to using the term to mean four different things. One is tempted to despair when one writer dismisses the term as meaningless (Guzzini, 2000), while another contends that the problem is “not that it has no meaning, but that it has too many meanings” (Claude, 1962: 13; Haas, 1953). It is beyond the scope of this chapter to attempt clarification of this conceptual morass.

No matter which version of balance of power theory one considers, the idea of power as a property rather than a relation is firmly embedded. It could hardly be otherwise, since any attempt to interpret balance of power theory using the relational concept of power would immediately encounter the difficulties flowing from the multidimensionality of power and the lack of a standardized measure of value in terms of which these dimensions could be expressed. Suppose a country drains resources from its domestic economy in order to increase its military strength, as the Soviet Union did. Its military power may be increasing at the same time, and partly because, its economic power is decreasing. How is one to calculate the net effect on the overall balance of power, given the difficulty of adding up various scopes and domains of power? It is precisely these difficulties that lead Guzzini (1998, 2000) to pronounce the term meaningless.

To the extent that balance of power theory has been meaningful, it has been based on a conception of power as a particular type of power resource used in a particular policy-contingency framework, that is, military force conceived in the context of war-winning ability (Claude, 1962; Gulick, 1955; Mearsheimer, 2001; Morgenthau, [1948] 1960; Walt, 1987; Waltz, 1979; Wright, 1965: 743ff). The analytical perspective of relational power prompts one to ask, “Power to get whom to do what?” One of the benefits of

bringing this perspective to bear on balance of power theories is that it brings to light the underlying assumptions that: (1) military force is the measure of power; and (2) winning wars is what matters most. Only after these assumptions have been made explicit can fruitful debate as to their wisdom occur.

Neorealism

The theory of neorealism (aka structural realism or defensive realism) developed by Waltz (1979) dominated discussions of international relations theory during the last quarter of the twentieth century, much as Morgenthau’s (1948) version of the theory of realism dominated discussions during the period between 1950 and 1975. Overall evaluation of neorealism is beyond the scope of this chapter. Instead, the focus is on the role of power and capabilities in the theory.

Waltz advances a structural theory of international politics. One of the defining characteristics of the structure of the international system is the distribution of capabilities. Since judgments must be made about how capabilities are distributed, Waltz must confront the issue of how to measure them. Realizing that his theory requires the rank ordering of states according to their capabilities, he resists the specification of scope and domain necessitated by a relational notion of power. Ranking the capabilities of states is much harder if power (or capability) is conceived as multidimensional. Thus, he asserts that “the economic, military, and other capabilities of nations cannot be sectored and separately weighed” (1979: 131). He provides neither argument nor evidence to support the assertion that different kinds of capabilities *cannot* be measured separately; he simply asserts it. It may be that Waltz has in mind the constraints of his theory in the sense that permitting capabilities to be weighed separately could make ranking states excessively difficult. Waltz goes on to say that “states are not placed in the top rank because they excel in one way or another.

Their rank depends on how they score on *all* of the following items: size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence. States spend a lot of time estimating one another's capabilities, especially their abilities to do harm" (1979: 131). The use of the term "score" is revealing. It implies a measuring rod, or standard, in terms of which the various elements of national power can be evaluated; but there is no indication of what this standard is. The assertion that states devote "a lot of time to estimating one another's capabilities" is unsupported and contestable. The defense ministries of states formulate contingency plans with respect to a variety of policy-contingency frameworks, but it is unlikely that they spend much time estimating each other's capabilities in general or without reference to actual or postulated situations. The idea that American policy-makers spend a lot of time calculating the capabilities of Canada or the United Kingdom in general, or in the abstract, seems rather far-fetched. Still, these are empirical questions and are, in principle, researchable.

Despite his admission that "states have different combinations of capabilities which are difficult to measure and compare" (1979: 131), Waltz proclaims that "ranking states ... does not require predicting their success in war or in other endeavors. We need only rank them roughly by capability." This assertion, of course, begs the question of how "capabilities" are to be defined – a definition that Waltz never provides. We are told only that capabilities are "attributes of units" (1979: 98). Clearly, the relational concept of power or capabilities is ruled out, since that concept of power depicts capabilities as potential relationships rather than as properties of a single state (or unit). The question of "Capability to get whom to do what?" is simply begged; and the power as resources concept underlying Waltz's theory becomes apparent.

At some level, however, most international relations theorists recognize the wisdom of the Sprouts' contention that "without some

set of given undertakings (strategies, policies), actual or postulated, with reference to some frame of operational contingencies, actual or postulated, there can be no estimation of political capabilities" (1965: 215). In most treatments of the elements of national power in international politics, an implicit set of policy-contingency assumptions can be identified, usually having to do with military power. Just as Morgenthau's discussion of the elements of national power implies that war-winning is the standard of judgment (Baldwin, 1993: 17–18), careful reading of Waltz generates a strong suspicion that war-winning ability is the unstated standard by which states are being ranked. Morgenthau's contention that "nations active in international politics are continuously preparing for, actively involved in, or recovering from organized violence in the form of war" ([1948]1960: 38) is remarkably similar to the outlook in Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*. "The possibility that force will be used by one or another of the parties looms always as a threat in the background. In politics force is said to be the *ultima ratio*. In international politics force serves, not only as the *ultima ratio*, but indeed as the first and constant one" (Waltz, 1979: 113). "The daily presence of force and recurrent reliance on it mark the affairs of nations. Since Thucydides in Greece and Kautilya in India, the use of force and the possibility of controlling it have been the preoccupations of international-political studies" (Waltz, 1979: 186). Given the absence of any explicit standard for "scoring" the capabilities of states in Waltz's text, there is more than a little reason to suspect that war-winning is the implicit standard being applied.

Although the book is nearly devoid of references to the scholarly literature on relational power, at the end of *Theory of International Politics* (1979: 191–2), almost as an afterthought, Waltz launches a confusing and confused attack on the relational concept of power: "We are misled by the pragmatically formed and technologically influenced American definition of power – a definition that equates power with control.

Power is then measured by the ability to get people to do what one wants them to do when otherwise they would not do it." This is a puzzling and misleading criticism. It is unclear why Waltz uses the phrases "pragmatically formed," "technologically influenced," or "American." The relational concept of power was developed by non-Americans as well as Americans (Barry, 1976; Goldmann and Sjöstedt, 1979; Hagström, 2005; Lukes, 1974; Weber, 1947) and has no intrinsically ethnocentric biases. And neither the meaning nor the significance of pragmatism and technology is self-evident or explained.

Waltz goes on to assert that "the common relational definition of power omits consideration of how acts and relations are affected by the structure of action," which is not necessarily true, and that unintended effects are ruled out of consideration, which is true of some versions of relational power but not others – as noted above.

"According to the common American definition of power, a failure to get one's way is proof of weakness." In a sense, this is true. Actors that consistently try and fail to influence other actors are unlikely to be viewed as powerful. Indeed, Waltz himself appears to believe this, since he later observes that "the stronger get their way – not always, but more often than the weaker" (Waltz, 1993).

Waltz then asks: "What then can be substituted for the practically and logically untenable definition? I offer the old and simple notion that an agent is powerful to the extent that he affects others more than they affect him." There are several remarkable aspects of this proposed definition of power. First, after rejecting both causal and relational concepts of power, he proposes a definition that is both causal and relational. Second, the notion proposed is similar to those espoused by Deutsch (1953, 1963) and Frey (1985), both of whom saw themselves as contributing to the development of the relational concept of power. Third, it is inconsistent with the statement in the very next paragraph that "the extent of one's power cannot be inferred from the results one may or may not get." And fourth, the proposed concept of power seems to have

little or nothing to do with the concepts of power and capability used throughout the earlier sections of the book. If capability is defined as the potential power to affect others more than one is affected by others, it is no longer a property of a single actor.

Even the critics of neorealism credit it with having enhanced the clarity and rigor of the realist theoretical tradition (Keohane, 1986). With respect to its treatment of power and capability, however, *Theory of International Politics* seems to have introduced a considerable amount of confusion, and contradiction.

Offensive realism

Offensive realism (Mearsheimer, 2001) differentiates itself from both the realism of Morgenthau and the neorealism of Waltz. Although both Morgenthau and Mearsheimer depict states as striving to maximize their power,⁷ the former attributes this to a "lust for power," while the latter views it as a necessary consequence of the anarchical international system. And although both Waltz and Mearsheimer derive state goals from the structure of the international system, the former views states as pursuing only enough security to assure survival, while the latter depicts them as seeking all the power they can get "with hegemony as their ultimate goal" (Mearsheimer, 2001: 22).

For Mearsheimer, "calculations about power lie at the heart of how states think about the world around them. Power is the currency of great-power politics, and states compete for it among themselves. What money is to economics, power is to international relations" (2001: 17). Like other realists, including Morgenthau and Waltz, Mearsheimer views power largely in military terms. Unlike them, however, his emphasis on military force is quite explicit: "In international politics ... a state's effective power is ultimately a function of its military forces. ... The balance of power is largely synonymous with the balance of military power. I define power largely in military terms because offensive realism

emphasizes that force is the *ultima ratio* of international politics” (Mearsheimer, 2001: 55–6). It is not just military power that matters for offensive realism, it is “land power.” Armies matter more than navies or air forces because of their superior ability to conquer and control land, “which is the supreme political objective in a world of territorial states” (86).

Critics of realism often portray it as emphasizing the material bases of national power. Although such characterizations are somewhat unfair to Morgenthau and Waltz, this is not the case with respect to offensive realism. For Mearsheimer, power “represents nothing more than specific assets or material resources that are available to a state” (57).

Like Waltz, Mearsheimer considers and explicitly rejects Dahl’s relational concept of power, which he views as equating power with outcomes. “According to this logic”, he asserts, power exists only when a state exercises control or influence, and therefore it can be measured only after the outcome is determined” (p. 57). This is simply wrong. Capability analysis may be difficult, but it is not impossible – which Mearsheimer seems to admit when he describes attempts to determine the balance of power in advance as “almost impossible” (60).

Offensive realism has little to say about states’ ability to achieve goals other than survival. The concept of power embedded in this theory is zero-sum and based on the material resources relevant to “conquering and controlling land,” which it considers the “supreme political objective of states” (86). Regardless of whether one agrees with this view or not, it has the great merit of making its premises and much of its logic explicit.⁸

CURRENT ISSUES

The study of power in international relations has generated a number of issues. Among these are the following: polarity and balancing, the role of military force, structural power, and constructivism.

Polarity and balancing

The end of the Cold War and the disintegration of one of the “superpowers” in a bipolar world triggered renewed interest in balance of power theory. Could the theory – or some variant thereof – explain the abrupt end of the Cold War? Was balance of power theory relevant to a post-Cold War world? Could balance of power theory predict the future evolution of the international system?

Some predicted that balance of power dynamics would lead to a multipolar distribution of power (Layne, 1993; Mearsheimer, 1990; Waltz, 1993), while others expected the post-Cold War world to be characterized by unipolarism (Ikenberry, Mastanduno, and Wohlforth, 2009; Wohlforth, 1999). Brooks and Wohlforth (2008) contend that the disparity in power between the United States and other countries is so great that the world is unipolar and likely to remain so for a long time.

Others have argued that the power-balancing process continues to operate using methods other than traditional military capability adjustments. This “soft balancing” provides a check on the power of the United States (Pape, 2005; Paul, 2005).

The renewed attention to the balance of power during the last twenty years has not generated much consensus among scholars. One writer observes that “recent work on the subject suggests that, despite decades of attempts to give greater analytical precision to the phrases “balancing” and “balance of power,” there has not been much progress” (Nexon, 2009: 334). Others scholars find that “both systemic outcomes and state behavior directly contradict the core balance-of-power hypothesis that balancing behavior prevents systemic hegemony” (Wohlforth et al., 2007). Even the question of what is meant by a “pole” has been contested. According to Wagner:

It is a remarkable fact that, in spite of all the discussion and debate about bipolarity and multipolarity, not to mention the possible consequences of “unipolarity,” since the end of the cold

war, neither Waltz nor anyone else has ever specified what the “polarity” of an international system refers to. And therefore no one has ever presented a valid argument in support of the claim that states behave differently in systems with different polarities (Wagner, 2007: 21; 1993).⁹

Military power

Many writers have commented on the preoccupation with military force by students of international politics down through the ages (Art and Waltz, [1971] 1999; Baldwin, 1989; Osgood and Tucker, 1967; Sprout and Sprout, 1945, 1962, 1965; Wagner, 2007; Waltz, 1979; Wright, 1955, [1942] 1965). Although war is an important phenomenon that international relations scholars regard as their special province, the field of international relations has paid a price for its preoccupation with military force. The importance of military force has been exaggerated; the role of nonmilitary forms of power has been underestimated; and the field of international relations has been impoverished by its insulation from studies of power in other realms.

The privileged place of military power in the study of international politics is demonstrated and reinforced by references to the “centrality” of force to international politics (Art, 1996; Baldwin, 1999; Wagner, 2007); to the study of power as “a study of the capacity to wage war” (Cline, [1975]1997); to force as “the ultimate form of power” (Gilpin, 1975, 1981); or to international security studies as “the study of the threat, use, and control of military force” (Walt, 1991: 212). Even Keohane and Nye ([1977]2001: 15), who have criticized the traditional emphasis on military force, depict force as dominating other means of power.

The tendency to single out force as the ultimate measuring rod to which other forms of power should be compared is anathema to the approach advocated by Lasswell and Kaplan (1950: ix, 76, 85, 92, 94). Although they gave “special consideration to the role of violence,” they repeatedly denied that power rests “always, or even generally, on

violence”; and they maintained “that power may rest on various bases”; that “none of the forms of power is basic to all the others”; and that “political phenomena are only obscured by the pseudosimplification attained with any unitary conception of power as always and everywhere the same.” Despite the vigorous efforts of Lasswell and Kaplan and the tradition of relational power analysis they spawned, the contemporary literature on international relations often exhibits the same tendencies to exaggerate the role of military power as did earlier works (Baldwin, 1995; Mearsheimer, 2001; Ray and Vural, 1986; Walt, 1991; Waltz, 1979).

The preoccupation with military force in the study of international politics has led to the neglect of nonmilitary forms of power, such as economic statecraft (Baldwin, 1985). In addition, it has ironically limited understanding of military statecraft itself. The question of when military force should be used cannot be answered without consideration of alternative instruments of statecraft (Baldwin, 1995; 1999/2000). Thus, the neglect of nonmilitary forms of power has hampered understanding of the conditions under which military force should be used.

Structural versus relational power

The relational power approach has been criticized both for neglecting the study of structural power and for its alleged inability to take account of structural power (Guzzini, 1993, 2000; Strange, 1988). To the extent that structural power is viewed as unrelated to human agency or based on a noncausal notion of power, it would be fair to say that relational power and structural power represent fundamentally different approaches to the study of power. Otherwise, the relational concept of power is quite capable of taking account of power structures.

If structural power refers to unintentional power or to power with respect to the creation and/or control of structures (Guzzini, 1993; Krasner, 1985; Strange, 1988), there is

no need to seek an alternative to the relational concept of power. The first meaning can be taken care of by excluding intentionality from the concept of power, as noted above. And the second meaning of structural power can easily be accounted for by proper specification of scope and domain. The creation and/or control of structures is simply an instance of influence with a particular scope and domain.

The study of power structures does present difficulties for the relational notion of power if such structures are depicted as unidimensional and monolithic and unspecified as to scope and domain. Thus, the idea of a single power structure dominating all issue areas and all domains to an equal degree is difficult to reconcile with the relational power approach. Some discussions of “hegemony” in international relations seem to imply this view. There is no reason, however, why structures defined as persistent patterns of power relationships in specified scopes and domains cannot be usefully studied using the relational concept of power (Frey, 1971). It is worth noting that Lasswell and Kaplan (1950) devoted a whole chapter to “structures.”

Constructivism versus rationalism

How does the debate between constructivism and rationalism intersect with power analysis in the study of international relations? It depends on which of the many versions of constructivism one examines. If constructivism is viewed as rejecting human agency and causal concepts and theories, there is very little overlap. The postmodernist followers of Michel Foucault, for example, may find the relational power approach of little interest. Subscribers to Wendt’s (1999) version of constructivism, however, will find much grist for their mill in the relational power literature. Wendt (1999: 97) divides international relations theories into those that emphasize “brute material forces” as bases of power and those that view power as “constituted primarily by ideas and cultural contexts.”¹⁰

From its inception, the relational power approach has included both material and nonmaterial bases of power. Lasswell and Kaplan (1950: 87) cited respect, rectitude, affection, and enlightenment as base values of power and influence; and they devoted a whole chapter to “symbols.” And Dahl ([1963, 1984], 1991: 35) includes information, friendship, social standing, and the right to make laws in addition to threats of force and money in a list of political power resources.

In addition, norms, values, ideas, and cultural contexts have figured prominently in the relational power approach. Among the factors that a power analyst might want to examine in explaining power relations, Dahl (1968: 412) included values, attitudes, expectations, decision-making rules, structures, and constitutions. No constructivist is more emphatic about the importance of cultural context in power analysis than are Lasswell and Kaplan (1950: 85, 94):

In particular, it is of crucial importance to recognize that power may rest on various bases, differing not only from culture to culture, but also within a culture from one power structure to another.

None of the forms of power is basic to all the others. As patterns of valuation in a culture are modified, and changes come about in the social order and technology, now one form of power and now another, plays a fundamental role. Political analysis must be contextual, and take account of the power practices actually manifested in the concrete political situation.

In sum, far from being a battleground for the dueling forces of constructivism and rationalism, power analysis may be a point of convergence for at least some members of each camp.

Noting that “Wendt does not discuss the meaning of power, let alone provide a “rival” conceptualization of it,” Berenskoetter (2007: 22n) concludes that Wendt’s “promise to present an alternative understanding of power constituted primarily by ideas and cultural contexts’ rather than ‘brute material forces’ remains unfulfilled.” Guzzini (2007: 23),

however, states that “constructivism has put some order into its own power concepts, which usually come as variations on the theme of ‘Lukes-plus-Foucault.’” He cites only articles by himself (1993) and by Barnett and Duvall (2005) in support of this assertion.¹¹

Barnett and Duvall (2005) contend that the discipline has shown “conceptual favoritism” by conceiving of power as the ability of one actor to get another to do something he would otherwise not do. Their characterization of this as a “realist conception of power” is puzzling since realism is usually associated with the power-as-resources approach rather than the relational power approach and since the two most prominent realists, Waltz and Mearsheimer, both explicitly reject a relational concept of power.

The concept of power proposed by Barnett and Duvall (2005: 42) is as follows:

Power is the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their circumstances and fate.

They concede that this concept is restricted in comparison with an alternative view that “sees power as the production of any and all effects and thus as nearly synonymous with causality.” What does this alternative approach include that Barnett and Duvall leave out? “It includes social relations of joint action through mutual agreement and interactions in which one actor is able to convince another actor to alter voluntarily and freely its beliefs, interests, or action.” They thus admit that their proposed concept of power excludes both cooperation and persuasion. They justify this exclusion by asserting that “most scholars interested in power are concerned not simply with how effects are produced, but rather with how these effects work to the advantage of some and the disadvantage of others.” This view of power as working to the advantage of A and the disadvantage of B, of course, is the same as that espoused by Lukes in 1974 and repudiated by him in 2005.

Although Barnett and Duvall depict their concept of power as broader than Dahl’s, it is

actually narrower in at least three respects: First, it excludes persuasion; whereas Dahl’s concept includes it. Second, it excludes cooperation for mutual gain, which Dahl’s concept does not. And third, it excludes all power relations in which A’s power benefits the interests of B.

POWER ANALYSIS AND POLICY RELEVANCE

The two dominant traditions in power analysis in international relations have been described above in terms of the elements-of-national-power approach, which depicts power as resources, and the relational power approach, which depicts power as an actual or potential relationship. Which is more likely to be useful to policy-makers? Nye (1990: 26, 2011: 240) suggests that the relational power approach is likely to seem “too ephemeral” to “practical politicians and leaders.” The idea of power as the “possession of resources,” he contends, holds more appeal for policy-makers because it “makes power appear more concrete, measurable, and predictable” than does the relational definition. “Power in this sense,” he notes, “means holding the high cards in the international poker game.”

A case can be made, however, for the opposite conclusion. It is the elements-of-national-power approach that has proved useful in the Correlates of War Project. Various studies based on this project of numerous wars during the past 500 years (Small and Singer, 1982; Stam, 1996; Wang and Ray, 1994) have produced useful knowledge about the causes and outcomes of war. Policy-makers, however, tend to have notoriously short time horizons. If they are considering going to war, it is not very helpful to point out that if they fight 50 wars during the next century, they are likely to win most of them. Nor are they likely to care much about what factors were important in most of the wars for the past 500 years. Most policy-makers are likely to be involved in only one

war. They want to know whether their country is likely to win a particular war, fought in a particular context, during a particular time period, against a particular adversary. The gross inventory of American elements of national power was not only of little help in predicting the outcome of the Vietnam War, it was quite misleading. The United States may have been the greatest power in the history of the world, but it was *ill*-equipped to fight a guerilla war in a faraway land with language, culture, and history that it understood poorly. In that situation, a relational power approach, setting the capability estimate in the context of a relevant policy-contingency framework, would probably have been more useful to American foreign policy-makers. Context matters, and policy-makers, as practical people, are likely to understand this more readily than academics. It is permissible to depict the elements of power as holding the high cards in *an* international card game, but it is impermissible to imply that there is only one kind of card game in international politics. If the name of the game is bridge, the person with the good poker hand may be in big trouble. Policy-makers need to know the name of the game in order to evaluate the strength of their hands.¹²

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Power analysis intersects with almost every major research program in international relations. It would be impossible to identify all of the promising avenues of research for the power analyst during the next ten years or so. Those discussed here do not begin to exhaust the possibilities for fruitful research.

Power relations as dependent variables

Power may be treated as either a dependent or an independent variable (Dahl, 1968). Dahl's (1961) classic study of community

power was entitled *Who Governs?* In this study, power was treated as a dependent variable. The study began, as the title implies, with the assumption that power was being exercised by those who govern and proceeded to ask, "By whom?"; "On what issues?"; "How?"; and so on. International relations scholars may want to devote more attention to power as a dependent variable. Instead of focusing on how a given power distribution affects regime formation or war initiation, international relations scholars could devote more attention to questions like "Who has power with respect to which other actors, on which issues?" "By what means is this power exercised?" and "What resources allow states to exercise this power?" A good example of this kind of research is Cox and Jacobson's (1973) study of influence in international organizations. They focus on the distribution of influence, different issue areas, and different time periods. They also examine the bases of power of various actors. Students of international relations need to devote more attention to treating power as a dependent variable and less to treating it as an independent variable (cf. Caporaso and Haggard, 1989).

Forms of power

Preoccupation with military power has led students of international relations to neglect other forms of power.

Soft power The term "soft power" was introduced by Nye (1990) and has been popularized by him in ensuing years (2004, 2007, 2011). He used it to call attention to the ability to get "others to want what you want" (Nye, 1990: 31–2). Noting that this ability to affect the preferences of others "tends to be associated with intangible power resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions," he distinguished it from "the hard command power usually associated with tangible resources like military and economic strength."

In later writings on soft power, Nye emphasized "attraction": "What is soft power? It is

the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments” (2004: x). In *The Future of Power* Nye (2011: 20–1) offered a “longer, more formal definition of the concept”:

Fully defined, soft power is the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes.

Apparently, the tangibility of resources is not an essential defining characteristic of soft power, but rather an empirical association. Military force, which many understand to be the prototypical example of hard power, only “appears to be a defining characteristic of hard power” (Nye, 2007: 167), since it can also be used to produce soft power. This amalgamation of the discussion of defining characteristics of soft power with empirical observations about it has generated needless confusion.¹³ Future research on soft power should clearly distinguish between definitional matters and empirical ones.

Although Nye sometimes refers to himself as having “coined the term “soft power,” at other times he claims to have “introduced the concept” (2007; 2004; 2011). The former assertion is true, the latter is not. There is a difference between coining a phrase and inventing a concept. The concept of influencing someone by shaping that person’s preferences – getting them to want what you want – has deep historical roots, which have been explored by Gallarotti (2010b).

Nye (2004: 150) suggests that the idea “builds on what Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz called the ‘second face of power.’” (Bachrach and Baratz, 1963: 632–42). Those familiar with the “faces of power” debate, however, will recognize that the concept of soft power is closer to Lukes’ third face of power than to the second.

Further research would also be helped by recognition that there is little new in the idea of soft power from the standpoint of the literature on relational power. All of the forms of soft power discussed by Nye are familiar to relational power analysts. Further research

on soft power should be more firmly rooted in that literature.

Positive sanctions Positive sanctions are actual or promised rewards. Most of the research on power in international relations focuses on negative sanctions, that is, actual or threatened punishments (Baldwin, 1971a). Despite a number of recent works on the role of positive sanctions (Cartwright, 1997; Crumm, 1995; J. Davis, 2000; P. Davis, 1999; Kahler and Kastner, 2006; Long, 1996; Newnham, 2000; Nincic, 2010; Solingen, 2012), the opportunities for further research are enormous.

Comparative influence techniques The instruments of statecraft – diplomatic, economic, military, and symbolic – tend to be studied separately. This is a hindrance from the standpoint of both theory and policy relevance. Without comparative research on techniques of statecraft, theorists can say little about the utility of various policy instruments. If the success rate of economic sanctions is estimated at 34%, should one conclude that policy-makers are fools for using an instrument with such a low rate of success? Or is this about the best that can be expected of any instrument of statecraft? There is little or no reliable data on comparative success rates of instruments of statecraft.

Policy-makers have little use for research findings regarding one technique of statecraft. Policy-makers need information that will help them choose among alternative policy options. Thus, what they want to know is: How successful is a given policy instrument likely to be, with respect to which goals and targets, at what cost, and in comparison with which policy alternatives? Without comparative studies of techniques of statecraft, it is hard to answer such questions (Baldwin, 1999/2000).

Military force Despite the emphasis on military force in the literature on international politics, much work remains to be done. Three problems are especially deserving of further research. First, the question of whether the utility of military force is declining needs attention. The groundwork for this

research was provided by Knorr (1966: 5) long ago. The basic questions to be asked were identified as follows: “How much has it [i.e., force] lost in utility, if there has been any loss at all? And utility for what purpose? And to whom? And under what, if not all, circumstances? And military power in all its forms and modes of employment, or only in some?” Utility for the economist Knorr, naturally, was a function of both costs and benefits. Recent studies that purport to say something about the utility of military power while devoting little or no attention to the costs of using force can be quite misleading (e.g., Art, 1996; Art and Waltz, [1971]1999; Pape, 1996). The book on the costs of the war in Iraq by Joseph E. Stiglitz and Linda J. Bilmes (2008) entitled *The Three Trillion Dollar War* constitutes a major step in the right direction.

Second, the fungibility of military force needs further study. To what extent can military force be used to exercise influence in which situations? Although it is usually assumed that force is quite fungible with respect to military issues and conflicts, this assumption needs to be questioned. Wars and militarized conflicts come in a variety of sizes and shapes: guerilla war, civil war, limited conventional war, limited nuclear war, chemical and biological warfare, large-scale nuclear warfare, deterrent situations, etc. It is not clear that the military power resources useful in one type of war can easily be transferred to another type. Thus, more studies of the use of particular types of military power in different policy-contingency frameworks are needed (Byman and Waxman, 2002).

The third problem concerns the question of how to define and measure military success (Baldwin, 1999/2000; Byman and Waxman, 2002; Johnson and Tierney, 2006). Despite the voluminous literature on war, very little attention has been devoted to explicating the concept of success. The idea that “every war has a winner” is deeply embedded in the literature on military force. The persistence of the zero-sum concept of military conflict is troublesome since it is

incompatible with many of the topics dominating the scholarly research agenda during the past fifty years. As Schelling (1984: 269) notes: Deterrence ...

is meaningless in a zero-sum context. So is surrender; so are most limited-war strategies; and so are notions like accidental war, escalation, preemptive war, and brinkmanship. And of course so are nearly all alliance relationships, arms-race phenomena, and arms control. The fact that war hurts – that not all losses of war are recoverable – makes war itself a dramatically nonzero-sum activity.

Institutions and power

Power can be exercised in the formation and maintenance of institutions, through institutions, within and among institutions. Institutions may reflect power relations, constrain them, or provide the basis for their existence. To what extent do the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund serve as instruments of American foreign policy? To what extent does the United Nations enhance the power of some countries and constrain the power of others? To what extent does the World Trade Organization constrain US power? To what extent does it strengthen US power? How is power distributed within the European Union (Garrett and Tsebelis, 1999; Holler and Widgren, 1999; Steunenberg et al., 1999)? To what extent do international institutions exercise power rather than merely reflecting it (Mearsheimer, 1994/95)? All of these questions provide a rich research agenda for the study of institutions and power relations (Martin and Simmons, 1998).

Domestic politics

How does domestic politics affect national power? Even classic elements-of-national-power approaches included national morale, quality of government, public support, and political stability among the determinants of a country’s power (Morgenthau, [1948]1960). Does regime type matter? Are democracies at a disadvantage in international bargaining?

How, if at all, does a divided government affect a country's international bargaining position? Although the conventional realist wisdom has depicted democracy as hampering the efficient conduct of foreign policy, recent studies have called this view into question and opened new lines of research on the relationship between domestic politics and the exercise of international power (Fearon, 1994, 1998; Lake, 1992; Mansfield et al., 2000; Martin, 2000; Milner, 1997, 1998; Milner and Rosendorff, 1996; Mo, 1995).

Strategic interaction and bargaining

The bare-bones specification of power in terms of A causing a change in B's behavior is compatible with strategic interaction, but it neither calls attention to strategic interaction nor requires taking it into account. This is unfortunate, since most of what interests students of international politics involves strategic interaction. One of the most important research needs is linking the relational power literature with research on international strategic interaction (e.g., Martin, 2000; Milner, 1997, 1998; Mo, 1995; Powell, 1999; 2004).¹⁴

This is not to suggest, however, that game theory is the only way to analyze strategic interaction. The work of Jervis (1997), Lake and Powell (1999), Larson (1998), Schelling (1984), and others has demonstrated the value of nonmathematical approaches to strategic interaction. Game theory is a useful tool for analyzing strategic interaction, but the analysis of international strategic interaction is too important to be left to game theorists alone. As Lake and Powell observe: "The strategic-choice approach is theoretically inclusive... [It] provides a foundation for integrating and synthesizing many otherwise competing theories of international relations" (1999: 6).

Distribution of power

The question of how power is distributed needs to be studied using the relational

power approach. The work of Frey (1971, 1985, 1989) is especially relevant to this line of research. Rather than striving to produce yet another global ranking of the so-called "overall power" of every country in the world, scholars need to focus on power distributions within specified issue-areas and perhaps within specified regions. To the extent that persistent patterns are found, issue-relevant structures of power may be identified. Rather than trying to identify a single overall international power structure, scholars should strive to identify multiple structures of power in different issue-areas.¹⁵ Admittedly, such research will not try to provide answers to the question of "Who's number one in the game of international poker?" But simply redirecting attention away from that kind of question would, in itself, constitute progress in international power analysis.

CONCLUSION

Power has figured importantly in discussions of international interaction since the time of Thucydides. Despite the long tradition of power analysis in international politics, scholarly agreement on the nature of power and its role in international relations is lacking. The two principal approaches to power analysis in international interaction have been the "power as resources" (or "elements of national power") approach and the "relational power" approach. The latter was developed during the last half of the twentieth century by scholars in philosophy and a variety of social science disciplines. Both approaches are evident in contemporary international relations scholarship.

Although power is an ancient focus in the study of international relations, there are many opportunities for further research. These include (1) the treatment of power as a dependent variable; (2) the forms of power; (3) institutions and power; (4) domestic politics and power; (5) strategic interaction; and

(6) power distributions in different issue areas.

Although scholarly agreement on the nature and role of power in international interaction is unlikely in the near future, research along the lines suggested above may nevertheless enhance understanding of important dimensions of international behavior.

NOTES

1 The question of what constitutes a 'Great Power' remains unsettled even today. Harrison Wagner (2007: 20–1) observes that the term 'has no standard meaning'. See also, Jack Levy (1983: 10–19).

2 This grossly oversimplifies the highly sophisticated methodology of *Who Governs?*

3 Lukes calls this first face the 'one-dimensional view of power' and associates it with Dahl. By describing it here, I do not mean to imply that Lukes' portrayal of Dahl's views is either fair or accurate.

4 This passage does not imply that the three 'faces' are 'useless abstractions' as Nye (2011: 16) contends. It merely points out how broad Dahl's basic concept of power is.

5 The terms 'liquidity,' 'fungibility,' and 'asset specificity' all refer to the same underlying concept of convertibility and can be used interchangeably. Money is high in liquidity and fungibility and low in asset specificity. The liquidity of a resource is a function of time, scope, and domain (Baldwin, 1989). The difference between money and other resources is that money permits one to buy a greater variety of things from more people more quickly. It should be noted, however, that no resource is ever completely liquid. Even money, it is said, cannot buy love.

6 Although the degree to which the United States intended its nuclear deterrent to provide for Canadian security can be questioned, I would like to sidestep this issue for the purpose of illustrating the general point. The point is that Canadian security against nuclear attack was provided for regardless of the intentions of the United States.

7 Gallarotti (2010a) argues that it is possible to have too much power, a situation he labels 'the power curse.'

8 The extent to which the conclusions of offensive realism follow from the premises is a different matter. For an incisive discussion of this and other theories, see R. Harrison Wagner's *War and the State* (2007).

9 For thoughtful discussions of polarity, see Mansfield (1994) and Fearon (2010).

10 'Constructivists like to say that social structures determine the "identities" of individuals. The word *identity* is undefined, and it is not at all clear what it means, especially when applied to states' (Wagner, 2007: 43n; Fearon, 1999).

11 This formula for describing constructivist power concepts as 'Lukes-plus-Foucault' should probably be written as 'Lukes (1974)-plus-Foucault.' This would make it clear that the formula refers to a concept of power that Lukes now regards as 'a mistake.' (Lukes, 2005:12, 2007).

12 In *The Future of Power* Nye (2011) acknowledges that specifying the name of the game is important but still underestimates how important it is. 'As a first step in any game,' he says, 'it helps to start by figuring out who is holding the high cards.' It is impossible to do this, however, unless one first specifies what game is to be played. Determining the name of the game is logically prior to figuring out who has the high cards; indeed, one cannot even know what the high cards are until this step is taken. Specifying the game is always the first and most important step – in cards or international politics. Even in poker it is impossible to evaluate one's hand without knowing whether deuces are wild.

13 Nye's (2011: 81) complaint about the 'misuse' of the term 'as a synonym for anything other than military force' suggests that his numerous attempts at clarification over a twenty-year period have not been completely successful. See the special issue of the *Journal of Political Power* (2011) devoted to soft power.

14 Forty years ago Wagner (1969: 11) suggested that 'a theory of interdependent decisions in conflict situations' could address many of the problems that concern power analysts. His recent study of war places it in the context of organized violence and depicts war as a bargaining process.

15 David M. Andrews' (2006) edited volume entitled *International Monetary Power* provides an example of power analysis in a particular issue-area.

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Foreign Policy

Walter Carlsnaes

A decade ago it could still be claimed that the study of foreign policy may have had its day, and hence that these ‘are testing times for foreign policy analysts. At issue is whether their area of study remains a major sub-field of International Relations or whether it has become anachronistic, either subsumed or replaced by other approaches’ (White, 1999: 37).¹ Ten years onwards, little is left of this bleak picture, and instead of a questioning of its identity and *raison d’être* within the broader domain of International Relations (IR), we find an *élan* and optimism suggestive of nothing less than a revivalist rejuvenation – if not outright rebirth – of the field. ‘The beginning of the twenty-first century’, Valerie Hudson thus proclaims in her recent book, ‘was a propitious time for Foreign Policy Analysis ... There is no longer any doubt that the field, so long in the periphery of International Relations, is becoming more theoretically important ... Foreign Policy Analysis, even though it has been around since the late 1950s, is poised to become one of the cutting-edge fields of social science in the twenty-first century’ (Hudson, 2007: 185). Indices that can be adduced to exemplify this upsurge in interest and activity within the field include the establishment

in 2005 – for the first time, filling an inexplicable lacuna in the dissemination of IR scholarship – of a journal exclusively devoted to the field (*Foreign Policy Analysis*); the notable fact that the Foreign Policy Analysis section of the International Studies Association has surged ahead to become one of its largest; and the impressive number of essays with a foreign policy analysis focus – around 34 – in the recently published *The International Studies Encyclopedia*.

At the same time, this remarkable change of fortune within the academy should not be over-emphasised. Thus, while a scholar writing in a recently published handbook on IR felt emboldened to claim that foreign policy is ‘one of the most popular subfields of international relations’, this assertion is perhaps somewhat undermined by the fact that his is the only chapter on this topic – or, more precisely on ‘foreign policy decision making’ rather than ‘foreign policy’ itself – in a massive volume consisting of 44 chapters (Stuart, 2008: 576). Even more telling is the fact that one of the most internationally popular texts on international relations and world politics continues, in its most recent edition, to omit altogether a chapter on foreign policy analysis (Baylis, Smith, & Owens, 2010)².

All in all, however, there has recently been a noteworthy scholarly upsurge of interest in and contributions to this subdiscipline, and it is against the backdrop of these developments that this overview of the past and current condition of the field will be presented below.

The way I intend to proceed in this chapter is as follows. In the next section, an intellectual history of foreign policy analysis will be presented, primarily covering developments during the past half-century or so. After that, a conceptual and analytical overview of the field itself will be provided, in which I will first discuss fundamental definitional issues and thereafter present four rock-bottom types of explanatory frameworks defined not in terms of ‘schools’, ‘grand debates’, or ‘contending approaches’ but with reference to two fundamental meta-theoretical dimensions within the philosophy of social science. On the basis of these four generic perspectives or ideal types, my intention in the subsequent and core part of the chapter is to highlight and briefly discuss some of the more prominent contemporary attempts to structure and pursue analysis within this subdiscipline. The concluding section will pinpoint a few current and contentious issues straddling the various approaches discussed, indicating some areas of potential development within the field.

However, before proceeding with this overview, a brief terminological clarification needs to be made. In this chapter, the acronym FP will be used instead of FPA for the field of study usually called Foreign Policy Analysis (uppercase), even though the latter abbreviation is the normal one in the current literature. The primary reason for this is that this acronym has been appropriated to designate a *specific* approach to the study of foreign policy – mainly focusing on psychological processes and on decision making – rather than the field *as a whole* (see, in particular, Hudson, 2005, 2007, 2008)³. This terminological practice represents a misconceived denotation of the analytic scope of the field as *actually* found in the foreign policy

literature, and as such causes unnecessary confusion in current discussions within the field (Smith, Hadfield, & Dunne, 2008a: 4). In addition, this acronym – FP – is more in line with the way the analysis of international relations – International Relations (uppercase) – is abbreviated: IR and not IRA.

THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF FP

The present state of a field of study can be fully understood and assessed only if placed in its proper historical context. In this respect, our understanding of IR is slowly approaching maturity following a recent upsurge of in-depth studies penetrating its intellectual roots and subsequent growth as a scholarly discipline (Buzan, Waeber, & Wilde, 1998; Dunne, 1998; Guilhot, 2008, 2011; Guzzini, 1998; Kahler, 1997; Hudson, 2010; Knutsen, 1997; Schmidt, 1998, 2002; Thies, 2002; see also the chapter 1 by Schmidt in this volume). Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about FP, even though it too has an eminent pedigree as a body of thought – in the past admittedly focusing mainly on diplomacy and security issues – stretching back a number of centuries. Except for short (and often laudatory) overviews in introductory textbooks and state-of-the-art accounts, this to a large extent remains virgin territory, and hence one that is best traversed with considerable circumspection. A particular danger here is the practice, often referred to as Whig history or ‘presentism’, of writing history by emphasising ‘certain principles of progress in the past and to produce a story which is the ratification if not the glorification of the present’, as noted by a famous British historian (Butterfield, 1959: v). More specifically, the temptation here is to write such a history in terms of one’s own favoured conception of its present condition, including current methodological commitments and substantive concerns, and to extrapolate from these into the past, which as a consequence easily becomes distorted in one way or another.

Despite these problems in delineating an adequate intellectual history of a discipline, an attempt will be made here to present such a historical narrative by tracing some of the central historical pathways that the study of foreign policy has taken by pinpointing the most important junctures – or formative moments – which have defined its scholarly trajectory over the past half a century or so.

The origin of two traditions

Foreign policy analysis as an academic subject matter has had strong roots in the broader domain of public policy, especially in the United States. However, this is not where the origins of the field as an empirical object of study are to be found, since these can be traced back to an earlier and long-standing tradition – primarily of a European provenance, originating in the 17th century and the rise of the modern state thereafter – of viewing foreign policy as a distinct domain differing in fundamental respects from all other spheres of politics and public policy. ‘The leading assumption’, a leading scholar of foreign policy analysis wrote many years ago about the intellectual and political differentiation between the two spheres, ‘is that foreign policy is “more important” than other policy areas because it concerns national interests, rather than special interests, and more fundamental values’ (Cohen, 1968: 530). A crucial consequence of this doctrine of the ‘primacy of foreign policy’ – of *raison d’etat*, to use the classical phrase – was that political elites expected that it should be treated differently from all other domains of public policy, that is, be excluded from democratic control and public scrutiny. However, the international perturbation leading to, and the consequences of, World War I convinced some statesmen – Woodrow Wilson in particular – that an end should be put to the traditional secretive practices of diplomatic statecraft, which almost invariably had led to bloody wars, great social upheaval, and immense material destruction.

Despite the failure of the Wilsonian project during the interwar years, the study of foreign policy was deeply affected – especially in the United States – by this liberal and democratic ideology, with the result that much of its activities subsequent to the Second World War, when foreign policy analysis first came to be firmly established academically, was concerned with the study of two major implications of these beliefs (Cohen, 1968). The first was to focus on how the governmental institutions responsible for the formulation and implementation of foreign policy could be made more efficient in the pursuit of their tasks. The second had a more ideological thrust, essentially involving a plea for the democratisation of foreign policy making so that public values and interests could be introduced to every stage in its formulation and execution. In short, as against the older European tradition of diplomatic relations between a small number of statesmen, we can here speak of the ‘domestication’ of foreign policy.

However, together with this domestically oriented focus in the academic study of foreign policy, which enjoyed its American heyday during the two decades following the Second World War, we also find a second major tradition, consisting of the immensely successful induction into American thinking of a powerful European influence, and one that stands in marked contrast to the indigenous strands of the liberal Wilsonian project. Realism is its name, and Hans Morgenthau was for decades its undisputed high priest (Morgenthau, [1948]1973). As argued by Stefano Guzzini in a comprehensive sociological analysis of the history of realism, Morgenthau’s main concern, as that of realism in general at this time, was to resuscitate an older diplomatic tradition by translating the maxims of nineteenth-century European *Realpolitik* into the ostensibly more general laws of an American social science (Dunne & Schmidt, 2008; Guzzini, 1998; see also Kahler, 1997). This he did by claiming ‘that the inherent and immutable self-interested nature of human beings, when faced with a

structure of international anarchy, results in states maximising one thing, power' (Smith, 1986: 15). By linking this conception of power to that of the national interest, he believed that he could provide a universal explanation – based on the 'objectivity' of the laws of politics – for the behaviour of states. This explanation is premised on a logic of perpetual power-seeking behaviour on the part of the state, and it is this dynamic – rather than the motives or ideological preferences of decision makers – which explains its actions vis-à-vis other states. Domestic factors thus play little or no role in this conceptualisation of the nature of international politics, especially since domestic political struggles – waged within hierarchical rather than anarchic structures – are qualitatively different from those characterising the international system (Dunne & Schmidt, 2008: 93).

Hence, it is not difficult to understand why there was so little contact between realism and the tradition of 'domestic' foreign policy analysis adumbrated above, despite the fact that both lived side by side within American universities for a number of years after the Second World War. However, as recently suggested by Nicolas Guilhot, this relationship – or rather lack thereof – has an additional component which also needs to be recognised if we are to understand the subsequent vicissitudes of both traditions. In his view, the issue here is both philosophical and disciplinary, involving a deep-rooted conflict between the post-war émigré realists and the emerging scientific rationalism increasingly characterising American political science, which led the realists to an attempt in establishing a separatist movement with the aim of insulating the study of international politics from these currents of change (Guilhot, 2008). The paradoxical result of this resolve to forge a separate IR identity was that despite the 'scientific' language appropriated by Morgenthau, the 'first IR theorists were united by their negative view of the social sciences: they saw in scientific rationalism the same utopian drive that characterized the legalist vision of the interwar years' (Guilhot,

2008: 298–299). Instead of such a rationalistic 'policy science' conception of the discipline, they 'viewed politics as an art, performed not by technical specialists but by a few men of good judgment, an elite seasoned in the arcane wisdom of statecraft' (Guilhot, 2008: 300). Although a noteworthy step in the genesis of IR as a field of study in its own right, this separatist movement was ultimately a failure.

The behaviouralist challenge

The behaviouralist turn in American social science in the 1950s and 1960s had a decisive effect on both of these approaches to the study of foreign policy. Its impact on the domestically oriented research tradition was perhaps deeper in the sense that it changed its character altogether from being an essentially idiographic and normative enterprise – analysing particular forms of policy or prescribing better means for its formulation and implementation – to one which now aspired to generate and to test hypotheses in order to develop a cumulative body of empirical generalisations. The main outgrowth of this fundamental theoretical and methodological reorientation was a movement, starting in the late 1960s, which became known as the comparative study of foreign policy, or CFP for short. Its strong behaviouralist character is manifested in its focus on explaining foreign policy in terms of discrete acts of 'behaviour' rather than in the form of 'purposive' state actions in the realist mode; and taking its cue from how American behavioural political science focused on quantifiable 'votes' as its fundamental unit of analysis, it posited 'events' as its dependent variable. In this view, foreign policy is seen as the exercise of influence in international relations, with 'events' specifying 'who does what to whom, and how' (Hudson & Vore, 1995: 215). As a consequence, the task of collecting data on and analysing such events, with the aim of generating and accumulating empirical generalisations about foreign

policy behaviour, became a major industry within CFP. It was also an activity generously funded by a federal government fully in tune with these ambitions.

However, it is generally acknowledged by friend and foe alike that this programme of establishing a truly 'scientific' approach to the analysis of foreign policy was, on the whole, a significant if commendable failure. The empirical results of the major research programmes which had been launched during these years turned out to be disappointing (Hudson & Vore, 1995: 215–216), and it became increasingly evident that the aim of a unified theory and a methodology based on aggregate analysis had to be rejected as empirically impracticable and analytically unfruitful (Caporaso, Hermann, & Kegley, 1987; Kegley, 1980; Smith, 1987).

The CFP programme did not, however, eclipse the type of foreign policy analysis which all along had focused mainly on the domestic processes involved in foreign policy decision making, or on contextual or sociopsychological factors influencing such behaviour (Hudson & Vore, 1995: 216–219). The former, with roots going back the pioneering work on decision making by Richard C. Snyder, H.W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin (R. C. Snyder, Bruck, & Sapin, 1962; R. C. Snyder, Bruck, & Sapin, 2002), flourished in the form of studies focusing on both small group dynamics (C. F. Hermann, 1978a; Janis, 1982; Tetlock, 1979), the 'bureaucratic politics' approach made famous by the publication of Graham Allison's study of the Cuban crisis (Allison, 1971), as well as John Steinbruner's attempt to present foreign policy making as analogous to cybernetic processes (Steinbruner, 1974). The latter type of research focus, concentrating on more particular aspects of the decision-making process itself, produced a number of distinguished studies ranging from Michael Brecher's work on Israel (Brecher, 1972), Robert Jervis's work on perceptions and misperceptions (Jervis, 1976), and a long series of studies – continuing to the present time, as we shall see below – on the role of cognitive

and psychological factors in the explanation of foreign policy actions (Axelrod, 1976; Cottam, 1977; M. G. Hermann, 1974, 1980; O. R. Holsti, North, & Brody, 1968).

Turning to the development of realism in the face of the behaviouralist challenge, we are presented with an intriguing paradox in the history of foreign policy analysis. On the one hand, it was believed by many that given the centrality in Morgenthau's approach of power defined in terms of the innate, unobservable but crucial notion of a fixed human nature, as well as his distrust of scientific rationalism, it would not be able to withstand this confrontation. Yet, this is precisely what it did, insofar as the behaviouralists never really challenged the underlying assumptions of realism, only its methodology (Vasquez, 1983). Nevertheless, while continuing to be the major intellectual force defining IR itself (Guzzini, 1998; Hollis, & Smith, 1990), realism became methodologically divided as a consequence of the debate on its scientific status, and suffered a setback – by no means permanent – with the publication of Allison's in-depth penetration of the Cuba crisis in terms primarily of an analysis of unit-level rather than systemic factors (Allison, 1971). Since the celebrated appearance of Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* (Waltz, 1979), an even clearer bifurcation within realism has occurred, particularly in response to the strong stand against all forms of reductionist approaches – typified by most theories of foreign policy – which lies at the core of his structuralist translation of realism into neorealism.

In summation of this historical overview of foreign policy analysis, one can thus say that two broad traditions have from the very beginning played a major role in it, and that they continue to do so. The first is the more difficult to label, insofar as it contains a host of different and disparate approaches, including work on cognitive and psychological factors, bureaucratic and neo-institutional politics, crisis behaviour, policy implementation, group decision-making processes, and transnational relations, to name some of

the most important (see Hudson, 2007: 17–30, 2008). If only for lack of a better term, we can refer to this tradition in terms of the primacy allocated within it to the role of *Innenpolitik* – of domestic factors – in the explanation of foreign policy. As noted by Rose, although there ‘are many variants of this approach, each favouring a different specific domestic independent variable ... they all share a common assumption: that foreign policy is best understood as the product of a country’s internal dynamics’ (Rose, 1998: 148). Juxtaposed against its explanatory logic, we find realism broadly conceived, and for the sake of simplicity (and linguistic consistency) we can refer to this tradition as that of *Realpolitik*. Although in some of its more recent forms it is not averse to allowing for the play of domestic factors in the pursuit of foreign policy, the major explanatory weight is here given to material systemic-level factors in one form or another.

However, although this characterisation in terms of the classical divide between domestic and international politics has a long historical pedigree, it does have at least one major drawback as a criterion for classifying contemporary foreign policy analysis. For while many scholars continue to think of this analytical boundary as the major line of division within the field, and one which continues to be conceptually fruitful in analysis, it is nevertheless based on an assumption which is highly questionable as both an empirical and a theoretical proposition: that it is indeed feasible to determine the nature and function of such a boundary, and to do so without begging a fundamental question in the study of international relations. Thus, while it can be argued that this boundary characterisation continues to reflect a disciplinary self-understanding of its development, it will not be used below when discussing the current state of affairs in foreign policy analysis. Instead of a criterion based specifically on the *substantive* nature of foreign policy (and one of dubious value), the discussion will proceed from two

meta-theoretical dimensions – one ontological, the other methodological – which are entirely neutral or agnostic with regard to the substance of foreign policy itself.

CONCEPTUALIZING THE DOMAIN OF FP

‘There is a certain discomfort in writing about foreign policy’, we were forewarned many years ago, ‘for no two people seem to define it in the same way, disagreements in approach often seem to be deep-seated, and we do not yet know enough about it to be able to say with confidence whether it may be differentiated from all other areas of public policy’ (Cohen & Harris, 1975: 318). What its two authors point to here is a twin *problematique* which has occupied a central place in the history of foreign policy analysis, and which needs to be addressed as much today as in the past. The first of these concerns the crucial issue of what constitutes the particular explanandum (or dependent variable in neo-positivist parlance) of the study of foreign policy: what it is that is to be explained. For while this conceptual issue may on first sight seem trivial, it in fact goes to the very core of what distinguishes this field of study from that of both domestic and international politics, since it lies at the heart of the long-standing question of where and how to draw the analytical boundary between a subfield which willy-nilly straddles these two major foci of political science. In short, insofar as foreign policy is neither fish nor fowl in the study of politics, but an empirical subject matter characterised by its symbiotic links to both the internal and the external domains of a state, its conceptualization needs to be handled with particular care. Secondly, this issue is also crucial to the choice of analytically feasible instruments of explanation, since the nature of a given explanandum has obvious and fundamental implications for the types of explanans, that is, explanatory factors or independent

variables, which in principle are appropriate and in practice fruitful.

Defining the explanandum

In the current literature, we find two essentially different specifications or stipulations of the explanandum in the study of foreign policy. The first is characterised by a focus on decision-making *processes* in a broad sense, while the second makes a clear distinction analytical between such processes and *policy* itself, defined more narrowly in terms of its content *qua* a choice of action in the pursuit of a goal, or a set of goals, often characterised as an undertaking. I shall briefly discuss each specification and their explanatory implications.

Valerie M. Hudson has provided a representative example of the first approach in a series of important contributions to the field over the past decade or so. 'The explanandum of foreign policy analysis', she stipulates in the first and keynote article of *Foreign Policy Analysis* when first launched in 2005, 'includes the process and resultants of human decision making with reference to or having known consequences for foreign entities' (Hudson, 2005: 2). She then elaborates on this broad conceptualisation as follows: 'One may be examining not a single decision, but a constellation of decisions taken with reference to a particular situation. Furthermore, decisions may be modified over time, requiring an examination of sequences of decisions. Also, the stages of decision making may be the focus of inquiry, from problem recognition, framing, and perception to more advanced stages of goal prioritisation, contingency planning, and option assessment' (Hudson, 2007: 4). This is a tradition that goes back to the pioneering work of Snyder and his associates, whose ideas – at least in Hudson's view – are now finally making their way 'toward the heart of current debates' (Hudson, 2002: 1). The notion here is essentially that the object of examination – foreign policy – is a question of what foreign

policy decision makers are thinking and doing, that is, their behaviour and what they are up to in taking part in the dynamic and complex process of making decisions; hence, this is what needs to be examined and explained. Or as she notes: 'The explanans of FPA [sic] are those factors that influence foreign policy decision-making and foreign policy decision-makers' (Hudson, 2007: 5). The focus is thus explicitly on 'human decisional behaviour,' as Douglas T. Stuart has recently noted, adding that this 'makes this the most ambitious and multifaceted subfield of international relations' (Stuart, 2008: 576). Because they aim to explore the process of foreign policy decision making as a whole rather than policy per se, scholars of this ilk sometimes use the acronym FPDM to describe the focus of their field of study (Mintz & Derouen, 2010). As summarised by Hudson, foreign policy analysis is 'centered on foreign policy decision making (FPDM) as it is performed by human beings' (Hudson, 2007: 165).

A central assumption of scholars focusing instead on explaining the choice of specific *policies* or *policy actions* rather than decision-making processes is the notion that policies *result* from such processes – hence causally explaining these – rather than being part of them. Charles Hermann, discussing many years ago 'that which is to be explained,' thus wrote of foreign policy that it 'it is the discrete purposeful action that results from the political level decision of an individual or group of individuals,' and as such it is 'not the decision, but a product of the decision' (C. F. Hermann, 1978b: 34). Similarly, Edward L. Morse many years ago enjoined that when 'process definitions of foreign policy are employed they tell us very little about foreign policy, but can help in the elucidation of a good deal about policy making ... No matter how much analysis is brought to bear on processes they can tell us very little about policies themselves and can hardly explain them' (Morse, 1971: 40). In my judgement, this second view of the explanandum is today embraced by most

foreign policy analysts – not only by those scholars working within the *Realpolitik* tradition, who never abandoned the notion of states actively pursuing their national interests, but also by those placing themselves within the *Innenpolitik* fold in one way or another.

In summation, while process-oriented researchers seem reluctant to be too explicit about defining their object of analysis (understandably, since human decisional behaviour is highly complex, contingent, and multifaceted), there is considerable consensus today among scholars writing within this latter tradition around the view that the nature of the explanandum should at a minimum be defined in terms of the *purposive nature* of foreign policy actions, a focus on *policy undertakings*, and the crucial role of *state boundaries* (Carlsnaes, 1986, 2002). This is a view of the explanandum already endorsed as a minimum consensus definition by Bernard C. Cohen and Scott A. Harris some thirty-five years ago, writing that foreign policy is understood as a ‘set of goals, directives or intentions, formulated by persons in official or authoritative positions, directed at some actor or condition in the environment beyond the sovereign nation state, for the purpose of affecting the target in the manner desired by the policy-makers’ (Cohen & Harris, 1975: 383).

How to explain foreign policies

As a starting point for discussing the types of *explanatory factors* that have characterised foreign policy analysis, we will proceed from two *meta-theoretical* dimensions – one ontological, the other methodological – which are entirely neutral with regard to how IR and FP approaches are usually categorised. The underlying assumption here is that the study of foreign policy, like that of any other form of social interaction, can be addressed on two levels: in terms of a second-order or foundational level, which concerns itself with questions about ‘what there is and how we can explain or understand it – ontology, epistemology and

method’; and with respect to a first-order level, which is substantive and domain specific (Wendt, 1999: 4–5). Although foreign policy scholars have on the whole been much more concerned with substantive rather than foundational issues (see, e.g., the recent collection of essays in Lieber, 2008), the role of social theory – which quintessentially focuses on second-order questions – is fundamental to all forms of sociopolitical inquiry, for the simple reason that it specifies its basic assumptions. These include ‘the nature of human agency and its relationship to social structures, the role of ideas and material forces in social life, the proper form of social explanations, and so on’, as Wendt has written (Wendt, 1999: 5). Although his focus is on IR, these claims apply equally to FP. They also suggest that underlying the various and often contending approaches to foreign policy analysis are different foundational choices made by the scholar, whether implicitly or explicitly, and that it is in terms of these second-order choices that these differences can be pinned down in their most fundamental form.

In current meta-theoretical debate within social theory (and IR), two such fundamental issues have dominated the discussion. The first concerns the *ontological* foundation of social systems: the type of issue exemplified by the claim, reputedly made by Margaret Thatcher in her heyday, that there ‘is no such thing as a society,’ only individuals and families (quoted in Wight, 2006: 6). Essentially, it revolves around the question what constitutes the basic building blocks of social existence or, in view of our concerns here, where the dynamic foundations of foreign policy making are thought to be located, and what the meta-theoretical implications of such a determination are. As Stefano Guzzini has written, this dynamism either has its origin in ‘the effects, intended or not, of individual action; or from the slowly evolving rules of the self-reproducing structure’ (Guzzini, 1998: 197), presenting us with ‘competing visions of what the social world is and what it might become’ (Wight, 2006: 4). Its importance to us lies in the fact (as noted by

Colin Wight) that 'research is only possible on the basis of some or other ontology', and that 'Uncovering these deeply embedded and often implicit ontologies can play an important role in terms of understanding the theory and practice of international relations' (Wight, 2006: 4–5). This goes as much for understanding various approaches within FP as for those in IR, and will hence here constitute one of two fundamental criteria in distinguishing between them.

Using a classic dichotomy in social theory which is equally germane to FP, the relevant ontological issue is here is the choice between 'individualism' and 'holism,' the former holding 'that social scientific explanations should be reducible to the properties or interactions of independently existing individuals', while holism stands for the view 'that the effects of social structures cannot be reduced to independently existing agents and their interactions ... Holism implies a top-down conception of social life in contrast to individualism's bottom-up view. Whereas the latter aggregates upward from ontologically primitive agents, the former works downward from irreducible social structures' (Wendt, 1999: 26). Although much more can be said about this distinction and its implications, this is not the place for an in-depth analysis of this classic debate. It suffices to note that for our purposes these two categories in their ideal form constitute research programs in which the position on social ontology that one takes will affect which factors are downplayed and which are taken for granted as more or less axiomatic.

This ontological polarity between individualism and holism should be distinguished from the question of how we acquire knowledge of social interactions, which is essentially a *methodological* issue. As noted in a volume appropriately entitled *Ways of Knowing*, the focus here is on the question 'How do we know?' (Moses & Knutsen, 2007: 5). In the literature on social theory, two choices are made available to us: to focus on human agents and their actions either from the 'outside' or from the 'inside',

corresponding to an approach based on a naturalistic view self-consciously replicated on that of the natural sciences, or one premised on the independent existence of a social realm constituted by social rules and intersubjective meanings. Although not uncontroversial and hence in need of further discussion, this methodological distinction – expressed here as a choice between an 'objectivistic' versus an 'interpretative' methodology – will in the present context concern us only by virtue of its implications when combined with the two ontological choices presented above.⁴

The individualistic answer to the ontological question reduces the methodological issue to a choice between either treating actors from the 'outside' as rational or cognitive agents in social systems, or from the 'inside' as interpretative or reflexive actors in an intersubjective world of meaning. In either case, the individual is viewed as the primary source of social order, and hence all conceptions of the link between agents and social structures are ultimately reduced to explanations in terms of individual action. Explanations proceeding from a holistic approach to social order treat action either as a function of structural determination in some sense or other, or with reference to processes of socialisation broadly defined. In both cases, the relationship between actors and social structures is tendered in terms of some form of structural determination in which individual action is conceived as a function of a pre-established socio-structural order.

On the basis of these two dimensions, we can now summarise their implications for foreign policy approaches in the four-fold matrix presented in the figure below (Fig. 12.1).

A caveat is, however, in order here: this type of logical representation of a complex analytic discourse should not be taken to reflect 'real' disciplinary boundaries despite being – in various analogous forms – common within both IR and in the social sciences in general (see Dunne, 1995: 370–372; Guzzini, 1998: 190–210; Hollis, 1994: 183–260;

| ONTOLOGY | METHODOLOGY | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| | Objectivism | Interpretativism |
| Holism | <i>Structural perspective</i> | <i>Social-institutional perspective</i> |
| Individualism | <i>Agency-based perspective</i> | <i>Interpretative actor perspective</i> |

Figure 12.1 Four types of rock-bottom perspectives in the study of foreign policy.

Hollis & Smith, 1990: 155–159, 214–216; Wendt, 1999: 22–40; Wight, 2002: 24, 2006: 85–89). As Wight notes in this volume, although ‘such devices may be valuable aids in teaching and understanding complex issues’, they provide ‘an image of rigid boundaries that do not hold when the issue is considered in other discursive and less dichotomous ways.’ Nevertheless, if we view this matrix simply as an analytical aid in the above sense, these four rock-bottom perspectives – in the form of ideal types – can be used to provide a conceptual structure for an analytical overview of the most significant current approaches which, in my reading of it, can be found in the contemporary FP literature. In contrast, in the concluding part of this chapter there will also be a discussion of how to bridge what may seem here to be excessively rigid analytical boundaries. The figure below gives the reader a preview of these particular approaches and the meta-theoretical criteria in terms of which they have been classified.

I shall now proceed to discuss prominent examples of each of these four types of rock-bottom perspectives in the study of foreign policy. Given the space available, the ambition here is to be illustrative rather than comprehensive or exhaustive.

CURRENT APPROACHES IN FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS

Approaches based on a structural perspective

Realism

Although, as we shall see below, there are other structurally oriented approaches to foreign policy analysis as well, there is no doubt that most contemporary forms of realism fit this bill best. It is also the case that despite the attacks which neorealism has experienced as a consequence of its reputed inability either to predict or to explain the end of the Cold War or the events of 9/11, it continues

| | |
|---|---|
| Structural perspective <i>Realism</i> <i>Neo-liberal institutionalism</i> | Social-institutional perspective <i>Social constructivism</i> <i>Discursive approaches</i> |
| Agency-based perspective <i>Foreign policy decision making (FPDM)</i> <i>Cognitive and psychological approaches</i> <i>Bureaucratic politics</i> <i>New Liberalism</i> | Interpretative actor perspective <i>Interpretative actor approach</i> |

Figure 12.2 Current Approaches in FP.

not only to be alive and well (especially in North America), but also to contribute to the contemporary analysis of foreign policy. For although Waltz has repeatedly claimed that neorealism is a theory of international politics and hence not a theory of foreign policy (Waltz, 1996), strong counterarguments have been made that this is essentially an untenable position, and hence that nothing prevents neorealists from formulating a theory of foreign policy of their own (Elman, 1996a, 1996b; Rittberger, 2001). As recently noted by Stephen M. Walt, 'despite his emphasis on the autonomous role of system-level forces, Waltz's "neorealist" theory still relied on unit-level factors to account for the security problem ... In order to explain why conflicts arise and states are insecure, in short, Waltz ended up saying one needed a separate theory of "foreign policy", which is merely another way of saying that one must add unit-level factors to fully explain why states in anarchy are insecure' (Walt, 2010: 3). However, there are different variants of (neo) realism, of which at least the following play important roles in the contemporary debate.

First of all, a distinction is often made between 'aggressive' and 'defensive' forms – two terms originally coined by Jack Snyder (see also Lynn-Jones & Miller, 1995: xi–xii; Rose, 1998; J. Snyder, 1991: 11–12). *Aggressive neorealism* has for a number of years been pre-eminently represented by John Mearsheimer, who argues that given the anarchic nature of the international system, and the fact that security is always scarce, states have to maximise their share of world power unabatedly in order to remain secure (see also Layne, 1995: 130–176; Mearsheimer, 1995: 79–129). Or as recently suggested by Steven E. Lobell in explanation of this view: 'Uncertainty about intentions of other states combined with the anarchical nature of the international system compels great powers to adopt competitive, offensive, and expansionist policies whenever the benefits exceed the costs' (Lobell, 2010: 2).

Defensive neorealists, on the other hand, do not share this pessimistic and essentially

Hobbesian view of the international system, instead arguing that although systemic factors do have causal effects on state behaviour, they cannot account for all state actions. Instead of emphasising the role played by the distribution of power in the international system, scholars such as Walt and Charles L. Glaser have pointed to the importance of the source, level, and direction of threats, defined primarily in terms of technological factors, geographic proximity, offensive capabilities, and perceived intentions (Glaser, 1995; Walt, 1995; see also the references in Rose, 1998:146, fn 4). The picture presented here is that states pursuing security in a rational manner can on the whole afford to be relatively relaxed except in rare instances; and that security can generally be achieved by balancing against threats in a timely way, a policy that will effectively hinder most forms of actual conflict. 'Foreign policy activity', Rose thus explains, 'is the record of rational states reacting properly to clear systemic incentives, coming into conflict only in those circumstances when the security dilemma is heightened to fever pitch' (Glaser, 1995; see also Lynn-Jones & Miller, 1995: xi; Rose, 1998: 150; J. Snyder, 1991; Walt, 1995; Van Evera, 1990/91: 11–17; Fareed Zakaria, 1995: 475–481).

More recently a third variant of realism has become increasingly popular, called *neoclassical realism*, a term introduced by Gideon Rose in an oft-cited overview article on realism in FP (Rose, 1998; see also Schweller, 2003). This approach, William C. Wohlforth has claimed, 'is, simply put, realist theory for the foreign policy analyst', and has quickly established itself among foreign policy analysts with a realist bent as an alternative to both offensive and defensive neorealism (Wohlforth, 2008: 46). It shares with neorealism the view that a country's foreign policy is primarily formed by its place in the international system and in particular by its relative material power capabilities. However – and here the classical roots of this approach come to the fore – they also

argue that the impact of systemic factors on a given country's foreign policy will be indirect and more complex than neorealists have assumed, since such factors can effect policy only through intervening variables at the unit level (Rose, 1998: 146). Or as noted by Walt, the causal logic of this approach 'places domestic politics as an intervening variable between the distribution of power and foreign policy behavior' (Walt, 2002: 211). This view is clearly contrary to the whole tenor of offensive neorealism, but neoclassical realists also fault defensive neorealists, mainly because it is claimed that their systemic argument fails to explain much of actual foreign policy behaviour and hence needs to be augmented by the ad hoc introduction of unit-level variables (see, e.g., Schweller, 1996: 114–115; Fareed Zakaria, 1995). As a consequence of the stress on the role of both independent (systemic) and intervening (domestic) variables, research within neoclassical realism is generally conducted in the form of theoretically informed narratives – sometimes supplemented with counterfactual analysis – that trace how different factors combine to forge the particular foreign policies of states (Rose, 1998: 153). More specifically, this has yielded extensive narrative case studies of how twentieth-century great powers – especially the United States, the Soviet Union, and China – have reacted to the material rise or decline of their relative power in the international system (Christensen, 1996; Schweller, 1998; Wohlforth, 1993; Faheed Zakaria, 1998). More recently, as discussed in the first systematic survey of the neoclassical approach, a host of empirical studies have seen daylight – too numerous to list here in full (Lobell, Ripsman, & Taliaferro, 2009; see Taliaferro, Lobell, & Ripsman, 2009: 8–9 for such a list). However, important examples are Christopher Layne's examination of US grand strategy and strategic adjustment (Layne, 2006), and Schweller's study of threat assessment and alliance formation in Britain and France before the two world wars (Schweller, 2006).

Neoliberal institutionalism

Although not generally touted as an approach to the analysis of foreign policy, it is obvious that the type of focus that usually goes under the moniker of *neoliberal institutionalism* is as relevant to the study of foreign policy as are realism and neorealism in their various configurations. Indeed, insofar as this school of thought is posited as an alternative to realism (and, the view of some, as the only one), it also *pari passu* entails an alternative approach to foreign policy (see Baldwin, 1993). Its roots go back to the study of economic and political interdependence a number of years ago, culminating in Keohane and Nye's seminal reformulation of institutional analysis in *Power and Interdependence* (Keohane & Nye, 1977).

What is distinctive about the neo-liberal institutionalist approach to foreign policy analysis? Very briefly, the following: whereas both realists and neoliberals view foreign policy-making as a process of constrained choice by purposive states, the latter understand this constraint not primarily in terms of the configurations of power capabilities facing policy-makers, but with reference to an anarchic system which, while it fosters uncertainty and hence security concerns, can nevertheless be positively affected by the institutional provision of information and common rules in the form of international regimes. Thus, instead of viewing international institutions as epiphenomenal and hence constituting a 'false promise' (Mearsheimer, 1994–5), neoliberal institutionalists emphasise that such institutions do matter – that they 'make a difference in the behaviour of states and in the nature of international politics' (Stein, 2008: 212). Or as noted by K.J. Holsti, how states 'defend and pursue their purposes is tempered by international institutions that encompass ideas, norms, rules, and etiquette ... [which] have a moderating influence on the plans and actions of their sovereigns' (K.J. Holsti, 2004: 306–307). As a result, international cooperation under anarchy *is* possible in the pursuit of given state preferences (Oye, 1985); and

hence certain specific features of an international institutional setting can explain state outcomes in the form of cooperative foreign policies (Axelrod & Keohane, 1993; Keohane, 1993).

Recent substantive work which has proceeded from this approach include John Ikenberry's empirical analysis of the increasingly institutionalised international orders created by victorious hegemony (Ikenberry, 2001), and Holsti's more general study of change in the institutional framework of international politics (K.J. Holsti, 2004).

Approaches from an agency-based perspective

Foreign policy decision making (FPDM)

As discussed above, this approach differs from all other approaches discussed here by specifying the decision-making process as the explanandum, and hence viewing the explanans as those factors that influence foreign policy decision making and foreign policy decision makers rather than the content of policy itself (Hudson, 2007: 5). More specifically, it is an actor-specific approach – only real decision makers count, since actors in this perspective are not generic entities but always specific individuals (Hudson, 2007: 6) – premised on the notion that the behaviour of such actors is affected by explanatory factors on various levels of analysis, 'from the most micro to the most macro', as Hudson writes (Hudson, 2005: 2). In its simplest form, such a levels-of-analysis framework is defined in terms of an individual level, a state level, and an international level of explanation (Neack, 2003), with additional variants including a group decision-making level as well as one incorporating culture and national identity (Hudson, 2007). Furthermore, the causal effects on the decision-making process of actors and structures are examined one level at a time, with actors dominating on the lower levels of analysis (individual and group decision levels), while structures take over the stage as the levels become more general

and abstract (state, cultural, and international levels).

Recent book-length contributions to studies with this explanatory focus are Hudson's recent text, which includes a host of empirical examples (Hudson, 2007); Neack's second edition of *The New Foreign Policy* (Neack, 2008); and Alex Mintz and Karl De Rouen's *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making* (Mintz & Derouen, 2010), which provides a book-length overview of the field, combining theory with a number of case studies from around the world.

Cognitive and psychological approaches

Although research on the cognitive and psychological characteristics of individual decision makers has been viewed with considerable scepticism in some IR quarters, this has in fact been one of the most substantial growth areas within foreign policy analysis over the past three decades. Indeed, as recently noted in an overview of the field, 'the literature has become so large and extensive that a comprehensive review of the vast body of cognitive-oriented scholarship in foreign policy accumulated over the years makes it a very difficult if not virtually impossible undertaking' (Jerel Rosati & Miller, 2010: 1; see also Goldgeier, 2010; Mintz & Derouen, 2010). A brief summary of the field will nevertheless be attempted (see also Stein's chapter 8 in this volume).

As against the rational choice assumption – common to both realism and neoliberal institutionalism – that individuals are in principle open-minded and adaptable to the dictates of structural change and constraints, this approach broadly defined is based on the contrary assumption that they are to a considerable degree impervious to such effects due to the stickiness of their underlying beliefs, the way they process information, as well as a number of other personality and cognitive traits. However, in its earliest years having focused essentially on the study of attitudes and attitudinal change, and more specifically on theories of cognitive consistency, including cognitive dissonance, congruity, and

balance theory (Jerel Rosati, 1995: 52), psychological analysis underwent a 'cognitive revolution' in the 1970s. Instead of the conception of the passive actor underlying previous work, a new view emerged stressing the individual as problem-solver rather than malleable agent (Jerel Rosati, 1995: 52–54; Young & Shafer, 1998).

Yaacov Y.I. Vertzberger's magisterial *The World in their Minds* (Vertzberger, 1990) provides a very useful summary of much of the work done within this genre by the end of the 1980s. This was also a period when studies of how the characteristics of leadership – beliefs, motivations, decisional, and interpersonal styles – affected the pursuit of foreign policies first received serious attention, a focus which has continued to this day (M. G. Hermann, 2005; M. G. Hermann & Hagan, 2002; M. G. Hermann & Preston, 1998). Here one can also include small group approaches, including a focus on the effects of 'groupthink' (Garrison, 2010; Hart, Stern, & Sundelius, 1997; C. F. Hermann, Stein, Sundelius, & Walker, 2001; M. G. Hermann & Hagan, 2002). To this list one must also add prospect theory, not least because it reputedly 'has evoked the most interest among students of foreign policy-making' (Kahler, 1998: 927). James W. Taliaferro has provided us with the most recent and up-to-date review of this approach and its current applications in FP (Taliaferro, 2010). Role theory, first introduced into FP by Kal Holsti (K. J. Holsti, 1970; see also Walker, 1987), should also be mentioned in this connection; Cameron G. Thies has recently provided a useful overview of this approach (Thies, 2010).

Important book-length work done within this field during the past decade or so include Deborah Larsen's work on Cold War mistrust between the two superpowers (Larsen, 1997); Samantha Power's analysis of how previous experiences – especially in Somalia – led to American inaction in such places as Bosnia and Rwanda (Power, 2002); and David Patrick Houghton's study of the Iran hostage crisis (Houghton, 2001).

Bureaucratic politics approaches

The intellectual roots of this approach can be traced to the first period of foreign policy analysis discussed above, focusing on public administration, to the early foreign policy decision-making approach launched by Snyder and his associates, as well as to classic scholarship on the role of domestic politics in public policy-making (Jones, 2010: 2). Allison drew heavily on these traditions in his study of the Cuban crisis, while putting his own particular stamp on it (mainly by discounting domestic factors and the role of the worldviews of decision makers).

Although focused heavily on organisational and institutional factors, it is nevertheless premised on an agency oriented rather than a structural view of the field (in contrast to his organisational process model, which has had little impact on FP, and which therefore will not be discussed here). Insofar as it focuses on interaction among organisational players with competing preferences involved in bargaining games, it does not aim to explain in terms of organisational outputs (as in organizational process models) but on the basis of the actual 'pulling and hauling that is politics' (Allison & Zelikow, 1999: 255). The power involved in this type of political infighting is not in the first-hand personal but bureaucratic, insofar as the actors involved in these bargaining games represent sectional or factional rather than individual interests. Hence the famous apothegm (reputedly minted by Don Price, but also known as Miles's law) which encapsulates this bureaucratic link between individual actors and their organisational anchorage: 'where you stand depends on where you sit'.

Although explicitly theorised on the basis of the empirical realities of how governments actually work (at least in the United States), this view of foreign policy decision making has over the years received considerable criticism both with reference to conceptual confusion and poor empirical performance (see, e.g., Bendor & Hammond, 1992; Bernstein, 2000; Rhodes, 1994; Welch, 1998). Nevertheless, it continues to stimulate

research on foreign policy, mainly in the form of a ‘third generation’ of bureaucratic politics scholarship which began to emerge in late 1990s; and although earlier claimed to be excessively US-centred in its empirical applicability, it is slowly finding its way to Europe and elsewhere (see, e.g. Jones, 2010; Stern & Verbeek, 1998; Tayfur & Goymen, 2002; Zhang, 2006). Although not part of this third generation of bureaucratic scholars, the second edition of Halperin and Clapp’s oft-cited *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* provides a number of new examples of bureaucratic politics behaviour based on developments in the Carter, Reagan, Bush I, Clinton, and Bush II administrations (Halperin & Clapp, 2006).

New liberalism

Although it has roots going back to the early Rosenau (Rosenau, 1969) and prominent European scholars of foreign policy (Czempiel, 1981; Hanrieder, 1967), Andrew Moravcsik must nevertheless be given primary credit for having put the liberal approach – or the ‘new liberalism’, as it is also called – squarely on the contemporary IR and FP agendas. This research programme places state-society relations at the centre of world politics, and is ‘based on the fundamental premise that a critical causal factor influencing a state’s behaviour is the relationship between the state and the domestic and transnational society in which it is embedded,’ Moravcsik writes in explanation (Moravcsik, 2003: 361). Examples of research influenced by this approach include studies focusing on transnational advocacy networks (Carpenter, 2007; Keck & Sikkink, 1998), agricultural trade policy (Gawanda & Hoekman, 2006), bilateral investment treaties (Elkins, Guzman, & Simmons, 2006), and the role of electoral institutions in producing illiberal commercial policies (Ehrlich, 2007). More spectacularly, this approach has also inspired the presentation of new liberal theory in the form of a prospectus for US foreign policy (Ikenberry & Slaughter, 2006) – ‘an approximation of what new liberal foreign relations might look,’

as a commentator has recently surmised (Simpson, 2008).

Approaches based on a social-institutional perspective

Social constructivism

Although ‘social constructivism’ (or simply ‘constructivism’), like ‘rational choice’ (or ‘rationalism’), is essentially a meta-theoretical standpoint in the study of social phenomena, and hence is foundational to political analysis rather than being a specific analytical or ‘theoretical’ approach within IR, it will here – following most constructivist scholars (Adler, 1997, 2002, this volume; Dunne, 1995; Guzzini, 2000; Hopf, 1998, 2002; Ruggie, 1998; Wendt, 1999) – be used to designate a more or less coherent and by now fully established body of thought in IR, including foreign policy analysis. Although it has roots in early phenomenological accounts of international relations (see Kowert, 2010), and was presaged in some of the classic contributions by Karl Deutsch, Ernst Haas, Richard Snyder, Robert Jervis, and the so-called English School (Bull, 1977; Deutsch, 1954; Dunne, 1995; Haas, 1964; Jervis, 1976; R. C. Snyder et al., 1962), it is nevertheless regarded by most IR scholars today as a relative newcomer to the subdiscipline; the term itself was first introduced to IR by Nicholas Onuf as recently as 1989 (Onuf, 1989). At the same time, however, it has quickly established itself as perhaps the main contender to ‘rationalism’ in IR (see Fearon & Wendt, 2002; Katzenstein, Keohane, & Krasner, 1998).

This is not the place to go into the details of social constructivism, since this is done by Emanuel Adler elsewhere in this handbook. As a minimum, however, ‘all strands of constructivism converge on an *ontology* that depicts the social world as intersubjectively and collectively meaningful structures and processes’ (Adler, 2002: 100). This means that all constructivists share the ‘view that the material world does not come classified, and

that, therefore, the objects of our knowledge are not independent of our interpretations and our language' (Adler, 2002: 95). Beyond this, constructivism is an increasingly broad church incorporating a wide spectrum of views; space, however, prevents delving here into these differences and exemplifying approach each in turn (see, e.g., Barnett, 2008, and Adler in this volume). Instead, a representative if small number of the most recent and notable social constructivist approaches to FP will be briefly presented.

A first group of prominent social constructivists adhere to a *normative-ideational* strand, which conceives of norms as aspects of social structure emerging from the purposive behaviour of actors in specific communities and that these, in turn, shape such behaviour by constituting the identities and actions of such actors (Hoffmann, 2010: 2). Challenging mainstream assumptions of the international system as essentially consisting of power calculations and material forces, early normative constructivists 'worked to demonstrate that shared ideas about appropriate state behaviour had a profound impact on the nature and functioning of world politics' (Hoffmann, 2010: 2). With particular reference to foreign policy behaviour, the goal was to show how such behaviour is enabled or constrained by normative-ideational factors, that is, how social norms influence states' understanding of the external, material world (see, e.g., M. Finnemore, 2003; Martha Finnemore, 1996; Katzenstein, 1996; Klotz, 1995; Legro, 1996; Price, 1997; Tannenwald, 1999). While this early work on norms treated them as essentially static social entities explaining foreign policy actions, more recent scholarship has moved towards a more dynamic conception of norms and their possible effects on state behaviour. Two issues, in particular, have received prominence in current norms-oriented constructivism: norm compliance and norm change (Hoffmann, 2010: 4–10). Both engage with notions of normative contestation, and as such problematise aspects of norm dynamics that tended, as Hoffmann has recently argued, to

be held constant in earlier work. As a consequence, he adds, 'current norms research explores when/where norms matter and how/when/why norms themselves change to a greater extent' (Hoffmann, 2010: 5). This in turn has meant that while previously having functioned as an explanatory factor in foreign policy analysis, norms have increasingly become a referent object in their own right. A prime example here is Alastair Iain Johnston's recent study of how the participation of China's foreign policy elites in a number of international security institutions socialised them to accept certain norms and practices not congruent with their previous foreign and security policy beliefs (Johnston, 2008).

A second constructivist research focus, often intertwined with the first, centres on the notion of *identity* to highlight the socially constructed nature of the state and its interests. As noted by Bruce Cronin, 'identities provide a frame of reference from which political leaders can initiate, maintain, and structure their relationships with other states' (Cronin, 1999: 18); and as such it 'is a constructivist concept if there ever was one' (Berenskoetter, 2010: 2). Indeed, as Paul A. Kowert has recently claimed, most of 'constructivist scholarship in foreign policy ... dictate a concern with state identity' (Kowert, 2010: 2). Although the meaning of the concept itself continues to be contested (see Kowert, 2010: 2–5), two aspects of the turn to 'identity' in IR to describe and to explain international interactions can be said to be central to FP. The first is its deconstruction of the Westphalian notion of statehood as a fixed entity defined by a bounded territorial state, and the positing in its stead of a view highlighting the historically contingent nature of the state as a product of shifting collective identities and social conventions. The second is the rejection of rational choice assumptions about exogenously given interests, claiming instead that the interests of a state – its foreign policy preferences – are dependent on endogenously generated conceptions of identity (see Berenskoetter,

2010: 2–3). Taken together, these two claims have inspired a growing body of work suggesting how conceptions of national identity have not only defined state preferences but have also been used by decision makers to justify and to pursue particular forms of foreign policy. Prominent examples include Jutta Weldes' and Henry Nau's books on the United States (Nau, 2002; Weldes, 1999); Iver Neumann's analysis of the role of the 'East' in European identity formation (Neumann, 1998); Ted Hopf's study of the Soviet Union and Russia during two periods (also see below) (Hopf, 2002); John S. Duffield's analysis of the role of political culture in German foreign and security policy (Duffield, 1998, 2003); as well as Thomas U. Berger's comparison of cultures of antimilitarism in Germany and Japan (Berger, 1998). On a more policy-specific level, Nina Tannenwald has argued that refraining from using nuclear weapons is not due to deterrence but to the constitutive effects of a nuclear taboo – of complying with a role prescription pertaining to the identity of 'civilised states' (Tannenwald, 2007: 45–46). In an earlier study, Richard Price has made a similar argument regarding the use of chemical weapons (Price, 1997).

Discursive approaches

Following the so-called linguistic turn in philosophy and social theory, a second holistic-interpretative approach, focusing on the role of language and discourse in social inquiry, is slowly but determinedly making inroads into foreign policy analysis. One early strand of this movement – belonging to the so-called Copenhagen School (see, e.g., Buzan et al., 1998) – has as its starting point a critique of the use of psychological and cognitive factors in the explanation of the role of belief systems in foreign policy, in particular, a tendency to focus exclusively on individual decision makers, viewing and analysing beliefs in positivist terms, and the assumption that language is a transparent medium without its own inner dynamic (Larsen, 1997: 1–10). Instead of analysing

the belief systems of individual decision makers in this conventional manner, the emphasis is here put on viewing the discourse characterising the foreign policy domain as a powerful structural constraint, on a high level of generality, shaping the foreign policy of the state in question. Contrary to more conventional constructivists, the assumption in this type of discursive approach is that inter-subjective meaning cannot be apprehended cognitively but is, rather, constituted by language and must hence be studied interpretatively by analysing discourses.

More specifically, we can here distinguish broadly between post-positivist and post-structural variants of discourse analysis. The first is quintessentially exemplified by Ted Hopf's study and comparison of the relationship between identity and Soviet and Russian foreign policy during two time periods: 1955 and 1999 (Hopf, 2002). In his own words, the aim is 'to show how a state's collection of identities, how it understands itself, can affect how that state, or more precisely its decision makers, understands other states in world affairs' (Hopf, 2002: xiv). His starting point is the assumption that any society consists of a social cognitive structure within which we find a number of discursive formations, and that these – which can be apprehended inductively through the interpretation of various types of texts and narratives, both low and high – constitute identities of various kinds. Such identities, in turn, set the limits for foreign policy behaviour, thus linking domestic discourse to foreign policy choice.

Post-structural discursive approaches differ from post-positivist variants above all with respect to the claim that 'to theorise foreign policy as discourse is to argue that identity and policy are constituted through a process of narrative adjustment, that they stand ... in a constitutive, rather than causal, relationship' (Hansen, 2006: xvi). In short, insofar as 'discourse is co-extensive with the social', discourse theory of this kind 'opposes the causal explanation of social phenomena' (Torfing, 2005: 9, 19). Furthermore, while

Hopf's analysis has an explicit phenomenological and inductivist starting point (Hopf, 2002: 23), post-structuralism of the kind referred to here is decidedly deductive insofar as 'it is not sufficient on epistemological grounds to rely upon actors' self-interpretations', since these need to be located in a broader perspective 'by employing theoretical concepts and logics not readily available to social actors themselves' (Howarth, 2005: 320). While much of the earlier work within this genre explored the links between identity and foreign policy in terms of identity construction through foreign policy (see, e.g., Campbell, 1998; Wæver, 2005: 34), more recently the direction of this link has also been reversed. This is the case, for example, in Lene Hansen's book-length and detailed exploration of Western discourses surrounding the Bosnian war (Hansen, 2006), in which she documents in meticulous detail the co-constitutive character of identity and the various foreign policy positions taken by the United States and Europe in this conflict (see also her chapters in Smith, 2012; Baylis, 2010).

Approaches based on an interpretative actor perspective

In their book-length discussion of core meta-theoretical issues in IR, Martin Hollis and Steve Smith have described individualist interpretative approaches to foreign policy as follows:

Understanding proceeds by reconstructing at an individual level. This Weberian line has been much used in International Relations, especially in the sub-field known as Foreign Policy Analysis. Here the concern is to understand decisions from the standpoint of the decision-makers by reconstructing their reasons. The foreign policy behaviour of states depends on how individuals with power perceive and analyse situations. Collective action is a sum or combination of individual actions. (Hollis & Smith, 1990: 74)

They also distinguish between understanding individual actions through social rules and

collective meanings (a top-down procedure), and understanding collective policy through their individual elements (bottom-up). Inasmuch as the top-down view is quintessentially the one discussed above in terms of social-institutional approaches, we are here left with the latter type of focus, which also happens to be the least utilised today in the study of foreign policy.

The historical antecedents of this approach go back to Snyder and his associates, focusing on a systematic empirical analysis of the actual deliberations of foreign policy decision makers. Insofar as the focal point in studies of this kind are the *reasoned* – rather than *rational* – choices made by decision makers, certain aspects of role theory also exemplify this approach, at least insofar as the analysis of particular role conceptions puts the focus on the reasoning of individual national foreign policy-makers and their understanding of the international system and the perceived role of their own states within this larger system (see, e.g., Aggestam, 2006; Hyde-Price, 2000). The same goes for more classical understandings of the role of the 'national interest' in foreign policy decision making, based on individual interpretations of this much-maligned but exceedingly flexible concept, as well as to the study of the role of crucial decision makers during crises (see, e.g., Bernstein, 2000: 161–164).

Although somewhat dated, Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice's detailed study of German reunification (Zelikow & Rice, 1995) remains an illuminative exemplar of this type of analysis. It offers an insider's view of the innermost workings of the top elites of the United States, the Soviet Union, West Germany, East Germany, Britain, and France in the creation of a united Germany. The logic of explanation is to determine the thinking of these elites – the reasoning behind their choices – and then to proffer it in explanation of the immense changes that occurred during the year following the collapse of the Berlin Wall. This is 'thick description' at its best; and although they have been chided for eschewing theory altogether in following this

strategy (see, e.g., Risse, 1997), it should at the same time be emphasised that although no causal analysis (or theorising) in the conventional sense is provided, the focus is most certainly not simply on ‘what’ occurred, but also on the ‘why’ and ‘how’ aspects of this process. The assumption underlying this type of analysis is the counterfactual argument that had not the main actors in this historical process reasoned and made choices the way they actually did, the history of this period would have been different. In this connection, it should also be noted that despite his concern with its lack of theoretical anchorage, Risse has been able to utilise this descriptive-analytic study to illustrate the role of ‘communicative action’ and ‘friendly persuasion’ in international relations (Risse, 2000). Indeed, insofar as the ‘logic of arguing’ – as distinct from the logics of ‘consequentialism’ and ‘appropriateness’ – aims at achieving a reasoned consensus on the part of real-life decision makers (such as Kohl and Gorbachev), this approach seems to be ideally suited for analysis from within the interpretative actor perspective.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

To round up, I would like to conclude by briefly pointing to three important and inter-related issues raised by the above overview, each of which in my judgement merits serious consideration in the future development of FP.

The first is that while FP – as we have seen above – is a well-established subdiscipline with a long, eminent if somewhat chequered historical pedigree, there is an increasing *lack of agreement* on the most fundamental aspect of any scholarly inquiry: what its *object of analysis* is conceived to be. I do not here have in mind so much definitional differences with respect to how the explanandum qua policy undertaking is conceptualised – disagreements regarding its *connotations* are unavoidable – as the increasingly common

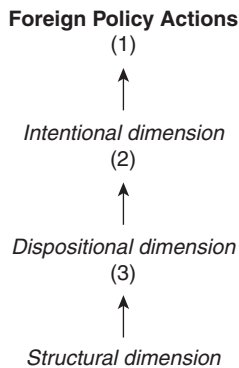
denotational practice of positing in its stead processes of decision making as that which needs to be explained.⁵ In this respect the recent resuscitation and interpretation of Snyder et al. as precursors of the current conceptualisation of the explanandum of foreign policy analysis in the form of decision-making processes is both ironic and problematic, insofar as their objective quite clearly was to explain state action – that is, foreign policy qua explanandum – as a causal effect of how decision makers subjectively view their situation (explanans). In any case, the practice in some quarters of defining the object of analysis in FP in terms of what many scholars continue to regard as essentially relevant explanatory factors is deeply unfortunate; and in my view its implications need to be addressed forthwith and head-on if we do not want to avoid foreign policy analysts increasingly speaking past one another.

A second important question raised in the light of the overview presented above is whether it is either desirable or possible *to integrate* at least some of the perspectives discussed here, or if we are willy-nilly obliged to choose between them. Hollis and Smith, for example, have claimed that there are always two stories to tell – that of ‘explanation’ versus ‘understanding’, corresponding to the distinction above between ‘objectivism’ and ‘interpretativism’ – and that they cannot be combined into one type of narrative. Similarly, ‘individualism’ and ‘holism’ have most often been assumed to be in principle mutually exclusive categories (often expressed in the form of the agency-structure *problematique*), forcing us into either a ‘bottom-up’ or ‘top-down’ mode of analysis. Despite these problems, Valerie Hudson concludes in her recent book that ‘theoretical integration is an imperative’ for foreign policy analysis, even though ‘it remains a promise unfulfilled for the time being’ (Hudson, 2007: 165, 184).

My own view is that a synthetic framework for analysing foreign policy is indeed feasible, but only if, as a first step, the explanandum is defined as purposive policy

behaviour rather than in process terms à la Hudson. The second step is a recognition and acceptance of the empirical fact that all foreign policy actions – small or large – are linked together in the form of intentions, cognitive-psychological factors, and the various structural phenomena characterising societies and their environments; and hence that explanations of actual foreign policy actions must be able to give accounts that do not by definition exclude or privilege any of these types of explanans.

My favourite way of conceptualising such a synthetic analytic framework consists of a simple tripartite approach to explaining foreign policy actions consisting, respectively, of an *intentional*, a *dispositional*, and a *structural* dimension of explanation, as follows (Carlsnaes, 1992):



Although conceptualised as analytically autonomous, these three dimensions should be viewed as closely linked in the sense that they can be conjoined in a logical, step-by-step manner to produce increasingly exhaustive (or ‘deeper’) explanations of foreign policy actions.

The starting point in such an explanation would be to focus on the first link, that is, the relation between a given foreign policy action and the intention or goal that it expresses (arrow 1 in the figure). This is a teleological relationship, giving us the specific reason(s) for, or goal(s) of, a certain policy undertaking. This is also a necessary first step, given

the inherently intentional nature of the explanandum. However, scholars who are interested also in giving causal in addition to intentional explanations – presumably most of us – will want to go further than this. This distinction can also be described in terms of an ‘in order to’ and a ‘because of’ dimension in explanations, in which the former refers to actions pursued intentionally (i.e., ‘in order to’ achieve a certain aim), while the latter aims to indicate those prior or underlying mechanisms which ‘caused’ a given actor to have a particular intention. Thus scholars not satisfied with merely tracing descriptively the reasoning behind a certain action will want to ask why one rather than another intention in the form of a policy undertaking was being pursued in the first place.

In such an analysis, the next step would be to trace the link between the intentional and the dispositional dimensions, with a view to finding the specific underlying psychological-cognitive factors which have disposed a particular actor to have this and not that preference or intention (arrow 2 in the figure). In the analysis of such dispositions, the primary focus would be on the underlying values (‘belief systems’) which motivate actors to pursue certain goals, as well as on the perceptions which make actors see the world in particular ways (‘world-views’). This is where cognitive and psychological approaches to the explanation of foreign policy enter into the analytic picture.

This leaves us with the question how structural factors are to be incorporated into this framework, since they are present in neither of the first two dimensions. In my view, they do so in terms of a third, deeper, and very powerful structural dimension, always underlying and thus affecting the cognitive and psychological dispositions of individuals (arrow 3 in the figure). These structural factors – domestic and international, social, cultural, economic, material, normative, or ideational – do so in many ways, but essentially as a consequence of being perceived, reacted to, and taken into account by actors (consciously or not); and it is in this sense

that structural factors can be said to influence, condition, or otherwise affect – either by constraint or by enabling – human values, preferences, moods, and attitudes, that is, actor dispositions as here conceptualised. It is also by causally affecting the dispositional characteristics of the agents of policy in this manner that one can say that structural factors – via its causal effects on the dispositions of actors (and only in this manner) – also determine the particular types of intentions motivating policies (thus combining all three arrows).

If this approach to foreign policy analysis provides an integrative framework, linking both individual decision makers and social structures across state boundaries, does it resolve the agency-structure problem mentioned above? No, not as it stands, for although it combines actor and structural features (which is a step forward), it privileges structures over actors insofar as the former are viewed as having causal effects on the latter, but not the latter on the former. In short, it is a logically static framework, which can be used to explain single foreign policy actions – in terms of the explanatory chain discussed above – but not a series of such actions over time. However, once we view policy undertakings with reference also to their actual *outcomes* – which may be intended or unintended, extensive or marginal – a dynamic component enters into the picture. In other words, insofar as these outcomes have subsequent causal effects *over time* on both the structures and actors determining the foreign policy undertakings of a particular state, we have a case of mutual interaction between agency and structure (see Carlsnaes, 1992).

A final comment concerns the relationship between FR and IR. As Houghton has recently argued, the former has for many years been ‘a kind of free-floating enterprise, logically unconnected to the main theories of international relations’ (Houghton, 2007: 2). Although there are reasons to be sceptical about his recommendation that social constructivism be hitched to cognitive

psychological approaches in order for FP to be fully reinvigorated, he has raised an important issue which needs to be addressed forcefully by scholars from both disciplines. In my judgement, such a rapprochement should proceed hand in hand with the ambition of integrating into a common framework – including an agreement on the object of analysis – the various perspectives discussed in this chapter.

NOTES

1 On my own take a decade ago on these developments, see the predecessor to this chapter (Carlsnaes, 2002).

2 Admittedly, this omission is to some degree rectified by the recent publication – by the same publisher, in a similar format, and with a joint co-editor – of an advanced text entirely on foreign policy analysis (Smith, Hadfield, & Dunne, 2008b; 2012).

3 In this context, it is also significant that in the aforementioned journal *Foreign Policy Analysis*, the substantive core of the field is described as follows: ‘Foreign policy analysis, as a field of study, is characterized by its actor-specific focus ... In its simplest form, foreign policy analysis is the study of the process, effects, causes or outputs of foreign policy decision-making in either a comparative or case-specific manner’ (see inside back cover of each issue).

4 For an exhaustive discussion and critique of these meta-theoretical issues, see Colin Wight’s book on the ontological nature of politics (Wight, 2006), as well as his chapter in this volume.

5 For a classic discussion of the distinction between ‘connotation’ and ‘denotation’ in conceptualisation, see Sartori (1970).

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International Organizations and Institutions

Lisa L. Martin and Beth A. Simmons

International organizations (IOs) and institutions (IIs) have become increasingly common phenomena of international life. The proliferation of IOs, the growth in treaty arrangements among states, and the deepening of regional integration efforts in Europe and in other parts of the world all represent formal expressions of the extent to which international politics has become more institutionalized over time (MacKenzie 2010; Reinalda 2009; Green 2008).

The scholarship on IOs and IIs has burgeoned in response. In the past decade, theories devoted to understanding why these phenomena exist, how they function, and what effects they have on world politics and other outcomes of concern have become increasingly refined. The methods employed in empirical work have also become more sophisticated. The purpose of this chapter is to draw together this divergent literature, to offer observations on the development of its various theoretical strands, and to examine progress on the empirical front. We predict that a broad range of theoretical traditions – realist, rational functionalist, constructivist – will exist alongside and in dialogue with one

another for many years to come (Neumann and Sending 2010). We offer some suggestions on research strategies that might contribute to a better empirical base from which to judge theoretical claims.

The chapter proceeds as follows. The first section provides a brief intellectual history of modern research on IIs and IOs from the post–World War II years to the “regimes movement” of the 1980s, and defines terms. We distinguish international *organizations*, understood as entities, from international *institutions*, understood as rules. The second section sketches three general clusters of theorizing and characterizes how each views the questions of organizational and institutional creation, decisions about membership and design, change and evolution, and institutional and organizational effects. We do not offer these approaches as either exhaustive or mutually exclusive, but rather as representative, semipermeable frameworks that share certain assumptions and diverge elsewhere. Increasingly, a number of scholars straddle or draw selectively from more than one approach.

The third section is devoted to an examination of the empirical literature on the effects

of IIs and IOs. Empirical research has developed significantly over the past decade as scholars have turned from the question of why such arrangements exist to whether and how they significantly impact behavior and outcomes. We examine these questions with respect to international cooperation, rule compliance, and distributional outcomes. We note, too, the growing number of studies that have looked for broader effects associated with IIs and IOs, some of which have been undesired and even unanticipated.

The final section delineates some recent developments and directions for future research. As IOs and IIs have increased in number and complexity, research has turned to the question of how multiple entities and layers of rules relate to one another, as well as how they accommodate and sometimes even privilege particular actors at the domestic and international levels.

BACKGROUND AND DEFINITIONS

Background

The term *international institution* has been used over the course of the last few decades to refer to a broad range of phenomena. In the early postwar years, these words almost always referred to formal IOs, usually to organs or branches of the United Nations system. This is hardly surprising. Such organizations were the most ‘studiable’ (if not necessarily the most crucial) manifestations of what was ‘new’ about postwar international relations (see Martin and Simmons 1998). The postwar research was largely descriptive and focused almost exclusively on formal international legal agreements, such as the Charter of the United Nations, Security Council resolutions and treaties relating to trade and alliances. A divide seemed to have opened up between students of international relations – who were tremendously influenced by realists such as Morgenthau – and scholars of international

law and organizations who made little explicit effort to link their analyses to theories of state behavior (see the chapter 14 by Simmons in this volume).

The best of the early work in this genre looked at the interplay between formal IOs, rules and norms, domestic politics, and governmental decision making – themes we would recognize today as being near the cutting edge of international institutional research. However, the initial effect of the behavioral revolution on studies of IOs and IIs was to further remove their study from the central problems of world politics, especially during the Cold War. The most clearly identifiable research program in this respect was that devoted to voting patterns and office seeking in the UN General Assembly (Alker and Russett 1965; Keohane 1966). This literature chose to focus on difficult-to-interpret behavior (what did these coalitions signify, anyway?) and imported methods uncritically from American studies of legislative behavior. Studies of the UN that focused on bureaucratic politics with links to transnational actors made more progress, since they opened up a research program that would ultimately lead to more systematic reflection on nongovernmental actors (Keohane and Nye 1977; Cox and Jacobson 1973).

The centrality of formal IOs and formal international legal agreements to the study of international relations has waxed and waned. The major international conflict for a rising generation of scholars – the Vietnam War – raged beyond the formal declarations of the United Nations. Two decades of predictable monetary relations under the purview of the IMF were shattered by a unilateral decision of the United States in 1971 to close the gold window and later to float the dollar. OPEC was hardly constrained by long-standing legal constraints or multilateral forums when it quadrupled oil prices in the 1970s. It became apparent that much of the earlier focus on formal structures and multilateral treaty-based agreements, especially the UN, had been overdrawn (Strange 1978).

The events of the 1970s encouraged thoughtful scholars to theorize international governance more broadly. The study of 'international regimes,' defined as rules, norms, principles, and procedures that focus expectations regarding international behavior (Krasner 1983) demoted the study of IOs as actors and began instead to focus on rules or even 'understandings' thought to influence governmental behavior. Research in this vein defined regimes for specific issue-areas, for which this approach has been criticized (Hurrell 1993; Kingsbury 1998), and viewed regimes as focal points around which actors' expectations converge. Principles and norms provide the normative framework for regimes, while rules and decision-making procedures provide more specific injunctions for appropriate behavior.¹

The definition led to some debates that were of questionable utility, such as what exactly counted as a "norm" or a "rule." The consensus definition of "regime" offered by Krasner and his colleagues was roundly criticized as imprecise and even tendentious (Strange 1982; De Senarclens 1993). But overall, the regimes concept was an important effort to make the study of international institutions (very broadly understood) more relevant to international politics.

Definitions

The regimes literature engendered such definitional confusion that scholars in the 1990s sought a simpler conception as well as a new label. The word "institution" has now largely replaced "regime" in the scholarly IR literature. Though a range of usages exists, most scholars have come to regard "international institutions" as *sets of rules* meant to govern international behavior. Rules, in turn, are often conceived as statements that forbid, require, or permit particular kinds of actions (Ostrom 1990). John Mearsheimer (ironically a neorealist who doesn't believe that institutions are effective) provides a useful definition of institutions as 'sets of rules that

stipulate the ways in which states should cooperate and compete with each other' (Mearsheimer 1994–95).

This definition has several advantages. First, it eliminates the moving parts that lent so much confusion to regimes analysis. Underlying principles, while perhaps of analytical interest, are not included in the definition of an institution itself. Rules and decision-making procedures, referring respectively to substance and process, are both simply 'rules' in this conception. This definition allows for the analysis of both formal and informal sets of rules, although the difficulty of operationalizing informal rules is unavoidable.

A second advantage of this definition is that it separates the definition of an institution from behavioral outcomes that ought to be explained. Regularized patterns of behavior – frequently observed in international relations for reasons that have nothing to do with rules – are excluded. The narrow definition strips institutions from posited effects and allows us to ask whether rules influence behavior. Contrast this approach with other well-accepted definitions. Robert Keohane (1989) defines institutions as 'persistent and connected sets of rules (formal and informal) that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations', which makes it impossible to test for the impact of institutions on activities and expectations. Similarly, Volker Rittberger has argued that an arrangement should only be considered a regime if the actors are persistently guided by its norms and rules (Rittberger and Zürn 1990), making inquiry into the effects of regimes on behavior tautological. While it may be problematic in any given case to tell whether particular patterns are rule-driven, such a project should be the subject of empirical research and not the result of an overly generous definition.

Finally, this definition is relatively free from a particular theoretical perspective. There are no qualifying criteria about the social construction of rules, nor about whether rules are explicit or implicit, nor their about

efficiency-enhancing characteristics.² This definition probably downplays but need not exclude “constitutive rules” that have been central to constructivist theories (Ruggie 1998). It is clearly consistent, however, with the “regulative rules” that dominate empirical constructivist research (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). This definition thus allows theorists writing from a range of perspectives to devise their own conditional statements as theoretically driven hypotheses. For example, it should be possible to test claims to the effect that rules are most effective when actors share intersubjective interpretations of what the rule requires, or that rules influence behavior if they lead to improved outcomes for governments. It therefore allows for the systematic evaluation of a broad range of theoretical claims using a single definition of institutions.³

While many find it convenient to use the word “institution” to refer to both rules and organizations, for purposes of this essay we make a distinction between the two. International organizations are associations of actors, typically states.⁴ IOs have membership criteria, and membership may entail privileges (as well as costs). While a state may unilaterally decide to follow a set of rules – the United States, for example, can decide to abide by the Law of the Sea without any other state’s permission – a state cannot typically unilaterally decide to join an IO; they have to be admitted. Some organizations, such as the United Nations General Assembly, may be little more than forums for state actors to deliberate, debate, or to share information. More ambitiously, IOs constitute “corporate actors” that take positions in the name of their membership. Many, such as the World Bank and the IMF, rely on more or less structured bureaucracies to implement their decisions; these bureaucrats themselves have or may develop interests independent of the state membership (Oestreich 2007). Some go as far as to speak of international organizations as exercising “sovereign” powers (Sarooshi 2005). When we speak of international organizations, then, we are often

dealing with principal-agent issues (Vaubel et al. 2007; Vauble 2006) as well as questions relating to the organizational culture of the entity (Barnett and Coleman 2005). To be sure, IOs are usually based on rules (procedural and normative), and their staffs often participate in the creation, implementation, and interpretation of substantive rules (Alvarez 2005). But it is analytically important to distinguish rules from forums and especially corporate or bureaucratic actors. After all, some institutions, such as extradition agreements, may not have organizations associated with them at all; and some IOs, such as the UN, may embody multiple institutions understood as rules.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO IOS AND IIS

Prelude: realist schools of thought

Theories of IIs and IOs have had to contend with the dominant paradigm in international relations from at least the 1930s to the 1980s: realism. Virtually all realists see power exerting the true influence behind the façade of these structures. Hans Morgenthau attributed apparently rule-consistent behavior either to convergent interests or prevailing power relations, arguing that governments ‘are always anxious to shake off the restraining influence that international law might have upon their foreign policies, to use international law instead for the promotion of their national interests ...’ (Morgenthau 1985). For traditional realists, IIs and IOs are epiphenomenal to state power and interests (Carr 1964).

Neorealists’ role in institutional analysis in the 1980s and 1990s was been that of forceful critic. On the logical side, Joseph Grieco (1988) and John Mearsheimer (1994–95) argue that relative-gains concerns prevent states from intensive cooperation: since the benefits of cooperation can be translated into military advantages, concerns about the distribution of the gains impede substantial

sustained cooperation (but see Snidal 1991; Powell 1991). Joanne Gowa uses this logic to argue that allies are much more likely to trade during periods of bipolarity than during periods of multipolarity, when there are greater uncertainties about friends and foes (Gowa 1994). Lloyd Gruber's work is a realist caution about assuming international institutions provide joint gains. Powerful states, in his view, often have the ability to present others with a *fait accompli* to which they are forced to adjust, sometimes making them worse off than they were before the agreement was made (Gruber 2000). And, of course, realists are the first to note that formal international organizations are ultimately either dominated by the most powerful states, or are designed to be irrelevant to international affairs (Mearsheimer 1994–95). Downs, Rocke, and Barsoom (1996) embellish a familiar realist theme in their claim that *deep* cooperation – anything other than superficial policy adjustments about which states care little – requires enforcement.

The strength of realist theorizing has been its insistence that international institutions are rooted in the interaction of power and national interest in the international system. A plethora of recent research with clever research designs has recently presented a strong reminder of the exercise of power behind IOs and IIs (Stone 2011; Foot et al. 2003). One branch of empirical research explores the extent to which powerful states simply buy off the cooperation of smaller ones in international organizations. Several new studies document the extent to which lending by international financial institutions reflect the geopolitical interests of the major powers, and the United States in particular (Reynaud and Vauday 2009; Stone 2004). Several scholars acknowledge power relations in IOs by modeling and coming up with monetary estimates of aid or concessionary financing funneled to countries by powerful countries. Kaja and Werkman estimate that developing countries that sit on the board of the World Bank scoop up an additional \$60 million in “bonus” loans from that institution

(Kaja and Werker 2010), while Kuziemko and Werker find that a country that rotates onto the UN Security Council can expect a cool 59% increase in bilateral aid from the United States (Kuziemko and Werker 2006).

A new breed of realist is now also exploring the extent to which states try to use international organizations to achieve their security objectives. Of course, this has always been the purpose of military alliances. Call them “soft realists”; these scholars analyze how states use IOs to engage in “institutionalized balancing” behavior, by which is meant the use of pressures and threats in multilateral institutions for the purpose of securing their security interests (He 2008). The world's most powerful countries – working through the G-8 – increasingly co-opt international organizations to achieve their preferred outcomes over debt relief and terrorist financing (Gstöhl 2007). This New Realism sees power and interest at work in a broad range of ostensibly “cooperative” multilateral institutions.

This basic insight cannot be neglected by any theoretical approach that purports to explain international politics. It does pose one important puzzle, however: if governments are not likely to be constrained by the rules to which they agree, why do they spend time and other resources negotiating them in the first place? If IOs and IIs are little more than a power play, why not bribe and threaten the old-fashioned way? Why pay a nickel for a Security Council vote? Why work through multilateral institutions at all?

Rational functionalism

Rational functionalism developed in the early 1980s as one response to these kinds of puzzles. By the mid-1980s, explanations of international regimes became intertwined with explanations of international cooperation more generally. The work of Robert Keohane (1984) drew from functionalist approaches that emphasized the efficiency reasons for agreements among regime

participants. This research sought to show that IOs and IIs provided a way for states to overcome problems of collective action, high transactions costs, and information deficits or asymmetries. This approach has produced a number of insights, which we will discuss and extend below. Furthermore, the strength of this approach has largely been its ability to explain the creation and maintenance of IOs and IIs. It has been weaker in delineating their effects on state behavior, an issue to which we turn in the next section.

This rational/functionalist research agenda originated with Keohane's *After Hegemony* and Krasner's edited volume on *International Regimes* cited above. Their work was informed by a fundamentally important insight: individually rational action by states could impede mutually beneficial cooperation. Institutions would be effective to the degree that they allowed states to avoid short-term temptations to renege, thus realizing available mutual benefits. In particular, institutions could help to focus expectations on a cooperative solution, reduce transaction costs, and provide a greater degree of transparency. Reputational concerns and the prospect of repeat interactions were supposed to render cooperative rules effective. Recent applications of this basic functionalist logic have been applied in issues ranging from the settlement of territorial disputes (Simmons 2005) to international cooperation with respect to freshwater resources (Dombrowsky 2007). In short, institutions could be explained as a solution to the problem of international collective action, providing a response to the puzzle posed by realism.

Once a basic functionalist logic was in place, researchers began to refine their conceptions of the strategic conditions that give rise to cooperative arrangements. Some authors, recognizing that the prisoners' dilemma (PD) was only one type of collective-action problem, drew a distinction between collaboration and coordination problems (Snidal 1985; Stein 1983; Martin 1992b). While collaboration problems are exemplified by the PD, coordination games are

characterized by the existence of multiple Pareto-optimal equilibria. When states face coordination problems, the dilemma is not the temptation to defect from cooperative outcomes, but how to choose among equilibria. Choice in coordination games may be relatively simple and resolved by identification of a focal point. But some coordination games involve multiple equilibria over which the actors have divergent preferences. German scholars have contributed to the further refinement of the basic functionalist logic by developing 'problem structural typologies' (Rittberger and Zürn 1990) and by unpacking 'problematic social situations', which Michael Zürn defines as those in which the Pareto optimum on the one hand and the individually rational Nash equilibrium on the other are not congruent (Zürn 1997). The logic is functionalist: states build institutions in order to achieve collectively desirable outcomes. Some constellations of interests are conducive to regime formation, while others are not.

Rational functionalism has also made pioneering forays into explaining the *form* that institutional choice will take. While arguments linking problem structure with institutional form are not new, a number of scholars have recently placed rational functional explanations of institutional and organizational design at the center of their intellectual agenda. Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal (2001) explore how five dimensions of design – membership, issue scope, centralization of tasks, rules for controlling the institution, and institutional flexibility – vary across organizations and institutions. These authors argue that particular choices over form are a response to distributional and enforcement problems arising from the number of actors relevant to the provision of joint-gains, as well as uncertainty about behavior or the state of the world.

One of the most promising insights about this line of analysis regards the ways in which institutional design will respond to the existence of various types of uncertainty. When states are uncertain about the state of the

world or the distributive impact of an agreement, they are likely to design institutions with loopholes. Barbara Koremenos (2005) theorizes that uncertainty about the distributional effects of agreements leads directly to the use of renegotiation provisions in international agreements. Similarly, Peter Rosendorff (2005) argues that uncertainty about domestic pressures for protection lead trade institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) to offer flexibility, in particular, in the form of the Dispute Settlement Procedure, while Lawrence Helfer and co-authors make a similar argument for derogations from human rights agreements (Helfer et al. 2011). Some but not all of the expectations about uncertainty can be confirmed in studies of negotiation processes, which make a good complement to the design outcomes that most researchers analyze (Thompson 2010).

Research on flexibility provisions raises an interesting design dilemma: Does widespread participation in a particular agreement depend on such provisions? Is there a trade-off between depth of cooperation and the breadth of membership? Logic – and, increasingly, empirical evidence – suggests this is indeed the case, although Michael Gilligan (2004) finds that the broader–deeper trade-off disappears if the agreement allows for variance with respect to the demands on each member. Kucik and Reinhardt (2008) argue that flexibility provisions within the GATT/WTO have encouraged countries to join, and to make commitments to greater reductions in tariff levels. Theirs is one of the most rigorous empirical demonstrations to date that flexibility does indeed support higher levels of trade cooperation. Maggi and Morelli (2006) focus on the voting rules used in various IOs. Because decisions of IOs must be self-enforcing, they argue, often the only sustainable voting rule is unanimity, offering an explanation for the widespread unanimity requirement, but also specifying conditions under which other voting rules might be sustainable.

The hypothesis that flexibility is desirable because it allows states to commit to deeper

forms of cooperation than would have been possible in the absence of flexibility mechanisms is in tension with the notion that states join IOs and IIs precisely for their *binding* effects. One function that IOs and IIs perform is that they make it possible for states to commit themselves to levels of cooperation that would not be credible in their absence. Some IOs have fairly clear “hands-tying” features: the International Criminal Court has independent authority to prosecute certain kinds of war crimes, largely removing impunity for these crimes. Simmons and Danner (2010) argue that the ICC’s hands-tying quality serves as a binding mechanism that leads to a reduction in international violence. Similarly, almost all bilateral investment treaties provide for international arbitration in the case of an investment dispute. States agree to such arrangements to bolster their credibility to treat investors fairly. The ultimate goal, of course, is to tie one’s hands sufficiently to attract foreign direct investment (Elkins et al. 2006). Mansfield and Pevehouse (2006) specify a causal mechanism by which democratizing leaders use IO membership to credibly commit to democratic reforms. Dreher and Voigt find evidence that countries that join a variety of IOs effectively gain credibility by doing so: delegation to IOs, they find, has a robust and felicitous impact on a country’s risk ratings, which they argue is a decent proxy for credibility (Dreher and Voigt 2011).

Another approach to institutional design, still within the rationalist tradition, is the application of principal-agent models. These models provide a framework for understanding decisions to delegate authority to IOs (Lake and McCubbins 2006; Sarooshi 2005). For example, Nielson and Tierney (2003) explain institutional reform in the World Bank with a delegation model, concentrating on environmental policy reforms; similarly, Siebenhüner (2008) explains organizational learning in international environmental organizations in terms of principal-agent theories. One of the major normative issues,

from an agency perspective, is the extent to which IOs remain accountable to the states that comprise them (Grant and Keohane 2005) – an issue upon which practitioners have written extensively as well (Cooker 2005). Empirical work on the extent of “independence” of IOs is growing and is getting more systematic (see, for example, Haftel and Thompson 2006).

Informational problems, in the rationalist approach, are central to the understanding of design and functioning of IOs. The idea that IOs might be useful for solving cooperation problems through the provision of information and signaling was borrowed initially from the domestic literature on legislative actors. That literature emphasized that legislative structures could be designed which would allow legislators to learn about the policies they are adopting, thus avoiding inefficient outcomes (Gilligan and Krehbiel 1990; Krehbiel 1991). IO theorists have applied these insights at the international level, analyzing various IOs from the UN Security Council to the WTO to international human rights IOs as credible sources of policy information that help various audiences to determine the quality of particular policies, such as a military intervention in the case of the Security Council (Fang 2008; Thompson 2006; Voeten 2005; Chapman 2007). Others have extended the informational theory of IOs as a mechanism to enhance states’ accountability to domestic actors who may favor outcomes such as improved human rights, a cleaner environment, or liberal trade, and thereby indirectly increase the possibilities for cooperative outcomes at the international level (Mansfield et al. 2002; Dai 2007). In all of these models, IOs generate credible information about governments’ policies that end up producing more cooperative outcomes.

Rational functionalist approaches are notable because the method of analysis treats institutions both as environmental constraints and as objects that are consciously chosen and manipulated by actors. However, one of the major drawbacks of the rational

functionalist approach lies in accurate ex ante specification of games and interests. Empirical researchers wanting to test functional explanations often find it difficult to determine precisely what games are being played without observing the outcome of state interactions, leading to a lack of refutability and loss of explanatory power. While recognizing the need for independent measures of interests, researchers have found it difficult to construct them. Rationalist theories of the kind discussed here are also silent on how to think about some of their central concepts. The concept of “focal point” is frequently relied upon as a way to reduce transactions costs, but just why some solutions are accepted as focal is rarely discussed. The notion of “common knowledge” helps to solve games with multiple equilibria, but what information is held in common by actors is asserted rather than explained. Appeals to “reputation” are ubiquitous in this literature, but there is nothing more socially determined than one’s reputation. The assumptions that these concepts are unproblematic has, however, been challenged most directly by scholars working from sociological assumptions.

From the english school to social constructivism

Rational functionalist approaches have been roundly criticized by theorists that place prime analytical importance on the social context of state behavior. While rational functionalism focuses on explaining cooperation under anarchy, social constructivists have questioned the primacy of anarchy, and have sought to reassert social context into the understanding of international relations. While rational functionalism explains IIs and IOs in terms of various forms of market failure, constructivists situate international institutions in their intersubjective social context.

A number of scholars, frequently associated with English scholarship, have emphasized the importance of international society

in maintaining international order. Bull and Watson (1984) define international society in state-centric terms, as a group of states that have 'established by dialog and consent common rules and institutions for the conduct of their relations, and recognize their common interest in maintaining these arrangements'. International society, in this conception, is the legal and political idea on which the concept of international institutions rests (Buzan 1993). Martin Wight's work emphasized the role of cultural unity in the identity of an international society (Wight 1977). Bull, on the other hand, saw the possibilities of international society for any group of states that shared coherent goals, such as limits on the use of force (Bull 1977). Others offer a subjective interpretation of international society that is echoed in contemporary constructivist assumptions: international society exists because those who speak and act in the name of states assume that it does (Evans and Wilson 1992).

The English school has offered a definition of institutions that is much broader than the one we employ in this essay; scholars in this tradition also typically eschew reference to specific issue-areas. Institutions in this view are 'a cluster of social rules, conventions, usages, and practices ... , a set of conventional assumptions held prevalently among society-members ... [that] provide a framework for identifying what is the done thing and what is not in the appropriate circumstances' (Suganami 1983). English school scholars have been concerned with 'institutions' as broad as the balance of power and the practice of diplomacy (Evans and Wilson 1992). Their work has tended to de-emphasize formal organizations (Crawford 1996), viewing these as important only to the extent that they 'strengthen and render more efficient the more basic institutions of diplomacy, international law, and the balance of power' (Evans and Wilson 1992). Furthermore, scholars in this tradition have on the whole been less interested in economic issues and rather less taken by

dilemmas of interdependence than have American scholars working in a more functionalist vein.

John Ruggie and Friedrich Kratochwil have done the most to advance the central insights of the English school and adapt them to the study of IOs and IIs. In their view, intersubjective meaning explains the role that IOs and IIs play in international life. In a critique of the regimes literature as it was developing in the United States, these authors noted the inconsistencies of trying to describe a subjective world of norms and beliefs with a positivist epistemology based on observed behavior (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986). In Kratochwil's view, '... interpretations of actions by the actors are an irreducible part of their collective existence. We as observers therefore can go only as far as looking 'at the facts' of their overt behavior; beyond that lies the realm of intersubjective rules which are constitutive of social practice and which an interpretive epistemology has to uncover' (Kratochwil 1988). It is crucial in this view to understand the ways in which specific institutions are embedded in larger systems of norms and principles, such as the liberal economic order of the postwar period (Ruggie 1982).

Constructivist approaches are highly attentive to the framing of rules and norms as clues to a deeper understanding of their intended meanings. When a rule is embedded in the context of international law, for example, governments have to forgo idiosyncratic claims and make arguments based on rules and norms that satisfy at a minimum the condition of universality (Kratochwil 1988; see also Kingsbury 1998; Hurrell 1993). Indeed, most constructivist theorists would go further and insist on the mutually constitutive nature of norms and actors' identities. International institutions define who the players are in a particular situation and how they define their roles, and thus place constraints on behavior. Constructivist scholars emphasize that international institutions can alter the identities and interests of states, as a result of their interactions over time within the auspices of

a set of rules (Arend 1999; Onuf 1989) or within a specific organization that actors imbue with meaning (Johnston 2001). This gives rise to an analysis that (compared with realist or rationalist approaches) takes nothing for granted: the relevant actors, their interests, and their understandings of rules and relationships are all open to interpretation. Moreover, constructivism emphasizes feedback effects and the complexity of social interactions, it lends itself naturally to the view that institutions cannot be treated as simply exogenous or purely objects of choice (Ruggie 1992).

Social constructivist approaches have been especially appropriate for appreciating the ways in which international institutions create, reflect, and diffuse intersubjective normative understandings. One important contribution to the literature on IOs and IIs has been to theorize their role in furthering normative convergence among actors. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) sketch out various stages of the norm 'life cycle' and note that IOs contribute to norm 'cascades' by 'pressuring targeted actors to adopt new policies and laws and to ratify treaties and by monitoring compliance with international standards'. In this way, IOs can be 'chief socializing agents' pressuring violators to conform (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998).⁵ Checkel (2005) provides a framework for studying socialization processes, specifying how the mechanisms of strategic calculation, role playing, and normative suasion can lead to socialization. Johnston (2008) elaborates these mechanisms, as well as social mechanisms such as backpatting or shaming. He theorizes that these powerful processes of socialization that are heightened among members of specific international organizations.

As it does in all aspects of politics, legitimacy plays a key role in constructivist accounts of IOs and IIs. The essence of most theorizing in this vein is the issue of how and to what extent international organizations and rules come to be understood by states and civil society actors as legitimate

instantiations of social goals, values, and aspirations (Coicaud and Heiskanen 2001). Christian Reus-Smit sees the rise of what he refers to as multilateral forms of legislation as a result of the shift of legitimacy from absolute rulers to popular sovereignty, and associated norms of procedural justice. Self-legislation mandates that those subject to the law should create it. Nondiscrimination means all are equally bound. In combination, these values give rise internationally to multilateralism (Reus-Smit 2004). IOs (e.g., the UN Security Council) may be conceptualized as representing the cumulative legitimacy of the post-war order, and the desire to maintain this order has a moderating effect even on the great powers (Westra 2010). International rules and the forums in which actors hammer them out in turn become key focal points for discursive struggles over legitimate political agency and action (internationally and domestically). By many accounts, rules and organizational membership become critical resources in the international politics of legitimacy (Reus-Smit 2004).

One branch of research associated with sociological theories focuses on the role of IOs as international bureaucracies with agency in their own right. These scholars emphasize that organizations have agency; they make loans, send peacekeepers, inoculate babies, and maintain databases. They have long been viewed as actors providing international collective or redistributive goods (Kindleberger 1951; Gregg 1966), but increasingly they have also come to regulate many of the social, political, and economic problems traditionally within nation-states' purview (Smouts 1993). Organization theorists point out that through the development of specific competencies, organizations can potentially transform agendas and goals (Cyert and March 1992). Moreover, these entities can function as creators of meaning and of identities (Olsen 1997). Some have urged far greater attention to the sociology of IOs, as well as the ways in which intergovernmental organizations interact

with nongovernmental organizations (De Senarclens 1993). In a critical vein, Barnett and Finnemore (1999) draw attention not only to IO autonomy, but also to the potential for pathological behavior when IOs become bureaucratized. These efforts represent a synthetic look at international organizational structures, normative standards, transnational actors, and governmental decision making (Barnett and Coleman 2005).

In short, the works of social constructivists have drawn attention to the intersubjective nature of IOs and IIs. The former insists on understanding these in the context of the broader purposes of the major actors in world politics. Constructivists have incorporated the importance of social meanings into their analysis of IOs and IIs, and have more fully developed the notion that institutions and interests are mutually constitutive. Both approaches have provided ways to think about the links between norms and institutions. It is to international organizational and institutional effects on state behavior that we turn in the following section.

THE ROLE OF IOS AND IIS: EMPIRICAL STUDIES OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS

Empirical studies of IOs and IIs have burgeoned in the last couple of decades. A growing body of research is developing that addresses many of the specific theoretical mechanisms discussed in the previous sections. Some set up competing tests of the various mechanisms implied by the theories, but increasingly studies are combining the insights from decades of theorizing in interactive ways, finding, for example, that coercive mechanisms sometimes reinforce socialization pressures, or that socially constructed focal points help to reduce transaction costs. The empirical studies below represent a variety of methodologies, but the empirical literature in the last decade on the effects of IOs and IIs on cooperation has

definitely taken a quantitative turn. This section discusses the empirical literature on effects of IOs and IIs on patterns and modes of interstate cooperation, organized roughly by mechanism. Paralleling the discussion above, we begin with the self-consciously rational and move to the rather more sociological research. In addition, we highlight some of the empirical research that tests for broader institutional effects as well.

One way to gauge the impact of IOs and IIs is to test for their coercive impacts. As agents of their state members, IOs are sometimes used as mechanisms to enforce the norms, values, and preferred outcomes of their members. Why might we expect coercion via IOs to differ from its unilateral cousin? Lisa Martin's research demonstrates that cooperation on economic sanctions increases when sanctions are imposed in an institutionalized environment (Martin 1992a). Rather than free-riding on the sanctioning efforts of others, Martin shows that highly institutionalized environments have assisted self-regarding states to overcome their collective action problems and impose sanctions on specific targeted states. Part of her logic is that international organizations are a forum for the credible bundling of issues in a way that makes deals "stick."

Several studies have looked into the *consequences* of coercion by IOs: does the United Nations enforce the peace and help to settle disputes? Do international financial institutions enforce internationally accepted standards of open and responsible economic policies through conditionality? These institutions have the potential to impose costs on states for contravening international norms. Some scholars note that enforcement actions are actually quite rare (Chayes and Chayes 1995). The empirical research on the consequences of coercive multilateralism is mixed. On the one hand, some studies have found that IO-imposed sanctions may increase the likelihood of conflict resolution in civil wars settings, especially if the targeted state is a member of the international institution imposing the sanctions (Escribá-Folch 2010).

On the other hand, while the United Nations has not often sanctioned countries for human rights violations, when they have, studies suggest that results may not be salutary. Dursun Peksen (2009) found that the multilateral imposition of economic sanctions by the United Nations and the European Union were associated with *worsening* human rights thereafter, as measured by physical integrity indices. Emilie Hafner-Burton argues, however, that the threat of punishment is critical in the human rights area. Though there may be some endogeneity issues that are yet to be resolved, she finds that trade agreements with clear consequences for human rights violations are associated with improved rights practices, while agreements with soft human rights provisions are not (Hafner-Burton 2005). The drawing of firm generalizations about the consequences of multilateral sanctioning through IOs has been elusive.

Coercion can also potentially be exercised by economic IOs or their members. By offering benefits (loans, aid, trade, recognition) or imposing costs (exclusion, sanctions, military intervention), IOs can potentially coerce national decision makers to implement favored economic policies. For example, Withold Henisz and others argue that the IMF and World Bank have indirectly coerced particular market reforms by tilting “the balance of power toward the group (or groups) favoring reform by providing that group with more resources, legitimacy, or rhetorical arguments, and by prompting various groups to join the pro-reform coalition” (Henisz et al. 2005). They find that international coercive pressures – measured as conditional IMF loans – have increased the likelihood of majority privatization and regulatory separation, but not of regulatory depoliticization and liberalization of competition in the telecommunications and electricity industries (Henisz et al. 2005; see also Brune et al. 2004). Other empirical studies link conditional IMF loans with monetary policy reforms, such as independent central banks (Polillo and Guillén 2005) and the

signing of treaty agreements that protect investors’ interests (Elkins et al. 2006). Recent research sees the hand of powerful countries working through multilateral aid agencies such as the World Bank (Dreher et al. 2009a) and IMF (Dreher et al. 2009b) to influence states temporarily holding seats on the UN Security Council. Whether such strategies “work” – that is, whether such attempts can actually buy political support – has yet to be shown empirically.

Some institutions are designed explicitly as enforcement mechanisms. They are designed to “tie actors’ hands” by imposing costs that deter actors from violating certain norms. For example, bilateral investment treaties call for transnational arbitration when investors allege they have not been treated fairly by host states. The prospect of a monetary award – enforceable in most domestic courts around the world – may encourage some states to respect investors’ rights (Tobin and Rose-Ackerman 2011; Busse et al. 2010; Egger and Merlo 2007). Similarly, the International Criminal Court has the potential to put individuals convicted of heinous war crimes in prison for life, which Simmons and Danner (2010) argue may account for ratification patterns as well as hiatuses in civil conflict. In these models, the threat of punishment allows for joint gains by helping states credibly to commit to certain actions.

Most empirical studies in the rational functionalist tradition, however, argue that IOs and IIs raise costs for noncompliance *not* through organized punishment as much as through “reputational” consequences (Joachim et al. 2008). “Reputation” was, of course, one of the main mechanisms Keohane developed in his original functional theory of regimes (Keohane 1984). Several empirical studies rely on reputational costs to account for their findings. Simmons (2000) asks whether IMF restrictions on manipulation of the current account have influenced state currency behaviors, and finds that states that have made a public declaration to be bound by Article VIII of the IMF’s Articles of Agreement are much more likely to eschew

current account restrictions than nonsignatories, a finding extended by Grieco, Gelpi, and Warren (2009; see also Simmons and Hopkins 2005; von Stein 2005). Similarly, Mitchell and Hensel rely on the purported ability of IOs to raise reputational costs for states when they pressure them to settle their territorial or boundary disputes peacefully. They find that common membership in various IOs increases the possibilities for the “passive” influence of IOs, but such a finding leaves wide open the exact nature of such influences (Mitchell and Hensel 2007). It is fair to say that many of these studies assert rather than document actual reputational damage as the unseen but presumably operative mechanism likely to account for cooperative state behavior. While quite reasonable in many cases, “reputation” is difficult to observe empirically, which has encouraged some researchers to turn to experimental methods to test for the plausibility of this mechanism (Tomz 2007).

Many empirical studies in the past couple of decades have been designed to test the claim that international organizations and institutions increase cooperation by creating focal points that help to coordinate behavior. A theoretically strong argument can be made that the mutual liberalization of markets is the paradigmatic “cooperative dilemma.” In the absence of a clear rule (focal point), states are tempted to protect their producers from competition. Trade agreements create clear focal points and reduce the transaction costs of continual bargaining over terms of market entry. If institutions could matter anywhere, it should be in ongoing commercial relations, where transaction costs are high and temptations to defect from liberal trade may exist, but the potential for joint gains is also high. It was surprising, therefore, when Andrew Rose found in an initial study that there is no evidence that the WTO has influenced trade patterns (Rose 2004; see also Gowa 2005). However, Goldstein et al. (2007) find that once the actual institutional standing of various states is taken into account, the GATT/WTO has, in fact, substantially increased trade flows. Some

studies suggest multilateral trade organizations help to reduce trade volatility as well. Claiming that trade agreements “foster policy transparency and convergence in expectations, standards, and policy instruments” (2008), Mansfield and Reinhardt show that the WTO as well as preferential trading arrangements (PTAs) substantially reduce the volatility of exports, leading to a higher volume of exports. These studies seem to suggest that trade agreements are for the most part self-enforcing, inasmuch as they do not distinguish the more passive influence of “expectations” and reciprocity (Kono 2007) from the more active application of WTO enforcement (legal retaliation). Some scholars emphasize the ability of the WTO to structure liberalizing negotiations in the first place. Christina Davis, for example, attributes the trade liberalizing effect of the WTO to its ability to link bargains across sectors, increasing the range of actors with a stake in the negotiations’ success. Like Martin, Davis finds that the ability of international organizations to link issues enhances the prospects for international cooperation (Davis 2004).

Rationalist theories also emphasize the nature of the information environment and how IOs and IIs influence this environment. The hypothesis most often tested is that IOs actively (and IIs passively) promote more credible, unbiased information on the behavior of actors than would be available in their absence, making it possible to overcome market failures that impede cooperation. A spate of empirical studies has explored the implications of such informational models. David Bearce and co-authors credit the informational functions of IOs (in this case, alliances, and conditional on power relations) with substantially reducing the risk of conflict among their members (Bearce et al. 2006; see also Haftel 2007; Hansen et al. 2008). Several empirical tests now exist that seek to show that the information-producing function of IOs helps *domestic* audiences hold their leaders accountable, which can have the effect of moderating governments’ behaviors in the direction of international norms.

Xinyuan Dai's domestic constituency mechanism depends on the ability of international human rights and environmental institutions to produce credible information on a government's rights practices and pollution patterns, and she produces case studies on air pollution and human rights to illustrate her theory (Dai 2007). James Morrow makes a different argument that also depends on the information function of international institutions. In his view, ratification of an agreement itself reveals information in some cases. Specifically, he argues ratification reveals information by signaling governments' intent to comply with the laws of war, but that this signal is only effective for democratic governments. He finds that the Geneva Conventions helps democratic governments to cooperate through reciprocity because of the information conveyed by the fact of ratification (Morrow 2007; see also Leeds 2003).

The UN Security Council has proved an especially fertile ground for testing theories about the information functions of IOs. Alexander Thompson sees the Security Council as a medium for the transmission of strategic information and, in particular, information about the level of international support offered to the coercing state. Thompson argues that IOs that are known for their independence, relative autonomy, and neutrality are able to convey information both about the intentions of a potentially coercive state as well as potential allies' support. His qualitative case study of the first Gulf War provides some suggestive evidence that in the absence of a UN Security Council resolution, the United States would have faced much more international opposition to intervention, largely because many more states would have been highly skeptical of US intentions (Thompson 2006). Similarly, Erik Voeten (2005) argues that states seek the blessing of the Security Council not to find out what constitutes "appropriate" behavior, but rather to find out what kind of opposition they will face if they decide to go ahead and intervene militarily in another country. Approaching

the Security Council is in his view all about finding out what other political elites will *tolerate*, not what they have internalized as legitimate. He provides qualitative evidence that the Security Council has behaved rather inconsistently, but that nonetheless governments act as though the Council's support is valuable. He sees Security Council decisions as creating focal points regarding socially acceptable uses of force through a process of elite political judgment (Voeten 2005). Terrence Chapman and Dan Reiter argue that gaining the approval of the UN Security Council is useful for domestic political reasons as well. UN approval for a US military intervention greatly increases the extent of public support for such interventions (measured as presidential approval ratings), and they argue that this is because the American public is thereby better informed of the likely success in these cases (Chapman and Reiter 2004).

Constructivist theories have inspired a rich empirical foray into the role of IOs in setting standards of appropriateness, diffusing international norms, and mobilizing various group socialization mechanisms to shape actors' behavior (Johnstone 2010). Inspired by the insights of scholars in political science as well as sociology, empirical work is looking into how and when states become "socialized" to international norms through their membership in international organizations. Finnemore (1993, 1996) and Legro (1997) study specific examples of norm promotion in international politics, finding that IOs can play a crucial role in the systematic dispersion of beliefs and standards of appropriate behavior. Several interesting case studies have argued that even in the most unlikely case – that of China – states have changed important aspects of their behavior as a result of socialization in the context of international organizations (Kent 2007; Acharya and Johnston 2007).

Increasingly, researchers have noticed that IOs play a crucial role both in adopting norms promulgated by various international civil society groups, and in promulgating

these norms to their state membership. Cora True-Frost's case study of the United Nations Security Council suggests that this central security institution has taken up the norms of "human security" offered by a range of non-state actors. These norms go well beyond its traditional concerns with interstate conflict, and deal with issues such as women's equality, HIV/AIDS, and children's rights. As "the sole organ with the capacity for collective judgment and mobilization of force in interpreting the UN Charter" (True-Frost 2007), the Council's decision to "consume" and also to promulgate broad notions of human security has had an important impact on international conceptions of legitimate collective action in this area. Susan Park makes a similar point about the World Bank. The bank's contacts with environmental NGOs over time have altered its "identity" as an institution and made it much more sensitive to the environmental impact of its development projects (Park 2005). These case studies analyze IOs as both consumers and diffusers of norms internationally.

One of the more well-developed lines of inquiry into the role of IOs in shaping outcomes worldwide has been the contribution of sociologists who advance theories of the world polity. As formulated by John Meyer, "world polity" refers to a rationalized but decentralized world order centered in the cultural West and consisting of models or "scripts" that shape states, organizations, and individual identities and ultimately their behavior (Meyer et al. 1997). This approach eschews the radical individualism assumed by rational functionalism, and sees states as embedded in broader social structures of which memberships in IOs and participation in IIs are an expression. IOs exemplify and teach states the tenets of modern statehood – from sovereignty to bureaucratic rationality to the adoption of human rights. "Embeddedness" in the world polity – often proxied by memberships in IOs and participation in IO sponsored conferences – has been used to explain a range of outcomes, from the spread of public education (Meyer et al. 1992) to the

bureaucratization of science (Drori 2003) to the ratification of human rights treaties (Wotipka and Ramirez 2008).

World polity theorists have always been keenly aware that many of the apparent influences of IOs and IIs are quite superficial. "Institutional isomorphism" is the phrase they use to describe the adoption of bureaucratic forms and formal policies that often do not signal either the capacity or the willingness fully to internalize the norms of western scripts. This observation is consistent with empirical research that finds that the socialization effects of IOs are quite conditional. While some have claimed that Western democratic IOs have had an important socializing effect on new members from the eastern bloc (Gheciu 2005), Frank Schimmelfennig's case studies reveal that membership in the EU and NATO – both conceptualized as institutions with the capacity to socialize new members to accept the liberal human rights norms of the majority of members – influence the human rights of liberal parties, but not those of antiliberal parties in Eastern and central Europe (Schimmelfennig et al. 2006; Schimmelfennig 2005). Several studies in the human rights area note that international socialization pressures quite often lead to incomplete internalization of norms and the decoupling of form and practice (Hafner-Burton et al. 2008). Bearce and Bondanella (2007) offer a possible resolution to this conflicting evidence, suggesting that short-term socialization efforts show little effect, but that in the longer term joint participation in formal intergovernmental organizations does lead to interest convergence among members. Meanwhile, in East Asia, Becky Shelley's research suggests that the United Nations has had a complex and ambiguous impact, in some cases delaying democratization, and in some cases, such as Taiwan's, contributing only very indirectly (Shelley 2005). While undoubtedly IOs contribute in some degree to changes in form and values, empirical research on the extent to which genuine internalization takes place is quite speculative, not least because there seems to

be no good way to observe norm internalization in any reliable way.

The central methodological difficulty in many of these empirical studies of the consequences of IOs and IIs has been to show that they contribute to a causal explanation of outcomes (Downs et al. 1996). Statistical analyses have had to grapple – with varying degrees of success – with the problem that membership in IOs and commitments to IIs are themselves choice variables, creating hoary problems of endogeneity when trying to estimate “institutional effects.” Some of the empirical research reflects skepticism. Ringquist and Kostadinova (2005), for example, question whether environmental protocols have any causal impact, arguing that in the case of sulfur dioxide emissions, states that intended to reduce emissions signed the 1985 Helsinki Protocol, but that the protocol itself had no discernible effect. Oona Hathaway has made the same argument about human rights treaties (Hathaway 2002; but see Simmons 2009).

Overall, empirical work on IOs and IIs in the past decade has been rich, varied, and increasingly sophisticated. It has ranged from military conflict to commercial relations to human rights, embracing case studies as well as statistical work. Reflecting the trends in theorizing, the boundaries between “schools of thought” have come down, and scholars are increasingly testing claims about how power and norms interact and even reinforce one another (Hurd 2005; Neumann and Sending 2010). While there is room for skepticism, the thrust of much of the literature has been to show that the influences of IOs and IIs are much more wide-ranging than might have been supposed only a decade or two ago.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This survey of the extensive and growing literature on IOs and IIs suggests much progress, yet many questions that continue to demand answers and ongoing research.

In this section, we briefly sketch out what we see as some of the most promising directions for ongoing and future research in this field, noting, where appropriate, authors who are already engaging in research on these issues. We consider, in particular, the emergence of networks of IOs and IIs; the relationship between IOs and civil society; new directions in work on IOs and domestic politics; and some normative issues.

IOs, IIs, and networked politics

The rapid growth and diffusion of IOs and IIs has led some scholars to move their analysis to a different level, considering how clusters such as “regime complexes” (Raustiala and Victor 2004) influence both institutions themselves and state behavior. As clusters of institutions grow, networks emerge – sometimes including formal organizations, sometimes not (Kahler 2009). In these cases, IO influence is both direct and indirect; networks create possibilities for linkages between states that would be difficult to forge in their absence. The network effects of IOs may be at least partially responsible for the collective effect of these organizations in mediating and settling international disputes (Dorussen and Ward 2008). Networks of organizations may also enable learning within institutions, as in the case of diffusion of capital taxation (Cao 2010; De Lange 2010).

Networks of memberships in IOs magnify the possibilities for cooperation and expanded joint gains among members. Scholars have found, for example, that trade relationships are enhanced not just by belonging to the WTO, but by participation in a broad network of IOs, including those that are primarily political or even cultural (Ingram et al. 2005); or by a thickening population of regional organizations that operate alongside global institutions (Tavares 2010; Kirchner and Dominguez 2011). As scholars consider the role of these networks in global governance, they find a dense network of civil society actors who participate in both IOs and in

politics at the local level (Armstrong 2010). Some consider these networks in terms of their “multiplier effects,” or the extent to which organizations overlap, coordinate their activities, and reinforce their messages and activities (Blavoukos and Bourantonis 2011; Heintze and Zwitter 2010). The high level of institutionalization of most areas of international relations suggests that the study of these networks will become a more prominent aspect of scholarship in coming years.

IOs and civil society

IOs and IIs constitute structures within which international civil society actors operate strategically. Some authors view these structures as placing limitations on the autonomy and agency of NGOs. IOs constitute and affect at least in part the international “opportunity structure” in which civil society actors pursue their interests (Tarrow 2005; Joachim and Locher 2009). Indeed, some scholars have argued that the existence of IOs – and their cautious embrace of civil society participation in their activities – has had a good deal to do with the growth of international civil society over the past several decades (Reimann 2006). But as Kathryn Sikkink has pointed out, much depends on the extent to which institutions are “open” or “closed” to civil society participation: “... for some activists, international institutions are part of the solution, and for others they *are* the problem” (Sikkink 2004). IOs have exhibited substantial variation in the degree to which they have welcomed or opposed the participation of elements of civil society, even within the same issue-area: compare, for example, the relative ease with which the World Bank has engaged civil society to the IMF’s grudging moves toward transparency. What accounts for the nature of IO interaction with civil society actors, and what will be the consequences of such interaction (or lack thereof)? So far, work on these questions has been intriguing but primarily descriptive; analytical frameworks that tie

together the institutional and societal dimensions are needed.

IOs, IIs, and the domestic connection

IR has long recognized that there are systematic connections between regime type and foreign policy orientations (see the chapter by Schultz in this volume). For example, there is a long tradition in the study of international institutions of linking regime support or “regime conducive foreign policies” to reciprocity and conflict management, especially through IOs and IIs. Zuern (1993) (Underdal 1995: 116; see also Cortell and Davis 1996). However, given the roots of contemporary work on IOs and IIs, domestic politics have often received short shrift. This aspect of the literature has undergone rapid transformation in recent years (see Simmons 2009), and we anticipate significant movement in this area in the near future.

One approach to the problem of domestic politics is to acknowledge that certain domestic actors have incentives to use and delegate to IOs and IIs. In trade, for example, governments delegate to IOs to realize joint gains for a society as a whole when they are blocked by domestic economic groups. Several scholars have interpreted international dispute settlement in trade, as well as territorial conflict, in this way (Goldstein 1996; Davis 2012; Simmons 2002). In general, if pursuit of gains over time involves short-term sacrifices, turning to international institutions can be an attractive option for domestic policymakers. These institutions can enhance the commitment of the state as a whole. From a domestic perspective, more importantly, they mobilize and empower particular interest groups, thereby shifting the weight of domestic politics. Through these mechanisms, IOs have an impact on the provision of domestic public goods, such as education (Bassett and Maldonado 2009; Martens et al. 2007) and social/welfare policies (Ervik et al. 2009),

areas that have not yet received sustained attention from IR scholars.

Beyond interest groups, domestic politics interact with IOs and IIs via the judicial system. International norms and agreements are often adjudicated in domestic courts (Simmons 2009; Sikkink 2011). As international agreements take on a legal form, they are interpreted by domestic courts. Judges can therefore use international law as a basis on which to make judgments (Alter 1996; Conforti 1993). In contrast, we can identify growing instances in which national courts challenge the rulings and actions of international organizations, from sanctions imposed by the Security Council, to acts of Interpol, to EU decisions about patents (Reinisch 2010). Regardless of the sign of this effect, the fact of judicialization of the relationship between IOs and domestic politics remains a pressing issue.

Normative issues

The domestic level of analysis also allows us to ask questions of normative significance. How and under what conditions can characteristics valued in domestic politics be preserved in governance structures at the international level? This concern has progressed furthest in the discussion of the ‘democratic deficit’ in the EU. Critics of EU structure argue that the inability of national parliaments to deeply influence EU decision making, combined with the weakness of the European Parliament, mean that the EU itself falls far short of the democratic standards it demands of its members. This concern has led to creative thinking about the meaning of ‘democracy,’ and whether the procedures that assure legitimacy on the international level should mimic those on the domestic level (Weiler 1995). Fritz Scharpf (1999) has cogently argued that the lack of a strong ‘European identity’ means that measures such as majority voting that assure legitimacy within states cannot do so on the European level, and argues instead in favor

of ‘output oriented’ mechanisms. Such discussions will have wide relevance, as demands for greater transparency and broader participation in the decisions of the WTO, the IMF, and the World Bank have recently highlighted.

Andrew Moravcsik argues that when compared to domestic regimes – and “calibrated to reasonable expectations in the ‘second-best’ world constrained by transaction costs, commitment problems, and justice claims” – the EU does in fact meet reasonably criteria of democratic legitimacy (Moravcsik 2004). Others disagree, pointing to the conspicuous lack of contestation over political leadership and policy at the highest levels of the institution (Follesdal and Hix 2006). The EU has responded to criticisms of a democratic deficit by allowing for increased civil-society participation, but scholars appear divided on whether this has significantly improved democracy on a regional level in Europe (Steffek et al. 2008; Smismans 2006). Despite rejection of the European constitution, Risse and Kleine have argued that the process by which European basic agreements are adopted and changed retains a good deal of legitimacy (Risse and Kleine 2007). What are the standards by which we are to judge whether processes and structures within IOs are normatively acceptable? Once our scope of analysis moves beyond the EU, is it possible that we will find that different issue-areas require different sets of standards? Arguments such as those raised by Keohane, Macedo, and Moravcsik (2009; see response by Gartzke and Naoi, 2011) about the relationship between multilateralism and democracy have begun to scratch the surface of these complex normative issues.

CONCLUSIONS

The political study of international institutions reveals a vibrant and diverse body of scholarship. In recent decades, research has turned from the study of formal IOs to the

study of regimes and institutions, informal as well as formal. For the most part, this turn has been salutary, as it has reflected a broad interest not only in formal organizations but in the deeper role that rules and norms play in a system of formally co-equal states. Initially, this turn was instigated by the observation that much of what is interesting about world politics – especially during the Cold War period – seemed to take place among intensely interdependent actors, but beyond the purview of formal interstate organizations. This turn was furthered by a rational-functionalist approach to the study of institutions, which took up the puzzle of how we could understand international cooperation at all, given the assumptions of neo-realism prevalent in the American international relations literature at the time. Meanwhile, in European circles, theorists of international society worked from sociological assumptions on a parallel question: how can order be maintained in an anarchical international society?

These theoretical orientations have made for interesting theoretical fireworks, as we have seen in the broader debates between today's constructivists and rationalists. This debate is clearly reflected in the institutional literature as a distinction between those who view international institutions (including institutional form) as rational responses to the strategic situations in which actors find themselves, versus those who insist on a subjective interpretation of social arrangements (which may or may not be 'rational' and are unlikely to be understood through the use of positive methodologies). These approaches in turn have spawned subsets of coherent scholarship, such as the German school among the rationalists, or those who give primacy of place to normative explanations among the constructivists. Each school has its more state-centric proponents: the English school among the constructivists; those whose mission it was to meet neorealism on its own terms among the rational functionalists. Theorizing is getting much more eclectic, drawing from a range of traditions to

synthesize our understanding of IOs and IIs. For example, inspired by the writing of Foucault, Neumann and Sending advance a conception of international organizations as a form of governing rationality ("governmentality") that embraces liberal norms in the context of state power challenged (though hardly rendered impotent) by globalization (Neumann and Sending 2010).

Several positive developments in the institutional literature should be highlighted as we wrap up this discussion. First, scholars from a range of approaches are showing a greater willingness to drop the assumption of unitary state actors and to engage systematically the world in which we live. For the rationalists, this has meant looking to domestic institutional conditions that make it rational to delegate authority to international institutions. For others working from a more sociological point of view, this has meant drawing in a wide array of transnational actors that have been empowered by democratization or international institutionalization itself. Much of the recent literature has furthered our understanding of the complex milieu in which institutions operate by systematically examining the relationship between governments, domestic coalitions, IOs, and transnational actors.

Despite these gains, weaknesses remain. The major weakness we would point out is the lack of confidence we have in the ability to draw strong inferences from much of the research to date. Some scholars would, of course, deny that this is the point of the exercise, but we feel that more attention to the causal mechanisms advanced, as well as much greater attention to research designs that allow for systematic comparisons across time, across states, or across international institutions, would greatly enhance our ability to explain the world around us. A careful look at literatures that develop theories of domestic and transnational politics, for example, should be drawn upon more systematically if we are to understand the sources and effects of international institutionalization. We also advocate thinking conditionally

about institutional effects, as some of the compliance literature has begun to do. Both the research completed so far and the directions we identify for future research suggest a promising and productive future for studies of international institutions.

NOTES

1 Subsequently, some scholars have divided this definition and labeled the principles and norms underlying an international relationship the “meta-regime” while reserving the term “international regime” for specific rules and procedures in a given issue area. Aggarwal 1998: 4.

2 Of course, this definition is not neutral in one important sense: it embodies our preference for the testing of theoretical propositions using social-scientific methods.

3 We limit ourselves in this chapter to public international organizations and institutions, and leave the analysis of private authority structures to Chapter 13.

4 This approach bears some affinity with sociological institutionalism, which emphasizes the role of “world culture” in explaining institutional isomorphism across countries, but which might also account for growing participation in the network of international institutions that can result from such socialization. See Meyer and Rowland 1977, Meyer et al. 1994, and Thomas, Meyer, Ramirez, and Boli 1987.

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International Law

Beth A. Simmons

The study of international law and international relations has flourished in the past decade. This should hardly be surprising. These two disciplines have closely entwined historical roots in the traditional study of interstate relations and diplomacy (Jeffery 2006). The role of international law in international relations has for a least a century been at the heart of some of the most important debates in international relations scholarship. Something of an intellectual wedge was driven between these two disciplines when the social sciences and international relations in particular took a behaviorist turn in the 1940s and 1950s. The normative and doctrinal approach of many legal scholars seemed to have little intersection with the increasingly social scientific concerns of international relations scholars to explain, interpret, and increasingly to predict international politics. For a brief period coinciding with the apogee of structural realism of the 1970s and 1980s, international law was widely viewed as irrelevant to the study of international relations.

The drought of scholarly work linking international law with international relations ended by the mid-1990s. The study of international regimes in the 1970s and 1980s

foreshadowed the current sharp upswing in interest in international law. Not only are scholars increasingly interested in the growing “legalization” of international affairs, they are making tremendous strides in theorizing and documenting the consequences of international legal norms and agreements for our understanding of international affairs more generally. This has led to new fields of inquiry in international relations that were barely apparent two decades ago.

The first section of this essay defines a few key terms and provides some historical background on the relationship between international law and international relations. The second section discusses the major theoretical approaches, from those that highlight material incentives to those that rest on more ideational foundations. The third section discusses international law development – concepts of legalization, judicialization, constitutionalization, and global administrative law. The fourth section reviews theories and empirical studies of compliance with public international law. The final section concludes that theory has become less compartmentalized by “school” and empirical research has become more rigorous over the past decade.

BACKGROUND

Scope and definitions

International law can be defined as a body of principles, customs, and rules recognized as effectively binding obligations by sovereign states in their mutual relations. “What distinguishes law from other types of social ordering is not form, but adherence to specific rules of legality: generality, promulgation, non-retroactivity, clarity, non-contradiction, not asking the impossible, constancy, and congruence between rules and official action” (Brunnée and Toope 2010). International law’s distinguishing feature – that which sets it apart from an institution, practice, or political agreement – is its acceptance in principle as *binding*. Public international law comprises a set of binding rules among *states*. Increasingly we can find instances in which such rules govern individuals (international criminal law and some aspects of the laws of war, for example), but only states (or in some cases, organizations of states) can enter into international legal agreements, or treaties. This binding state-to-state quality distinguishes international law from the broader concept of international institutions, which can include nonbinding practices and which, many would agree, can also include rules and principles devised by nonstate actors (see the chapter 13 by Martin and Simmons in this volume).

Study and research on international law is also distinct from that of international organizations. While intergovernmental organizations are usually based on an international legal agreement (the various bodies of the United Nations are obvious examples), they are also actors in their own right, and are often studied as such. Many international legal agreements give rise to thin or even no international organizational structures whatsoever. An extradition treaty, for example, creates no *international* organization whatsoever. The parties to the agreement decide when and how to carry it out.

Some scholars and practitioners make reference to “soft law.” In international relations, this can have two meanings. One refers to any written international instrument, other than a treaty, containing principles, norms, standards, or other statements of expected behavior. Or, it sometimes is used to refer to the more hortatory or promotional provisions within a legally binding treaty (Shelton 2009: 69).

International law is found not only in treaties but in the body of *custom* that has developed over time among states. Customary international law is based on state practice, combined with an understanding that such practice has developed into an obligatory norm (*opinio juris*). When a stable practice develops among a sufficiently broad number of states, and when a large number of them view the practice as legally binding, it becomes recognized as a binding principle of international law. *Ius Cogens* norms are considered the most fundamental principles of customary international law, from which derogation is not ever allowed. While no single authoritative list of such norms exist, some examples include prohibitions against aggressive war and crimes against humanity. A similar set of basic norms are sometimes termed *erga omnes* – obligations owed to all. Examples include obligations to refrain from slavery and torture. Legal scholars have also given attention to a growing body of what they refer to as “interstitial law,” that is, the implicit rules operating in and around explicit normative frameworks (Lowe 2000). While an important source of international law in many areas, customary and interstitial international law have been the subject of relatively little attention in international relations, perhaps because they can be difficult to establish empirically and their causal influence is hard to study rigorously (Goldsmith and Posner 2005). Since much of international custom – from the law of the seas to prohibitions against torture to the law of treaties – has now been codified, IR scholars have largely concentrated on treaty law. This article will do the same.

International law in history

Some form of international system of rules has governed relations between independent political entities for centuries if not millennia. David Bederman argues that there was “a coherent sense among ancient peoples from Near East and Mediterranean traditions that state relations should be conducted in accordance with established norms and values” (Bederman 2009: 115). He notes that ancient law among nations was first and foremost an instrument for order, used to secure not only stable power relations among sovereigns but also to bolster their internal legitimacy. While the prehistory of legal agreements between organized groups of humans has been lost in the mists of history, as early as 2500 BCE evidence can be found of third party arbitration awards regarding arable land among cities, as well as nonaggression pacts (frequently violated) among the same (Altman 2004). Ancient Sumerians concluded “international” agreements regarding dynastic marriage alliances between rulers, arbitration in city-state conflict management, and the laws of travel and extradition for runaway slaves, refugees, and deserting soldiers at the dawn of recorded history (Altman 2009).

It is not the purpose of this article to write a history of the development of international law. However, many such histories note that international law has roots in the rules and principles developed by the Roman Empire to govern interactions between Roman citizens and citizens of the outside world (*jus gentium*, or the law among peoples, rather than *jus civile*, or the law among citizens of Rome). For centuries – at least until but perhaps well beyond Grotius’s treatise on *The Laws of War and Peace* (Grotius 1962) – international law was widely viewed as grounded in natural law, divine in origin. Of course, as Yasuaki reminds us, “The overwhelming majority of the human species lived in the areas where ‘universal’ natural law had no impact at all. It was only around the end of the nineteenth century that

the European international law actually became valid as universal law of the world in the geographical sense” (Yasuaki 2000). Most international law histories can therefore be considered the history of *European* traditions and structures, developed in the wake of the crumbling Holy Roman Empire, the scourge of repeated wars, and the rise of trade and maritime transportation (Nussbaum 1954; Butler and Maccoby 1928).

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

The early twentieth century

International law and international relations scholars began an intense, self-conscious dialog in the early twentieth century. One window into this conversation is the implicit debate that took place during the interwar years on the role of international law in reducing violent conflict among nations. In many ways, of course, this was a subset of the more general debate about the role of power, morality, and law that took place among a variety of so-called legal idealists and realists in the 1920s and 1930s. E.H. Carr was one of the most prominent commentators for the latter (and, in fact, is the likely source for the “idealist” label). The “idealists” held in common the notion that progress in international relations post World War I was indeed possible, and would likely be built upon the pillars of international trade, international organizations, and domestic democratic governance (Zimmern 1934; Angell 1911). Many expected international law to play a significant role in the international order of the time. Indeed, as the United States rose to power in the early twentieth century, it found itself with a weak foreign policy structure, but a well-developed notion of the role of law in ordering human affairs. Steinberg and Zasloff argue that it was therefore natural that the United States would see international politics through a legalistic lens, as epitomized by such statesmen as

Elihu Root and Woodrow Wilson (Steinberg and Zasloff 2006).

In many ways, the interwar “debate” between the Idealists and realists has been exaggerated (Simpson 2001). Woodrow Wilson himself spoke publicly of law generally as “subsequent to the fact;” as reflective of rather than transformative of social realities (Wilson 1911). Yet realists such as E.H. Carr emphasized what they saw as naïveté in the hope that international law could contribute much to the post-war peace, much less stave off general war in the 1930s. His work is enlightening as a succinct expression not only of classical realism: “... a state whose interests were adversely affected by a treaty commonly repudiated it as soon as it could do so with impunity ...” (Carr 1964: 169). Carr can also be read as a precursor of critical legal theory. In his discussion of the post-World War I order, he described treaties as devoid of moral content, espoused by those satisfied with the status quo to secure their interests (Carr 1964: 166). High on his agenda was the project of deflating the presumption that international law was particularly moral or legitimate¹ – a message that resonates with critical theory today.

Post-World War II: international law in a “science” of politics

Continuing many of the themes developed in the 1930s, the classical realists of the 1940s through 1960s can be read to have understood law as largely epiphenomenal, or worse yet, irrelevant to the more basic forces of international politics. The “science” of international politics was designed explicitly to leave behind the normative wishful thinking of legal idealists, and to describe not the world one might wish, but the world as it actually is. And the lessons of World War II were fairly clear in this regard: power could not be contained by fragile legal tenets. Morgenthau, for example, complained that “the very structure of international relations – as reflected in ... legal arrangements – has

tended to become at variance with and in large measure irrelevant to the reality of international politics” (Morgenthau 1985: 8). The central problem with international law, as he saw it, was its decentralized and essentially unenforceable nature (Morgenthau 1985: ch. 18). The message of the classical realists was pretty clear: nothing of real *importance* in international relations could be achieved through international law. As Raymond Aron put it, “One does not judge international law by peaceful periods and secondary problems” (Aron 1981: 733). At most, the classical realists thought that international law could function in a limited way when the underlying balance of power kept the most violent ambitions of states in check. But shifting power balances exposed international law’s weaknesses and “created opportunities for chaos” (Hoffmann 1987: 166).

Kenneth Waltz’s influential structural realism stripped law, rules, and norms away completely, until the only thing of relevance to a theory of international politics was “structure” – defined as power relations among states in a system of anarchy (Waltz 1979: 70–101). “Structure” thus defined, Waltz admitted, was “certainly no good on detail” (Chapter 2) – which is the status to which he evidently relegated international economic relationships, protection of the environment, and human rights. With these “details” removed from international politics, law became largely irrelevant to the study of international relations. By the late 1970s, the study of international law in the social sciences was nearly moribund.

Nearly, but not completely, and not for long. The realist view of the world raised some uncomfortable theoretical puzzles. One was to explain why such a useless institution as international law existed at all. Surely there were costs involved in negotiating international legal agreements, seeking ratification, and dreaming up ways to fit specific agreements logically under broader normative principles to which many if not most states adhered. Moreover, states seemed for the most part to be guided by the rules they

were negotiating. Morgenthau himself noted that “The great majority of the rules of international law are generally observed by all nations without actual compulsion, for it is generally in the interest of all nations concerned to honor their obligations under international law” (Morgenthau 1985: 112–113). Echoes of this sentiment could be heard years later in the writing of a scholar with realist roots who took the possibility of “international society” seriously. As Hedley Bull wrote, “The fact that these rules are believed to have the status of law ... makes possible a corpus of international activity that plays an important part in the working of international society” (Bull 1977: 136). In these views, we find two openings for theorizing the conditions under which international law can influence the actions of sovereign states; via their interests, and via their shared conceptions of appropriate behavior. Each of these has found expression in recent approaches to the study of international law in international relations.

Contemporary theories

Resistance to the utter irrelevance of international law has developed in two fairly distinct theoretical traditions in the past two decades. Both “rationalists” – a broad term used here to designate theorists who emphasize instrumental behavior to achieve specific, often material ends – as well as constructivists – broadly, those who believe in the constructed nature of social reality – were intrigued by the puzzle of international law’s very existence. Many wondered whether realism had any theoretical purchase on understanding a world in which rules, norms, dispute settlement procedures, and other law-like structures were proliferating.

One of the most important theoretical developments in international relations to influence later scholarship on international law explicitly eschewed any connection to law *per se*. The “international regimes” literature, exemplified in a volume edited by

Stephen Krasner, was an effort to understand a world that, while quite obviously anarchic, was nonetheless highly organized (Krasner 1983a). A cluster of scholars in the early 1980s began to work out theories of the formation, transformation, and decline of formal and informal arrangements they referred to as “international regimes,” or rules, norms, and decision-making procedures that shape actors’ expectations and thereby influence relations among other states and between states and other actors (Krasner 1983b: 2). The early regimes literature was theoretically eclectic. It ranged from structural/strategic approaches that linked the rise of regimes with specific power relations among states (Stein 1983; Keohane 1983) most especially with the hegemony, or dominance of a major power, to more “Groatian” approaches that assumed a common social purpose among states and to some extent other actors (Ruggie 1982).

Two distinctive theoretical traditions found in this early regimes literature continue to flourish in the social sciences today. To simplify the matter greatly, they were inspired by the seminal theoretical work of Robert Keohane and to a lesser extent Stephen Krasner on the one hand and John Ruggie and to a lesser extent Friedrich Kratochwil on the other. Keohane’s theory of the demand for “international regimes” spawned a hugely influential research agenda constructed on rationalist/functionalist premises to explain the rise and development of international regimes (Keohane 1983). Strongly influenced by institutional economics, Keohane proposed a “functional” theory of international regimes that analyzed why states would demand such structures, arguing that the existence of rules norms and agreed-upon procedures helped to reduce transactions costs among states, reduce uncertainty, and create focal points around which states could coordinate their behaviors and policies. Some regimes were also theorized to provide information that would assist in developing reputations, thereby reinforcing agreements for states that wanted to benefit from future contracting.

This general functional approach to international institutions has had a tremendous impact on the study of international law in the social sciences, despite the fact that it was not conceived as a theory of international law per se.² Many of the same assumptions, concepts, and modes of reasoning could be found in the IR/IL theories that followed. Charles Lipson, for example, concentrated on the focal qualities of international treaties and in particular their explicitness and precision which he and many others argue raises the reputational costs of non-compliance. States use very formal agreements (international law) when they have strong motives to try to overcome cooperation dilemmas; treaties are a way to be explicit and to signal seriousness in a way that distinguishes them from less formal agreements (Lipson 1991). Abbott and Snidal drew on the idea of transactions costs to explain why states would want to develop “hard law” agreements (Abbott and Snidal 2000). A similar rationalist logic characterizes a number of scholar-practitioners as well, from international jurist Rosalyn Higgins to Justice Department legal counsel Jack Goldsmith (Higgins 1994; Goldsmith and Posner 2005). Agreements regarding the law of the seas (Posner and Sykes 2009), trade liberalization, arms control, and even the laws of war (Morrow 2007) are areas in which joint gains and the expectation of a future stream of benefits have been theorized in rationalist-functionalist terms (see below).

Yet, rationalist theories have a number of blind spots that social constructivist theories have to some extent been deployed to address. For example, it is quite obvious that focal points have to be intersubjectively recognized to be helpful at coordinating behavior. “Law” can only raise expectations of compliant behavior if actors share a mutually constructed notion of its special obligatory status (Brunnée and Toope 2010). Most evidently, the concept of a reputation – the mechanism on which rationalists typically depend for reciprocity and ultimately compliance – only has meaning when it is constructed by a

community about which a specific actor cares.

In constructivist theory, rules and norms are important, not only because they solve problems, but also because they condition actors’ self-understandings, references, and ultimately their behavior. Indeed, rules are crucial in determining who is a legitimate actor in world politics. The basic tenet of sovereign state equality that serves to privilege states as the relevant actors in international law itself is a social construction, and therefore open to contention and redefinition.

Among the original “regimes theorists,” John Ruggie’s work represented and advanced this intersubjective approach. One of his much-cited articles interpreted the postwar set of rules governing international trade, not simply as rules about reciprocity and market access, but in terms of the broader social purpose of achieving employment and income security as well (Ruggie 1982). The trade regime, he noted was governed not only by material power distributions, but also by what actors had come to regard as “acceptable” behavior, and what was acceptable was the product of intersubjective meaning, not coercion or narrow material payoffs alone.

These insights have influenced a broad range of constructivist theorizing about international law. Christian Reus-Smit, for example, argues that rules and norms are important because they “condition actors’ self-understandings, references and behavior ...” (Reus-Smit 2004: 3) Or as Friedrich Kratochwil put it, “Law is always more than simply an instrument of regulating present interferences and the inevitable conflicts among self-interested actors; ... it is one of the primary means of making sense in individual and collective life” (Kratochwil 2009: 56) The reciprocity on which law depends for its existence – its very character as obligatory – “can only exist when actors collaborate to build shared understandings ...” (Brunnée and Toope 2010: 7). Reciprocity in this view is deeper than a series of contracts for mutual advantage.

It is fundamental for the construction of communities of mutual obligation.

In contrast to rationalist approaches, constructivists emphasize how rhetoric, deliberation, and persuasion influence actors' preferences. When actors debate the content, interpretation, and application of international law, they simultaneously engage in activities that potentially feed back into their understanding of their identities and therefore their preferences. Many scholars of international law insist that legal discourse is distinctive in this regard. Christian Reus-Smit claims, for example, that legal discourse differs from extra-legal discourse because it structures the discussion toward multilateralism, obligation, and legal justification (Reus-Smit 2004: 5). Legal discourse, relying as it does on rules, facts, precedents, and agreements, is a way to structure discussions that encourage actors to internalize broadly accepted principles rather than narrow conceptions of interest (Johnstone 2003). The central issue for constructivists is how actors come to accept certain rules and the international legal system itself as legitimate. For it is the legitimacy of these rules, and the extent to which they are widely viewed as "fair," that helps to explain their importance in international affairs.

A broad range of scholarship has had an important presence in law schools, but has had a weaker influence in international relations or political sciences departments, or in the social sciences more generally. Critical legal theory, for example, became a fairly well-developed school of thought in the 1970s, at about the time that regime theory was developing. Critical legal theory developed from a radical left ideology, but in fact has much in common with realist theories of international relations (aside from the assumption of state centrism, which it does not particularly espouse). Along with realists, critical legal scholars generally viewed law in general and international law in particular as indeterminate; its general provisions hardly dictated necessary outcomes, and there was a lot of room for manipulation.

Critical legal scholars generally agree with the realists that international law almost always operates to favor the powerful, wealthy, and dominant elites of any society.

The two branches of critical legal studies that are most relevant to international affairs include postcolonial studies and feminist theory (see chapter 6 by Zehfuss, and Chapter 7 by Sjoberg and Tickner, in this volume). Historical critical legal theory offers a strong critique of international law in the context of colonial and postcolonial studies. Marti Koskenniemi describes the role of international law – and, in particular, international lawyers – in legitimating the categories of "civilized" versus "uncivilized" while at the same time striving in an honorable if paternalistic fashion to protect the latter from the worst forms of exploitation by such private entrepreneurs as Cecil Rhodes (Koskenniemi 2002). More generally, critical legal scholars are concerned with "the management of the non-European world by international law and institutions" (Anghie 2005: 246). They insist that international law be analyzed not only from the point of view of its *generators*, but from the vantage point of the peoples who were in fact *subject* to it. Critical legal scholars such as David Kennedy come to the conclusion that law in general and international law specifically rarely delivers on its hyped-up promises, for example, in the human rights arena (Kennedy 2004).

Feminist theories of international law echo the thrust of critical theory above, only the focus is on the public and the patrimonial nature of the international legal system, and hence its systematic silencing of issues of concern to women (Buss and Manji 2005). As in other areas of international relations, feminist theorists stress the disempowerment of women, in this case via "the role of the legal system in creating and perpetuating the unequal position of women" (Charlesworth et al. 1991: 613). In particular, the feminist critique is that public international law is just that – *public* – and is construed as relating to the male world of states rather than the "private" world of women's issues

(Charlesworth et al. 1991: 627). Using human rights law as an example, feminists argue that the emphasis on such public acts as free speech and political participation, while important, hardly challenge the true rights abuses that women suffer daily in their private lives: a lack of reproductive autonomy, battery, rape, and prostitution to name but a few (Stetson 1995).

While distinctive theoretical strands of international law scholarship can certainly be discerned in the literature, increasingly, empirical researchers are problem driven and use a combination of these theoretical insights to guide their inquiry. Much research attempts theoretical synthesis (see the chapter by Checkel in this volume) or at least displays declining respect for sharp theoretical boundaries (Simmons 2009a). Long-standing theoretical traditions continue to inform research. But today's realists are more likely to stress international law's ephemerality rather than its utter irrelevance to international politics (Downs et al. 1996; Goldsmith and Posner 2005), and some acknowledge the possibility that international law might influence state behavior – even in wartime – by theorizing and testing for its possible influence in their research (Valentino et al. 2006). The “irrelevance” of international law to international politics no longer has the status of a self-evident truth among realist theorists. Meanwhile, theorists of such processes as legalization and judicialization draw on both functionalist and constructivist insights in explaining thickening international legal structures and institutions (Sandholtz and Stone Sweet 2004). Critical scholars are more explicitly normatively driven, but come to conclusions that would hardly surprise their conservative realist counterparts. One of the most gratifying aspects about the research on international law and international relations is that debates over meta-theoretical orientations have to some extent become muted in the interest of going after genuine puzzles (Simmons 2010), to which we turn in the following section.

CENTRAL PUZZLES: INTERNATIONAL LAW DEVELOPMENT

The “legalization” of international relations

International relations scholars seem to have (re)discovered not only that world politics are *organized*, but also quite *legalized* toward the end of the 1990s. The creation of the International Criminal Court, the apparently growing authority of the European Court of Justice, and the development of dispute settlement procedures within the WTO all seemed to signal that perhaps the post-Cold War years would indeed be a period of intense legalization of international affairs. At a minimum, these developments drew scholars' attention to the nature and extent of variation in legal arrangements.

To explain patterns of legalization, Kenneth Abbot and his co-authors have proposed a multidimensional continuum ranging from an ideal-typical “highly legalized” setting to a weakly legalized, or even non-legalized, one. They distinguish three “elements” of legalization: obligation, by which they mean the extent to which “state or other actors are [legally] bound by a rule or commitment”; precision, or the extent to which “rules unambiguously define the conduct they require”; and delegation, or the extent to which third parties have been “granted authority to implement, interpret, and apply the rules; to resolve disputes, and (possibly) to make further rules” (Abbott et al. 2000: 401).

Many scholars have used this framework to understand the varying density of legalization across time and space. Drawing on functionalist logic, Kenneth Abbot and Duncan Snidal argue that “international actors choose to order their relations through international law and to design treaties and other legal arrangements to solve specific substantive and political problems” (Abbott and Snidal 2000: 421). They hypothesize that hard law was especially useful (and therefore

predicted) when actors want to make strong credible commitments, where the actors face high transaction costs, and when they anticipate problems arising from incomplete contracting. On the other hand, soft law arrangements were rationally preferred, Abbott and Snidal surmise, when it would be politically costly to get states to agree, and when actors were uncertain about the consequences of an agreement in the future. While Abbot and Snidal claim their approach “combines the rational incentives associated with ‘contracts’ and the normative considerations associated with ‘covenants’” (Abbott and Snidal 2000: 455), their explication clearly has its theoretical heavy foot in the rational world of contracting.

The framework on which the legalization project is based resonates with a number of rationalistic studies about the nature and especially the form of international legal agreements. The obverse of obligation is flexibility, and a number of studies have sought to use a rationalist framework to explain why it is that governments enter into binding agreements, only to design them with huge loopholes through which they can escape their obligations. Barbara Koremenos notes that such an apparent contradiction reflects states’ efforts to cope with uncertainty, which is rife in international cooperation problems (Koremenos 2005). States cannot predict the effects that various random shocks will have on the distribution of benefits from a particular agreement. The larger the variance in these shocks, more likely states are to include renegotiation clauses (though, curiously, not escape clauses) in international agreements (Koremenos 2005). The extent and conditions of legal obligations are also influenced by uncertainty in Milner and Rosendorff’s model of international trade agreements. In their case, the uncertainty arises from domestic reactions to trade conditions; the less sure governments can be about how a trade agreement will affect domestic political demands, the more likely they are to assent to optimal escape clauses (Rosendorff and Milner 2001).

Lawrence Helfer and his co-authors develop a similar argument about uncertainty to explain derogations in international human rights treaties, which they argue are a response to domestic political uncertainty, enabling governments facing serious domestic threats to buy time to confront crises while signaling to various external or domestic audiences “that rights deviations are temporary and lawful” (Helfer et al. 2011). Alexander Thompson finds good support for the proposition that uncertainty helps to explain flexibility in the international law relating to climate change (Thompson 2010). In short, uncertainty has been a key explanation for variance along at least one of Abbott et al.’s (2000) three dimensions of legalization: the extent and nature of legal obligation.

There are some trends in world politics that the functionalist vision advanced by the legalization project has a hard time explaining. One is the spatial variation in the phenomenon: why so much legalization in Europe but not in East Asia, for example? Miles Kahler tries to grapple with this in his discussion, but ultimately accepts that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations’ (ASEAN’s) fairly recent acceptance of certain processes such as third party adjudication of territorial disputes supports “demand driven” or possibly “strategic” explanations for Asia (Kahler 2000). Another puzzle, from this perspective, is the growth of international law in the area of human rights. While in some loose sense “demand driven,” it is certainly hard to understand why rational self-interested states would find it in their interest to create binding international agreements to treat their own citizens with respect. Beth Simmons argues that it might have been more “functional,” from the point of view of state demand, to contract to maintain mutual silence in this issue-area (Simmons 2009a). And yet the legal regime for international human rights has increased and hardened substantially over the course of the past five decades.

The approach forwarded by the Legalization Project drew fairly immediate fire.

The idea of studying legalization struck legal scholars as a peculiar self-created puzzle that “presupposes that a legal void is coming to be filled, without properly questioning whether that void existed to begin with” (Klabbers 2009: 8). Moreover, its narrow rationalist, formalist, and liberal approach drew criticism from constructivists in both law and the social sciences. Most irksome was the project’s effort to single out three dimensions of legalization, an exercise that seems arbitrary and not well justified to critics. Martha Finnemore and Stephen Toope argue that legalization is not in any sense dependent on precision or delegation, and point to entire areas of law governed by vague principles of “equity” and whole international legal regimes such as human rights that involve very little delegation at all (Finnemore and Toope 2001: 747–8). What the project really misses, according to these scholars, was a good grip on obligation as a subjective sensation. For these critics, the focus on formal agreements unnecessarily bureaucratized the notion of law and stripped it of its central claim on human action: acceptance of its legitimacy.

Judicialization and delegation

If explaining legalization has proved to be a bite too big to chew, it has been somewhat more tractable to explain a related phenomenon: international judicialization. One of the most conspicuous developments in international law in the past few decades has been the emergence of authoritative third party bodies to help settle international legal disputes among states, and sometimes between states and individuals (Alter 2011; Romano 1999; Spelliscy 2001). Examples of new international judicial institutions include those with a functional remit, such as the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and those with little more than a “quasi-judicial” (nonlitigious, nonbinding) character, such as the recently acquired powers of the Committee on Economic Social and

Cultural Rights to hear and render views on complaints of individuals alleging noncompliance by their governments with their treaty obligations. It is always possible to dismiss these developments as window dressings, but that raises its own puzzles: Why bother creating international tribunals? And why take the risk of an adverse decision and bad publicity, should one rule against you?

The judicialization of international politics has been explained in several different ways. One theme is to note that domestic politics are increasingly judicialized (Tate and Vallinder 1995), and we should therefore not be surprised to see these domestic forms of politics spreading to the international system. Some scholars attribute this global judicialization to economic liberalization, which introduces new actors, increases demands for transparency, and extends the market for legal services globally (Kelemen and Sibbitt 2004; but for a critique, see Levi-Faur 2005).

Judicialization is central to the development of governance institutions more generally. Alec Stone Sweet has developed a theory that links judicialization to the interests of pairs of state actors, but his account links the process of deciding specific cases to the development of international norms. Blending elements of rationalist theorizing with constructivist ideational elements, he views judicialization as an essential aspect of normative development and change. Conflicts develop out of dyadic state interactions, and states have a strong interest in developing rules for the settlement of these disputes. Judicialization involves two disputants and a “resolver” whose narrow purpose it is to settle the dispute at hand, but whose broader social purpose includes the reproduction and reinforcing of broader norms of rule interpretation and behavior. At root, this is a functionalist account: the dyadic form “generates a massive functional demand for dispute resolution in the form of rule interpretation” (Stone Sweet 1999: 154). As in most traditional functionalist accounts, states turn to third parties because they want to continue to

enjoy the benefits of contracting with other states. Stone Sweet relies on “identity” arguments to make this point: the parties have to understand their interests as being served by pursuing a common interest, and not as exclusively competitive with other states. “Resolvers” in turn are characterized as strategic: they try to choose solutions to disputes within the “overlapping bargaining space” of the disputants. (Stone Sweet 1999: 156). In the process, however, the “resolver” responds to and generates social change.

Rational functionalist logic does seem to dominate the empirical research explaining the turn to third party dispute settlement. In some accounts, the logic of turning to an authoritative third party flows from domestic politics. For example, Christina Davis finds that democratic governments turn to third party dispute settlement at the WTO when executives face relatively protectionist legislatures. Under these circumstances, using the dispute settlement panels of the WTO allows a leader to appear to be “doing something” to stand up to protectionism without responding with protectionist measures of their own (Davis 2012). Beth Simmons makes a similar argument about domestic dysfunctionality to explain the resort to third party arbitration to settle territorial disputes (Simmons 2002). While they deal with completely different issues, these studies share a logic that sees the turn to international dispute settlement as a strategy states adopt to circumvent the problems associated with divisive politics at home.

Others attribute the impulse to delegate not to internal politics, but to external bargaining pressures. The trend in the international law of investment is an interesting example of judicialization as the result of hard-nosed bargaining: capital exporting companies are lobbied by international firms to demand international arbitration clauses in their investment agreements, and tend to get more stringent delegation from capital-importing countries in weak negotiating positions (Allee and Peinhardt 2010; Simmons 2011).

The example of investor protection draws attention to the fact that there are varieties of judicialization, with varying consequences for law development and law compliance. Keohane and his co-authors were careful to distinguish between two ideal types of “judicialization” (Keohane et al. 2000): on the one hand, transnational adjudication is much more independent from the interests of the disputing parties, and tends to be relatively easy for individuals and other actors to access. On the other hand, state-to-state dispute resolution bodies tend to be characterized by a low degree of independence from the disputants, and are harder for nonstate actors to access whether as parties or “friends of the court.”

Scholars disagree about the extent to which international courts can effectively act independently from states. International legal scholars have advanced impressionistic notions, largely drawn from the European experience, to claim that independent tribunals are quite likely to be effective in settling disputes among states (Helfer and Slaughter 1997). However, legal realists Eric Posner and John Yoo contend that “independent tribunals pose a danger to international cooperation because they can render decisions that conflict with the interests of state parties. Indeed, states will be reluctant to use international tribunals unless they have control over the judges. On our view, independence *prevents* international tribunals from being effective” (Posner and Yoo 2005: 7). Posner and Yoo argue that there is a narrow set of circumstances in which states find “independent” tribunals useful: when the tribunal can provide neutral, credible information about the law or about some set of facts that would be difficult otherwise to obtain. Only when states want to settle a legal problem, and have an interest in such information, do Posner and Yoo acknowledge that international courts are likely to play a useful dispute settlement role.

The empirical work to support these claims of the effectiveness of international judicial institutions has been relatively unsystematic.

For one thing, not nearly enough care has been given to conceptualizing and measuring “effectiveness” in this context. Posner and Yoo advance three “highly imperfect” measures: “compliance,” “usage,” and “overall effectiveness” to try to establish that independent courts are no more effective than ones that are more controlled by states (Posner and Yoo 2005: 28–9). We will have more to say on compliance below, but note here that there is a growing literature on compliance with the decisions of international arbitral and/or adjudicative bodies (Paulson 2004). But because of the serious problem of designing research that takes good account of the processes whereby states choose judicial dispute settlement (these processes vary, but all involve some form of consent), it is hard to draw strong inferences about the impact of international tribunals on dispute settlement. There seems to be a growing recognition that international courts cannot be completely independent from states; if judges are concerned that their decisions be implemented, they must to some extent anticipate how the executives and legislatures in the countries concerned will implement their decisions (Carrubba et al. 2008; Busch and Pelc 2010).

Debates about the nature of international courts and their relationship with states have spawned research into judicial behavior at the international level. Much of this literature is clearly inspired by the domestic literature on courts and judicial behavior. The general finding that international judges – no less than domestic judges – can behave strategically has opened up research into how international judges are appointed and whether they can be considered mere puppets of state actors. Consistent with their realist perspective, Posner and de Figueiredo run regressions that suggest judges of the International Court of Justice favor the states that appoint them, as well as states at or near their own developmental level (Posner and de Figueiredo 2005). But it is hard to know whether this constitutes “bias” since there is no clear yardstick for a “fair” decision. Erik Voeten

comes to a completely different conclusion about international judicial behavior when it comes to cases decided by the European Court of Human Rights. In that context, he found fairly convincing evidence that judges did indeed have policy preferences over rights (and, in fact, judges from previously socialist governments were more likely to rule *against* their governments than in their favor) but that judges do not use the tribunal to make larger, geopolitically relevant points (Voeten 2008). Voeten also finds that governments choose judges for the ECtHR that reflect their preferences for EU expansion (Voeten 2007), but this is not to say that these judges rule in a nationalistic way or are beholden to their appointers.

Global constitutionalism and global administrative law – solutions to global governance?

Globalization and its consequences have had a tremendous impact on the way that scholars are thinking about international law. Several concerns arise: the international legal system is growing increasingly complex, with law and jurisprudence developing at various levels of governance (global, regional, national) and across distinct issues areas (trade, human rights, the environment). International law is traditionally state-centric, yet modern problems raise issues of how to regulate the activities of nonstate actors. International law has traditionally not been especially transparent; that is, diplomatic traditions have influenced its development, and participation by stakeholders has hardly been a traditional core concern. Several research programs have developed – primarily in legal academies – in the past decade to address some of these issues. I discuss them in this section under the headings of constitutionalization, global administrative law, and private governance.

Regional experience with supranational law has led to some significant differences between Europeans and the rest of the world

with respect to the possibilities of a more coherent and consistent international legal system (Weiler and Wind 2003). While American scholars are quick to note the limits of international law and Asian voices are scarcely heard in the IL/IR literature, Europeans have begun to theorize and to assess the extent to which "... international law is increasingly starting to look like the sort of legal order we are familiar with from our domestic legal systems" (Klabbers 2009: 11). As law has become more fragmented across legally defined issue areas, is it possible to articulate a more coherent set of principles for ordering the international legal system? A constitutional order is one that spells out relationships of authority among political institutions, how those institutions are to be controlled, and the fundamental rights of individuals vis-à-vis those public authorities. Moreover, "Constitutionalism promises to settle the score once and for all, by giving either *jus cogens* priority, or trade, or human rights, or *erga omnes* principles" (Klabbers 2009: 18).

Two branches of literature have developed: a normative literature that analyzes the problems of a fragmented international order, and an empirical literature that – much like the legalization literature discussed above – tries to assess the extent to which a constitutional order is developing or, in fact, already exists (Klabbers 2009: 4). International relations scholar have noted what might be called "constitutional bargains" associated with the end of great wars (1815, 1914, and 1945) after which great powers design international institutions in their own interests, locking other states into these structures, and yet creating stability in a "hegemonic" fashion by institutionalizing rules of the game (Ikenberry 2001). Legal scholars claim that constitutionalism has recently been on the rise around the world (Ackerman 1997). Joseph Weiler argues that this is a response to globalization, the erosion of state sovereignty, and the attendant need to regulate the activities of nonstate actors – all of which seem to have put the credibility of the

international legal system under some stress (Weller 2009).

Where do scholars look for evidence of a waxing global constitution? The United Nations Charter is the usual candidate, by virtue of its attention to broader governance issues, to defining community membership, and to setting up a hierarchy of values (Fassbender 1998). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), sometimes in conjunction with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, is sometimes said to resemble and indeed to function as an "International Bill of Rights" (Gardbaum 2008). As the Security Council has taken actions in the name of peace and security that impinge on the rights of individuals (the maintenance of individuals on terrorist blacklists, for example), some scholars believe it has become urgent to think through the principles that govern the relationship between international authority and individual rights. Moreover, there is the question of the proper relationship between *international* legal authority and *regional* legal authority. The European Court of First Instance's 2005 decision³ that the EU is bound by international law as decided by the Security Council certainly does pose "constitutional" questions of the highest order.

Others point to governance within issue-specific functional areas as evidence that international law is becoming more "constitutional" in nature. Deborah Cass argues that the decisions of the appellate body of the WTO, for example, reflect growing attention to what one might term constitutional principles: concerns about democracy and governance, constitutional design, fairness, and allocation of policy responsibility (Cass 2005). Others disagree, and indeed are puzzled by debates of "the WTO's (non-existent) constitutional features" and believe the debate over constitutionalism reflects anxieties about the status of international law rather than its real characteristics (Dunoff 2006).

The desirability of a constitutional moment for international law is hardly universally embraced, of course. If something as foundational as an international constitution is developing, this raises serious concerns for the way in which a robust international constitutional structure is adopted. One critique focuses on the contribution that a global constitution in principle makes to the democratic deficit posed by international law more generally. Indeed, Buchanan and Powell warn against the process of international law's slow accretion of constitutional status, charging that "public constitutional deliberation and popular choice has been conspicuously absent" from the process (Buchanan and Powell 2008: 346). Democratic theorists chafe at the easy assumption that self-governance at the local level can be preserved without a significant if not Herculean effort at "contextualization, interpretation, and vernacularization by self-governing peoples" (Benhabib 2009). Perhaps it is best modestly to conclude, as does Andrew Hurrell, that if the international legal system is indeed constitutionalizing, it will at most evolve toward a "common law constitution" – one that is likely to be identified over time rather than ratified *in toto* (Hurrell 2007).

On a more quotidian level, globalization has led to some very practical problems that demand the attention of scholars. The rapid growth of international and transnational regulatory regimes governing everything from banking and finance (Büthe and Mattli 2011) to labor standards (Macdonald and Macdonald 2006) to the investment decisions of the World Bank (Fourie 2009) – threatens to create an accountability deficit in the growing exercise of transnational regulatory power. One response has been an effort to document and theorize the development of "global administrative law ... comprising the mechanisms, principles, practices, and supporting social understandings that promote or otherwise affect the accountability of global administrative bodies, in particular by ensuring they meet adequate standards of

transparency, participation, reasoned decision, and legality, and by providing effective review of the rules and decisions they make" (Kingsbury et al. 2005: 17). By concentrating on what they view as the more technical administrative side of governance, this approach hopes to downplay the role for grand (and controversial) global values, and concentrates on how international institutions make the decisions they do (Klabbers 2009: 28). The study of global administrative law is related to concerns among normative social scientists about the extent to which international law is compatible with acceptable levels and modes of accountability generally (Buchanan and Powell 2008).

COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LEGAL AGREEMENTS

One of the greatest growth sectors in the study of international law and international relations in the past decade has been on the questions of compliance and effectiveness. Dogged by the realist challenge to show that international law and institutions matter to outcomes we may care about (Mearsheimer 1994–95), and the growing recognition even among international legal scholars that there are limits to international law's influence on state behavior (Goldsmith and Posner 2005), scholars have devoted tremendous attention to designing research that can address the question of whether international agreements facilitate anything more than shallow cooperation; that is, do they influence states to behave in ways or to take policies that they might otherwise not have done, were it not for the existence of an international legal norm (Downs et al. 1996)? And does it matter whether a given state has explicitly subscribed to these norms through ratification?

In parallel with the discussion of theories of international law above, it is possible to distinguish two general clusters of theories of

law compliance: theories of material pressures, and theories that depend primarily on ideas, identity arguments, and persuasion. It may be also useful to distinguish theories that locate the primary source of compliance pressure at the interstate, transnational, and local levels. It is essential to reiterate, however, that few actual accounts of compliance are clean examples of one causal mechanism. Most draw on both material pressures as well as nonmaterial influences. Many span more than one level of causal analysis. Moreover, almost all recognize different compliance mechanisms have varying relevance across a variety of issue areas.

***Material “enforcement”:
from international coercion
to domestic constraints***

Perhaps the most common theory of compliance with international law is most closely aligned with realist thinking: compliance depends on the willingness of states to enforce agreements, using material pressures if necessary. This is the case especially if the agreement at stake is one on which governments are tempted to renege on (arms control, prohibitions on the use of torture, trade liberalization). In the absence of material pressures to comply, we are only likely to see shallow compliance based on a coincidence of interests (Goldsmith and Posner 2005; Downs et al. 1996). Examples of state-to-state efforts to use material pressures to enforce international law include the use of authorized retaliation by the dispute settlement panels of the WTO, the linkage of trade to legal human rights practices, and enforcement actions authorized (or not) by the United Nations Security Council. The basic theory is simple: unless states face significant costs, they will violate the law if it is in their interest to do so. The approach predicts better compliance rates, other things being equal, where states face a credible threat of material punishment for their transgressions by their peers or international organizations.

Surprisingly few studies of international law compliance rely exclusively on state-to-state coercion to explain international law compliance. In the nineteenth century, Krasner characterizes the enforcement of international law as episodic and based on various forms of retaliation. He argues, for example, that toleration of religious minorities primarily resulted from a concern about retaliation against one’s own nationals and not out of respect for treaties protecting their rights (Krasner 1999: 82). Studies of the laws of war have found that international norms that are not enforced – for example, norms proscribing the intentional killing of civilians – are likely to be sacrificed to military exigencies, an outcome not affected by international law. Valentino et al. found that the intentional killing of civilians was correlated with the strategy chosen to prosecute the war, but not influenced at all by ratification of the relevant treaty for the time period under question. (Valentino et al. 2006). Realists have long asserted that “most human rights practices are explained by coercion or coincidence of interest” (Goldsmith and Posner 2005: 262); consequently, early quantitative studies of human rights agreements that found little improvement in rights practices upon their ratification *assumed* that this was because they were unlikely to be enforced (Hathaway 2002). Emelie Hafner-Burton infers state-to-state enforcement is important for compliance with international human rights norms from an observed correlation between trade agreements with stringent human rights provisions and rights improvements (Hafner-Burton 2005), although the nature of these agreements is likely highly endogenous to rights programs in the “target” country in the first place. One tantalizing possibility is that states use multilateral forums to manipulate sanctions to enforce international law. James Lebovic and Erik Voeten for example have shown that resolutions of the Human Rights Commission are linked with reductions in aid from the World Bank (Lebovic and Voeten 2009). State-to-state enforcement is certainly an

important part of trade law under the WTO dispute settlement panels, and while the decisions of these panels enjoy extremely high rates of compliance, these rates are not plausibly linked to material coercion. There seems to be no clear relationship between the magnitude of retaliation and the likelihood of compliance with a WTO panel.

One twist on coercion models assumes that states *want* to expose themselves to external enforcement. The assumption of credible commitment theory is that many states are unable to enjoy the “joint gains” implied by international agreements precisely because their potential partners do not know if they will carry them out. Incentives to misrepresent true intentions aggravate the contracting problem. Almost all theories of credible commitments rest on the assumption of time-inconsistent preferences: it may be rational in time t to promise to behave according to an agreement, but in time $t+1$ it is likely that one or both parties will face incentives to renege on the agreement. One way to reduce these incentives is to increase costs a government will face if it reneges. By tying their hands, governments may be able to conclude profitable contracts that would have been difficult to conclude in the absence of high *ex post* violation costs. Enforcement in such models is a desirable feature of agreements that facilitate the realization of joint gains. Several scholars have argued that agreements that contain monitoring, arbitration, prosecution, or dispute settlement mechanisms are efforts to make commitments more credible by ramping up *ex post* costs. Examples include peace agreements that create international “audience costs” (Fortna 2003) the International Criminal Court (Simmons and Danner 2010), bilateral investment treaties (Elkins et al. 2006), territorial agreements with provisions that tend to tie the parties’ hands by raising *ex post* costs (Mattes 2008), and the more institutionalized provisions of some alliance pacts (Long et al. 2007).

Overall, the coercion hypothesis dominates the international relations literature

largely by default. Theories that posit that international law is weak because it is not enforced are likely to *assume* the converse: material coercion increases compliance. The indeterminacy of the decades-long debate about the effectiveness of sanctions – even in the unlikely event that states decide to bear the burden of imposing them (Hovi et al. 2005) – should cast some doubt on the easy assumption that international material coercion alone increases compliance with international law. Scholars and observers, of course, have long recognized that with few exceptions enforcement – from military action to economic sanctions to diplomatic hardball – itself is costly. If we want to think of adherence to international law as an “international public good,” then no one actor is likely to want to bear the burden, and, as realists and others have noted, interstate enforcement of all kinds is likely to be undersupplied. Indeed, the observation that states rarely use available enforcement mechanisms (Chayes and Chayes 1995) – even in such important areas as arms control – has led to a search for other plausible explanations for compliance with international norms.

The dominant rationalist rival to the compliance-by-coercion theory is the theory of *self-enforcing* agreement. Most international norms are not, in fact, enforced through the pressure of third parties or the explicit sanctions of a treaty partner. Rather, they are enforced simply by the threat of withdrawing from the agreement itself, and the risk of losing or reducing the future flow of benefits, not by third party sanctions. Reciprocity and reputation are the key enforcement mechanisms. Robert Keohane’s early theories of compliance with international regimes followed this logic (Keohane 1984). Since “enforcement” depends largely on reciprocity, this framework is useful for explaining stable trade agreements (Goldstein et al. 2007), some aspects of the laws of war, where militaries risk retaliation in kind (Morrow 2007), and obligations whose violation might provoke negative market reactions, as is plausible

in the area of monetary affairs and investment (Simmons 2000).

Theories of self-enforcing agreements and especially those based on reciprocity and the value of a reputation for compliance for purposes of contracting have inspired a rich empirical literature, much of it in the area of war fighting and security. James Morrow's study of eight different subissue areas, including aerial bombardment, armistice/ceasefire, chemical and biological weapons, treatment of civilians, protection of cultural property, conduct on the high seas, treatment of prisoners of war, and treatment of the wounded suggests that reciprocity is key to establishing stable compliance with international norms on war-fighting, and that treaties play a special role in facilitating this reciprocity (Morrow 2007). He argues that treaties clarify what is, and what is not acceptable behavior, which allows adversaries in war more precisely to respond to violations in kind. Alliance commitments may have self-enforcing features as well, that work largely through reputational mechanisms. Douglas Gibler produces evidence that governments (note: not "states") that abrogate their alliances are less likely to be able to negotiate alliance relationships for the rest of their terms in office, making it harder to deter potential aggressors (Gibler 2008). Alliance treaties tend to be "self-enforcing agreements" in that the *ex post* consequences of abrogation entail very real risks to national security into the future. Consistent with this view, Leeds and Savun found that states do not abrogate alliance agreements lightly, but typically when they experience a drastic change in circumstances from those prevailing when the treaty was ratified (Leeds and Savun 2007).

The self-enforcing nature of much international law is perhaps best illustrated by commercial norms and agreements. In the area of trade, the role of reciprocity is thought to be so strong that there is no realistic option to compliance; no state would want to risk withdrawal from the network of liberalizing treaties that (presumably) have done so much

to further market integration in goods and services over the past several decades. Indeed, although recent experience demonstrates that multilateral trade agreements are difficult to reach, compliance tends to be high. Judith Goldstein and her co-authors have shown that there has been "enough" compliance with the various treaty obligations to make a marked positive impact on bilateral trade (Goldstein et al. 2007). Moreover, there seems to be a good deal of consensus that while some 90 of all adopted decisions of WTO involve a finding of a violation, in practically every case the violator complies with the decision of the panel (Wilson 2007). Why such a high compliance rate, especially given that many of these cases that escalate to a formal panel decision are politically "hard" cases to solve (Guzman and Simmons 2002; Davis 2012)? Daniel Kono's study of how trade dispute settlement mechanisms facilitate reciprocity provides a potential answer (Kono 2007). He argues that defiance of WTO decisions inflicts too heavy a reputational toll. It is not the threat of retaliation as much as a loss of potentially rich contracting arrangements that inspires states to comply with their trade agreements.

Most international norms and agreements do not, of course, have strong external enforcement mechanisms. Some international legal norms, such as human rights, do not even involve international reciprocity in any clear way (Simmons 2009). Increasingly, research on compliance reflects the possibility that some of these norms are enforced primarily through *domestic* rather than through international mechanisms. A growing research stream now focuses on the domestic "audience costs" associated with noncompliance with international law. The notion that international legal commitments engage domestic audiences has reoriented some of the theoretical literature toward domestic and comparative politics. Xinyuan Dai theorizes that "toothless" international institutions' legal agreements sometimes inform electorates that governments are pursuing policies they do not perceive to be in

their interest. Dai theorizes that compliance with international agreements is enhanced through new information, generated by treaty bodies and monitoring systems, that inform and empower domestic voters to punish governments for actions of which they disapprove (Dai 2007). When a potential pro-compliance constituency is large (which is not always the case, even in democratic polities), and when an international agreement sheds significant new information on the government's record of compliance, a government will have strong electoral reasons not to violate international agreements. Dai's theory sheds light on why it is that *liberal* democracies are often better treaty compliers: they are populated by large numbers and dense networks of citizens with extensive interests in predictable and harmonious transnational relationships (Gaubatz 1996; Slaughter 1995) who are in a position to "punish" their governments electorally. But to the extent that the electoral "enforcement" mechanism is blunted or anticompliance groups dominate electoral politics, the pressure on states to comply will diminish.

Finally, nonstate national and transnational organizations can play a role in "enforcing" international law by virtue of their ability to manipulate the material incentives of decision makers. Elizabeth Desombre's study of compliance with international environmental and labor laws in the international shipping industry stresses the exclusion of corporations from certain "club goods" such as port access (DeSombre 2006). She notes that despite the economic pressure to cut corners and violate agreements, the ability of port states, international labor unions, intergovernmental fishery organizations, and high-standard industry actors to exclude violators associated with particular flags of convenience has helped to nudge some of the worst polluters toward at least partial compliance. Since environmental protection is a regulatory policy that involves a broad array of nongovernmental actors, it is not surprising that models stressing the civil society and interest aggregation abound. Patrick Bernhagen proposes a model in which

business organization, structural strength, and information asymmetries predict low compliance with multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in general, and the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in particular (Bernhagen 2008). In several studies, nongovernmental organizations have been shown to be important to compliance outcomes, via lobbying and monitoring functions (Bernhagen 2008; see also Gulbrandsen and Andresen 2004). One key to compliance in the environmental area has been to understand the incentives of public and private actors, and the ways in which they interact.

Ideational approaches: legitimacy, identity, persuasion, and socialization

A second class of mechanisms offered for explaining compliance with international law rests on its *legitimacy* as a social institution. Legal scholars emphasize the elevated status of legal commitments, which raise the reputational stakes associated with noncompliance (Guzman 2002; see also Schachter 1991). This special quality of international legal obligations may be due to the fact that they are embedded in a broader system of socially constructed interstate rule-making, normatively linked by the principle of *pacta sunt servanda* – the idea that agreements of a legally obligatory nature must be observed. Customary international law seems to carry a strong presumption of legitimacy; after all, one criterion for identifying custom in the first place is the criterion of *opinion juris* – the widespread sense that complying with a particular rule is "obligatory."

While enforcement theories typically assume the pursuit of material interests or office seeking (as posited by the analyst), constructivists tend to view law as more than a way to improve payoffs; it embodies norms which reflect the social meanings and purposes of the relevant community. Rules and norms are important because they "condition

actors' self-understandings, references, and behavior ..." (Reus-Smit 2004). As such, they become a key focal point for discursive struggles over legitimate political agency and action and critical resources in the international politics of legitimacy. International law has a special place in the array of social norms, some constructivists argue, because it shapes the justificatory politics that ultimately inform official actions.

Some empirical work is beginning to test arguments about the power of perceived legitimacy of international legal obligations to explain state policies and behavior. Judith Kelley's empirical work stresses the principled commitment of states to comply with their legal obligations associated with the International Criminal Court, and finds an impressive rate of compliance with those obligations, despite very material pressure by the George W. Bush administration *not* to cooperate with the ICC (Kelley 2007). She argues that a strong commitment to the rule of law highly conditions any general claims about the overall "compliance pull" of treaties generally. Consistent with normative theories of behavior, she finds the "tug" is strongest for those polities that place the highest value on the rule of law.

The notion that international law may have more legitimacy than other kinds of commitments has been recently subjected to empirical investigation at the individual level of analysis as well. Michael Tomz has recently used survey evidence to test the proposition that there are more significant "audience costs" (reputational repercussions) associated with law violation than with an otherwise similar behavior that does not violate international law (Tomz 2008). Just what gives rise to any potential audience costs is unclear, but one prime candidate is the legitimacy of a legal obligation: a sense on the part of survey respondents that international legal commitments are somehow more compelling than run-of-the-mill policy pronouncements.

The legitimacy of international legal norms is also reflected in some studies of

compliance with international judicial and quasi-judicial bodies. Arguably, compliance with a legal decision of an authoritative body has a different *social meaning* than compliance with the demands of an adversary (Simmons 2002; Allee and Huth 2006). Sara Mitchell and Paul Hensel use a selection model to demonstrate empirically that governments are more likely to comply with the decisions of an authoritative third party than they are with an agreement reached on their own (Mitchell and Hensel 2007). These findings illuminate how the legal context potentially shapes the meaning of actions: deferring to legal authority signals a law-abiding character, while deferring to an adversary signals nothing but weakness. This is a powerful demonstration of the need to marry rational accounts with subjective understandings of behavior.

If discourse and ideas inform politics, then law compliance is explicable in terms of what actors come to believe and value. Compliance with rules can be enhanced through efforts at socialization, or what Kathryn Sikkink and Thomas Risse define as the process by which principled ideas become broadly accepted norms. Once they are internalized, these norms can lead to changes in interests, values, and even identities, which in turn ultimately shape state behavior (Risse et al. 1999).

Compliance is enhanced in this view when actors become socialized to comply. Socialization can mean three kinds of processes in this literature. In a crude sense, actors (state elites) can be "socialized" through a system of rewards and punishments (Schimmelfennig 2005). This form of socialization shades into incentive-based inducements discussed above. More subtly, actors can be encouraged through various cues indicative of social acceptance or approbation to bring their practices in line with international standards. Ryan Goodman and Derek Jinks refer to this as a process of *acculturation* by which they mean the "general process by which actors adopt the beliefs and behavioral patterns of the surrounding culture"

(Goodman and Jinks 2004). Acculturation involves “social costs” associated with shaming or shunning as distinct from the more material costs associated with overt coercion. These pressures may lead to superficial compliance with international norms as reflected in treaty obligations, not necessarily the internalization of norms as deeply held values (Strang and Chang 1993). Institutional sociologists tout the (nonmaterial) power of “world society” to generate and diffuse norms of behavior that mimic accepted scripts of modernity – encouraging countries on the periphery to display outward forms in conformity with the institutions and forms of leading states of the Western world – without internalizing the values behind these forms (Cole 2005; Wotipka and Ramirez 2008; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005).

Acculturation can be contrasted with a more fundamental form of socialization, often referred to in the literature as normative *persuasion*. Persuasion depends on the power of argumentation and deliberation as distinct modes of social interaction which when successful changes what an actor values and sometimes even his or her very identity (Risse 2000; Johnston 2001). Jeffrey Checkel defines persuasion as “a social process of interaction that involves changing attitudes about cause and effect in the absence of overt coercion” (Checkel 2001). He argues that persuasion is more likely to play an important role in explaining compliance behavior when elites do not have deeply held priors, and they are therefore open to new ways of thinking about issues.

Constructivists often agree with rational theorist that pressures applied by (often transnational) civil society tend to encourage governments to comply with international legal standards and obligation. Sally Merry’s ethnography of the role of transnational actors provides a rich description of how the process of persuasion and communication operates (Merry 2006). Transnational human rights ideas become part of local social movements and local legal consciousness through the work of individuals who have

one authentic foot in the local culture and the other in the transnational world of United Nations conferences, meetings and workshops. These individuals play a crucial role in “translating global principles into the local vernacular” (Merry 2006). This is a two-way form of communication, often supporting new ideas and identities locally but also educating the global community about local realities on the ground.

Capacity constraints

Sometimes neither incentives nor ideas are the primary determinant of international law compliance. Brief mention should be made of the very real capacity constraints that many governments face when they try to comply with their international legal obligations. Vast areas of international law, of course, do not typically encounter capacity constraints: nearly all of customary international law requires states to recognize principles (the 12 mile territorial limit from one’s coastline) or to refrain from particular actions (genocide), but by its nature makes no demands that large numbers of states lack the capacity to respect. Much treaty law (the “first generation” of human rights that limit government interference with free expression spelled out in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the requirement established under the auspices of the WTO to reduce import quotas) is of the same quality. Where international law calls for governments to refrain from particular policies, their capacity to comply is usually not at stake.

However, international law appears to have become increasingly demanding over time – in terms of the bureaucratic capabilities, technical sophistication, and resource base needed to comply. Compliance with international environmental requirements is a clear example. Accordingly, early studies emphasized a lack of capacity as one of the most serious barriers for compliance with international environmental accords (Weiss and Jacobson 1998). Capacity constraints have also been important in the provision of

positive rights such as basic health care for children, as required by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Simmons 2009: ch. 8). European law has long stressed the capacities of some states to “keep up” with their obligations. In a study of 6,300 violations of European law, Tanja Börzel and her coauthors have found that bureaucratic inefficiency helps to account for much of the variance in compliance (Börzel et al. 2010). As international law becomes more demanding of state bureaucracies and resources – for example, as norms shift from nonintervention in the affairs of other states to a “responsibility to protect” foreign civilians in humanitarian crises – we can expect capacity constraints to become an increasingly important explanation for noncompliance.

* * *

Despite the temptation to contrast so-called “ideational” theories of international law compliance with “rationalist” ones, the complementarities are striking. Like rationalists, constructivists recognize that reputation surely matters to governments and their constituencies, but reputational concerns themselves are hardly exogenously given constructs; they are the result of intense socialization among state elites within a particular region (Lutz and Sikkink 2000). Game theorists posit such concepts as “common conjectures” that facilitate reciprocity, but what are common conjectures if not commonly shared basic principles or beliefs about how the “game” should be played (Morrow 2007)? Simmons explicitly combines both rationalist (treaty as legal leverage) and constructivist (treaty as an educative device) approaches when she discusses the influence that ratified human rights conventions may have on domestic political organization and mobilization (Simmons 2009). Habermasian theories of communicative action (Risse 2000) have something in common with the Chayes’ notion of “jaw-boning” (Chayes and Chayes 1993). Theorists of law compliance have been borrowing from

one another’s conceptual toolkits for years. That few scholars any longer feel obliged to declare an exclusive theoretical affiliation has largely promoted theoretical rigor, not undercut it.

CONCLUSION

Two broad theoretical approaches have done most to advance the study of international law as a social science in the past decade: constructivist theories and rationalist theories of rules and behavior. The former has its roots in the recognition that norms and norm-governed behavior generally play an important role in human relations, and that there is no reason to think that this role should end abruptly at the water’s edge. The latter grew out of the “neo-functional” theories of international institutions pioneered by Keohane in the 1970s. Both approaches have given rise to a broad range of fruitful research that has moved the theoretical but especially empirical frontiers well beyond that of earlier decades. Today, it is still possible to see the influence of these two areas of theorizing studies of international law and international relations, but the most interesting work draws insights from both.

The literature on international law and international relations has developed both theoretically and empirically in the past decade. Theory has become less compartmentalized even as it has become more rigorous. Empirical testing has benefited from decades of data collection by governments, nongovernmental organizations, and teams of scholars. The frontier of research now seems to be at the nexus of international law, international relations, and domestic politics and legal systems. New research is beginning to explore the globalization of law into domestic contexts, and the differentiated ways in which international rules are absorbed and resisted by local political, social, religious, and legal traditions. Another frontier for research is presented by the slow fading

of the sharp distinction between international law and more informal forms of international governance. International governance is a product of both interstate agreements but also the myriad understandings, procedures, and standards that develop between states and private actors and among private actors (operating in the shadow of states) themselves. Not only can the public international law scholarship be faulted for being too state-centric, but scholars of “global governance” should think about the international legal context in which private groups operate. It is surprising during a time when international law is flourishing that a recent collection of essays on global governance had not a chapter, not a subheading, not even an index entry on international law (Avant et al. 2010).

The most significant feature of new research is the pervasive assumption that legal institutions are worthy of scholarly study. In international relations, space has opened up as realism has lost its near monopoly position of decades past. Critical legal theory has also probably run its course, although it has left many valuable insights in its wake. This is not to say that there is not some quite intelligent and insightful work in these traditions. It is only to say that both of these approaches from very different ideological perspectives failed to inspire young researchers who could hardly square the dour messages of the law’s irrelevancy on the one hand and its essentially tragic nature on the other hand with what anyone with eyes could observe: actors from the largest to the smallest nations, in the regulation of everything from human rights to tax coordination; from land mines to investment agreements were turning to law or law-like instruments to nurture their identities and/or to achieve their objectives. International law was an empirical reality that was not melting away, and indeed seemed to enjoy a huge boost from the end of the Cold War. Much needed explaining – from the sprouting of regional trade agreements to a new global institution with the power to try and sentence

individuals for war crimes. The new attitude seems to be that skepticism, too, no less than “idealism,” has empirical burdens to bear. The past two decades have demonstrated the value of taking these burdens seriously.

NOTES

1 For this position, many thought of him as an apologist for Nazi Germany. See the preface to *The Twenty Years’ Crisis*.

2 For example, despite his focus on international rules and norms, Robert Keohane’s work never explicitly engaged international law until 1997 (Keohane 1997). For a review of the literature in international institutions that has been influenced by rational functionalism, see the chapter by Martin and Simmons in this volume.

3 Case T-306/01 *Yusuf and Al Barakaat v Council and Commission* [2005] ECR II-3533 and Case T-315/01 *Kadi v Council and Commission* [2005] ECR II-3649.

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Negotiation and Bargaining

John Odell

Negotiation among states and other actors remains one of the most central recurring processes of international relations. This chapter takes stock of the most important theoretical ideas that have been proposed for understanding it. The central conclusion will be that scholars are making interesting headway in several directions, yet many questions have yet to be answered satisfactorily. Researchers divide into vigorous networks that still operate largely independently of one another, like communities on different islands.¹ Those who prefer the same theories and methods have tended to cluster together. Each tradition has established significant knowledge while not taking the others' ideas into account very much. Fascinating opportunities for new research, within schools and blending them, are calling for attention.

One tradition, described as negotiation analysis, blends ideas about the individual-level process from several disciplines; much of it originates outside political science. Within political science, game theorists have generated different ideas relevant for this process. International relations (IR) constructivists also have begun to apply their ideas to it. After considering these three schools of thought, we will zoom out from

the micro-process to consider insights about the contexts surrounding the international negotiator.

This essay uses *negotiation* as the primary and more encompassing term. Negotiation is a sequence of actions in which two or more parties address demands, arguments, and proposals to each other for the ostensible purpose of reaching an agreement (Iklé, 1964: 711; Odell, 2000: 10–11). Some negotiations and some agreements are tacit rather than explicit. Scholars lack consensus about the meaning of *bargaining*, and each section introduces the meaning used by that tradition.

Additional caveats might be helpful. Often commentators ask who won and who lost a particular negotiation, thinking with a sport or military analogy. But negotiation is not limited to manipulative behavior designed to defeat an opponent. The war analogy distracts us from the possibility that the talks will make both better off than they were before.

Neither is negotiation limited to accommodation and win-win agreement.² This definition does not say that parties always bargain in good faith, that every outcome makes all parties better off, or that coercion is absent from negotiation by definition. Any time two

parties face unequal alternatives to agreement, the one with the better alternative has an advantage, and normally they press this advantage. In some cases, the other party accepts an agreement that leaves him worse off than before, a win-lose agreement, because under the circumstances, refusing would make the situation even worse. Coercion and influence are matters of degree and both are present to some degree in virtually every encounter of cooperation and conflict. Many negotiations involve both efforts to create joint gain and efforts to claim value from other parties, and the distribution of these efforts in a particular case is a matter for investigation.

Later propositions refer to the individual negotiator. This simplification is not meant to imply that she is always free from influence from the organization, culture, state, and coalition she represents. I assume that the ultimate unit of analysis is the individual agent, but not all studies must focus at that level. Of course, a comprehensive understanding must include structures in which agents operate. The forms and degrees of constraint and the processes of aggregation are also matters for investigation.

Even a long essay cannot mention all relevant studies owing to space constraints. This one highlights many ideas that have been applied empirically and gives references that illustrate these ideas and lead the reader deeper into the subject.³ It is concerned mainly with state-to-state negotiations but includes ideas generated through the study of business and other negotiations.

NEGOTIATION ANALYSIS

This tradition is concerned with negotiation in general – from divorce settlements to business deals to world politics. Scholars working together under this banner come from business studies, law, psychology, economics, IR, political science, and other social sciences.⁴ This large, long-standing multi-disciplinary

literature has developed our most comprehensive conceptual framework for analyzing the process. This framework is richer theoretically but less parsimonious than those of the following two traditions. Negotiation analysis shares common elements to be identified in a moment, but beyond those elements it is a holding company with some internal diversity, rather than a single deductively unified set of propositions. During the 1980s and 1990s, this tradition became partly institutionalized through the Program on Negotiation headquartered at the Harvard Law School, the Processes of International Negotiation Project based at the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis near Vienna, *Negotiation Journal*, and *International Negotiation*. This tradition occupies the largest share of this essay, since it has elaborated the dynamic micro-process more fully than others, yet it is the least familiar to IR scholars.

Negotiation analysts share a preference for theorizing about and observing negotiator behavior at the individual or delegation level as directly as possible, especially through case studies in the field and experiments. In the international case study literature, most theoretical elements are concepts and typologies – of negotiation stages, issues, roles, strategies, and tactics. Less frequent here are hypotheses that explain variation across cases and are stated precisely enough to be refuted. Experimentalists, in contrast, have proposed and tested many causal hypotheses. These ideas are presented in an order moving roughly from the face-to-face process, to coalitions, and finally strategy effects.

Core concepts

Negotiation analysts commonly use *bargaining* as a synonym for *negotiation*, following the dictionary. The framework focuses first on two parties bargaining over one issue. Complexity is then recognized by adding multiple issues, multiple parties, divisions inside parties, and variable negotiation contexts. Some studies use rationalist premises,

many build on cognitivist or ideational assumptions, and more blend the two.

One seminal blend is Schelling (1960), which proposes that conflict situations like the Korean war and US deterrence of the USSR can be thought of as bargaining situations. The outcome depends on more than which side has the greater arsenal. Schelling is well known in international relations for using early game theory to generate powerful insights (and should be recalled in the following section). He also sought to explain outcomes when the logics of the situation and of mathematics do not suffice (Schelling 1960: 22, 58), and so placed beliefs, expectations, imagination, communication, and tactics near the center of his analysis. We are indebted to Schelling for the concepts of tacit bargaining, the intuitive focal point, commitment tactics, and their credibility.

Another seminal blended framework, less familiar to IR scholars, is given by Walton and McKersie (1965). This book on US labor–management negotiation proposes that the process is best conceived as four subprocesses running simultaneously. Distributive bargaining resolves pure conflicts of interest. Integrative bargaining finds common or complementary interests and solves problems confronting both parties. Attitudinal structuring influences the parties' basic social relationship. Intraorganizational bargaining achieves consensus within each party. This attention to the internal helped inspire Putnam's (1988) metaphor of the two-level game. This classic's most fundamental insight for the novice is that negotiating is more complex than the familiar distributive behavior that was so prominent in the US–Soviet case.

The book identifies different strategies and tactics found to correspond to each analytical subprocess. Concretely for instance, distributive tactics include opening with high demands, refusing to make concessions, exaggerating one's minimum needs and true priorities, manipulating information to others' disadvantage, taking others' issues hostage, worsening their alternatives to agreement,

filing a legal complaint against others, making threats, and actually imposing penalties. A defensive distributive strategy consists of analogous steps to protect against losing value. The distributive model uses the concept of utility but emphasizes that actual utilities are partly subjective and the negotiating process can change them (Iklé and Leites, 1962; Walton and McKersie, 1965: 24, 42).

Integrative or problem-solving tactics include proposing agenda items likely to benefit both sides, communicating more information, joint research, and imaginative joint searches for unprecedented arrangements outside the parties' opening positions. Integrative does not mean yielding to a demand without compensation; that would redistribute value, not necessarily increase joint gain. Integrative tactics can include ways to benefit the acting party and do not require altruism.

Lax and Sebenius (1986) contribute the core insight they call the negotiator's dilemma. At the tactical level, there is an inherent inconsistency between distributive tactics and integrative tactics. Value-claiming moves tend to discourage the integrative process and the gains it might generate. And value-creating moves open the negotiator to a risk of exploitation and loss of value for her side. This book and others also identify ways negotiators mitigate this dilemma's consequences.

As negotiation research expanded, different authors used core terms with somewhat different meanings. Some recognized that there is no guarantee that all parties to a negotiation will behave the same way. When one party uses an integrative strategy and the other a distributive strategy, can the process as a whole be classified as 'distributive bargaining' or 'integrative bargaining'? Some authors adapted these terms to refer to the individual party in the first instance. Thus, distributive (competitive, value-claiming) refers to a set of actions one side can use, and integrative (or cooperative, problem-solving, value-creating) refers to a different set of

behaviors. Odell (2000) proposes a conceptual continuum of strategies ranging from purely distributive through mixed to purely integrative. Then a particular interaction is described by aggregating whatever mix of behaviors that set of parties exhibits. Still other researchers classify bargaining behaviors as soft or hard. In some cases (Hopmann, 1974) their meanings seem to overlap integrative and distributive, while in others (Dür and Mateo, 2010) they differ.

A subset of this first tradition reduces *bargaining* to mean exclusively distributive behavior by all parties, and contrasts it with *problem solving*, which seems equivalent to integrative bargaining. These studies attempt to classify the behavior of all parties to a negotiation into one of these two categories; they do not allow for the possibility of different strategies by different players (Elgström and Jönsson, 2000).

Issues and linkage

A fundamental dimension of any negotiation is the number and nature of the issues under discussion. Walton and McKersie (1965: 129) find that agenda items involving strictly economic values where one side's gain is the other's loss generate less integrative behavior than qualitative rules that will establish future rights and obligations. Winham (1986: 367) confirms this hypothesis in the 1970s Tokyo round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), where talks to set tariff rates exhibited more distributive behavior than talks to write new rules, where behavior was more flexible and exploratory. The nature of the issue is a main feature in Oran Young's model of institutional bargaining, offered to explain the formation of international regimes and based on observations in the environmental domain (1994: ch. 4).

Keohane and Nye (1977: 30–32) suggested the concept of linkage strategy, an attempt by a stronger state to use military power to coerce weaker states to change their policy on issues like oil or exchange rates. They theorized that such strategies will be less effective the more the world approximates

complex interdependence. How this strategy fits into the rest of the negotiation process was not yet clear. Tollison and Willett (1979) called attention to other situations in which issue linkage could promote agreement and expand mutual gain, such as when agreement on issue 1 would distribute most of the gain to A at the expense of B, but a complementary issue 2 would have the opposite distributional effect.

Raiffa (1982) and Sebenius (1983) began to situate issue linkage within a comprehensive understanding of the process. Negotiators sometimes add or subtract issues (and parties) during talks, thus changing the game. Adding an issue to a negotiation can, depending on the issue's properties, lead to one-sided gains for the powerful, widen the zone of agreement, or reduce or destroy a zone of agreement. Linkage is ubiquitous at some level rather than a special strategy. Every international treaty covering more than one point or issue has necessarily involved linkage.

The alternative to agreement, the reservation value, and the resistance point

One of the most common ideas in this tradition is that the party's best alternative to a negotiated agreement (its *batna* or outside option)⁵ sets its reservation value inside the talks. The reservation value (Raiffa, 1982) is the value of the best alternative plus or minus transaction costs. The outside alternative is best understood as a course of action by A other than agreement with B. Since the value of that alternative could change, Haskel (1974) and later scholars focus on its net value at a particular time. The no-deal option might be equal to the status quo prior to negotiations, but it can also be worse or better than reversion to that status quo. Typically, a party is not certain of the other's reservation value prior to bargaining. Two parties' reservation values set the limits of the zone of agreement or bargaining range – the set of potential agreements both can accept – on that issue.

More exactly, negotiation analysts assume that the parties' perceptions of the respective outside alternatives will shape their behavior. Here the *resistance point* is the reservation value modified by subjective elements (in contrast to game theory). Some negotiators settle above or below their reservation values (White and Neale, 1991). For example, a developing country views the process as unfair, sets its resistance point above its reservation value, and accepts impasse. The resistance point is the worst deal the party will accept, and it determines behavior.

Furthermore, negotiation analysts do not accept the game-theory assumption that these bargaining limits are fixed. The subjectivity also opens additional opportunities for the negotiation process to work. The international case literature reports many successful efforts during talks to persuade counterparts, explicitly as well as tacitly, to move their resistance points and accept deals they had believed were unacceptable.⁶ In this way, the process can change parties' preferences, in negotiation analysis.

Various studies have applied the concept of the alternative to agreement. Pillar (1983: ch. 4) reports that warring states that are negotiating armistice agreements use military escalation to worsen the no-deal option for the adversary and hasten concessions. Moravcsik (1998) uses outside alternatives to explain distributional outcomes of major internal EU negotiations. Odell (2009) proposes that a worsening in a party's perceived outside option will lead the negotiator to shift her strategy in the integrative direction, and vice versa.

Negotiation analysts argue that the perceived alternatives to agreement are a more accurate guide to the outcome than power. Wiggins (1976) illustrates tactics by Malta that dramatically worsened the alternative perceived by Britain and yielded much greater gain for Malta than the huge bilateral power asymmetry had implied.

The *batna* also offers a way out of the circularity that appears in writings about bargaining power. Often, we read that A gained more because it had greater bargaining power.

In this usage, bargaining power is only another description of, not an explanation for, the gain. The gain could be explained if A had a better outside option than B.

The outcome

Every negotiation eventually terminates in an outcome, either in an agreement or an impasse. Replacing agreement with *success* and impasse with *failure* can be misleading, since avoiding an agreement might be the main goal of a weaker party under pressure to give up value.

A second common meaning of outcome refers to the distribution of gains and losses across the parties, whether these are measured precisely or not. Gains and losses may include intangibles. Reducing all outcomes to successes and failures also loses information that is conserved if outcomes are conceived as varying by degrees of gain and loss.

Any notion of gain implies some reference point, and negotiation analysts use different reference points at different times. One is the value of the status quo prior to bargaining. This concept is attractive for being easier to identify by consensus. But if we expect all negotiators to measure with reference to the prior status quo, we may be surprised in some cases. If after the talks begin, B worsens A's outside option by making a credible threat to impose a serious new cost in the event of no deal, a rational A might accept a deal that makes it worse off than before, if that loss is less than the threat would cost it.

A second common reference point is her no-deal alternative at a given time. A gain by this definition means a situation that will be better for her objectives than what would have prevailed had she chosen the outside option. This concept comes closer to representing the decisions negotiators must make. Its disadvantage is that gains and losses are speculative and more difficult to identify by consensus. It also implies that every agreement represents a gain or at least no loss for

every party, making it impossible to record as a loss an outcome that leaves a party worse off than it began.

Phase typologies

Zartman and Berman (1982) divide the process into three phases. In the diagnostic phase, parties decide to explore the possibility of negotiating, conduct separate preparations, and sound out other parties. In the second phase, they jointly search for and settle on some formula to guide the third phase. UN Security Council resolution 242, intended to promote settlement of the 1967 Arab–Israel war, established the formula of trading security for territory but did not settle the details. In the detail phase, negotiators then work out the particulars of an agreement consistent with the formula. This stage typology contrasts with the image of bargaining as mutual concessions along a single dimension, converging at a point.

Spector and Zartman (2003) focus on the role of negotiation in the evolution of international regimes after establishment, a fourth phase in effect. One conclusion is that the process changes ‘from initial concessional bargaining to problem solving as a basis for governance The members quit competing and vying for advantage’ (277).

Research on the settlement of violent African conflicts leads to the proposition that ‘conflict resolution depends, above all, on the identification of the *ripe moment* in differing patterns of conflict and escalation’ (Zartman, 1989: 263). The ripe moment is defined as a time when both parties believe that neither can win a decisive military victory; they see themselves in a mutually hurting stalemate. This stalemate ‘is as much a matter of perception as of reality for the parties, and as much a subject of persuasion as of timing for the conciliator’ (268). Pugh (2009) applies this idea to explain the 1992 settlement of the conflict in El Salvador.

Druckman (2001) defines the *turning point* and generalizes about the type of precipitant

most likely to generate a turning point in different types of international negotiations. Narlikar (2010) defines the *deadlock* and probes its causes in multilateral talks.

Psychology and communications

Psychological negotiation analysts have rigorously tested many causal hypotheses about the subjective dimensions of the micro-process. They have documented predictable biases that cause negotiator behavior to depart from ideal rationality. It has been reported that about 80% of negotiators assume that the parties’ interests are completely opposed even when opportunities to make both better off are present. Negotiators with this fixed-sum bias tend to place a lower value on a concession framed as coming from an adversary, and they tend not to find mutually beneficial trades (Thompson, 2005: 13).

Each negotiator is a partisan for his or her side, and another set of experiments confirms a general partisan bias. The partisan subject, compared with neutral subjects given the same information, significantly overestimates the value of her outside option (Lax and Sebenius, 1986), underestimates the degree to which the other side’s objectives are compatible with hers (Thompson, 1995), and uses a self-serving definition of fairness (Babcock and Loewenstein, 1997). Partisan bias narrows the zone of agreement from what would exist on objective grounds.

The psychological insight that IR scholarship has recognized the most is prospect theory, the idea that individuals take greater risks to avoid or recoup a loss than to reap a gain of the same magnitude. When negotiators in experiments are instructed to ‘minimize your losses’, they use strategies such as making threats that run a higher risk of breakdown, and they reach significantly fewer agreements than negotiators who have identical interests and information and are told to ‘maximize your gains’ (Bazerman and Neale, 1992: ch. 5). Berejekian (1997) uses this loss-aversion hypothesis to explain

changes in EC behavior during the UN negotiation that created the regime to protect the world's ozone layer. Elms (2006) finds – in a matched pair of US bilateral trade negotiations – that negotiators who perceived a larger loss engaged in more risky and aggressive strategies, and that a mixed-integrative strategy gained more for the US side than a strictly distributive strategy.

Some findings from university experiments are confirmed by others using expert subjects, such as officials playing simulation roles during a WTO training program. Under time pressure, these officials also made tactical decisions by relying on fixed rules of thumb rather than responding to clear new information from others' moves. They too showed evidence of self-serving bias. They found it difficult to tell which aspects of others' actions were valid signals and which were irrelevant. Some convergence toward common knowledge occurred over rounds, but it was not smooth or complete (Dupont et al., 2006). Experiments using expert subjects increase confidence that university findings have external validity.⁷

Psychologists and communication researchers have devoted extensive attention to persuasion and argumentation (Thompson, 2005: ch. 7). In severe conflicts where parties' minds are closed because of distrust and biased information processing, persuasion depends on first opening minds to flexible information processing (Chaiken et al., 2000). B is more likely to be persuaded after A makes unexpected concessions; offers arguments that undermine suspicious expectations; asks questions, especially ones that will elicit disconfirming evidence; and identifies what the other will gain from settlement. Then convergent arguments, a special type created from the positions of other participants, make collaborative problem-solving more likely (Keough, 1992: 117). Axelrod (1978) codes arguments made in three foreign policy settings and concludes that the key to persuasion in these settings is presenting arguments that others have not already taken into account.

Jönsson (1990) is a pioneering attempt to mine communication theory for international negotiation. The book studies how international negotiators attach meanings to ambiguous signals. Language is the first step in signaling; hearers attach different meanings when a speaker describes a political group as 'freedom fighters' or 'terrorists'. Listeners' reactions are also colored by listeners' initial stereotypes and tendencies to devalue possible signals of accommodation by distrusted adversaries.

Few negotiation analysts have studied emotions, but some work has begun to open that door (Barry, 2008). Although the laboratory is limited for studying intense, complex emotions, recent experiments offer evidence that even mildly positive affect in a negotiator leads to greater concession making, more integrative strategy, and improved outcomes. Positive affect may also reverse the familiar finding that negotiators in a loss frame make fewer concessions (Carnevale, 2008). For Mercer (2010), credibility is not a property of the threatener but a belief in the mind of the target's leaders colored by their emotions.

It should be clear that it would be a mistake to confuse negotiation analysis with a narrow version of rational choice that is limited to selfish material incentives and fixed preferences without persuasion.⁸ This tradition has always assumed that reality includes the subjective and that the subjective includes more than information. New information is interpreted, and interpretations vary according to values, expectations, biases, emotions, and others' tactics. Negotiation analysis introduced the subjective dimension a decade before game theorists began incorporating incomplete information, and a generation before IR constructivism was invented.

Many IR specialists question the value of psychological ideas and laboratory findings for international relations. Some exclude psychology by assumption for the sake of parsimony. Others find little theoretical interest in case study claims about leaders' idiosyncrasies. Others question how much space there could be for individual negotiator

biases and arguments to make a difference considering the constraints of bureaucracy and constituents.⁹ Many doubt the external validity of experimental findings when the subjects are naïve undergraduates facing low stakes, and expect that expert experience will drive out ignorance and biases (Babcock and Loewenstein, 1997). Few negotiation experiments have investigated international variables explicitly.

Defenders respond that external validity is established by replication and triangulation and that negotiation experiments using experienced professionals have confirmed some findings. Learning from experience often reinforces rather than offsetting biases (Babcock and Loewenstein, 1997). 'Experts who have rich models of the system in question' are more susceptible than lay people to overconfidence in judgments and confirmatory bias (Rabin, 1998). Regarding constraints, international case studies find that many delegations have significant autonomy from their capitals.¹⁰ Regarding idiosyncrasies, defenders reply that biases such as partisanship are widespread, and generalizations about their effects have been established. Hardly any skeptics have investigated laboratory findings empirically in international relations and demonstrated that they are useless.¹¹ Academics who serve a tour in the practical world often return convinced of the importance of the art as well as the science of negotiation and even the value of experimental research (see testimony from game theory pioneer Raiffa, 1982: 3).

Coalitions

The framework increases complexity further by introducing multiple parties and recognizing that a distinguishing feature of multilateral negotiation is coalition formation. A coalition is a set of parties who coordinate explicitly among themselves and defend the same position. A complex strategy includes tactics to build and hold coalitions together and split rivals. Coalitions are used both

to claim value from others and to promote joint-gain deals.

In international institutions, coalition impact varies with the prevailing decision rule. When decisions are made by voting, a coalition reaching the required minimum vote share wins. When the rule is unanimity or consensus, minority coalitions also influence the process, for instance, in the GATT. At the end, however, coalitions find it more difficult to settle as a unit, since settling often requires concessions and trade-offs, and coalition members often have different preferences on particulars (Hamilton and Whalley, 1989).

Under the consensus rule, the coalition's most significant distributive move is the threat to block. Others are more likely to believe the threat the more the members' preferences on the issue are homogeneous, reducing the odds that splitters will manage to fragment the group; the more the coalition includes powerful players who may block even if their allies desert them; and the larger the coalition, provided its members overcome the fragmentation problem. Odell and Sell (2006) illustrate a trade coalition that did so; Narlikar and Odell (2006) describe one that fragmented and gained little.

A consensus seems to be forming behind the proposition that a coalition of developing countries with heterogeneous issue preferences is likely to gain less, even if it is large, than one representing common issue preferences. Evidence comes from the Group of 77 in the UN General Assembly and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (Miles, 1977; Rothstein, 1979) and comparisons of the two types of coalition in the GATT and WTO (Narlikar, 2003, and works cited there).¹²

The sequence in which a coalition builder invites other parties to join can affect the outcome (Sebenius, 1996). Likewise if one element of a proposal will generate a large blocking coalition, delaying that element until the end will be more favorable for agreement than other sequences (Sebenius, 1995).¹³

A complete theory of complex international negotiation would differentiate between propositions explaining the behavior of individuals, delegations, and coalitions, respectively. It would link decisions at different levels and examine the propositions in light of evidence. Present theory falls far short of this ideal, which poses a major goal for future research.

Strategy effects

Some research has assessed the effects of strategies under different conditions. Regarding distributive strategy, Bayard and Elliott (1994) report that US use of threats under trade law section 301 to gain unrequited trade concessions gained more when the target economy was more dependent on the United States, when targeting a tariff or quota rather than a less transparent measure, and when a GATT panel had ruled against the other side except when the target was the EC Common Agricultural Policy.¹⁴

Regarding mixed-integrative strategy, Walton et al. (1994) show that US business managers who used mixed strategies with labor in the 1980s tended to gain more than those who used strictly distributive strategies. Elms (2006) finds that in a matched pair of bilateral US trade negotiations, a mixed-integrative strategy gained more for the United States than a purely distributive strategy. But we need more careful comparative studies to pin down these effects and conditions that enhance them.

Negotiation analysis, then, has developed a comprehensive set of ideas for analyzing negotiation in general, starting simple and adding much complexity. Relative to the alternatives, this literature has the advantages of theoretical richness, an empirical base in case studies that document the micro-process up close, and rigorous experimental tests of hypotheses. Possible critiques are that it achieves less parsimony and less internal integration overall than other traditions. It needs work to improve theoretical and

methodological rigor in case studies and external validity for international relations in laboratory studies. Few of its hypotheses have been studied in more than a handful of international cases. This first tradition has not made extensive use of insights from the second or third, beyond informal use of concepts from formal bargaining theory.

GAME THEORY CONTRIBUTIONS

A second major tradition presents rationalist political science studies that share a preference for game theory as a method for generating insights. They favor the term *bargaining*, and in this tradition *bargaining theory* is often synonymous with game theory (e.g., Powell, 2002). For Powell, 'Bargaining is about deciding how to divide the gains from joint action' (2). This approach to bargaining is now the most widely seen in political science.

This method permits hypotheses to be proved more conclusively and integrated more tightly than those generated by other traditions. Models assume negotiators are rational decision makers with an unbounded capacity to compute optima, though many models relax the assumption of complete information. All results depend on which bargaining rules and which equilibrium concept the modeler chooses.

Most models assume the players are states and are limited to two unitary states. Game-theoretic work is generally not designed to illuminate explicit negotiator behavior at the micro level, and typical models do not come with nuanced empirical observation at that level. Many models (e.g., Powell, 2007) can, however, be interpreted as simplified representations of tacit bargaining.

This school contributes original insights that others interested in the micro-process could also explore. Some models spotlight how a familiar distributive tactic – misrepresenting private information – can lead to an impasse. Fearon (1995), in an influential

contribution to the large literature on military crisis bargaining, theorizes that one reason rational states go to war even when a lower-cost settlement would be acceptable to both is that leaders have an incentive to exaggerate their private information about their military capabilities and willingness to fight, to gain a better deal, in addition to the incentive to save war costs. He reasons that A's leader, knowing that B's leader has this incentive, disregards B's verbal statements as cheap talk and delays concessions (396). Rauchhaus (2006) provides quantitative evidence that mediation targeting parties' asymmetric information about one another's reservation points is an especially effective form of conflict management. Leventoglu and Tarar (2008) object that private information in crisis bargaining need not result in war unless the dissatisfied state is highly impatient. Meanwhile, a different class of rational models proves that asymmetric information can lead to agreement, not delay and breakdown – if, after B rejects A's initial move, A re-estimates its probabilities about B's type and makes a lower demand in a round 2, and if B accepts the second offer (Morrow, 1994: ch. 8).

Insufficient commitment credibility also can block agreement (Fearon 1995). Costly civil wars break out, and some continue for many years because of bargaining failures due to commitment problems as well as information problems, according to Walter (2009). This article is part of a growing rationalist literature on how third parties can help prevent or resolve international conflicts (Kydd, 2010).

As another illustration, Bearce et al. (2009) incorporate states' beliefs about whether an agreement would be enforced into their choices about whether to enter talks in the first place. The main result is that a low discount rate makes the decision to talk more likely, suggesting a reason why negotiations are more frequent on issues such as trade than on territorial disputes.

Putnam (1988) introduced the two-level game. Putnam was inspired partly by negotiation analysis, and he reasons about

individual negotiators. The central insight is that because an international agreement will have to be ratified at home, the negotiator is often engaged simultaneously in an internal as well as an external negotiation. Specifically, the larger the domestic win-set faced by negotiator A, the greater the odds she will reach an international agreement with B, and the smaller the share of the gain she is likely to capture. Evans, Jacobson, and Putnam (1993) further develop this set of insights through paired case studies of economic, human rights, and security negotiations.

Others took up Putnam's challenge to develop formal models of two-level games. Milner (1997 with Rosendorff) concludes that ratified cooperation will be less likely when one government is divided with its branches controlled by different political parties, when no domestic interest group endorses the agreement, and when domestic institutions allow opponents to change the ratification process after an agreement is concluded.

Another related line of research explores implications of domestic audience costs for negotiations. Browne and Dickson (2010) ask why a leader like Israeli Prime Minister Rabin in 1993 would denounce the PLO as unfit for negotiations while secretly negotiating with it in Norway. A novel rational causal mechanism is suggested: the PLO is unwilling to negotiate, so Rabin undertakes a commitment that will incur serious audience costs when its violation becomes public, which credibly reduces Israel's leverage in negotiations somewhat, which induces the PLO to negotiate.

The game-theoretic perspective can also cast fresh light on ideas generated otherwise. It has been suggested that in a stalemate over contentious issue 1, an offer to link issue 2 to issue 1 can lead to mutual gains. During a security crisis with incomplete information, however, according to game theorist Morrow (1992), such a linkage proposal may be interpreted by the other as a signal of weakness, with dangerous consequences. Governments in those situations rarely make such proposals.

One possible critique is that the simplifying assumptions of this approach have prevented it from observing and explaining features of international negotiations and their outcomes that other approaches regard as significant. Also, some empirical studies in this bargaining tradition provide little evidence about bargaining (e.g., Reed et al., 2008; Bearce et al., 2009). While statistical testing with large data sets has important advantages, this method typically misses much of the dynamic process.¹⁵

Some modelers read case studies of events such as Nixon's 1971 opening to China and build models to account for choices in situations like these (Schultz, 2005). Otherwise, few have incorporated concepts or hypotheses from the first or third traditions. As more do so, researchers in the latter traditions also could consider applying theoretical insights like the strategic implications of negotiators' incomplete information, their discount rates, and the credibility of their commitments in their own research.

CONSTRUCTIVIST CONTRIBUTIONS

Recently, a number of constructivist political scientists have turned their attention to interstate negotiation as such. This newer tradition tends toward case studies based on documentary records of discourses among states and others rather than field work.

Some propose that the concept of Habermasian communicative action or *arguing* helps explain negotiated agreements. This school of thought identifies certain negotiation activities exclusively with rational choice theories and restricts *bargaining* to describe those activities, and identifies other activities exclusively with constructivist theories and uses *arguing* to describe them (Kotzian, 2007).

... [A]rguing in the sense of reason-giving and justifying one's preferences on the basis of some commonly accepted principles and norms is all pervasive in public as well as in private settings ...

[A]rguing means that the participants in a discourse are open to be persuaded by the better argument. Power and social hierarchies consequently recede in the background ... The goal ... is not to pursue one's fixed preferences, but to seek a reasoned consensus. Actors' interests, preferences, and the perceptions of the situation are not fixed but subject to discursive challenges.... In contrast [to rational choice bargaining], arguing necessarily involves references to a mutually accepted external authority to validate empirical or normative assertions (Risse and Kleine, 2010: 708–11).

Early empirical work found, however, that 'arguing could not be isolated empirically from bargaining' (Deitelhoff and Müller, 2005: 171). The two types of speech occur simultaneously, and it proved impossible to identify the motives behind actions. Research shifted to identifying the institutional conditions that help arguing prevail in multilateral negotiations, which is when a persuasion attempt leads at least one actor to change strategy or preference (Risse and Kleine, 2010).

Ulbert and Risse (2005) find that shared norms shape the negotiation process in an international organization. Taken-for-granted norms differ across organizations and empower certain actors as legitimate in the process, rule certain arguments out of order, and determine which discursive strategy will be effective. Their six case studies find three discursive strategies that were used to make arguments resonate with an organization's established norms. Deitelhoff and Müller (2005), reporting on the same project, suggest several hypotheses about conditions that will raise the odds and effectiveness of arguing:

- when negotiators are members of a common institution and already committed to common norms, approximating a common lifeworld;
- when talks take place in an international institution that gives the weak some authority, approximating the ideal speech situation;
- when the negotiators are free of strong pressures from domestic or international politics; and
- when negotiators are less certain of their interests.

Other constructivist case studies add new evidence on arguments that affected behavior and international outcomes on electronic commerce (Farrell, 2003), the UN convention against torture (Hawkins, 2004), UN sanctions against Libya (Hurd, 2005), and climate change (Steffek, 2005). The latter article suggests a way legal arguments can achieve political effects without persuading others to change their beliefs.

The European Union (EU) is the most likely international organization in which to find deliberation and persuasion, since its members are more similar and have deeper legal institutionalization than those of any other. A substantial literature on EU negotiations, using constructivist and other analytical perspectives, has been expanding. Scholars have explored negotiation styles and traced variations to EU institutions, national characteristics, and the issues under discussion.¹⁶ Constructivists have explored the possible socialization of EU diplomats into a common European identity (Checkel, Jeffrey T., 2005). Lewis (2005) finds that experience in EU institutions socializes individual national officials into a collective culture, and citing a 1994 case of talks inside the Committee of Permanent Representatives, claims that this socialization explains behavior that negotiation analysis could not have explained.¹⁷

Niemann (2006) is another rare study that compares ideas from traditions one and three. This case study of internal EU talks to set a common position for WTO negotiations in the 1990s does find Habermasian genuine debate but only in a subcommittee of the Article 113 Committee (state representatives who monitor and work intensively with EU Commission officials) during the early phase of the talks. Later and at higher levels, other behavior identified by negotiation analysis dominated even in the EU.

This third tradition has generated new theory and illuminated international persuasion in new cases. The emphasis on international norms and socialization goes beyond what the first two traditions had contributed.

One possible critique is that otherwise, arguing theory has not yet been shown to be an improvement on multidisciplinary negotiation analysis (including its psychological branch), which had departed from materialist rational choice and fixed preferences years earlier. Arguing toward consensus seems to overlap earlier ideas such as persuasion, arguing from principle and keeping an open mind (Fisher and Ury, 1981), and integrative problem solving. More research comparing these two approaches side by side could clarify the contributions of each.

In addition, attempting to classify all negotiating action as either arguing or bargaining incurs analytical disadvantages. Compared with more comprehensive frameworks, concentrating on modes of communication misses other ways that negotiators act. Also, in this scheme *bargaining* lumps together elements of distributive strategy (such as the threat) and elements of integrative strategy (such as an offer of material reward) and excludes arguments. A distributive strategy can employ some material elements and some arguments, and so can an integrative strategy. A mixed strategy can alternate between common-interest arguments and selfish value-claiming arguments. Using the arguing/bargaining typology instead makes it difficult to see variations between these different strategies and study their effects. Finally, this tradition too has made relatively little use of insights from the others.

THE NEGOTIATOR'S EXOGENOUS CONTEXTS

A fourth set of insights concerns what can be called the contexts surrounding the international negotiator, elements of the situation that are generally beyond the negotiator's control during talks. In this section, we zoom out to encompass elements surrounding the micro-process, which could be considered causally prior to it. Many studies in this set skip over that micro-process, but they merit

space because they highlight conditions that differ across negotiations, that may exert influence on processes and outcomes, and that some negotiation studies neglect. Some of these insights refer to factors that can be partly endogenous. The ideas grouped here do not constitute a single, self-referential school of thought.

State power distribution

The state negotiator is situated in an international distribution of power in the familiar sense of slowly-changing state assets such as population, productive and financial capacity, level of development, government capacity, and military forces. One hypothesis holds that a stronger state is more likely to use an expansive (joint gain) strategy and a weaker state, a distributive strategy (Haskel, 1974). But Dür and Mateo (2010) find the opposite in internal EU negotiations.

Some attribute negotiated outcomes directly to the state power distribution. Keohane and Nye (1977) formulate two power structure models for explaining international regime change. Telhami (1990) explains why Egypt decided to sign a peace agreement with Israel at Camp David at the expense of its relations with other Arab states by pointing to prior shifts in the distribution of power globally and in the Middle East. Krasner (1991) contends that the power structure determines who gains how much from communication regimes. Steinberg (2002) attributes the distributional outcomes of multilateral trade negotiations to great power asymmetry.

Others show that power differences alone leave much outcome variance unexplained. Singh (2008) finds that when power is concentrated, negotiations matter less but that when it is diffused, negotiations alter interests and create mutual-gain outcomes. Zartman and Rubin (2000) conclude from nine bilateral episodes that equal power does not generally lead to more effective negotiation than unequal power. Many other case studies of 'the power of the weak' report moves and

relationships that weaker parties have used to mitigate their disadvantage (Habeeb, 1988; Odell, 2010a).

National cultures

The international negotiator is embedded in a set of national political cultures that are essentially fixed during talks but can vary across cases. A large literature on culture and the micro-process has appeared. One set of studies documents tactics used by one country in many cases and attributes them to culture-specific norms, but does not consider whether the same tactics might be used in many cultures (Faure, 1998). A second set of case studies provides original evidence that cultural differences shape outcomes but without a method for disentangling this claim from alternative interpretations (Albin, 2001; Mingst and Warkentin, 1996).¹⁸

Experimenters have explored whether representatives of different cultures behave differently when faced with the same situation. Much of this research concentrates on business-to-business talks, much comparing one nationality (e.g., a Japanese negotiating with another Japanese) with other nationalities negotiating intraculturally. Recent research has begun to show that individualistic and collectivistic orientations, the most-studied dimensions and long thought to be mutually exclusive, can occur in the same culture; the same negotiator acts individually in some conditions and collectively in others.¹⁹ Brett et al. (1998) find that some cultures achieve greater joint gains than others. But the key cultural variables are the value the culture places on information sharing, the ability to deal with multiple issues simultaneously, and the motivation to continue working to improve an initial deal, not individualism-collectivism.

Recent research has also questioned the universality of the fixed-sum bias. The great bulk of early research was conducted with North American subjects. Evidence has appeared that Greek subjects manifest less of

this bias, and East Asians tend to show different biases (Morris and Gelfand, 2004).

On inter-cultural negotiations, one experiment explains why Americans and Japanese achieve smaller joint gains when negotiating across cultures than when negotiating within their own group (Brett et al., 1998). One survey of American and Chinese managers of joint ventures in China finds expected differences in their default strategies, but also that greater commitment to the relationship mitigates those tendencies in both cultures (Lin and Miller, 2003).

Gender

Little research has specialized on the effects of gender in international negotiation (Boyer et al., 2009; Maoz, 2009; Ruane, 2006), even though a substantial literature analyzes gender in international relations generally (see the chapter by Sjöberg and Tickner in this volume). The past decade has, however, brought many studies of gender in workplace negotiations. To illustrate, most of this research treats gender as a stable property of individuals and looks for evidence of individual differences. Findings include that women are less likely than men to ask for a raise or promotion, less likely to initiate negotiations, and likely to feel less confident about their negotiating abilities and to set lower goals. Men achieve larger gains than women in integrative as well as distributive negotiating (Kolb, 2009).

More recent studies introduce the feminist insight that gender can be a property of a system of social practices and expectations in an organization, within which individual talks occur (or do not). A gendered order can shape which issues are negotiable – for instance, a firm assigns the most valuable clients to male executives and considers the assignment of clients to be non-negotiable (Kolb, 2009). When negotiations take place, gender stereotypes impose social costs that men do not face. One stereotype holds that women are nice and sensitive to others'

needs, and when a woman initiates negotiations for greater compensation for herself, men view this behavior negatively (Bowles et al., 2007). Thus, outcomes may depend on more than the individual woman's strengths or deficiencies as a negotiator.

Skeptics may ask how well these findings generalize to professional diplomats and leaders such as Margaret Thatcher or Condoleezza Rice negotiating on behalf of states. It has not been shown, for instance, that female diplomats gain less than male diplomats. Feminists may respond in turn that prominent 'iron ladies' confirm the socializing power of masculine identity models. Future research could investigate gender in international negotiations as well.

International institutions

Existing international institutions form another dimension of the negotiator's environment. Functionalists theorize that states create formal international regimes to make subsequent negotiations among member states more efficient, by helping members overcome transaction costs, information problems, and collective action problems (Keohane, 1984). Martin (1992) provides statistical and case evidence that the presence of an international organization makes issue linkages among the member states more likely.

This tradition has made little effort to study negotiator behavior or transaction costs directly. Some complex multilateral negotiations run for years and cause us to wonder whether alternatives would have been less costly. Moravcsik (1999) objects that states can find information and focal points without international secretariats' help.

Case research has generated additional insights about how institutions shape negotiator behavior within them. Susskind (1994) complains that the way UN environmental talks are organized encourages distributive behavior and long delays, discourages states from engaging in informal coalition building, and discourages integrative behavior such as

creating options for mutual gain. Recent studies have begun to learn about the effects of the chair of a multilateral negotiation on efficiency and the distribution of value (Tallberg, 2006).

The EU may be the most extreme case of an institution that could shape negotiating behavior among members. Elgström and Jönsson (2000) find that day-to-day internal EU negotiations are dominated by problem solving and that the trend is toward institutionalizing this behavior, but that bargaining (distributive and conflictual behavior) occurs under some circumstances.

Domestic political institutions

The international negotiator also works in the context of national political institutions that are generally fixed during talks. Some political scientists find that democracies cooperate significantly more than non-democracies on average, in avoiding wars, expanding mutual trade, and on other issues. One rationale is that they have an advantage over autocracies in making credible commitments (Schultz, 1999; Lipson, 2003; but see Weeks, 2008). Another hypothesis holds that because democracies share the norm that political competition should exclude violence, they are more likely than autocracies to negotiate peaceful settlements of international disputes with other democracies (Dixon, 1994).

Variable internal institutions in democracies and other states may restrict the positions a negotiator is likely to take and thus the odds of agreement. The domestic ratification requirement has been mentioned. Encarnation and Wells (1985) find that a developing country's gains in negotiating over terms of incoming foreign investment depend on how the government is structured. Jupille (1999) provides evidence that the EU negotiating position is closer to the status quo on issues where the unanimity rule prevails, while qualified majority voting is associated with greater change, and that international outcomes vary accordingly.

Domestic political pressures and changes

While domestic institutions are constant, other internal political conditions vary. For instance, an international threat is likely to gain less when the threatening government has a freer hand domestically to back down (Martin and Sikkink, 1993), and when it faces greater pressure at home not to implement the threat (Odell, 2000: ch. 6).

Internal politics are not fully exogenous; leaders have some influence over the politics they face. Some case studies have shown that negotiators' tactics vis-à-vis their own constituents have reduced the odds of a ratified agreement. One general dilemma is that tactics functional for claiming value from the foreign party, such as exciting domestic groups to express high demands, may raise expectations so high that constituents will refuse to ratify a deal that is better than the alternative to agreement.²⁰ But leaders in other cases have increased the odds of agreement by manipulating the information available to their constituents and by other internal means, even in democracies (Zahariadis, 2003). This study also provides evidence that the tactic of claiming one's hands are tied will be more credible in a presidential system with an independent legislature than in a parliamentary institution.

Negotiators employ tactics to influence domestic politics inside other countries. Schoppa (1993) found two, termed participation expansion and alternative specification, in a set of five cases of US negotiation with Japan. When US negotiators used them, they gained more than when they did not.

Markets

International negotiations over trade, investment, and financial issues differ fundamentally from others in that they are sensitive to changing market conditions. Some propositions take market conditions to be exogenous. For example, industries with greater scale

economies will be more likely than others to lobby for a regional free trade agreement (Chase, 2003). When two states are on the same side of a market (both sellers, for instance), they are more likely to use integrative strategies toward each other than when they are on opposite sides. The better the market alternative to a prospective agreement as viewed by the negotiator, the lower the odds he will enter a negotiation toward that agreement, and if he does, the higher his resistance point and the harder his claiming behavior, and vice versa (Odell, 2000: ch. 3). The outcome of bargaining between multinational firms and host countries over subsidiary ownership will vary with the rate of technological change in the industry, its degree of global integration, and the speed of change in host country technical development (Kobrin, 1987).

Ultimately, markets are endogenous to a political environment, and sometimes negotiators move markets as well as the reverse. This is more likely the shorter the lag between government action and market reaction. Lags are shorter in monetary and financial affairs than in trade. Also, official talks have spurred firms, over the medium term, to generate new market possibilities that in turn enlarge or shrink the government negotiators' possible agreement space (Odell, 2000: ch. 3).

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Recent research on the international negotiation process has made substantial headway, building on its foundations in intriguing ways. We have many theoretical ideas relevant for understanding the process plus a growing body of evidence, gathered and analyzed with diverse methods at several levels of analysis. Each sub-literature is continuing to push forward along its track.

This area also faces important challenges and opportunities. The first is addressing its theoretical weaknesses. As long as this

literature is apparently confused about the meanings of such core concepts as bargaining and strategy, knowledge accumulation and influence on other scholars and practitioners will naturally be impeded. In case-based work, there is a need to continue the move from typologies to falsifiable propositions. Research concentrating on the micro-process needs to specify and differentiate propositions that apply to individual negotiators, states, and coalitions, respectively, and explore links among them.

Related is a gap between theory about micro-processes and theory from macro conditions. How do constant background features – such as whether the states are democratic or authoritarian or the formal properties of the international institution – fit together with dynamic individual processes documented by experiments and case studies – to determine outcomes? Can political scientists thinking primarily about cooperation theorize more about negotiator behavior inside international institutions? Can experimentalists introduce hypotheses about how international institutional differences (as conceived by either rationalists or constructivists) affect individual negotiator behavior? Can our theory generalize using the two levels jointly?

A second major challenge is methodological. International negotiations are typically secret, and much of the process is informal and not recorded in official documents. The case study allows the researcher to investigate the complex process, including the informal elements, more fully. But future case studies can attempt to improve on those that are not disciplined by considering what evidence would count against their main claims and by alternative interpretations. Statistical hypothesis testers can consider moving beyond regressing outcomes on initial conditions and proxies, to the creation of valid quantitative data capturing the process itself. This is a thorny problem, however, discussed along with a range of other methods in three special issues of *International Negotiation* (7: 1, 9: 3, 10: 1).

A third major challenge is empirical. Many experimental findings need corroboration from observational studies in international relations. Many other ideas have been applied in only a few countries, periods, and international institutions. This literature severely under-represents the experience of developing, socialist, and transition countries. We do not know how widely present ideas apply or what novel perspectives might develop in other domains.

Probably the most obvious implication of this review is the great opportunity for contributions that better integrate the insights generated in our separated negotiation and bargaining literatures. Bracketing only certain ideas for study can be a productive strategy initially, but in time these self-imposed limits become obstacles to progress. None of these rival approaches has proved sufficient by itself, as usual in social science. Integration is more likely if researchers focus on developing the best possible middle-range theory grounded in evidence, regardless of which 'ism' or method suggested an insight. Integration sometimes advances from the bottom up, as empirical projects weave in ideas from two or three traditions simultaneously.

For example, negotiation analysts might incorporate process ideas from contemporary game theorists or institutional hypotheses from Section 4, say by comparing strategies used by delegations from democratic and authoritarian states when facing similar issues and situations. Or do differences in international organizations' designs lead states to use more or fewer integrative strategies? Experimenters could focus more on properties of international institutions and relations. Game theorists and negotiation analysts could consider taking off from novel constructivist insights about arguing.

For political scientists, the largest underexploited opportunity is to explore negotiation analysis. The game theorist might generate a novel model by searching those case studies and experiments for insights about micro-processes. The constructivist will find in the first tradition a more comprehensive

foundation on which to build, possibly even improving constructivist theories' micro-foundations (Checkel, Jeffrey T., 1998; Odell, 2002).

These are only a few examples from a fascinating multitude of possibilities. Our knowledge could and probably will become much fuller and better integrated than it is today. That future body of knowledge would be even more respected, useful, and influential.

NOTES

1 Jönsson (2002). Earlier reviews are found in Young (1975) and Zartman (1977). Also see related essays in this volume on security cooperation and international organizations. The present chapter draws on Odell (2010b). I am grateful to Mariano Bertucci, Andreas Dür, Eric Hamilton, Amrita Narlikar, Brian Rathbun, Thomas Risse, and Beth Simmons for helpful comments on an earlier draft.

2 For a win-win tilt, see Zartman (1977) and Fisher and Ury (1981).

3 The Economic Negotiation Network, www.usc.edu/enn monitors new research on international economic negotiations. For introductions to research on diplomacy see Sharp (2010), Jönsson (2002), and the *Hague Journal of Diplomacy*.

4 Sebenius (1992) gives it this label and reviews the early phase of a line of research that makes informal use of game theoretic concepts, pioneered by Schelling (1960), Walton and McKersie (1965), and Raiffa (1982). The latter two attempt to identify all key dimensions of a negotiation. Lax and Sebenius (1986) and Odell (2000) build further on those foundations. Sebenius uses *negotiation analysis* to mean a prescriptive endeavor based on accurate description of how others behave. But much of this literature aims to explain the process using theoretical ideas and evidence. The label is used here to refer to explanatory works.

5 This concept has deep roots in the economics of bargaining and negotiation analysis: Zeuthen (1930); Fisher and Ury (1981).

6 E.g. Iklé (1964) on Western negotiations with Stalin; Wriggins (1976) on military base negotiations; Odell (2009) on WTO talks.

7 Other experiments have used experts such as realtors on the job (Northcraft and Neale, 1987) and experienced salesmen and women attending executive education programs.

8 Ulbert and Risse (2005:353) write: 'Studies on international bargaining have overwhelmingly focused on the material context of negotiations.'

9 Comment at a panel, annual convention of the International Studies Association, San Diego, March 2006.

10 For example, research in Brussels on delegates to the EU (Lewis, 2005). My field work in Geneva finds that many developing country capitals give their ambassadors only the most general instructions on WTO issues (Odell, 2009).

11 An exception is Levy (1997), which notes several problems in applying prospect theory rigorously in international relations.

12 Narlikar notes, however, that the transaction costs of operating in several issue-based coalitions at the same time may be prohibitive for many small and poor states. Lida (1988) also presents 4 hypotheses for explaining and predicting an increase in group solidarity.

13 For related work analyzing international mediation, see the special issue of *International Negotiation* 12, no. 2 (June 2007) and Bercovitch and Rubin (1992).

14 Research on economic sanctions' effectiveness in influencing other governments (Baldwin, 1985; Hufbauer et al., 2007) overlaps negotiation analysis, yet little effort has been made to explore this intersection.

15 This extensive rationalist bargaining literature could fill much more space. See the chapter on rational choice, Zagare and Slantchev (2010), Danilovic and Clare (2010), Kydd 2010, and Powell 2002.

16 See special 2010 issue of the *Journal of European Public Policy* (17:5), Panke (2010), and Elgström and Jönsson (2005). Other examples are found in other sections of this essay.

17 This article defines negotiation analysis as a view that expects only distributive behavior; integrative behavior is omitted.

18 See Sebenius (2002) for cautions about emphasizing culture.

19 This section draws on Weiss (2006).

20 Walton and McKersie (1965: chap. 9) identify the dilemma; Odell (2000: chap. 5) illustrates it with an international negotiation between Mexico and the United States.

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Globalization and Global Governance

Michael Zürn

INTRODUCTION

The literatures on interdependence in the 1970s and more recently on globalization reveal remarkable similarities, of which two are especially striking.¹ The first is that the interest in both interdependence and globalization can be seen as an expression of a “poorly understood but widespread feeling that the very nature of world politics is changing” (Keohane and Nye, Jr., 2000: 104). The second is that both concepts never reached the status of a sound theory of world politics. While most users of these concepts realize that they challenge conventional theories of world politics and in a sense created new research agendas in International Relations, endeavors to formulate an interdependence or globalization theory of international relations have so far not succeeded.

Not least because of these commonalities, the more recent literature on globalization is confronted with questions such as “What’s New?”. In this contribution, I want to emphasize two differences between interdependence

and globalization research. On the one hand, the notion of globalization differs from that of interdependence in that it refers to qualitatively different conditions. Whereas the notion of interdependence refers to a growing sensitivity and vulnerability between separate units, globalization refers to the merging of units (Section 2). This also affects the causal mechanisms which lead to political change (Section 3). Therefore, a reassessment of those propositions about political effects made by both interdependence and globalization literature is called for (Section 4). On the other hand, to the extent that the notion of globalization refers to much more than just interdependence between distinct units, the propositions about change in world politics go much further in the current debate on global governance (Section 5). They indicate the need for a theory of world politics that re-evaluates the notion of distinct territorial units – be they ontologically given as in Realism or socially constructed as in Constructivism – as theoretical building blocks (Section 6).

THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLE: DIFFERENT FORMS OF INTERCONNECTEDNESS AND SOCIAL SPACES

Interdependence

Dependence, in its most general form, can be described as a situation in which a system is contingent upon external forces. Interdependence in the social sciences describes a situation of mutual dependence between social actors. Thus defined, interdependence relates to specific kinds of actions in specific issue-areas (see Morse, 1976: 118). Based on the distinction between the types of social actors that figure as external forces, interdependence in international relations can be due to two factors. On the one hand, nation states and national societies are dependent upon the activities of other states (*state interdependence*). In this sense, states have been dependent upon each other at least since the Westphalian system of states emerged (Bull, 1977). National security has always been dependent upon the decisions of governments in neighboring states – for instance, whether or not to wage war. On the other hand, the effects of given actions by a government may depend on societal developments that take place outside of its jurisdiction (*societal interdependence*). For instance, the development of national economies cannot be understood without taking into account what happens elsewhere. Social interconnectedness can lead to quite different forms of societal interdependence. While there are countless distinctions made in the literature (see, e.g., Baldwin, 1980; Caporaso, 1978; Senghaas, 1994; De Wilde, 1991), the most consequential distinction is the one between “sensitivity interdependence”, defined in terms of mutual effects, and “vulnerability interdependence”, defined in terms of the opportunity costs of disrupting the relationship (Keohane and Nye, Jr., 1977: 12–15).

Globalization and societal denationalization

Globalization goes further than interdependence. Richard Cooper (1986: 1) argues that “the internationalized economy of the 1960s was characterized by a sensitivity of economic transactions between two or more nations to economic developments within those nations”. By contrast, the process of economic globalization describes a *movement towards* one integrated world market in which “buyers and sellers are in such free intercourse with one another that the prices of the same goods tend to equality easily and quickly” (Cooper, 1986: 71). This distinction between an internationalized economy and the global integration of markets can be taken *pars pro toto*. When generalized to all societal relations, it points to the most important difference between interdependence and globalization. *Globalization* thus describes a *process* in which the world moves toward an integrated global society and the significance of national borders decreases. It thus calls into question the distinction between domestic and foreign relations. In this view, the living conditions of people and local communities have changed through globalization; distant events of all sorts have immediate consequences not only for states but for individuals’ daily lives (Rosenau, 1990: 78; Holm and Sørensen, 1995: 4–5; Hirst and Thompson, 1996: 7; Held et al., 1999: ch. 1). This notion of globalization refers to a measurable process of *social change* which, in turn, may or may not have causal effects on *political developments*. Globalization is thus neither identical with nor does it *necessarily* lead to the extension of political space and global governance. Nor does it necessitate the formation of a world society² or transnational identities.³

As opposed to globalization, the term “interdependence” refers to a condition. In this context, it is helpful to contrast the terms “interdependence” and “globalism” (Keohane and Nye, Jr., 2000: 104). The data however

does not justify the use of the term globalism. Globalism may only be appropriate to sketch some exceptional cases such as the financial markets and some global dangers, but it is inappropriate for most other fields. Moreover, in some areas a process toward globalism, that is, globalization as a process leading to global societal spaces, does not seem to be taking place at all. Most importantly, regionalization under the umbrella of American dominance is a process running in parallel to globalization (Katzenstein, 2005). Generally speaking, the context of globalization has fostered regionalization mainly as a result of new regional agreements such as the European Single Market, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the establishment of the ASEAN charter (Mansfield and Milner, 1997).

Against this background, the term “societal denationalization” (Habermas, 1998; Sassen, 1998; Zürn, 1995) seems to be more appropriate. The question is then whether intensified transboundary societal interactions at an already relatively high level signify a further decline in the importance of nationally defined borders. The condition of a society can be described as denationalized when transactions within national borders are no denser than transnational transactions.⁴ The term *societal denationalization* – as a process – thus has the advantage that it defines a starting point (national society) of the process but leaves the end point indeterminate. Moreover, if cases can be singled out that show a clear trend toward globalization, there is no problem in interpreting them as special instances of a more general trend toward societal denationalization. Seen thus, the transboundary pollution of the Rhine is just as much a phenomenon of societal denationalization as global warming, although only the latter is genuinely global.⁵

Measurement

The interconnectedness of societies can be measured by the rise of transboundary transactions

relative to transactions that take place within a national territory (see Deutsch and Eckstein, 1961; Rosecrance and Stein, 1973; Rosecrance et al., 1977; Katzenstein, 1975; Hirst and Thompson, 1996; Garrett, 1998b; Reinicke, 1998; Beisheim et al., 1999; Held et al., 1999). In the words of K.W. Deutsch (1969: 99), borders of national societies dissolve when there is no more critical reduction in the frequency of social transactions. The objection raised now and again by economists to this approach to measurement is that by observing these transactions, little can be said about real interdependence or, for that matter, globalization. For instance, changes in flow values may be due to market volatility, that is, changes in the attractiveness of economic locations, and perfectly integrated spaces may even be characterized by lower flow values (see Garrett, 1998a: ch. 3). For this reason, economists often propose the analysis of transaction costs and convergent prices, which they claim more closely approximate the theoretical conception of integrated spaces (Frankel, 1993; Garrett, 1998a). For instance, average prices for air travel with American airlines dropped from around 45 cents in 1929, to about 14 cents in 1960 to about 4 cents per mile in 2009 (<http://www.airlines.org/economics/finance/PaPricesYield.htm>); international telecommunication costs have sunk by about 8% per year since the late 1960s (Zacher with Sutton, 1996: 129).

Nevertheless, direct measurement of transactions is necessary in order to determine the level of globalization from a political science point of view. First, it is by no means certain that low transaction costs are a more reliable indication of integrated social spaces than the intensification of transactions. A reduction in the price of international phone calls, for instance, tells us much less about transboundary communication than an actual increase in phone calls. It is not the technical facilitation of communication, but communication itself that constitutes the relevant social action. Second, the argument that

perfectly integrated spaces do not necessarily show evidence of increased transactions is theoretically correct, yet of little practical significance. There are in effect no perfect, totally stable markets, but only approximations. Real-world approximations such as national markets are indeed characterized by extremely high transaction flows. Furthermore, if transaction flows are monitored over longer periods, temporary volatilities should be negligible as random noise created by periodic political events and spasmodic competitive shifts. Third, the measurement of transaction costs is technically very problematic, especially if specific national differences are taken into consideration. As a result, when it comes to operationalization, researchers who for theoretical reasons opt for measuring transaction costs ultimately have to resort to measuring the transactions themselves. As Keohane and Milner (1996: 4), for example, put it: “An exogenous reduction in the costs of international transactions (...) can be empirically measured by the growth in the proportion of international economic flows relative to domestic ones.”

Against this background, empirical studies on levels of interdependence and globalization can be summarized as follows (see also <http://globalization.kof.ethz.ch/>, and Baldwin, 2006).

- Early propositions about decreasing interdependence among highly industrialized countries (Deutsch and Eckstein, 1961) and between great powers (Waltz, 1979) proved, at least in their generalized versions, to be wrong. While it is correct that levels of economic interdependence were lower in the 1950s and 1960s than in the decades prior to 1929, economic interdependence grew again in the industrialized world in the decades after World War II (Katzenstein, 1975; Rosecrance and Stein, 1973; Rosecrance et al., 1977).
- The latter part of the 1980s and most of the 1990s brought a sharp increase transborder transactions (any activity of social actors reaching beyond national boundaries) in many areas such as trade, foreign direct investments and other capital flows, but also human mobility, the volume of transborder information and communication, and the exchange of cultural products (Beisheim et al., 1999: 39–320). This surge led to the use of the term *globalization*. In most areas, the level of interconnectedness today clearly surpasses the levels of 1914.
- Many social transactions today transcend national borders, but neither are they global nor can a general tendency toward globality be observed. Rather, boundaries of new social spaces are becoming visible at the periphery of the OECD world. This is particularly evident in the economic sphere. Transborder trade primarily takes place within the three large trade blocks of the EU/EFTA, NAFTA, and ASEAN. This is followed by trade between the large trade blocks, with only a small share finally left for the rest of the world. Communication flows indicate a similar concentration on a relatively small number of countries (see, e.g., <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>).
- Substantial cross-national differences in market integration remain even in the OECD-world (see Garrett, 1998b). The levels of market integration are significantly higher in smaller countries than in larger ones. Moreover, a comparison of larger economies (G7), which takes into account more than just economic indicators, reveals that the integration of the British and American society into world society is higher for most indicators than in other G8 countries (see, e.g., <http://www.atkearney.com/index.php/Publications/globalization-index.html>).
- The level of globalization varies also significantly between different fields and issues. While the proportion of transborder postal deliveries, cross-border phone calls, and foreign direct investments, to name but a few indicators, is still below 10% in all G7 countries, the share of foreign trade, foreign air travel, foreign e-mails, and the consumption of foreign culture is often above 50% (Beisheim et al., 1999: 39–320).
- A new development is the common transboundary production of goods and bads (as opposed to transboundary exchange of goods), which took off in the mid-1980s. The Internet, international crime, global climate change, and other global environmental dangers as well as the global financial markets can be seen as such phenomena. In these cases, transborder exchanges become so dense and in effect produce a new quality in the global space, so that references

to de-territorialization or even de-borderization (Agnew and Duncan, 1989; Harvey, 1989; Brock and Albert, 1995; Appadurai, 1996; Albert, 1996) are most pertinent.

WHAT DO INTERDEPENDENCE AND GLOBALIZATION EXPLAIN?

Having described the changes in the independent variables and the discussion of the causal mechanisms, the question now arises which effects really take place. In this section, I shall discuss two hypothesized effects (dependent variables) that are ascribed to both growing interdependence and globalization (as independent variables).

Peace and cooperation

The promise of early interdependence theorists was nothing less than “peace.” Sir Norman Angell (1969) and Ramsey Muir (1932) emphasized the reduction of difference and the convergence of interests as mechanisms through which rising interdependence would directly, though unintentionally, change world politics (see De Wilde, 1991). Czempiel (1986) elegantly framed this kind of thinking in terms of “peace through trade” as one of the three most important peace strategies at hand. Empirical studies have shown, however, that the pacifying effects of trade depend on the symmetry and the extent of the ensuing interdependence and other factors (Barbieri, 1996; Dorussen, 1999; Polachek et al., 1999; Reuveny and Kang, 1998; Gartzke, 2007; see also Chapter 23 by Jack Levy and Chapter 29 by Helen Milner in this volume).

The role of international institutions has been enhanced over the past three decades more or less in parallel to the rise of interdependence. While the number of international organizations, which is only a very rough measure of the development of international governance, has remained more or less constant since the 1990s (see Shanks et al., 1996; Pevehouse et al., 2004), the number of

UN-registered international agreements grew from a total of 8,776 treaties in 1960 to 63,419 as of March 25, 2010. If we consider only the most important multilateral agreements officially drawn up and countersigned in the UN, then we obtain a comparable level of growth, namely, from 484 such agreements in 1969 to 1873 in 2010. The increase in international agreements is accompanied by a growing intensity of transgovernmental relations (Slaughter, 1997). The rise of international agreements and more intense transgovernmental relations are the components of a second strategy for peace emphasized by interdependence theorists: “peace through international organization.”

The current globalization literature is remarkably tacit on the issue of international peace and security. Relevant statements are mostly of a very general nature. By emphasizing the pressures that globalization puts on authoritarian states to foster liberalization, however, some writers – more implicitly than explicitly – have also connected globalization with the third peace strategy identified by Czempiel (1986): the ‘democratization’ of authoritarian societies (“peace through democracy”; see especially the literature on diffusion of Western norms, e.g., Simmons et al. 2006 and Chapter 18 by Gilardi in this volume). In this sense, globalization may be helpful in supporting three processes that are conducive to the absence of war between states. These are the direct effects of the reduction of difference (a diminished role for the armed forces) and convergence of interests (economic interests in maintaining relationships), that is, peace through trade; a liberalization of society brought about by the pressure to improve efficiency (peace through democracy); and the strengthening of international institutions as a political response (peace through international organization) (Russett and Oneal, 2001; see also Chapter 23 by Levy in this volume). The evolving patterns resemble what Karl Deutsch once described as the conditions and the processes leading to a pluralistic security community (Deutsch et al., 1957; Adler and Barnett, 1998).

The association of peace with globalization must be qualified for several reasons. First, it applies only to those areas in the world in which interconnectedness is highly prevalent and in which the effect of smaller differences is accompanied by the rise of international institutions and liberal societies. Second, only figures in the category of “interstate wars” have clearly declined, while intra-state or civil wars have been transformed (see also Chapter 26 by Walter in this volume). The number of *intra*-state conflicts has risen steadily since the beginning of the Cold War, coming to a peak in the mid-1990s. Since then, civil wars have also declined significantly (Human Security Centre, 2005; Chojnacki, 2006). While the rise of societal interdependence and new social spaces may indeed have reduced the capacity of the nation state to mobilize people for interstate wars, this does not imply a decline in general willingness to participate in instances of organized collective violence.

Societal denationalization has also created new opportunities for organized collective violence. Most importantly, the rise of transnational economies of violence which keep civil wars alive (Pugh and Cooper, 2004; Le Billon and Nicholls, 2007), transnational terrorism (Enders and Sandler, 2006; Schneckener, 2006), and transnational networks of weapons proliferation (Corera, 2006) have created new opportunities and lead to the introduction of a new concept to understand collective violence in the age of globalization: “new wars” (Kaldor, 1999/2006). Partially as a response to new wars, a growing willingness of the international community most often authorized by the United Nations Security Council to intervene in such wars can be observed (Zangl and Zürn, 2003).

Deregulation and convergence

The growing ineffectiveness of national policies was the major theme of Richard Cooper’s (1968) contribution on the economics of

interdependence. With the growing interdependence of national markets, so the argument goes, growing numbers of national policies no longer work. Empirical studies on the effect of economic interdependence, however, did not support this expectation. On the contrary, work on the national adaptation to external economic challenges demonstrated convincingly that domestic structures are decisive for an understanding of national political responses (see Cameron, 1978; Gourevitch, 1978; Katzenstein, 1978/1985). Quite contrary to the original hypothesis, this literature was instrumental in bringing the state back into (Anglo-Saxon) political science (Evans et al., 1985).

Nevertheless, Cooper’s analysis has experienced a revival in the age of globalization. Most of the early literature on the effects of globalization took up the argument and diagnosed “the end of the social democratic era” (Scharpf, 1987), the “retreat of the state” (Strange, 1996), a “race to the bottom” as well as the “competition of the obsessed” (Krugman, 1995), a “competition state” (Hirsch, 1995), a “Schumpeterian workfare” state (Jessop, 1994), or a “residual state” (Cerny, 1996). Common to these early studies is the notion that efficiency pressures, congruence problems and, above all, problems of competitiveness induce a rapid deterioration in the effectiveness of national regulations. As a result, the state retreats and gives way to economic and social deregulation.

A number of prominent contributions claimed, however, that the often-feared race to the bottom did not materialize for several reasons. First, higher levels of economic openness increase the demand for policies to buffer the less desirable effects of world market integration. According to this compensation hypothesis, social policies and state interventions should be seen not only as cost-intensive burdens for efficient production, but also as a form of risk insurance in the face of increased economic openness (Garrett, 1998a; Rieger and Leibfried, 1997; Rodrik, 1997). Moreover, new growth theory suggested that many state interventions are

economically efficient, even and especially in times of global competition (Krugman, 1994; Barro, 1996). In addition, it was argued that under certain circumstances, integrated markets may even trigger a race to the top (Vogel, 1995) and hence higher levels of economic interdependence and globalization may well lead to more rather than less state intervention. Finally, political scientists held that the way external challenges are politically mediated is still the single most important factor for understanding national policies. The mediation process is determined by a number of different, mainly institutional factors (Kitschelt et al., 1999; Vogel, 1996; Weiss, 1998). Therefore, different varieties of capitalism may choose different strategies of adaption and in this even lead to a further divergence of regulation (Hall and Soskice, 2001). The evidence produced in these first waves of studies clearly demonstrated that prominent convergence or deregulation trends did not exist in the 1990s. The level of state expenditures did not go down in parallel to the rise of economic interdependence and globalization, nor could clear convergence processes be observed (see Bernauer, 2000 for an excellent overview).

These findings have, however, also been subject to criticism, and newer studies cast doubt on these early conclusions for a number of reasons. First, the 1990s studies looked at a relative short time period after the new thrust of globalization set in. More recent studies show that that state expenditures have indeed gone down to some extent (Bussemeyer, 2009; Elkins et al., 2006; Höpner and Schäfer, 2007; but see also Bergh and Karlsson, 2010; Dreher et al., 2008). Second, it has been convincingly argued that looking at actual expenditure levels is a bad indicator. The more relevant indicator would be individual entitlements for social benefits. While, for instance, the level of unemployment expenditure did grow, the amount of money received by the individual beneficiaries dropped in almost all G7 countries (Pierson, 1996; Anderson and Pontusson, 2001). Moreover, the absence of convergence processes

cannot be equated with an absence of constraints. Case studies on current political processes in many welfare states show that constraints imposed on social policies are strongly felt and translate into difficult compromises (Seeleib-Kaiser, 2000). For example, it can be shown that tax competition did not cause a decrease in tax revenue but led to important changes in the structure of national tax systems. In general, the tax burden was shifted from mobile to immobile businesses and from capital to labor and consumption (Genschel, 2002; Ganghof, 2006; Rixen and Rohlfing, 2007; Swank, 2006).

At the same time, some movements toward deregulation have been shown. Studies focusing on specific policy areas demonstrated a strong convergent trend toward deregulation. Deregulation in the postal and telecommunication services is a strong case in point. It thus seems necessary to focus much more on issue-area differences in order to understand the dynamics triggered by globalization (see Bernauer, 2000: ch. 8; Scharpf, 1999: ch. 3; Lee and Strang 2006; Höpner and Schäfer, 2007). Moreover, globalization has led to a general and significant increase of inequality within developed market economies. If the distribution of wealth is looked at from a global perspective, however, inequality did not increase (Atkinson and Brandolini, 2010; Bergh and Nilsson, 2008; Dreher and Gaston, 2006), largely due to the rise of income in China (Wade, 2004).

In sum, more recent studies on the effects of globalization have shown that a trend toward convergent deregulation has taken place to some extent, yet much less clear than originally expected and very much conditional on a number of scope conditions. Nevertheless, the competitive pressure on nation state policy can hardly be overlooked and shows some effects. Additional evidence in that respect is provided by studies that examine how societal denationalization affects political *processes* as opposed to political outcomes. Such an examination of “the politics of denationalization” looks at the changes of those political institutions and

struggles that produce national policies rather than at the policies itself (see Burgoon, 2009; Quinn and Toyoda, 2007; Zürn and Walter, 2005).

Research with a focus on peace and cooperation or on convergence and deregulation as functions of increasing societal denationalization – with the possible exception on the literature of new wars – never fundamentally challenged the theory of international relations. It essentially builds on given assumptions, for instance, that national societies are separable units and that state executives are agents who act rationally in the name of their principals. In this sense, they were never intended to culminate in a globalization theory (writ large) of world politics. They did, however, have a theoretical impact in that they constituted a serious challenge to Realism on a number of counts. Since the emergence of interdependence, research in international politics can no longer be reduced to the study of security and military issues, of peace and war. World politics today is much more than that. Moreover, interdependence research brought nonstate actors and, above all, international institutions to the fore.

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: THE DEEPER EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION

There is hardly a modern political institution which is not allegedly challenged, transformed, or undermined by globalization. Globalization is not only said to be curbing the autonomy of nation states and enforcing a convergence of national policies, but also disabling democracy and with it the legitimacy of national political systems, altering the nature of sovereignty and thus ultimately transforming the fundamental structures of international politics from an anarchic to a global governance system (see Rosenau, 1997; Zürn, 1998; see also Chapter 10 by Biersteker in this volume). Global governance refers to the entirety of regulations put forward with reference to solving specific

denationalized problems or providing transnational common goods. The entirety of regulations includes the processes by which norms, rules, and programs are monitored, enforced, and adapted, as well as the structures in which they work. Governance activities are justified with reference to the common good, but they do not necessarily serve it. Global governance points to those sets of regulation which address denationalized problems, that is, problems which reach beyond national borders.

This concept of global governance has two important implications. To begin with, by distinguishing governance structure from contents and actors, it becomes obvious that governance beyond the nation-state is possible, although a central authority or a ‘world state’ equipped with a legitimate monopoly of the use of force is currently lacking (Rosenau, 1992). Moreover, by requiring a common goods-oriented justification of norms and rules, the concept of global governance also refers to a certain quality of international regulation. Accordingly, international cooperation includes more than just simple coordination between states to achieve a *modus vivendi* of interaction. Rather, international regulation often aims actively at achieving normatively laden political goals in handling common problems of the international community. In this sense, governance presupposes some common interests and goal orientations beyond the nation-state, at least in a rudimentary form, without – of course – denying the persistence of fundamental conflicts.

In addition to the study of international cooperation, the analysis of global governance thus also raises issues such as transnational participation and transnational networks as well as the merging and interplay of political institutions that once were conceived as separable units (Keohane and Nye, Jr., 2000; see also Chapters by Adler, Snidal, Risse, and Simmons and Martin in this volume). In this contribution, I want to focus therefore on supra- and transnationalization of governance beyond the nation-state,

the emergence of global multi-level governance, and the ensuing transformation of statehood and its impact on the notion of democracy as well as critical responses to these developments. So far, none of these fields of debate and research have come up with conclusive results, but they do highlight interesting fields of research for the future.

Supranationalization, transnationalization, and decentralization

Supranational and transnational governance undermine the notion of a sovereign state in the so-called Westphalian constellation. *Supranationalization* describes a process in which international institutions develop procedures that contradict the consensus principle and the principle of nonintervention. In this way, some international norms and rules create obligations for national governments to take measures even when they have not agreed to do so. As a result, political authority shifts partially toward the international level (Kahler and Lake, 2009: 246; see also Barnett and Finnemore, 2004: 5; Hurd, 2007; Rittberger et al., 2008: 3; Ruggie, 1998). International Institutions have authority when states recognize in principle or in practice, their ability to make [...] binding decisions on matters relating to a state's domestic jurisdiction, even if those decisions are contrary to a state's own policies and preferences." (Cooper et al., 2008: 505).

Political authority beyond the nation-state does not necessarily require autonomous international organizations. Both, international institutions with an international organization that has been delegated autonomous power to make decisions (e.g., the International Criminal Court) and international institutions without such a formal delegation of power (e.g., majority decisions in the UN Security Council) can possess authority in the defined sense. In the former case, one can speak of delegated authority; the latter is a case of pooled authority (Moravcsik,

1998: 67; Hawkins et al., 2006). The authority of international institutions thus points to another feature than the autonomy of international organizations.

To the extent that societal denationalization increases, demands for strong international institutions on the level beyond the nation-state that are able to act even in the presence veto players grow as well. Moreover, to the extent that the density and scope of international governance grow, demands for supranationalization and transnationalization arise. As international governance covers more and more issue-areas, overlaps and collisions between the jurisdictions of international regulations and other international or national regulations become more likely. Supranational bodies are a logical response to avoid such collisions. Moreover, the more international regimes address behind-the-border issues (Kahler, 1995), which are especially difficult to monitor and have significant impacts on societal actors, the more the question of credibility arises. A logical way to increase the credibility of commitments is to develop supranational bodies that are able to decide even when complete consensus does not exist and that monitor regulations and resolve conflicts (see Zürn, 2004).

As a result, international institutions possess a new, authority-generating quality which shows at every stage of the policy cycle.

- First, an increase of *majoritarian decision making* in international institutions can be observed. Today, roughly two-thirds of all international organizations with the participation of at least one great power have the possibility to decide by a majority of votes by states (see Blake and Payton, 2008). This implies that some member states in an international institution can be overruled. Even if decision by majority is employed far less often than it is formally available for use, it however exerts pressure on veto players and increases their readiness to seek compromise.
- *Secondly, monitoring and verification* of international rules are, likewise, increasingly carried out by actors who are not directly under the control of states. In this way, the growing need

for independent actors who process and make available information on treaty compliance is met. Such information could be provided by contracting organizations established as part of a treaty regime's safeguard. Equally important in this regard is the growing significance of transnational nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). For example, the monitoring of internationally standardized human rights has long been transferred informally to human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch (see Simmons, 2009 and the chapter by Risse in this volume). The proliferation of transnational NGOs accredited by the United Nation's Economic and Social Council can thus be taken as an indicator for this development (see <http://esango.un.org/paperless/content/E2009INF4.pdf>).

- Thirdly, regarding disputed cases of *rule interpretation*, we find that there has been a significant increase in international judicial bodies. In 1960, there were worldwide only 27 quasi-judicial bodies; by 2004, this number had grown to 97. If we narrow the definition and include only those bodies that meet all of the prerequisites for formal judicial proceedings, then only five such bodies existed worldwide in 1960, climbing to 28 by 2004 (see <http://www.pict-pcti.org/matrix/matrixintro.html>; see also Alter, 2009). The rise of such bodies also indicates a broader process of legalization of international institutions (see Abbott et al., 2000; Zürn and Joerges, 2005 and the chapter by Simmons in this volume).
- Concerning *rule enforcement*, we can observe an increased readiness to levy material sanctions against violators. *Jus cogens* (independent and binding international law, not requiring the consent of states) in the meantime reaches beyond the prohibition of wars of aggression and includes *inter alia* the prohibition of crimes against humanity, genocide, and apartheid. Furthermore, especially since 1989, the international community has begun to respond to cases of gross violation of human rights increasingly with military force and economic sanctions (Finnemore, 2003; Holzgrefe and Keohane, 2003; Binder, 2009: 340). After 1989, in some cases (like Kosovo or East Timor) the United Nations even set up transitional administrations with far-reaching executive, legislative, and judicial powers (Caplan, 2004).
- Finally, other actors have begun to compete with states in the field of *policy evaluation and related agenda setting*. The concept of epistemic

communities refers to transnational expertise networks that shape international negotiations, especially in the area of environmental politics (see Haas, 1992 and the chapter by Mitchell in this volume). Moreover, the set of organizations that evaluate the effectiveness of existing regulations and place new problem areas on the international agenda has widened in accordance with the extent to which the addressees of international regulation have become societal actors (Haas and Stevens, 2009).

In addition, *transnational institutions*, which are able to partially escape the control of nation-states, have gained in importance. *Transnationalization of governance* refers to a process in which transnational nonstate actors develop political regulations and activities without being formally authorized by states (Djelic and Sahlin-Andersson, 2009; Pattberg, 2007; see Chapter 17 by Risse in this volume). Such regulations are based on the principle of self-governance and create *private authority* (vgl. Cutler et al., 1999; Biersteker and Hall, 2002).

Overall, a dense network of international and transnational institutions has developed in recent decades. Many of these institutions are far more intrusive than conventional international institutions. With the – most often consensual – decision to install international institutions, state parties become subject to a law other than their own, to which they either have not agreed upon (mission creep) or do not agree with any more (costly exit option). Given the extent of the intrusion of these new international institutions into the affairs of national societies, the notion of “delegated, and therefore controlled authority” in the principal-and-agent sense no longer holds.⁶ At least in some issue-areas, the global level has achieved a certain degree of authority and has thus partially replaced the consensus principle of the traditional international system.

In parallel to the rise of political authority beyond the nation-state, processes of *decentralization*, that is, the shifting of political authority to decentralized levels within the

nation-state, can be observed. It is no longer only the political actions of the nation-state that provoke regionalist responses, but also the undermining of some of its traditional functions through globalization and political internationalization. In an increasingly competitive world market, rich regions want to rid themselves of their national commitments, while at the same time the development of market-enhancing international institutions has reduced the risks of secession and even increased the incentives to organize regionally in order to be eligible for supranational resources. The evolving complexity of governance beyond the nation-state in turn creates desires to emphasize cultural differences at the regional level and to represent regional interests directly, no longer via the nation-state. Against this background, it does not come as a surprise that in parallel to the growing importance of international institutions, we see a clear and strong tendency towards decentralization within the nation-state (Hooghe and Marks, 2010). An index of regional authority in 42 democracies and semi-democracies reveals that 29 countries have regionalized, and only two have become more centralized since 1950 (Marks et al., 2008).

The new role of the state and multi-level governance

The rise of political authority beyond and below the nation-state should, however, by no means be read as an indication of the demise of the nation-state. First, the developments described here apply only to certain denationalized issue-areas. Secondly, it is hard to see how governance goals can be achieved without the nation-state even in strongly denationalized issue-areas. Thirdly, the nation-state remains with respect to many issues the first address for political demands, even in highly denationalized issue-areas. Whereas transnational NGOs and even traditional interest groups increasingly address international institutions directly with their

political demands, the nation-state remains in this respect the default option. Nation-states still aggregate territorial interests and put them forward in international negotiations.

The concept of multi-level governance promises to better grasp the complex arrangements of governing institutions than the notion of sovereign states.⁷ In such a multi-level constellation, nation-states will not relinquish their resources such as monopoly on the use of force or the right to extract taxes in a given territory. Nevertheless, while the nation-state will play a significant role in multi-level governance, it will no longer be the paramount political institution being able to perform all functions, but only one among others carrying out some of these tasks (Leibfried and Zürn, 2005). The nation-state has lost its monopoly for political authority. At least fully consolidated states in the OECD world remain pivotal, however, playing increasingly the role of an authority manager (Genschel and Zangl, 2008) orchestrating global governance (Abbott/Snidal 2010).

Each of the levels constituting global governance thus exercises authority; that is, it can meet decisions and take measures in a given issue-area, which cannot be unilaterally reversed by other levels without violating accepted procedures. If, however, more than one level exhibits authority, there is a “need to coordinate decisions between different levels,” and one can speak of multi-level governance (Benz, 2004).

Global multi-level governance is different from both unitary federal political systems (Scharpf et al., 1976) and the European multi-level system (Marks et al., 1996; Jachtenfuchs and Kohler-Koch, 1996). All these three types of multi-level governance systems are characterized by a *two-staged implementation* process. In all these cases, norms and rules developed by the higher level will be mostly implemented by decentralized units. The first important difference refers to *legitimation processes*. In a unitary federal system, there is a direct relationship between the societal addressees of a regulation and the central decision-making units.

The government and the parliament are directly accountable to the citizens. They are elected by the citizens and address them directly when justifying laws and measures. Here, we can speak of a direct, or one-staged, legitimation process. In the European multi-level system, the direct contacts between the central decision units and the citizens are limited. Whereas elections to the European parliament constitute a direct relationship, other – more important – decision units such as the Commission and the Council are as a collective not directly accountable. This is even less so when it comes to international institutions.

In addition, global multi-level governance differs with respect to the *coordination of different policies*. Since regulations always produce effects in other issue-areas than the one to which it is directed, governance also involves the coordination of different policies which have been formulated at the same level or at different levels. In unitary federalism, coordination takes place via formal procedures on the side of central decision makers, for instance, via cabinet rules or supreme courts, and through public debate on the side of the addressees of a regulation.

In this respect, the EU can be described as a multi-issue arrangement with a limited number of nonoverlapping jurisdictional boundaries and some built-in coordination mechanisms such as the Commission and the Council. Such a governance structure follows a system-wide architecture which is relatively stable and clearly public in character. Whereas broad public debate is possible, such debates occur most frequently at the constituent-member level and are therefore often fragmented. They nevertheless

provide for some policy coordination as an expression of some minimal sense of a polity (Hooghe and Marks, 2010). By contrast, global multi-level governance describes a complex and fluid patchwork of overlapping jurisdictions. In these cases, each issue area has developed its own norms and rules, and the membership varies from issue-area to issue-area. Debates and discourses take place almost exclusively within sectoral publics which do not address the side effects of certain measures for other issue-areas. In addition, there are no constitutionalized mechanisms for the coordination of different issue-area-specific regimes; at best, informal mechanisms exist. Thus, global multi-level governance stands out by a very loose coupling of different issue areas (see Table 16.1).

Structural problems of global Multi-level governance

These specific features of global multi-level governance point to their most important deficiencies which are discussed in the literature (see Zürn, 2010).

Compliance

Global multi-level governance systems are permanently confronted with a *significant likelihood of noncompliance* (see Börzel et al., 2010; Downs et al., 1996). While many consider the legitimate monopoly on the use of force as a necessary prerequisite for compliance, the case of the European Union demonstrates that alternative mechanisms such as legitimacy, legalization, and nonhierarchical enforcement can be used to successfully induce a sufficient level of compliance

Table 16.1 Types of Multi-Level Governance

| <i>Types MLG Features</i> | <i>Unitary Federalism</i> | <i>EU MLG System</i> | <i>Global Governance</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Implementation | Two-staged | Two-staged | Two-staged |
| Legitimation | One-staged | One-staged/Two-staged | Two-staged |
| Coordination | Centralized | Decentralized | Missing/Rudimentary |

(Tallberg, 2002; Zürn and Joerges, 2005). All of the alternatives mentioned for ensuring compliance depend, however, on specific scope conditions which are not regularly given on the global level. The appeal to legitimacy grounded in law-like procedures depends on the willingness of a noncompliant actor to be responsive to good reason and concerns of legitimacy. In cases of nonhierarchical enforcement mechanisms, the enforcing actors need to be willing to bear the costs of enforcement, and the addressees of sanctioning and blaming need to be vulnerable to such strategies. Obviously, these conditions do not always hold on the global level. While some of these mechanisms work under some conditions effectively on the global level as well (see Breitmeier et al., 2006; Chayes and Chayes, 1995; Simmons, 2009), global multi-level governance is inherently selective vis-à-vis the implementation of norms and rules.

Coordination

The *lack of a central place for the coordination of different policies* points to a further deficiency in the global multi-level governance system. Global Governance does not know a central government which is responsible for the coordination of different policies. Moreover, one of the major functions of a broad public – namely, to decide in cases of goal conflicts between different sectors such as growth and clean environment, or security and freedom – cannot be fulfilled by sectoral publics which, by definition, are tied exclusively to either growth, environmental protection, security, or freedom. In this sense, the fragmentation of international regulation constitutes a serious defect of global governance (Benvenisti and Downs, 2007).

Against this background, the global multi-level governance system has – again informally – produced some substitute institutions which sometimes seem to assume such a coordinating role. The UN Security Council in particular has aspired to such a role by deciding on all those issues in which the goal of peace and the protection of human rights

seem to contradict each other. Also, the G 8/20 seem to define themselves as central coordinators by giving other international institutions a sense of direction and by taking up those pressing issues which are not sufficiently dealt with by existing international institutions. The rise of transnational and national dispute settlement bodies points as well to the lack of coordination in global multi-level governance. While such adjudicatory bodies still rarely mediate between different issue-areas – with the exception of the WTO-DSB – they play an important role in the coordination between the global and the national levels. The quantitative rise of such dispute settlement bodies indicates the growing autonomy of the global level, but also the lack of coordination between different sectors of the global level. All these attempts, however, have remained limited. Moreover, they generate resistance from many other actors, because membership in these institutions is not only restricted, but also highly exclusive. The members of these institutions are self-nominated in the role as coordinators and lack authorization to act in this function. Moreover, these institutions were in the first place not created for the purpose of coordination. They are probably the most emergent elements of an emergent order.

Legitimacy

In addition, global multi-level governance produces specific legitimation problems. As long as the intergovernmental level was restricted to merely developing a *modus vivendi* of interaction, requiring the consent of each member state, the two-staged process of legitimation was sufficient. The decisions taken at the level beyond the constituent members were legitimated through the legitimacy of their representatives. With the rise of a multi-level system and the authority of international institutions undermining the consensus principle, this has changed. There is an increasing need for direct accountability (Grant and Keohane, 2005).

There are two strands of thought among those who identify a democratic deficit in the

way international institutions work. One strand points to institutional deficits of international institutions that can be adjusted through reforms, provided there is the right political will. Another strand considers these suggestions as naïve and even questions the *mere possibility* of democratic processes beyond the nation-state because the EU and other international institutions cannot meet the social prerequisites for democracy. According to skeptics, democratic legitimacy is only possible within the framework of a political community with the potential for democratic self-governance as expressed in the concept of the modern nation (Kielmansegg, 1976; Miller, 1995). Beyond the nation-state, the social prerequisites for a democratic political community – the political space – is missing. Hence, the connection between nation and democracy is not a historical coincidence but systematic and indissoluble. A political community as exemplified in the modern nation-state requires some degree of homogeneity, and without it there can be no democracy (Scharpf, 1998; Greven, 2000).

To the extent that for pragmatic reasons skeptics accept the need for decisions through international institutions, globalization leads to the uncomfortable choice between “effective problem-solving through international institutions” or “democratic political processes” (Dahl, 1994). This is, however, not a particularly convincing theoretical perspective (Zürn, 2000). In democratic terms, international institutions are a sensible response to the problems facing democracy in times of societal denationalization, as they help to secure some of the constitutional prerequisites of democracy (Keohane et al., 2009) and redress the incongruence between social and political spaces (Held, 1995). For the purposes of democracy, spatial congruence is necessary at two critical points. First, congruence between the people who are affected by a decision and their representatives in the decision-making system (input congruence) is required. If there is no *input congruence*, then a group affected by a decision but not participating in its making can be considered

to have had the decision imposed on it by others. Congruence between the space for which regulations are valid and the boundaries of the relevant social transactions – that is, *output incongruence* – is also significant for democratic legitimacy. In a denationalized world ruled by a system of formally independent nation-states, there is a danger that political communities will not reach a desired goal due to conditions outside their jurisdiction. The “emergence of denationalized governance structures” (Joerges, 1996) helps to bring all those who are affected by a political decision into the decision-making system, thus observing the principle of “no taxation without representation.” What is more, international institutions help to increase the factual freedom of political communities. Governance beyond the nation-state can therefore improve both social welfare *and* democracy in the face of societal denationalization. In this sense, international institutions are not the problem, but part of the solution to the problems of modern democracy.

The rising number and importance of transnational NGOs – that is, societal groups influencing international decisions directly by arguing mainly in terms of the global common good (as opposed to member interests) – can be seen as an institutional response to the deficits of the two-staged legitimation process. NGOs are an important element of sectoral publics, which help to connect the global level of regulation directly with the societal addressees of the regulations. In this way, the two-staged legitimation process gets informally complemented with a direct link (see Chapter 17 by Risse in this volume).

Politicization and fragmentation

These three deficiencies of global multi-level governance are reflected in an increased politicization of international institutions. The growing need to legitimate international affairs is evidenced by the unwillingness of national publics, parliaments, and transnational civil society to accept without further ado the important outcomes of major international

negotiations as urgently necessary achievements of international cooperation. The outcome of international negotiations is no longer greeted merely because a result has been attained. The procedures for obtaining results in international political processes and their content, and above all the concomitant subsystemic assignment of powers, require justification. It is called for by numerous, so-called antiglobalization groups such as Attac and other social movements acting in the transnational sphere (see della Porta and Tarrow, 2005; della Porta and Caiani, 2009; Rucht, 2004; Tarrow, 2001).

Resistance against international authority organized at the national level against the undermining of democratic sovereignty became more visible as well in the last decades. A good case in point are the referendums on European integration and a growing skepticism against European integration (Hooghe and Marks, 2004). More generally, an ominous factor accompanying the decline of public confidence in traditional political authority in many OECD countries is a resurgence of right-wing extremism. In a similar vein, anti-modernist movements have gained strength in parallel to globalization outside of the OECD world, too.

However, such activities are not alone in focusing attention on international institutions and treaties. Only part of the current discussion on international institutions is concerned with opposition. Many transnational NGOs and social movements are calling for stronger international and transnational organizations to satisfy the need for regulation. For example, many environmental groups advocate a central world environmental organization and the drastic intensification of climate policy measures at the international level, or the strengthening of international development policy. Many societal groupings hence demand stronger international institutions. This double movement of growing protest against international institutions and their more intensive utilization can be described as *politicization*, that is, making previously unpolitical matters political.

The extent of this politicization today is considerable. The increasing politicization of international institutions is apparent in both individual attitudes (e.g. Mau, 2007; Ecker-Ehrhardt and Wessels, 2010) and in the behavior of societal and political actors (e.g. Rucht, 2010; Gronau et al., 2009; Hooghe and Marks, 2008; Grande and Kriesi, 2010). Although the political debate on cross-border problems and the mandate and decisions of international institutions is not omnipresent, it is becoming increasingly broad. Politicizers range from local action groups and a multiplicity of civil society organizations, companies, associations, and parties to governments. They politicize in the media, in the street, and in the forums of political institutions themselves.

This level of politicization can be explained by the deficiencies of global multi-level governance (see also Cox, 1997; Habermas, 2007). On the one hand, there is a *growing demand for legitimation of international institutions exercising authority*. The politicization of international institutions arises here as a consequence of their political authority and the ensuing need for legitimation (see Zürn et al., 2007). In the course of this track of politicization, oriented to begin with on the material policy itself, the thrust of the process often changes direction: decision-making procedures and the institutional setting as such become the focus of criticism. What is criticized is the lacking representativeness, transparency, and accountability of decision-making processes and bodies in international institutions – the lack of legitimation on the “input side” (cf. Ecker-Ehrhardt and Wessels, 2010; Scharpf, 1997). Greater public access is accordingly demanded, especially for NGOs and direct stakeholders. Seldom is the shift of decision-making powers to international institutions as a whole called into question (cf. also della Porta and Caiani, 2009).

On the other hand, politicization can emerge as a consequence of the *perceived need for regulation*. Numerous economic, social, and cultural problems have meanwhile been

denationalized in the sense that contexts of action have been established that reach beyond national borders. In this situation, criticism that certain problems have been dealt with inadequately can also point to the overly narrow mandate of existing institutions. International institutions are now not only accorded greater importance in the political process in connection with more and more problems, but they are also increasingly regarded as necessary and desirable. Such a politicized lack of efficient and assertive institutions is also apparent, for example, in financial regulation and trade regulation, where a number of experts and NGOs demand stricter regulation of markets. This is also the case in the field of security policy. Societal campaigns have pilloried regulatory deficiencies in relation to the production, spread, and use of certain types of weapon (small arms, landmines) and the behavior of companies in crisis areas, successfully drawing public attention to these topics. In these cases, the state of affairs is not simply described as deficient and hence declared a “political problem” in a general sense (Binder, 2010; Deitelhoff and Wolf, 2010); campaigns regularly point to the lack of international standards and viable institutions capable of regulating the behavior of countries and companies and – where rules have been contravened – able to impose severe sanctions. Politicization processes can accordingly be provoked not only by a lack of legitimacy in decision-making by strong international institutions but also by a lack of effective institutions.

CONCLUSION: METHODOLOGICAL NATIONALISM AT BAY?

Societal denationalization over the past two or three decades has led to a rise in international institutions that in effect may change the constitution of world politics. The shape of more recent inter-, trans-, and supranational institutions is hardly compatible with

the traditional notion of state sovereignty in the national constellation. Governments and other political organizations do not merely sit back and watch globalization and the decline in the effectiveness of unilateral policies. As a result, global governance has emerged, leading to both political mobilization beyond the nation-state and resistance to it. The national constellation, that is the convergence of resources, recognition, and the realization of governance goals in one political organization – the nation state – seems thus to be in a process of transformation into a post-national constellation (Zürn and Leibfried, 2005). The nation-state is no longer the only site of authority, political contestation, and the normativity that accompanies it.

Globalization and global governance studies, however, so far hardly constitute a theory of world politics. In many ways, both these literatures speculate and hypothesize about the political effects of increasing societal interconnectedness using already existing theories. In a very subtle sense, though, this research has structured the theoretical debate in IR over the last three decades. Waltz’ (1979) theory of international politics and other Realist writings can be seen as a deliberate attempt to rescue IR as an independent discipline from the logic of interdependence. In Realist thinking, it was possible not only to understand IR without taking domestic politics and international institutions into consideration and, moreover, the notion was reconfirmed that national societies and their respective states can be conceptualized as utterly separate entities. Thus, the interaction of those entities was declared a field of the discipline of International Relations. This reconfirmation put interdependence writers in the defensive. Their counterattack was directed at a different target: to show that nation states have good reasons to establish international institutions. In this way, they indirectly reconfirmed the strict notions of distinctly separate national societies and traditional notions of sovereignty. In a sense, the debate as a whole accepted the analytical shackles of “methodological nationalism”,

The study of global governance needs to go beyond methodological nationalism.

Methodological nationalism considers nation-states as the basic unit of all politics. It assumes that humankind is naturally distributed among a limited number of nations, which organize themselves internally as nation-states and delimit themselves externally from other nation-states (see Smith, 1979; Beck, 2000). In addition, it assumes that the external delimitation and the subsequent competition between nation-states are the most fundamental concepts of political organization. Methodological nationalism is distinct from normative nationalism, according to which each nation has the inalienable right to organize itself in its own, culturally specific way. Methodological nationalism sees national self-determination as ontologically given and as the most important cleavage in the political sphere. This double premise predetermines empirical observations, as can be seen, for example, in the case of aggregate statistics, which are almost exclusively categorized in national terms. It locates and restricts the political sphere to the national level.

Governance beyond the nation-state extends the realm of the political beyond national borders and sovereign states. We must therefore develop a notion of a global polity which cannot only be seen as substitutive to nation-states at a higher level. All forms of governance beyond the nation-state currently lack a central authority or a "world state" equipped with a legitimate monopoly of the use of force. In the absence of a world state or an empire with global reach, governance beyond the nation-state cannot take the form of governance by government; rather, it needs to be a form of governance with governments such as we see in international institutions, or governance without governments⁸ as in transnational institutions, or in supranational governance. The interplay of different forms of governance beyond the nation-state produces polities of a new quality. Such conceptualizations do not need to rely on utopian thinking about a world state

or world federalism. It seems more promising to recall the tradition of historical macro-sociology upheld by Stein Rokkan, Charles Tilly, and others. As early as the 1960s and 1970s, they aimed at overcoming the dominant approach of treating nation-states as logically independent cases. Instead, they advocated a more complete map of one interdependent system (Tilly, 1984: 129).

In this contribution, it has been argued that the recent research on globalization and global governance shows that a transformation of world politics takes place requiring research approaches that move beyond methodological nationalism. The outcome of this transformation, however, is open, and it is certainly not possible to predict it by just extrapolating some of the trends discussed above. Most international institutions were created by Western powers, sometimes before developing countries had emerged from colonialism. These institutions will have to respond to the rise of new powers that have a claim for greater influence based both on distributive and legitimacy grounds. Moreover, some of these new powers have traditions of political authority and legitimation different from the experience of the established democratic states. They also emphasize different justifications for political authority at an international level (see Zürn and Stephen, 2010).

The ensuing emphasis on the principle of nonintervention by almost all new powers (and the United States) thus seems to be a huge obstacle for further strengthening international institutions and making global governance more effective. A closer look, however, reveals significant ambiguities. On the one hand, most newly emerging powers, sometimes including China, often demand more international regulation and stronger international institutions as, for instance, indicated by the positions taken with respect to the economic and financial crisis in the G20 negotiations. The emerging powers seem not to aim at overhauling the existing international institutions, rather they want to be co-opted and to reform them from the inside.

On the other hand, there is an ongoing suspicion that stronger international institutions are instruments of Western dominance and help to prolong an unequal distribution of benefits. This tension explains the widespread emphasis on broader and more equal state participation as a prerequisite for stronger international institutions. The demand for more societal participation therefore does not rank as the newly emerging powers' highest priority. Such demands stem from (mainly Western) NGOs and thus will play out to some extent independent of the relations between new and old state powers. The double demand of newly emerging powers for more equal state participation and NGOs for more societal involvement in international decision making may be the driving forces in the development of global governance in the next decades. Political authority beyond the nation-state as any political authority requires legitimacy to be effective. In any case, these struggles about the shape of international authority will focus increasingly on legitimacy of international and transnational institutions as a bone of contention. It will need a new International Relations theory moving beyond methodological nationalism to understand these processes.

NOTES

1 I want to thank the editors of the handbook as well as Martin Binder, Monika Heupel, and Thomas Rixen for their helpful comments.

2 This, of course, depends on the notion of world society. I use a definition that requires more than just transactions. For major contributions to the question of world society see Luhmann (1971), the contributions to Beck (1998) and Albert et al. (2000).

3 Thus, globalization is *not* defined here as an all-encompassing process of epochal proportions. According to this latter understanding, globalization not only implies a growth in transnational interactions, but also comprises political processes and "the stretching and deepening of social relations and institutions across space and time" (see e.g. Giddens, 1990; Held and McGrew, 1993: 263; Held, 1995: 20; Elkins, 1995; Rosenau, 1997). Globalization thus understood denotes all (individual as well as the sum

total of) globally oriented practices and patterns of thought as well as the epochal transformation which is constituted by them (Albrow, 1996: 89). These general notions of de-territorialization underestimate the extent to which politics is spatially bound. Politics tends to be more particularistic than, for example, economics, since, as Michael Walzer (1983: 50) writes, "communities must have boundaries".

4 The denationalized condition is still rare. Helliwell (1998) demonstrates that even between the US and Canada, the national border still has an impact on reducing trade between cities and provinces in North America.

5 In the remainder I use the terms *globalization* and *societal denationalization* interchangeably. The term denationalization goes back to the classic works of Karl W. Deutsch (1969) and Eric Hobsbawm (1992) on nationalism, according to which a nation is a political community for which dense societal transactions within the national territory and a sharp reduction in the frequency of social transactions at the borders are constitutive components. In this view, a nation stands in a mutually constitutive relationship to the nation state. Consequently, societal denationalization is an indication of the weakening link between "nation states and [their] corresponding national societies" (Beck, 1997: 44).

6 See also Haftel and Thompson (2008), who define the independence of international organizations as the absence of complete control by other actors and consider autonomy, together with neutrality and delegation of authority, as constitutive elements

7 Arguably, the arrangement is – given the parallel process of supranationalization and transnationalization – better described as multi-level and multi-actor governance, since on each of the levels, different actors – public ones and private ones – independent of each other are relevant. In this contribution, the conceptual focus is on the interplay of different levels (each of them consisting of more than one actor) which makes it possible to use the simpler, yet still not very elegant term multi-level governance.

8 The meaning of this term differs from Rosenau (1992: 5) governance without government, which refers to all politics without a central authority.

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Transnational Actors and World Politics

Thomas Risse

The end of the Cold War and globalization have led to renewed interest in the study of transnational relations and the impact of non-state actors on world politics.¹ Some authors praise the emergence of a global transnational civil society (Boli and Thomas, 1999; Held et al., 1999), while others denounce an increasing transnational capitalist hegemony (Gill, 1995; Altvater and Mahnkopf, 2002). Both positions ascribe to nonstate actors an extraordinary influence on outcomes in international politics. It is certainly true that transnational actors – from multinational corporations (MNCs) to international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) – have left their mark on the international system and that we cannot even start theorizing about the contemporary world system without taking their influence into account. Rather than analyzing transnational and interstate relations in zero-sum terms, however, it is more useful to study their interactions. This is the first point I make in this chapter.

The second point concerns a shift in the study of transnational actors and world

politics. Up to the early 2000s, the main thrust of scholarship on transnational actors focused on the question how and under what conditions nonstate actors influenced international affairs in terms of *interstate* relations, be it international governmental institutions (IOs) or be it the interests or preferences of individual states, including major powers.² This work continues, of course, and has recently been complemented by research on transnational social movements and the transnationalization of social protest. But from the 2000s on, the “governance turn” has reached the study of transnational actors, too. Currently, research is increasingly concerned with transnational governance, that is, the direct involvement in and contribution of nonstate actors to rule-making, on the one hand, and the provision of collective goods, on the other hand. Transnational governance ranges from “governance with governments” (e.g., public–private partnerships [PPPs]) to “governance without governments” (e.g., private self-regulation; see Zürn, 2000, on these distinctions). This reflects a major departure

from a still state-centered view according to which states are the only “governors” in international relations.³ In the 2010s, the state has got company and the “society world” (Czempiel, 1991) of nonstate actors is actively engaged in governance. In addition, states have become part of the problem rather than the solution in global governance, as the debates about failed and failing states or “limited statehood” reveal (Rotberg, 2003; Risse, 2011b).

Compared to these substantive trends, meta-theoretical orientations such as the divide between rational choice and constructivism or methodological differences such as the one between qualitative and quantitative work have largely receded into the background with regard to transnational studies.

This review proceeds in the following steps. I begin with some definitional remarks followed by a brief intellectual history of theorizing about transnational relations in world politics. The main part of the chapter examines the role of transnational actors in world politics. This is the realm where most empirical research has been carried out in the past two decades and where we can make some empirically informed theoretical statements. I focus on the two ways mentioned above in which transnational actors impact world politics. First, they exert considerable influence on interstate relations, be it the foreign policies of states or be it international institutions. Second, they contribute directly to transnational governance by co-regulating international issues and providing collective goods, on the one hand, and by private self-regulation leading to the rise of private authority in global affairs, on the other. The chapter concludes with remarks on directions for future research.

DEFINING TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS

“Transnational relations” is a rather elusive concept. A good way to start is still the 1971

definition by Keohane and Nye, who refer to “regular interactions across national boundaries when at least one actor is a non-state agent ...” (Keohane and Nye, 1971b, xii–xvi). Here, the concept encompasses anything as long as human agency is involved. Yet, cross-border capital flows, international trade, CNN media broadcasts, international migration, cross-border tourism, the diffusion of values and norms, transnational social movements, INGOs, and MNC are quite different phenomena. It is impossible to theorize about them in any systematic sense (for globalization and global governance in general, see Chapter 16 by Zürn in this volume; for transnational diffusion processes, see Chapter 18 by Gilardi in this volume).

This chapter does not deal with transnational relations in general, but takes an actor-centered perspective. This refinement still comprises a wide range of regularized transnational relationships, from networks exchanging material and/or ideational resources to INGOs and large organizations such as MNC. Some transnational actors operate globally (e.g., the Catholic church, the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC]; Amnesty International; General Motors), while others are confined to specific regions of the world (such as the European Environmental Bureau, Asia Watch, or the European Trade Union Confederation). Some transnational actors concentrate on a single issue (such as the transnational campaign to ban landmines), while others such as religious organizations follow a multi-purpose mission.

In the following, I distinguish among transnational actors (TNAs) along two dimensions. The first dimension concerns their internal structure. Some TNAs are formal organizations (from MNCs to INGOs). Such organizations are usually characterized by a formal statute defining the roles, rules, and relationships among the members, a clear external boundary, and at least some degree of internal hierarchy in the sense of a decision-making body entitled to take binding

decisions for the members. Other TNAs are connected in a more loose and nonhierarchical fashion for which I use the term “network,” defined as “any collection of actors ($N \geq 2$) that pursue repeated, enduring exchange relations with one another” in the absence of a central authority able to impose hierarchy upon them or to settle disputes (Podolny and Page, 1998, 59).⁴ Transnational networks still encompass a whole variety of actors, from loosely coupled advocacy networks sharing specific values, principled beliefs, and a common discourse (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, 2) and knowledge-based epistemic communities (Haas, 1992b) to transnational coalitions “who coordinate shared strategies or sets of tactics to publicly influence social change” (Khagram et al., 2002a, 7) and – finally – transnational social movements engaging in joint and sustained social mobilization (*ibid.*, 8).

The second dimension is orthogonal to the first one and differentiates between the constitutive purposes of the actors. Some TNAs – such as MNCs or transnational special interest groups – are primarily self-interested and try to promote the well-being of the organization itself or of the members of the networks. Others, such as INGOs, advocacy networks, or social movements are primarily motivated by promoting principled beliefs or what they see as a (global) “common good.” This differentiation roughly coincides with the distinction between the “for profit” and the “not for profit” sector as frequently found in the literature. However, it is useful to think of this distinction as a continuum rather than sharply divided classes of actors. The business-sponsored Global Climate Coalition certainly claims to promote the international public good, while some (I)NGOs seek to make a profit in the humanitarian action sector (for a “NGOs as firms” perspective, see Prakash and Gugerty, 2010). Moreover, the more both firms and INGOs engage in transnational governance, the more they become involved in rule-making and in the provision of collective goods irrespective of their original motivation (see below).

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS: A SHORT INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

Neither transnational relations nor theorizing about them started in the post–World War II era. Multinational corporations with dispersed investments and transnational production lines across several political jurisdictions date back at least to the medieval era. During the Renaissance era, “family businesses” such as the Medici in Florence or the Fugger in Augsburg held huge investments and production facilities across Europe and had agents in India and China by the end of the sixteenth century (Krasner, 1999, 221). From the sixteenth century on, the trading companies of the imperial powers such as the British East India Company and the Hudson Bay Company operated across continents (Held et al., 1999, 238–239). Similar observations hold true for advocacy groups held together by principled ideas and values. Precursors to modern transnational networks in the human rights and women rights areas include the campaign to end slavery in the United States during the early to mid-1900s (Kaufmann and Pape, 1999), the international suffrage movement to secure the vote for women in the late nineteenth century, and others (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, ch. 2). While these early transnational movements did not enjoy the Internet, their strategies were remarkably similar and sometimes no less effective than those of their modern successors.

If the phenomenon of transnational actors is not particularly new, theorizing about them has its precursors, too. Yet, scholarship on transnational relations during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was more normative and prescriptive than analytical and descriptive. Take Immanuel Kant, for example. His 1795 “Perpetual Peace” which has become the mantra of today’s literature on the democratic peace, contains ideas on transnational relations (Kant, 1795/1983). His statement that the “spirit of trade cannot coexist with war, and sooner or later this spirit dominates

every people” (Kant, 1795/1983, 125 [368]) has been among the first claims about the causal relationship between economic interdependence and world peace. Kant’s cosmopolitanism was rather common among liberal intellectuals during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

While these scholars related the democratic organizations of polities, transnationalism, and peace, liberal writers of the nineteenth century such as Adam Smith or John Stuart Mill took up Kant’s ideas about free trade and peace. Schumpeter’s “Sociology of Imperialism” constitutes perhaps the most elaborate statement of the interwar period on the causal relationship between liberal capitalism, economic interdependence, and peace (Schumpeter, 1919/1953). Schumpeter reacted primarily to Marxist theories of imperialism, particularly Lenin’s writings, which made exactly the opposite claim. Lenin argued that wars among capitalist states were inevitable in a stage of development “in which the dominance of monopoly and finance capital has established itself” (Lenin, 1917/1939, 89). The controversy about the precise relationship between economic interests, capitalism, and economic interdependence, on the one hand, and aggressive/imperialist foreign policies as well as peace and war, on the other, continues until today (see Chapter 23 by Levy and Chapter 29 by Milner in this volume).

With the emergence of international relations as a social science discipline, scholars increasingly employed analytical rather than normative arguments. David Mitrany argued in 1943 that technology and technical issues confronting the industrialized democracies in the twentieth century necessitated international cooperation along functional lines (Mitrany, 1966/1943). After World War II, regional integration theory (Haas, 1958) reformulated the argument, claiming that rational economic behavior not only leads to transnational interdependence, but also to the creation of supranational institutions as stable peace orders such as the European Community. Karl W. Deutsch and his colleagues argued

that increasing transaction flows and cross-border communication as facilitated by trade, migration, tourism, educational exchanges, and the like, lead to a sense of community among people, to collective identification processes, and to the emergence of security communities (Deutsch et al., 1957; see Adler and Barnett, 1998).

Explicit analytical work on transnational actors and relations started during the late 1960s and early 1970s, both in the United States and in Europe (Cooper, 1968; Vernon, 1971; Kaiser, 1969). In 1971, the journal *International Organization* followed suit with a special issue edited by Keohane and Nye on “Transnational Relations and World Politics” (Keohane and Nye, 1971a). These and other works challenged the state-dominated view of world politics. James Rosenau, in particular, promoted the “transnationalization of world politics” (Rosenau, 1980).

The 1970s also saw a revival of critical political economy attacking transnational economic relations in general and the role of multinational corporations in particular with regard to the North–South relationship. Dependency theory argued against liberal free trade economists, claiming that underdevelopment results from the structural dependency and the integration of the developing world in the world economy (see Chapter 31 by Hönke and Lederer in this volume). Dependency theory constituted the first major contribution to the subject of transnational relations by Latin American, African, and Asian scholars, even though most of its propositions could not be confirmed empirically (see, e.g., Caporaso, 1978; Menzel, 1992).

But liberal arguments about transnational relations of the 1960s and 1970s claiming an end of the state-centered view of world politics did not survive the counterattack of realism. In the 1971 “Transnational Relations and World Politics” volume, Robert Gilpin had already argued that MNCs were primarily an instrument of American foreign policy and power, not the other way round (Gilpin, 1971, 1975). The late 1970s and

early 1980s then saw a revival of (neo) realist theory (Waltz, 1979). Hegemonic stability theory was the realist response to the liberal interdependence arguments. The result was rather profound, particularly in the United States. The original connection between transnationalism and international institution-building, according to which transnational interdependence had to be regulated by international institutions (e.g., Ruggie, 1983; Keohane and Nye, 1977), was lost during the early 1980s when regime analysis and neoliberal institutionalism took off. The main controversy between neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism concerned the prospects of “cooperation under anarchy,” that is, of cooperation among states (Baldwin, 1993).

Two developments of the late 1980s reopened intellectual space for theorizing about the cross-border activities of nonstate actors in the United States and Europe. First, the late 1980s saw the beginning of what would later be called constructivism or sociological institutionalism in international relations (Kratochwil and Ruggie, 1986; Wendt, 1987; Kratochwil, 1989). Kratochwil, Ruggie, and Wendt drew attention to the social and ideational rather than simply material structure of international relations (for the most comprehensive statement, see Wendt, 1999; see Chapter 5 by Adler in this volume). Second, the end of the Cold War should not be underestimated in its impact on international relations theorizing. It pushed many scholars away from structuralist theories such as realism and state-centered institutionalism to a renewed appreciation of domestic politics, on the one hand, and of transnational relations, on the other.

The 1990s saw a revival of theorizing about transnational actors, a trend which was further enhanced by the debate on “globalization.” Rosenau’s book *Turbulence in World Politics* constituted a sweeping statement on post-international politics (Rosenau, 1990, 11; also Rosenau, 1997). A 1992 special issue of *International Organization* elaborated the notion of knowledge-based transnational

“epistemic communities” (Haas, 1992b). A 1995 volume (Risse-Kappen, 1995b) argued that the impact of TNA on outcomes depends on the domestic structures of the polity to be affected and the extent to which TNAs operate in an environment regulated by international institutions. Margret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink then developed the concept of transnational advocacy networks and explored their impact in the human rights and environmental areas (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

Compared to the attempts of the 1970s, these moves of “bringing transnational relations back in” (Risse-Kappen, 1995b) shared three characteristics:

1. While the empirical literature on transnational relations of the 1970s largely concentrated on MNCs, this focus on the international political economy has now been taken over by the literature on globalization (see Chapter 16 by Zürn in this volume). The transnationalism of the 1990s and early 2000s examines more thoroughly the transnational nonprofit sector, such as “epistemic communities,” value-based advocacy networks, INGOs, and transnational social movements.
2. The recent literature is much more about the *interaction* between states and transnational actors than about *replacing* a state-centered view with a society-dominated perspective. One indicator of this trend is the increasing replacement of traditional regime analysis with its focus on interstate institutions by a governance perspective emphasizing networks among public and transnational actors (see, e.g., Czempiel and Rosenau, 1992; Kohler-Koch, 1998; Cutler et al., 1999; O’Brien et al., 2000; Grande and Pauly, 2005; Schuppert and Zürn, 2008; Kahler, 2009b; Avant et al., 2010b).
3. As mentioned above, constructivism and sociological institutionalism have influenced scholarship on transnational relations. This resulted in work focusing on transnational actors promoting and diffusing causal knowledge (epistemic communities) and norms (advocacy networks). In 2010, the turf warfare between rationalism and constructivism was largely over, however, giving rise to more synthetic approaches from a variety of methodological orientations.

TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS AND INTERSTATE RELATIONS

There is an important difference between scholarly controversies of the 1990s and 2000s as opposed to those of the 1970s and 1980s. Most of the contemporary work in international affairs does not dispute that transnational actors influence international politics (compare, e.g., Waltz, 1979 with Krasner, 1999). Rather, current scholarship focuses on the *conditions* under which these effects are achieved, and most of the controversies center around the significance of these intervening factors.

I begin by discussing the TNA impact on traditional international relations as interstate affairs. First, I look at the controversy about MNCs as sources of policy convergence and of a “race to the bottom.”

Multinational corporations: race to the bottom or to the top?

As mentioned above, both the liberal and the critical-Marxist literature on transnational relations of the 1970s focused on the role of MNCs in world politics. At the time, the main controversies centered on the question of whether MNCs contributed to or hindered economic development (overview in Gilpin, 1987, ch. 6, 7). Realists argued that MNCs were irrelevant for development, since national government remained largely in control of development policies, even in the less developed world (e.g., Krasner, 1978). Liberals and modernization theory claimed that MNCs had an overall positive effect on economic modernization by guaranteeing an open world economy based on free trade and by exporting capital, know-how, and modern values into less developed countries (see Huntington, 1968 for an early statement). Critical theorists, particularly “dependistas,” maintained that, on the contrary, MNCs were among the main culprits of uneven development by essentially extracting resources from developing countries which were desperately

needed for economic development (see Chapter 31 by Hönke and Lederer in this volume).

Twenty years later, this controversy has largely disappeared. The differentiation process among developing countries led to functionally equivalent paths to economic development (compare, e.g., the Latin American experience with South East Asia’s experience; see Menzel, 1992). In the 2000s, the Newly Industrializing Countries and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) can no longer be treated as the periphery of the industrialized North. As a result, it is impossible to sustain a unifying theory of MNC impact on economic development such as claimed by either modernization or dependency theorists. The MNC impact on development varies enormously depending on social, political, and cultural structures in target countries (Clark and Chan, 1995; see Chapter 31 by Hönke and Lederer in this volume).

As a result, the debate about the MNC impact on world politics since the 1990s has largely taken place in the context of discussions about “globalization” and internationalization (see Held et al., 1999, ch. 5). This controversy is far from over, since the very notion of “globalization” is heavily contested in the literature.⁵ There is widespread agreement that the ability of MNCs to shift production elsewhere and their capacity to allocate financial and other resources to places which promise the highest profit rates severely circumscribe the autonomy of national governments to take economic decisions. The more a national economy is integrated into global markets, the higher the costs of a national economic policy which is not oriented toward liberalizing markets but toward expansionary monetary and fiscal policies to create full employment. The result is a growing convergence of national economic policies toward neoliberalism and monetarism (Strange, 1996). Following this line of argument, the impact of MNCs on national policies and on international institutions would be to contribute to a regulatory

“race to the bottom” (e.g., Bhagwati and Hudec, 1996; Murphy, 2000; Lofdahl, 2002).

Critical theory in the neo-Gramscian tradition agrees with the overall description of these trends, but explains it differently. Gill and others see an emerging transnational “historic bloc” establishing the hegemony of transnational mobile capital and relevant capitalist classes. The industrialized nation-states have not been passive by-standers of these trends, but have actively encouraged and contributed to it through, for example, the liberalization of capital markets and the encouragement of foreign direct investments (FDI). At the same time and with the demise of Keynesianism, neoliberalism became the dominant ideology of how to run a national economy, shaping the worldviews of transnational elites, policy-makers, and other actors (Gill, 1995; Gill and Law, 1993). In the neo-Gramscian view, it is this confluence of modes of production (transnational), international and national institutions, and dominant ideas which constitutes transnational global hegemony.

The empirical literature on globalization and the role of MNCs in the international economy has started tackling these questions and, as a result, a more differentiated picture emerges. The scholarly discussion has moved toward specifying the conditions under which MNCs are likely to contribute to a regulatory “race to the bottom” or – on the contrary – might actually help in fostering social and environmental regulations in weakly regulated countries (e.g., Vogel, 1995; Flanagan, 2006). The latter literature argues that MNCs would seek higher rather than lower regulatory standards (overview in Börzel et al., 2011). Global firms increasingly operate in socially embedded markets and are confronted with customers and stakeholders who care about their social and environmental impact. At this point, the literature on the MNC impact on international relations connects with the scholarship on a different type of nonstate actors, namely, advocacy networks and NGOs.

The power of principles and knowledge: transnational advocacy networks and INGOs

In parallel to and accompanying the increasing institutionalization and legalization of world politics, we observe an enormous growth of the transnational NGO sector from about 200 in 1909 to more than 20,000 in 2005, while the number of NGOs with consultative status at the United Nations increased from a few dozen in 1945 to about 3,300 at the end of 2009 (data according to Transnational NGO Initiative, 2010, 2; also Sikkink and Smith, 2002). Most of the growth occurred from the 1970s on. Since the early 1990s, a consensus has emerged in the literature that transnational advocacy networks (TANs), (I)NGOs, transnational social movements (TSM), and other nonprofit actors make a difference in world politics, particularly with regard to the emergence, creation, and implementation of international norms.

The literature has moved toward specifying the conditions under which both domestic and transnational mobilization influence state policies, the creation of international norms, and the diffusion of these norms into domestic practices.⁶ At the same time, NGOs especially have become the subject of critical scrutiny. Scholars have begun to challenge the view that NGOs are simply “forces for good,” have criticized their legitimacy, have pointed out their potential harmful effects on global governance, and have identified them with Western hegemony in the global system (see, e.g., Brühl et al., 2001; Bob, 2005; Jaeger, 2007; Mendelson and Glenn, 2002; Kennedy, 2004). Moreover, and partly as a direct result of the events following September 11, 2001, there is a growing literature using the tools of research on advocacy networks and transnational social movements to investigate the “dark side of transnationalism,” that is, transnational terrorist as well as criminal networks (e.g., Arquilla and Ronfeldt, 2001; Kahler, 2009a; Kenney, 2007; Sagemann, 2004; Schneckener, 2006;

Williams, 2002; see also Chapter 25 by Bueno de Mesquita in this volume).

While these and other works provide evidence that the power of knowledge and of principled beliefs matters in world politics for better or worse, the interesting question is why and under what conditions? The scholarship can be grouped under two headings, namely

- organizational characteristics and strategies of transnational advocacy;
- international and domestic opportunity structures, including complex models linking the two levels.

Organizational features and strategies of transnational mobilization

The first group of factors which scholars have identified as determining the impact of advocacy networks and organizations on state policies and international politics in general pertains to organizational characteristics and strategies of these transnational actors themselves. This is an area in which we can observe a growing convergence among different theoretical approaches, particularly moderate social constructivism, sociological institutionalism, and various rational choice concepts.

As to organizational features, institutional capacity as well as material and ideational resources are crucial factors in determining the effectiveness of transnational advocacy networks and movements. First, Keck and Sikkink pointed out that transnational advocacy networks “operate best when they are dense, with many actors, strong connections among groups in the network, and reliable information flows” (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, 28, 206–207). At the same time, centralization appears to be a mixed blessing. On the one hand, networks with strong central nodes and hierarchically organized NGOs (such as Greenpeace or Amnesty International) are able to react quickly to changed environmental conditions and to commit resources rapidly to new causes (Lake and Wong, 2009; Martens, 2005). On the other hand, research

on transnational social movements (e.g., Della Porta et al., 1999; Della Porta and Tarrow, 2005; Tarrow, 2005) demonstrates that, on the contrary, decentralized movements with many nodes are rather flexible to adapt to new circumstances. Research on transnational criminal and terror networks has also shown that these groups have adapted to state counterterrorism and anticrime strategies by quickly decentralizing, making it harder to fight them effectively (Kahler, 2009a; Kenney, 2009).

Second, professionalization is hugely important. The times are long gone in which (I)NGOs and TANs were mostly volunteer organizations, even though some of the most successful (I)NGOs such as Amnesty International combine the advantages of employing a professional staff (lawyers, country experts, etc.) on the one hand with a large membership of volunteers on the other (Clark, 2001). While service-providing NGOs have professionalized from the beginning, the same holds true today for more advocacy-oriented organizations, too (see, e.g. Martens, 2005; Prakash and Gugerty, 2010). One of the consequences of this professionalization is that both service-providing NGOs and advocacy networks tend to pursue more reformist rather than radical agendas geared toward a fundamental transformation of the international system. This trend is exacerbated by the fact that many more NGOs are services providers rather than pure advocacy organizations (see Transnational NGO Initiative, 2010; Lecy et al., 2010).

Third, material resources matter, of course. Funding for (I)NGOs and TAN is limited, be it public finances, foundation support, or donations from private citizens. Research adopting a collective action perspective shows that (I)NGOs especially tend to adopt product differentiation strategies and particular marketing strategies (e.g., “branding” and the development of core identities) in order to compete in a market of scarce resources (Barakso, 2010; Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Gill and Pfaff, 2010). In some cases, this can have perverse consequences

when, for example, NGOs become too dependent on foreign donors and lose contact with their local constituencies (see Henderson, 2010; Mendelson and Glenn, 2002 on the case of Russia). Moreover, many INGOs are more directly dependent on the “state world” than they would admit. Particularly in the issue-areas of international development and humanitarian aid, funding for the grassroots activities of INGOs originates to a large extent from public sources (see Hulme and Edwards, 1997, 6–7).

Thus, funding necessities might corrupt the primary mission of (I)NGOs and TANs to advance principled beliefs and international norms in search of funding. However, there is a “market correcting” mechanism in place if transnational advocacy groups or networks fail in their primary mission. If they are accused of making profits instead of pursuing their primary goals or if they compete too much over scarce public or private resources, this is likely to result in reputation loss which can have immediate financial consequences.

This leads to the fourth feature, ideational resources, which are constitutive for (I)NGOs and TANs and crucial for their effectiveness. The reputation of these actors and, as a consequence, their power and influence stems primarily from two sources, moral authority on the one hand and their claims to authoritative knowledge on the other. In the case of epistemic communities, it is primarily the latter which adds to their effectiveness (Haas, 1992b). With regard to advocacy networks, the two resources – moral authority and knowledge – go together and cannot be separated. Moral authority is directly related to the claim that these groups represent the “public interest” or the “common good” rather than private interests. The example of Transparency International (TI) indicates that ideational resources and knowledge might overcome a lack of material power and organizational capacities. TI was a tiny INGO with initially only few professional staff members which almost single-handedly put corruption on the international agenda, thereby creating a new international

anticorruption norm (Galtung, 2000). The ability to convert moral authority and excellent knowledge of the issue-area into ideational power explains to a large degree why transnational advocacy networks sometimes win against materially far more powerful actors such as MNCs or national governments. At the same time, TANs and (I)NGOs can quickly lose their credibility if they are identified with special economic or political interests or if they manipulate knowledge claims.

Last but not the least, the effectiveness of transnational advocacy groups and activists depends crucially on the strategies used. Transnational networks as moral and knowledge entrepreneurs rely on social mobilization, protest, and pressure. On the one hand, they use strategic constructions such as the framing of issues or shaming in order to mobilize people around new principled ideas and norms (Meyer and Tarrow, 1998). Shaming strategies remind actors such as national governments of their own standards of appropriateness and collective identities and demand that they live up to these norms (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, 23–24; Liese, 2006). Here, the logics of consequences and of arguing overlap (on the latter, see Habermas, 1981; Risse, 2000). Framing an issue constitutes a strategic construction, since language is used for instrumental purposes. The literature on transnational social movements in particular has emphasized that the effectiveness of framing depends to a large degree whether it resonates with prior beliefs of the target audience (Tarrow, 2005, ch. 4; Della Porta et al., 2006, ch. 3; in general, Gamson, 1992; Checkel, 2001). Resonance, however, requires that a frame be persuasive. Here, the “power of the better argument” comes in. Advocacy networks and epistemic communities need to justify their claims and give reasons in order to persuade their audience to change their interests and policies. Ideational resources such as moral authority and authoritative claims to knowledge are crucial in that they enhance the persuasiveness of arguments. This discursive

power is key to understanding the effectiveness of TANs and (I)NGOs in shaping global norms.

Public communication as a crucial factor in explaining the effectiveness of transnational actors is also the decisive difference between advocacy networks, on the one hand, and transnational criminal and terrorist networks, on the other (see Kahler, 2009a; Kenney, 2009; Sikkink, 2009 for the following). Criminal networks are profit-seeking, and the condition for their success is their secrecy. For transnational terrorist networks such as Al Qaeda, matters are more complex. On the one hand, carrying out terrorist operations requires utmost concealment in order to evade law enforcement. On the other hand, terrorist networks share with advocacy coalitions that they want to advance principled beliefs as a result of which they need to communicate in public. Establishing a global *Ummah*, for example, requires persuading at least parts of the (disenfranchised) public in the Islamic world. Terrorist acts are communication strategies directed both at the declared enemies and at audiences which one wants to persuade.

International and domestic opportunity structures

The effectiveness of transnational advocacy and campaigns not only depends on organizational features and strategies of transnational actors themselves, but also on international and domestic conditions. Social movement research calls this “opportunity structures” (Kitschelt, 1986; McAdam et al., 1996; Tarrow, 2005, ch. 2). I now turn to scholarship which has investigated both the international and domestic scope conditions under which transnational advocacy achieves its objectives.

To begin with, realist-inspired authors essentially argue that only great powers enjoy the ability and capacity of affecting outcomes in world politics, as a result of which transnational actors need to influence their decisions and policies in order to make a difference (e.g., Krasner, 1995). While it certainly helps

if the governments of great powers start promoting the goals of transnational advocacy networks, this is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for their impact. On the contrary, there are many instances in which transnational advocacy has been successful in creating and establishing new international norms by aligning with small states rather than great powers. Prominent examples include the 1984 international Convention Against Torture (Clark, 2001; Korey, 1998), Simmons, 2009, ch. 7), the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (Holzscheiter, 2010; Simmons, 2009, ch. 8), the 1997 Ottawa Treaty Banning Anti-Personnel Mines (Price, 1998), the 2000 Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court (Deitelhoff, 2006, 2009; Busby, 2010), the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions (Petrova, 2007), and others.

These examples also point to a significant international opportunity structure enabling transnational advocacy to have an impact. I have argued in my earlier work (Risse-Kappen, 1995a) that TANs are expected to increase their political influence the more they act in an international environment, which is heavily structured by international institutions (see also Tarrow, 2005, ch. 2). International organizations, for example, provide arenas enabling regular interactions between advocacy networks and state actors. In some cases, they actively encourage (and even finance) INGOs and other transnational coalitions. The European Commission, the World Bank, and the developmental sector in general are cases in point (Chabbot, 1999). The collaboration between the World Bank and the INGO world did not result in a less contentious relationship between the two, even though sharp divisions among INGOs emerged concerning how far one should cooperate with the World Bank (O'Brien et al., 2000). The United Nations system provides another arena for INGO participation. The UN World Conferences in particular have served as important focal points for the activities of transnational advocacy networks (Clark et al., 1998; Joachim, 2003, 2007;

Weiss and Gordenker, 1996). Moreover, the UN and its various organizations increasingly serve as fora where transnational actors and state officials regularly meet and interact (see, e.g., Willetts, 1996; Finger, 1994).

We need to differentiate among various phases in the international policy cycle, such as agenda setting, international norm creation, and norm implementation. It is safe to argue that *ceteris paribus* the influence of transnational advocacy networks has always been greatest during the agenda-setting or “norm emergence” phase of a “norm life cycle” (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). Since TANs and (I)NGOs provide moral authority and knowledge about causal relationships, they are particularly crucial when it comes to paradigm shifts on the international agenda. One can probably go as far as to argue that there has rarely been a new normative issue on the international agenda which has not been promoted by transnational advocacy coalitions, INGOs, or epistemic communities. In the international political economy, for example, an epistemic community put Keynesian ideas of “embedded liberalism” on the international agenda during the negotiations establishing the Bretton Woods system and the GATT (Ikenberry, 1993). In the environmental area, examples include the protection of the ozone layer, global warming, deforestation, wildlife conservation, and other questions (Haas, 1992a; Hurrell, 1992; Keck and Sikkink, 1998, ch. 4; Raustiala, 1997; Ringus, 1997; Litfin, 1994; Busby, 2010). Concerning human rights, the origins of almost every single post–World War II international human rights agreement can be found in the activities of transnational advocacy networks (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, ch. 2; see Chapter 33 by Schmitz and Sikkink in this volume). Examples from international security include the Geneva conventions, the nuclear test ban debate, and the treaty banning landmines (Finnemore, 1996, ch. 3; Adler, 1992; Price, 1998).

Yet, agenda setting does not equal norm creation. When it comes to international rule creation and international treaty making,

national governments and IOs assume center stage again. During this stage of the process, INGOs and TANs need to work through governments or international organizations. In recent years, however, we have seen more and more attempts at directly including transnational actors in the very process of international treaty making. The International Labor Organization (ILO) is a case in point (Senghaas-Knobloch et al., 2003), but there are many more transnational PPPs engaged in rule making (Schäferhoff et al., 2009). I discuss this “rise of private authority” (Cutler et al., 1999) in global governance below.

As to multilateral interstate negotiations, the available evidence points to three potential pathways through which transnational advocacy networks influence them:

- through lobbying activities in the domestic society of powerful states such as the United States, thus exploiting “two level game” mechanisms and changing state preferences (see Busby, 2010, for a sophisticated argument on the success and failure of transnational advocacy networks);
- through coalitions with IOs, thus pressuring states “from above” and “from below”;
- through coalition building with smaller states, providing the latter with knowledge and “informational power” (see above).

Once international rules and norms are created and international regimes have emerged, these normative commitments need to be implemented in the domestic practices of states and societies. This is by no means an automatic process as numerous studies about rule compliance (or the lack thereof), and rule effectiveness reveal (Raustiala and Slaughter, 2002; Börzel et al., 2010; see Chapter 14 by Simmons in this volume). Transnational advocacy networks, epistemic communities, and (I)NGOs once again assume center stage during rule implementation. There are three reasons for this. First, the legalization process of international norms increases the legitimacy of those actors who demand compliance with them. International institutions and the rules emanating from them empower both domestic

and transnational actors in a differential way, thereby enhancing their moral and knowledge power. Second, IOs and state agencies often rely on the monitoring and information capacities of transnational networks and INGOs, because the former are bound by rules of sovereignty and of “non-interference in internal affairs,” while the latter can move more freely. This dependence on TNA expertise and information-gathering capacities is particularly pronounced in issue-areas such as human rights and the environment and probably most relevant concerning international regimes that lack adequate, detailed, and intrusive verification procedures (Haas, 1992b; Peterson, 1997; Smith, 1997).

Third, the vulnerability of states to transnational (and domestic) pressures increases the more they commit to international legal norms. Of course, international legal obligations such as the ratification of international treaties does not automatically lead to compliance, as numerous studies have pointed out (Hathaway, 2002; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005; for a systematic assessment, see Risse et al., 2013). But commitment does increase “target vulnerability” in cases of rule violations because of reputational concerns. States or international organizations become vulnerable to transnational pressures, because they want to be members of the international community “in good standing.”

The discussion about compliance already points to the fact that transnational networks not only target international institutions and IOs, but more often than not national governments and their policies. One prominent proposition which has been evaluated extensively claims that differences in domestic structures explain the variation in transnational policy influence (Risse-Kappen, 1995a; Evangelista, 1997; see also Tsebelis, 1999 on the role of veto players).

Note that the domestic structure argument is not synonymous with the distinction between liberal democracies and autocratic systems. Democratic systems certainly provide ample opportunities for transnational actors to get access and to flourish. But they

also have comparatively high requirements for winning coalitions to shape policies. Take the case of the United States as one of the most open and pluralist democracies on the globe. One of the most comprehensive and global advocacy campaigns – the transnational campaign to ban antipersonnel landmines – was crucial in bringing about an international treaty (Price, 1998). But it failed miserably to change U.S. policies in its country of origin. The same holds true for the International Criminal Court (Deitelhoff, 2006; Busby, 2010). In contrast, transnational advocacy networks promoting nuclear arms control and disarmament had enormous difficulties to gain access to the Communist Soviet Union. After the arrival of Mikhail Gorbachev, however, they helped shaping the policies of the new leadership and thus to bring about the end of the Cold War, as Matthew Evangelista has documented in detail (Evangelista, 1999).

But domestic institutional structures do not tell the whole story about transnational impact, since some networks operating in the same institutional context succeed, while other do not (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, 202). Constructivist insights help solving the puzzle of why some transnational advocacy successfully influences changes in state policies, while others fail, despite similar institutional conditions. A “resonance” hypothesis has been developed by students of international norms trying to explain their differential diffusion in domestic practices (e.g., Checkel, 2001; Cortell and Davis, 2000; Busby, 2010): The more new ideas promoted by transnational coalitions resonate with preexisting collective identities and beliefs of actors, the more policy influence they will have. Cornelia Ulbert has used this proposition to show why ideas about climate change resonated much more with preexisting beliefs about environmental change and the precautionary principle in Germany than in the United States (Ulbert, 1997), while Anja Jetschke has made a similar argument in her study of human rights changes in the Philippines as compared to Indonesia

(Jetschke, 1999, 2010; see also Evangelista, 1999, about the differential impact of transnational advocacy networks between Brezhnev and Gorbachev in the former Soviet Union).

But the “resonance hypothesis” is not unproblematic. Most transnational advocacy coalitions are in the business of framing and strategic constructions (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998, 269–275; see above). They deliberately make new ideas and principled beliefs “resonate” with preexisting and embedded norms and collective understandings. It is very hard to predict beforehand which of these new ideas will carry the day. Joshua Busby’s book about “moral movements and foreign policy” develops a potential way out by combining framing theory with Tsebelis’ argument about veto players (Busby calls them “gatekeepers”; see Busby, 2010, ch. 2). Busby suggests that transnational advocacy is more likely to succeed the more their frames and strategic constructions resonate with the values of a given society and the less gatekeepers have to be persuaded in a political system. He thereby combines a constructivist approach with the domestic structure argument mentioned above.

Toward complex models of transnational advocacy impact

Recently, scholars have advanced complex models of TAN and (I)NGO impact integrating international and domestic levels. This work is particularly relevant for the study of transnational impact on norm implementation and compliance. Scholars have started specifying the conditions and causal mechanisms by which transnational advocacy networks manage to link the “global” and the “local” levels. Keck and Sikkink have pioneered this work by introducing the so-called “boomerang effect” to show how domestic and transnational social movements and networks unite to bring pressure “from above” and “from below” on authoritarian governments to accomplish norm change (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, 12–13; similarly Brysk, 1993; Klotz, 1995; see Chapter 33 by Schmitz and

Sikkink in this volume). A “boomerang” pattern of influence exists when domestic groups in a repressive state bypass their government and directly search out international allies to bring pressure on their states from outside. National opposition groups and social movements link up with transnational networks, which then convince international human rights IOs and Western states to pressure norm-violating states.

Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink have developed a five-phase dynamic model of human rights change consisting of several “boomerang throws” (Risse et al., 1999; see also Risse et al., 2013) and specifying the conditions under which links between domestic opposition groups and transnationally operating networks produce change toward domestic norm implementation and compliance. The “spiral model” of human rights change claims that the mobilization activities of transnational advocacy networks are particularly significant in the early stages of the process when domestic groups in the repressive state are too weak or too oppressed to constitute a serious challenge to the regime. The more the government is under pressure “from above” and “from below” and forced to make tactical concessions to its critics, the more the center of activities shifts from the transnational to the domestic level. The spiral model has been successfully evaluated for the issue-areas of human rights and the international environment and has been applied to multinational corporations, too (Jetschke and Liese, 2013; Deitelhoff and Wolf, 2013; Kollman, 2008). Moreover, the “quantitative turn” in human rights research has recently corroborated the findings of such complex models linking the international and the domestic levels (e.g., Simmons, 2009, 2013; Clark, 2013).

Work on these micro-mechanisms and TAN strategies has evolved considerably over the past fifteen years. Methodologically, it has brought together comparative case study work and large-N quantitative studies. Theoretically, it has overcome the divisions between rational choice approaches and those

committed to social constructivism and/or sociological institutionalism. But the “dependent variable” of this scholarship has remained the same: It investigates the impact of transnational advocacy on state policies and international institutions and is thus committed to a rather traditional view of international relations in which the main actors are states and international (interstate) organizations. This view has changed in recent years.

TRANSNATIONAL GOVERNANCE IN WORLD POLITICS

Probably the most important innovation in research on transnational actors since the mid-1990s focuses on their direct participation in global governance, understood here as the various institutionalized modes of regulating social issues and/or of providing collective goods (Mayntz, 2002; see also Benz et al., 2007; Czempiel and Rosenau, 1992). This “governance turn” in international relations shows transnational actors as active “governors” in world affairs (on this term, see Avants et al., 2010a). It represents a rather fundamental challenge to the prevailing view in the field

of international relations, which has long treated states and their interactions as the primary governance mechanisms in world politics. The research reviewed above focuses on transnational actors, but without questioning that states are the ones doing the governing in global affairs. The “governance turn,” while not denying that states remain significant actors in world politics, sheds new light on the governance contributions of nonstate actors.

When nonstate actors become involved in governance, they directly participate in norms making and rule making or in the provision of public services – be it through various cooperative arrangements with state actors (e.g., PPPs, see Börzel and Risse 2005; Schäferhoff et al., 2009; Rosenau, 2000) or through private regulations (see Cutler, 2003; Cutler et al., 1999; Hall and Biersteker, 2002; Noortmann and Ryngaert, 2010). The following figure depicts these various forms – ranging from co-optation of nonstate actors in public decision making via public–private co-regulation to private self-regulation (see Figure 17.1). It is important to note in this context that private self-regulation without any public involvement is still the exception rather than the rule in transnational governance (e.g., in standard setting, see Prakash

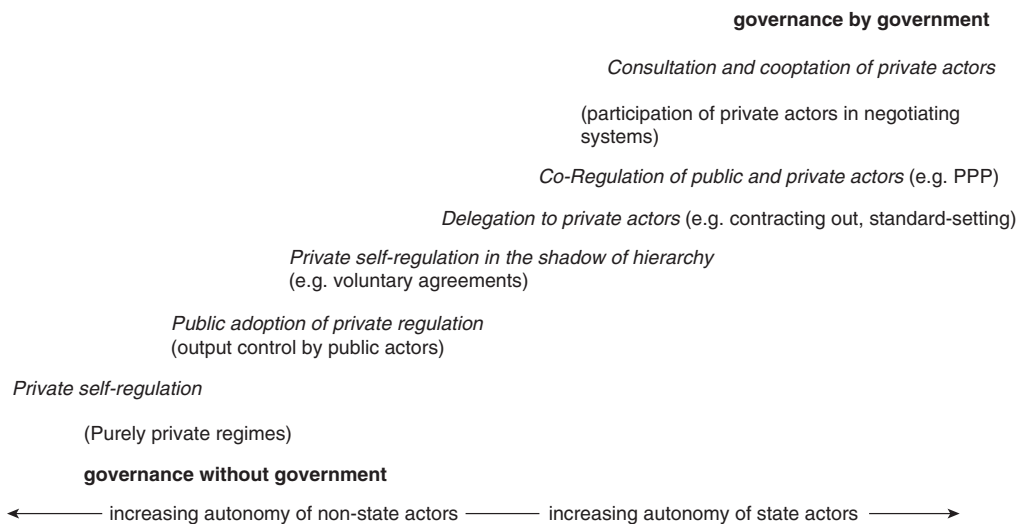


Figure 17.1 Forms of transnational governance. (Source: Börzel and Risse, 2005)

and Potoski, 2010; Internet governance, see Cowhey and Mueller, 2009; merchant law, see Cutler, 2003; or aspects of global financial regulations, see Mosley, 2009). Far more common are various forms of public–private co-regulation or co-provision of public services and common goods.

The early literature on transnational governance took a rather normative view on the subject matter, either praising the inclusion of nonstate actors in governance as substantial progress in world affairs (e.g., Reinicke, 1998; Kaul et al., 1999) or condemning it as another example of the pervasive nature of privatization and the deregulation of (world) politics in general (e.g., Altvater and Mahnkopf, 2002; Brühl et al., 2001; Levy and Newell, 2002). In the meantime, a more differentiated picture is emerging and scholars increasingly explore scope conditions under which nonstate actors can contribute to the effectiveness and problem-solving capacity of transnational governance. This scholarship includes studies on transnational security governance, including private military companies (Krahmann, 2005; Avant, 2005; Bailes and Frommelt, 2004; Deitelhoff and Wolf, 2010; Singer, 2003; Haufler, 2010), environmental governance (Andonova et al., 2009; Dingwerth and Pattberg, 2009; Prakash, 2000; Kollman and Prakash, 2001; Prakash and Potoski, 2006), human rights, particularly social rights (Alston, 2005; Clapham, 2006; Deitelhoff and Wolf, 2013; Hurd, 2003; Jenkins et al., 2002; O'Rourke, 2006), public health (Buse and Harmer, 2007; Schäferhoff, 2011), and development in general (Beisheim et al., 2008; Bull and McNeill, 2007; Dingwerth, 2008; Liese and Beisheim, 2011; Prieto-Carron et al., 2006) – and this is just a small sample of an ever-growing literature.

Despite all these scholarly efforts, we still know little about the effectiveness of transnational governance, especially when compared with traditional interstate regimes. Moreover, we know much more about successful examples of transnational governance such as the World Commission of Dams (Khagram, 2004; Dingwerth, 2007), the Forest Stewardship

Council (Dingwerth, 2008; Cashore et al., 2004), ISO 14001⁷ (Prakash and Potoski, 2006, 2007), or the Global Reporting Initiative (Flohr et al., 2010, 190–194) than about transnational governance failures. Nevertheless, these and other studies show at least that transnational governance involving nonstate actors matters increasingly in world affairs.

In addition, preliminary findings are worth mentioning here which particularly pertain to the governance contribution of firms, especially multinational corporations. The commitment of companies to global norms in the environmental, development, and human rights areas pertains to international “soft law,” including self-regulatory arrangements. Most firms are adamantly opposed to binding international treaties committing them to transnational governance. At the same time, corporate social responsibility has become a global norm over the past twenty years in that more and more firms subscribe to some form of voluntary arrangements in transnational governance. For example, 110,000 production facilities in 138 countries had received ISO 14001 certification in 2005 (Prakash and Potoski, 2010, 75), while more than 6,000 companies in 135 countries have signed up to the United Nations Global Compact (GC), among them a large percentage of the world's largest multinational corporations.⁸

The Global Compact commits firms to voluntary compliance with ten normative principles, including human rights, labor rights, environmental protection, and the fight against corruption. It has received its fair share of criticism for lack of effectiveness in the literature (e.g., Brühl, 2007; Bruno, 2002). More recently, a more nuanced analysis has emerged from various detailed empirical studies (e.g., Rieth, 2009; Bernhagen and Mitchell, 2010; Mwangi et al., 2013). In general, these studies show that signing up to the UN Global Compact does increase the likelihood that firms – mostly multinational corporations with headquarters in the West, particularly Europe – develop human rights policies, particularly when they participate in national GC networks.

A study of more than 20 PPPs to implement the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) confirms the "legalization" hypothesis (Goldstein et al., 2000) according to which high levels of obligation, precision, and delegation of the respective norms should lead to better performance and effectiveness. Rule-setting and service-providing PPPs especially have been found to reach their goals more effectively the more institutionalized the arrangements are at the transnational level (Liese and Beisheim, 2011; Beisheim et al., 2008). Moreover, studies of transnational governance and voluntary self-regulation in the European Union (EU) show that these arrangements work particularly well in the "shadow of hierarchy" (Héritier and Lehmkuhl, 2008; Héritier and Rhodes, 2011; Börzel, 2010), that is, if either states or the EU threaten nonstate actors with hard regulation.

However, there appear to be functional equivalents for either high degrees of institutionalization or the "shadow of hierarchy" induced by the state or by supranational institutions (Börzel and Risse, 2010). Studies of fighting HIV/AIDS and of controlling pollution in South Africa revealed that self-interested firms are likely to contribute to governance if their investment in human resources is otherwise threatened (as in the case of HIV/AIDS), if they produce for high-end markets (in the case of environmental protection), and if they cannot rely on the state to take care of the problem (Börzel et al., 2011; Thauer, 2009; Hönke, 2010). These and other studies show (e.g., Flohr et al., 2010; Deitelhoff and Wolf, 2010; Zimmer, 2010; Sage, 1999) that multinational firms in particular are likely to contribute to governance and the provision of collective goods

- if they sell brand name products which benefit from strict social and environmental standards;
- if their major markets and home countries are highly regulated (Western) countries;
- if they see an economic advantage in having regulatory standards imposed on their competitors in a globalized market;

- or if they or their industry sector have been exposed to social mobilization and campaigns by transnational advocacy groups or NGOs.

Moreover, the laws and regulations of a multinational corporation's home country often produce a "spillover" effect into weakly regulated host countries. A study by Prakash and Potoski showed that foreign direct investments from countries with high levels of ISO 14001 certification lead to high levels of such certifications in the host countries (Prakash and Potoski, 2007). Another study showed similar results for labor rights (Greenhill et al., 2009), which indicates some sort of "California effect" with regard to transnational governance (see above).

This emerging scholarship shows that the inclusion of nonstate actors in global governance is neither a panacea for curing all the world's problems nor is it part of a neoliberal conspiracy to privatize international politics. Rather, a more nuanced picture emerges focusing on both scope conditions under which nonstate actors contribute to more effective global governance and on the causal mechanisms that produce these effects.

CONCLUSIONS

This survey of more than forty years of empirical scholarship on transnational actors demonstrates that the significance of cross-border interactions involving nonstate actors – multinational corporations, INGOs, epistemic communities, and advocacy networks – is no longer contested in an age of globalization. But it would be premature to proclaim the end of the interstate world as we knew it.

Three developments are noticeable in the course of the past fifteen to twenty years of research on transnational actors:

1. With (neo-) realism having lost its hegemonic position in – particularly – American International Relations, the study of transnational actors is no longer framed in terms of a society-centered

versus a state-dominated view of world politics. The contemporary literature focuses instead on complex interactions between transnational actors on the one hand and state actors on all levels of supranational, international, national, regional, and local governance on the other.

2. While the earlier literature on transnational actors – of the 1970s and then again of the 1990s – concentrated on documenting their impact on the interstate world, the more recent scholarship focuses on the inclusion and contributions of nonstate actors to global governance. Yet, the much-acclaimed (or much-criticized) “rise of private authority” in world politics is probably an overstatement. Private rule making and self-regulation of nonstate actors, especially companies, still represents the exception rather than the rule in world politics, while complex and cooperative governance institutions which include both nonstate and state actors are definitely on the rise.
3. The literature on INGOs, advocacy networks, and epistemic communities of the 1990s was strongly influenced by the simultaneous constructivist turn in International Relations theory. This changed during the 2000s. Transnational advocacy is no longer the domain of constructivist scholarship, but the contemporary literature on transnational actors uses both constructivist approaches and insights from rational choice. Moreover, studies of transnational governance are more often than not influenced by bridge-building efforts across paradigmatic divides (see Chapter 9 by Checkel in this volume). Similar bridge building can be observed with regard to methodology: During the 2000s, large-N quantitative as well as comparative case studies were employed to study the role of transnational actors in world politics.

As a result of these developments, the study of transnational actors has reached a mature stage of scholarship. It has become “normal (political) science.” In this context, I see three directions for future research: First, the study of transnational governance can learn from the earlier work on the impact of transnational actors on interstate relations and international institutions, especially with regard to the shift from explaining the emergence of international norms to the study of compliance (see Chapter 14 by Simmons in

this volume). We still know relatively little about the effects of transnational governance arrangements that include nonstate actors on world politics and on problem solving on the ground. This calls for the study of scope conditions and causal mechanisms based on carefully selected comparisons, whether through large-N or case studies.

Second, an equally difficult problem concerns the legitimacy of the new modes of transnational governance (for different viewpoints, see Benz and Papadopoulos, 2006; Held and Koenig-Archibugi, 2004; Keohane, 2003; Wolf, 2000). This debate has a long history, starting with the first liberal thinkers on transnational relations, for whom these interactions were an unproblematic ingredient of liberal democracy and a guarantee for peaceful international relations. But, as Karl Kaiser had pointed out already in 1971 (Kaiser, 1971), it constitutes a problem for democratic accountability if transnational governance includes private actors – be they MNCs or INGOs – who are not elected and, therefore, not accountable except to their shareholders or their members. This issue has an empirical and a normative component. The empirical challenge is to investigate PPPs and voluntary self-regulation by nonstate actors with regard to the degree to which they allow stakeholder input and participation (for preliminary findings, see Dingwerth, 2007; Schäferhoff et al., 2009, 465–468; Andonova and Levy, 2003) and to compare the results to the democratic legitimacy of conventional interstate institutions. The normative challenge is to evaluate the emerging transnational governance arrangements against standards of legitimacy and accountability of governance beyond the nation-state (see Chapter 3 by Hurrell and MacDonald in this volume).

Last but not the least, even the most society-centric work on transnational actors still takes consolidated statehood with full domestic sovereignty for granted, defined as the ability of the state to implement and enforce central decisions and the monopoly over the means of violence (see Krasner,

1999, for details). We might be puzzled by the rise of “private authority” in international affairs, but we assume that nation-states fully enjoy the ability to rule hierarchically and to enforce decisions. What, however, if “limited statehood,” that is constraints on the state’s ability to exert domestic sovereignty, constitutes the rule rather than the exception in the contemporary global system (see Risse, 2011b, for the following)? Fragile, failing, and failed states are only the tip of the iceberg with regard to “limited statehood” (Rotberg, 2003; Schneckener, 2004). There are very few failed states in the international system, but areas of limited statehood abound in that a majority of countries do not control at least parts of their territory or are unable to enforce rules and decisions in various policy-areas. Even the BRICS belong to this category (e.g., the Brazilian government has little authority in the Amazon region, while the Chinese government is unable to enforce its own environmental laws).

Yet, areas of limited statehood are not simply ungoverned territories or policy areas (see Krasner and Risse, in prep.; Lee, Walter-Drop, and Wiesel, in prep.). There is huge variation in the degree to which governance is taking place and collective goods are provided under conditions of limited statehood. Empirical evidence indicates that various governance configurations – which usually include external as well as transnational actors – provide these services. As a result, major distinctions of Western modernity start blurring in areas of limited statehood, for example, the distinctions between “public” (aka state) and “private” (aka nonstate) actors (see Risse, 2011a). In many instances, non-state actors contribute to the public good, while governments primarily work for private profits. “State building” as such does not do the trick in these circumstances, as the examples of Iraq and Afghanistan document. Rather, governance promotion should assume center stage in areas of limited statehood (Brozus, 2011). In sum, while the turn toward global governance in the field of international relations challenges the state-centered

view of world politics “from above,” the problematique of limited statehood questions it “from below” – with major consequences for our theoretical, methodological, and empirical tools.

NOTES

1 For comments and critical inputs to this article, I thank Tanja Börzel, Beth Simmons, Christian Thauer, as well as the participants in my graduate seminar on “Transnational Actors and World Politics” at the Freie Universität Berlin during the summer term of 2011.

2 See my contribution to the first edition of this handbook (Risse, 2002).

3 On the “global governors,” see Avant et al., 2010b.

4 The literature on networks is huge (overview in Börzel, 1998) and usually distinguishes between networks, markets, and hierarchies.

5 I keep the following discussion short, since it is tackled in more detail by Zürn’s chapter (Chapter 16) in this volume.

6 See, e.g., Avant et al., 2010b; Arts et al., 2001; Boli and Thomas, 1999; Clark, 2001; Evangelista, 1999; Joachim, 2007; Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Khagram et al., 2002b; Klotz, 1995; Martens, 2005; O’Brien et al., 2000; Price, 2003; Risse-Kappen, 1995b; Risse et al., 1999; Risse et al., 2013; Simmons, 2009; Smith et al., 1997; Tarrow, 2005; Willetts, 1996.

7 ISO 14001 is the most widely accepted voluntary environmental management standard worldwide.

8 According to <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/ParticipantsAndStakeholders/index.html> (08/28/2011).

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Transnational Diffusion: Norms, Ideas, and Policies

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1 INTRODUCTION

International interdependence is at the core of the international relations discipline, which is premised upon the fact that states interact with one another and examines the nature, causes, and consequences of different types of cooperative and conflictive interactions. This chapter discusses how international interdependence shapes domestic decision making through transnational diffusion processes. In other words, how are decisions in one country influenced by the international context, and especially by the ideas, norms, and policies displayed or even promoted by other countries and international organizations? This idea has played an important role in international politics for a long time. Consider, for instance, US president Eisenhower's "falling domino principle," which expressed the risk that communist regimes would spread rapidly throughout the world: "You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly."¹ More recently, George W. Bush used a similar argument to

justify the second Iraq war: "The establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution."²

More or less implicitly, the notion that international interdependence is a powerful driver of domestic change is present in many important academic works. For instance, Huntington's (1991) "third wave of democratization" directly refers to a possible interdependent diffusion process. Furthermore, many international typologies, such as the distinction between "Beveridgean" and "Bismarckian" welfare states, suggest that national policies come from the same blueprint. At bottom, this is the well-known "Galton's problem," or the idea that in comparative studies, units are seldom independent from one another (Ross and Homer, 1976). However, the systematic analysis of transnational diffusion processes is relatively recent, as shown by the fact that the previous edition of this handbook did not include a chapter on this subject. The purpose of this chapter, then, is to give an overview of the main arguments, approaches, and findings of the diffusion literature, as well as a critical

assessment of its achievements and of the direction that future research should take.

The chapter is organized as follows. Section 2 presents basic definitions and shows how the question of transnational diffusion is embedded in broader debates and research traditions, both within international relations and in related (sub)disciplines. Section 3 considers the multiple faces of diffusion, or, in other words, the fact that many political phenomena can be studied from this perspective. Section 4 discusses the methods that can be employed to uncover diffusion and to what extent empirical evidence documents its presence. Section 5 then unpacks diffusion and discusses, using both theoretical arguments and empirical evidence, four broad classes of mechanisms (coercion, competition, learning, and emulation) that explain how policies diffuse. Section 6 assesses the achievements of the diffusion literature and discusses how it could overcome the challenges it faces. Finally, the conclusion sums up the main arguments.

2 THEORETICAL DEBATES AND RESEARCH TRADITIONS

There is a consensus that diffusion can be defined as a consequence of interdependence. For instance, Simmons, Dobbin, and Garrett (2006, 787) write that “[i]nternational policy diffusion occurs when government policy decisions in a given country are systematically conditioned by prior policy choices made in other countries.” This definition is broad, but it can be made even more general by noting that diffusion does not occur only at the international level, that national governments are not the only relevant units, and that it is not only specific policies that diffuse. Diffusion can take place also within countries, among a wide range of public and private actors, and it can lead to the spread of all kinds of things, from specific instruments, standards, and institutions, both public and private, to broad policy

models, ideational frameworks, and institutional settings.

In addition to characterizing diffusion in terms of interdependence, the definition emphasizes diffusion as a process, as opposed to an outcome (see also Elkins and Simmons, 2005). That is, diffusion is the interdependent process that is conducive to the spread of policies, not the extent of convergence that can result from it. If we think of the famous S-curve that scholars tend to associate with diffusion (see, e.g., Rogers, 1995; Berry and Berry, 2007; Simmons and Elkins, 2004; Weyland, 2005), in which the rate of adoption increases up to the point where the curve flattens out because it is approaching the ceiling (as in the case of adoption by all countries), diffusion is the process that leads to the pattern of adoption, not the fact that at the end of the period all (or many) countries have adopted the policy. Therefore, diffusion is *not* equivalent to convergence. A significant increase in policy similarity across countries – a common definition of convergence (Holzinger and Knill, 2005; Heichel, Pape, and Sommerer, 2005) – can, but need not, follow from diffusion. Even if it does, convergence characterizes the outcome of the process, but not the nature of the process itself. Thus, a clear separation of diffusion from convergence is of paramount importance. Furthermore, in principle this definition excludes hierarchical processes such as conditionality because these are not characterized by horizontal interdependence. While I believe that this view is correct, a significant portion of the literature considers coercion integral to diffusion (Dobbin, Simmons, and Garrett, 2007; Weyland, 2007). Therefore, I will include it in the discussion.

Transnational diffusion is at the core of some of the most important debates in international relations. As Most and Starr (1990, 392) argue, “diffusion/contagion processes fit logically in that set of questions which are traditionally asked by foreign policy or comparative politics analysts.” Diffusion is germane to many classic concepts and theoretical frameworks, such as Rosenau’s “linkage

politics,” which is premised on linkages defined as “any recurring sequence of behavior that originates in one system and is reacted to in another” (Rosenau, 1980, 381), and Gourevitch’s (1978) “second image reversed,” which theorizes how international structures affect domestic politics. Diffusion pertains directly to disputes over the definition, causes, and consequences of globalization, which produced a large number of studies, especially in the 1990s (Garrett, 1998). Relatedly, an influential research agenda was spurred by Keohane and Milner’s volume *Internationalization and Domestic Politics*, in which internationalization was defined as “the processes generated by underlying shifts in transaction costs that produce observable flows of goods, services, and capital” (Milner and Keohane, 1996, 4). This definition led to a conceptualization of globalization in terms of economic openness, or the extent to which a country embraces international economic exchanges. As we will see, the key contribution of the diffusion perspective to these debates has been to shift attention away from general openness toward specific patterns of interdependence, economic or otherwise, which has led to a better conceptualization and analysis of the nature and consequences of globalization and internationalization (Jahn, 2006). Furthermore, if we consider that coercion belongs to the definition of diffusion, important debates related to the impact of international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund on domestic policy making (Mukherjee and Singer, 2010), as well as to European Union (EU) conditionality requirements in view of accession by new member states (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004), can also be reframed in terms of transnational diffusion.

Beyond international relations, interdependence and diffusion have had a long history in the social sciences. These ideas can be traced back at least to 1889, when Francis Galton, the British social scientist and statistician, commented on a paper comparing laws of marriage and descent given at an

anthropology conference and argued that “full information should be given as to the degree in which the customs of the tribes and races which are compared together are independent. It might be, that some of the tribes had derived them from a common source, so that they were duplicate copies of the same original” (Tylor, 1889, 270). Since then, the nonindependence of units in comparative studies has been known as “Galton’s problem” (Ross and Homer, 1976). However, until recently it was mostly treated precisely as a problem, a nuisance that researchers should try to control, but not an interesting phenomenon in itself (Przeworski and Teune 1970, 51–53; Lijphart 1975, 171–172). Even recent comparative politics textbooks either mention diffusion briefly in the context of the challenges of the comparative method (Caramani, 2008) or skip it altogether (Boix and Stokes, 2007).

While cross-national comparativists have not paid much attention to interdependence and its consequences, this question has been at the center of subnational comparisons for a long time, especially in the context of American federalism. The first systematic analyses of policy diffusion in US states were published in the first half of the twentieth century (McVoy, 1940), motivated by the hypothesis that states work as “policy laboratories” in which innovations can be tested and, if successful, spread across the country. A large literature has developed from these ideas, which has progressed from rather crude studies of geographic effects to sophisticated analyses of diffusion patterns (Gray, 1973; Walker, 1969; Berry and Berry, 1990; Volden, 2006; Shipan and Volden, 2006). Although there has been relatively little dialogue between scholars studying subnational and transnational diffusion, the underlying phenomenon, as well as many theoretical concepts and methodological tools, are essentially the same, so that the two literatures are highly compatible. For instance, Volden (2006) borrowed from the IR literature the dyadic approach (where units of observations are pairs of countries, the first being the

receiver of a given phenomenon, such as trade or military conflict, and the second, the sender) and adapted it to the study of diffusion among US states; in turn, this approach was later employed to investigate diffusion at the cross-national level (Gilardi, 2010). Furthermore, Shipan and Volden (2006) examined diffusion across levels, namely from cities to states. This idea could be fruitfully developed also in the context of transnational diffusion – for instance, by looking at how diffusion among EU member states affects policy making at the supranational level. Finally, it should be noted that subnational diffusion studies are not confined to the United States. Füglistner (2012), for instance, analyzed the spread of health policies among Swiss cantons and found that intergovernmental institutions enhance the capacity of cantonal governments to learn from one another, a finding that is relevant beyond the specific case of Switzerland.

Interdependence has also been studied extensively in sociology, with a focus on individual and organizational behavior (Rogers, 1995; Strang and Soule, 1998). Much of the sociological work builds on DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) "institutional isomorphism," namely the idea that "organizations compete not just for resources and customers, but for political power and institutional legitimacy, for social as well as economic fitness" (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, 150). These insights have been applied to an extremely wide range of policies, practices, and organizations, such as newspapers (Carroll and Hannan, 1989), corporate structures (Fligstein, 1985), and health care organizations (Ruef, 2000), among many others. A typical study is the one by Baum and Oliver (1992), which investigates foundings and failures of day care centers in Toronto over 20 years. Results show that more centers were created, and were not discontinued, as the interconnections with the institutional environment became stronger. According to the authors, this relationship has to do with the increasing legitimacy of the day care centers, which, by gaining social acceptance

through institutional embeddedness, are more able to attract and retain clients. As is common in these works, what matters are not the objective characteristics of organizations, such as their efficiency, but their congruence with the institutional environment in which they evolve. Accordingly, organizations and other formal structures are seen as "myths and ceremonies" whose purpose is not to achieve predefined goals, but to increase the legitimacy of the behavior of social actors (Meyer and Rowan, 1977).

A closely related strand of research looks at institutional legitimacy at a global scale by focusing on the relationship between nation-states and "world society." The central proposition is that many national institutions, organizations, and policies "derive from worldwide models constructed and propagated through global cultural and associational processes" (Meyer, Boli, Thomas, and Ramirez, 1997, 144–145). Works in this tradition show, for instance, that the rise of higher education was influenced by the consolidation of international societal models putting emphasis on the development of human capital, as well as by integration within transnational networks (Schofer and Meyer, 2005). Similarly, Ramirez, Soysal, and Shanahan (1997) found that, while country-specific factors were crucial in the acquisition of women's suffrage rights until the 1930s, their salience later declined in favor of transnational influences, which ultimately led to women's political rights being taken for granted as an essential component of modern states. The ideas developed in the sociological literature play an important role in a diffusion mechanism often called "emulation," which is discussed in Section 5.4.

Related to the classic sociological studies, but with a more interdisciplinary flavor, is the recent literature on social networks, which has analyzed the spread of a wide range of phenomena, such as smoking (Christakis and Fowler, 2008), obesity (Christakis and Fowler, 2007), and autism diagnoses (Liu, King, and Bearman, 2010). Although some of these studies have been

increasingly criticized, notably for their limited ability to dissociate diffusion from “homophily” (Shalizi and Thomas, 2011), the network approach has been making its way into mainstream diffusion studies, as we will see later.

Finally, policy diffusion has been studied by policy analysts under the label “policy transfer,” which is defined as “the process by which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political system (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system” (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000, 5). This definition is very similar to that of diffusion (for a comparison, see Marsh and Sharman, 2009); indeed, the underlying phenomenon is essentially the same. Using this approach, policy analysts have studied a wide range of topics, such as railway regulation (Lodge, 2003) and national tax blacklists (Sharman, 2010).

In sum, while the study of how interdependence causes policies to spread transnationally is relatively new in both international relations and comparative politics, it has a long tradition in related (sub)disciplines. As argued in Section 6, there is a definite redundancy across these literatures, which would benefit from a closer integration of theoretical arguments and empirical strategies.

3 WHAT IS DIFFUSED?

One of the appeals of the diffusion approach is that it can be applied to a wide range of social and political phenomena. Starting with policies, we can think of a continuum going from specific instruments and settings, such as corporate tax rates, to general policy frameworks, such as neoliberal models. The literature offers several ways to think about these differences. In his influential work, Hall (1993) developed the concept of “policy paradigm,” namely “a framework of ideas and standards that specifies not only

the goals of policy and the kind of instruments that can be used to attain them, but also the very nature of the problems they are meant to be addressing” (Hall, 1993, 279). Within this perspective, we can distinguish between “normal policy making,” in which adjustments are incremental and occur within a given paradigm, and radical changes that alter the paradigm itself. The latter is labeled “third-order change,” while the former consists of “first-order change” (namely, the revision of the settings of existing policies) and “second-order change” (that is, the introduction of new policy instruments that, however, remain consistent with the existing paradigm). Thus, taking regulation as an example, some scholars studied the diffusion of specific policies such as the liberalization and privatization of infrastructures (Henisz, Zelner, and Guillén, 2005), regulatory impact analysis (Radaelli, 2004), and financial market regulation (Way, 2005), but others have argued that these seemingly disconnected policy changes are in fact part of a paradigmatic shift that puts regulation at the core of contemporary political economies, leading to the global diffusion of “regulatory capitalism” (Levi-Faur, 2005).

Weyland (2007) unpacked the concept of “policy” by drawing a distinction between loose templates (“principles”) and concrete policies (“models”):

A principle is a general guideline for designing programs or institutions. Such a maxim provides a broad orientation for policy makers that encompasses several specific design options. It charts an overall direction but not a specific course of action. By contrast, a model is one specific option from the menu offered by a policy principle; a model [. . .] prescribes a coherent, integrated way of organizing a policy program or designing an institution (Weyland, 2007, 18).

The distinction has consequences for the nature of the diffusion process. While coherent policy models, such as the pension privatization pioneered by Chile in the 1980s, are more likely to spread and be adopted without major adaptations, general principles such as

universal coverage and efficiency in health care may prompt similar reforms in many countries, but to a lesser extent and with more heterogeneous implementation than policy models (Weyland, 2007, 22–27).

While policies, in their various forms, have been the focus of a significant share of works, by no means are they the only political phenomenon covered by the diffusion literature. Many studies have examined the diffusion of institutions. Some concentrated on specific organizational forms such as independent central banks (Polillo and Guillén, 2005) and independent regulatory agencies (Gilardi, 2005; Jordana, Levi-Faur, and Fernandez I Marin, 2011), while others examined institutions such as women's political rights (Ramirez, Soysal, and Shanahan, 1997) and candidate quotas (Krook, 2007).

Democracy itself has been studied from a diffusion perspective. A first group of studies focused on broad patterns, such as the distribution of governmental transitions (Starr, 1991) and the geographic clustering of democratic transitions (Brinks and Coppedge, 2006; Gleditsch and Ward, 2006). Controlling for the typical country-specific determinants of democracy, the democratic level of a country is significantly related to that of its neighbors. These empirical patterns are very robust and, at first sight, they seem to support George W. Bush's view, mentioned in the introduction, that the democratization of Iraq through military intervention would lead to increased democracy in the Middle East. However, Leeson and Dean (2009) have shown that, while the democratic level of a country is influenced by that of its neighbors, the magnitude of the effect is small. Other studies have attempted to document the diffusion of democracy, and unpack its process, with qualitative evidence. Weyland (2009, 2010) shows that foreign examples increase the confidence of domestic opposition, even though the probability of success is often overestimated. Furthermore, Weyland (2010) argues that the diffusion of democracy may lead not only to the successful replication of

a democratization event, which is in fact relatively rare, but to a wider range of outcomes, including preemptive reforms by autocratic leaders and even repression that blocks immediate democratization efforts and even freezes them in the medium term. Elkins (2010) focuses on another aspect of democratic diffusion, namely, the similarity of constitutions. Using an original dataset covering almost all independent states since 1789, he shows that the structure and content of constitutional documents exhibits the same geographic clustering as general democracy scores, but to a larger degree in Latin America than in Europe. Elkins (2010) argues that this is due to the availability of influential models in Latin American countries, such as the US constitution, which played a lesser role for European countries. Despite stronger heterogeneity in Europe, Elkins (2010) could document unambiguous influences in this continent, such as the Portuguese constitution of 1822 borrowing heavily from the Spanish constitution of 1812. The latter belongs to some of the most influential models, which include also the constitutions of France (1791) and those of the German states of Bavaria (1808 and 1812) and Baden (1818).

The list of political phenomena that have been studied from a diffusion perspective is very long. It includes standards and certifications (Prakash and Potoski, 2006), labor rights (Greenhill, Mosley, and Prakash, 2009), legal styles (Kelemen and Sibbitt, 2004), military coups (Li and Thompson, 1975), war (Most and Starr, 1980; Buhaug and Gleditsch, 2008), presidential election campaign strategies (Boas, 2010), military systems and organizations (Resende-Santos, 2007), bureaucratic oversight mechanisms in international organizations (Grigorescu, 2010), international election monitoring (Kelley, 2008), and suicide terrorism (Horowitz, 2010), among many others. In this chapter, I often use "policy" as a convenient shortcut, but it should be kept in mind that most of the arguments hold for a much broader class of phenomena.

4 IS DIFFUSION AN OBSERVABLE PHENOMENON?

Anecdotal evidence of diffusion abounds; one can hardly read a newspaper or magazine without stumbling upon examples illustrating the plausibility of the idea that interdependence is a key feature of decision making in virtually all domains. For instance, in the October 4, 2010, issue of *The New Yorker*, Evan Osnos wrote on the politics of meeting the Dalai Lama:

[As the Dalai Lama] prepared for his first visit to the new Administration, the *Washington Post* broke the news that he and Obama would delay their White House meeting until after the President's official trip to China, that November. [. . .] Lodi Gyari, the Dalai Lama's special envoy and lead contact with the US government, says the criticism of Obama was unwarranted: "The decision not to do the meeting beforehand was absolutely mutual." Nevertheless, he added, in the months since, some foreign governments have used it as an excuse to avoid irritating China. "They said, 'Look, if the big United States is shying away, then, please, give us a break,' " he told me.

Scholarly work also offers many illustrations, sometimes quite colorful. For instance, in his article on national tax blacklists, Sharman (2010, 634) reports unambiguous evidence that Venezuela literally copied and pasted Mexico's legislation:

[T]he Venezuelan legislation made reference to the wishes of the Mexican legislature and the need to be consistent with the Mexican constitution. Worse still, the original Mexican list had included Venezuela, and thus by copying the Mexican list, Venezuela succeeded in blacklisting itself.

While these examples make the idea that diffusion really occurs thoroughly believable, finding systematic evidence is another matter. For qualitative and quantitative researchers alike, the starting point is often some kind of spatial and/or temporal clustering, such as neighboring countries adopting similar policies or an adoption pattern that is characterized by waves. For instance, both Simmons and Elkins (2004, 172) – a quantitative

analysis – and Weyland (2007, 18–21) – a qualitative study – note that, respectively, foreign economic policies on a global scale and social security reform in Latin America tend to be clustered geographically, and that reforms have been concentrated in relatively short time spans. Such clustering offers preliminary evidence of diffusion, but researchers are faced with two problems. First, how do we know whether the clusters are caused by interdependence, as opposed to commonly experienced shocks of various kinds? Second, how can we discriminate among different forms of interdependence, or, in other words, among different diffusion mechanisms? Qualitative researchers rely on process tracing to assemble enough pieces of information and convincing "smoking guns" to support the hypothesis that diffusion takes place and, especially, to uncover the mechanisms that drive the diffusion process (Weyland, 2007, 14–16; Resende-Santos, 2007, 41–46). Of course, the nuances of the specific conclusions vary, but virtually all qualitative studies find that, at least to some extent, diffusion can be documented empirically.

On the other hand, quantitative researchers formulate the null hypothesis that interdependence does not have a significant effect on policies, and that country-specific factors and common pressures account for their transnational spread, which would imply that traditional arguments do not miss an important part of the story (Simmons, Dobbin, and Garrett, 2006). Against this baseline argument, most studies conclude that interdependence matters and policies do diffuse across countries. But what is exactly the empirical basis for this claim? The typical analysis uses time-series-cross-section data and models policy in a given country and year as a function of a set of control variables, which usually capture domestic factors and international pressures, and of a so-called "spatial lag," which, despite its pompous name, is simply a weighted average of the policy in other countries (usually lagged one year). The connectivity matrix that is needed to construct the spatial lag specifies

how countries are connected with one another. For instance, it may contain 1s for country pairs that are geographic neighbors, and 0s otherwise. The construction of the connectivity matrix is the crucial step in which researchers try to measure theoretically meaningful relationships between countries. The key here is to understand that “space is more than geography” (Beck, Gleditsch, and Beardsley, 2006): there is no reason to define “distance” exclusively in geographic terms, although in many cases geography is a useful starting point. We see why this approach is appealing: the spatial lag offers a straightforward way to integrate interdependencies into a standard regression model, although the estimation of spatial models does present some difficulties (Franzese and Hays, 2007, 2008). A crucial issue in spatial analyses is making sure that the estimated spatial lag – our measure of interdependence – is not biased by unmeasured heterogeneity and/or common shocks. To this end, the inclusion of unit and time fixed effects is generally recommended, but as Plümper and Neumayer (2010) argue, it is not a panacea. In particular, unit fixed effects capture heterogeneity in policy levels, but not in changes. Furthermore, unit fixed effects in general are appropriate if the theory points to variation in changes of the dependent variable, but not if we are interested in levels. This is usually unproblematic in diffusion research, but it needs to be kept in mind.

Simmons and Elkins’ (2004) path-breaking study illustrates the type of results that many subsequent works could corroborate. These authors investigated the diffusion of liberalization and restriction of the current account, the capital account, and the exchange rate regime in 182 countries. Controlling for economic and political conditions and external political pressures, they found that policy change among capital competitors, among countries sharing the same religion, and among countries experiencing high economic growth significantly increased the likelihood of similar changes in other countries. Concretely, each of these variables represents

a spatial lag. That is, the policies of religious partners are operationalized by weighting the policies of all countries by whether any two countries share the same dominant religion. Because this weight is binary, this amounts simply to the average policy among religious partners. Simmons and Elkins (2004) used the same approach also for more complex relations, such as the extent to which countries have the same trade relationships. Here, weights are correlations across each country’s total exports to each of the other countries. The same principle was used for many other diffusion variables, such as the policies of bilateral investment treaty (BIT) and preferential trade agreements (PTA) partners, language partners, and trade competitors.

To sum up, there is an almost unanimous consensus in the literature that interdependence and diffusion are real phenomena that can be documented. However, how do policies diffuse? What forms can interdependence take, and how are they related to the ways policies diffuse transnationally? We turn to these questions in the next section.

5 HOW DOES DIFFUSION OCCUR?

The definition given in Section 2 states that diffusion follows from interdependence, but it does not explain how. Obviously, interdependence can take many forms; therefore, there can be many ways in which policies diffuse. The literature has discussed at length what these ways may be and generally has approached the issue from the angle of mechanisms. A mechanism can be defined as “a systematic set of statements that provide a plausible account of how [two variables] are linked” (Hedström and Swedberg, 1998, 7). It follows that diffusion mechanisms are systematic sets of statements that provide a plausible account of how policy choices in one country are systematically conditioned by prior policy choices made in other countries (Braun and Gilardi, 2006, 299). There has been considerable theorization on these

issues, and the list of diffusion mechanisms is almost as long as that of scholars that have written on the subject. However, the emerging consensus is that most mechanisms can be grouped in four broad categories: coercion, competition, learning, and emulation. Coercion is the imposition of a policy by powerful international organizations or countries; competition means that countries influence one another because they try to attract economic resources; learning means that the experience of other countries can supply useful information on the likely consequences of a policy; and emulation means that the normative and socially constructed characteristics of policies matter more than their objective consequences.

5.1 Coercion

Coercion means that international organizations and powerful countries can pressure states to adopt certain policies. The typical mechanism is conditionality: in order to access certain resources, national governments must comply with given policy requirements. This logic applies especially to two settings. First, international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank tie their financial help to mostly neoliberal economic reforms to be enacted by the recipient governments, usually some combination of fiscal austerity and market creation (Biersteker, 1990). Second, the EU makes accession conditional on wide-ranging reforms, including the national transposition of EU legislation and the restructuring of domestic political institutions and practices (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004). If these efforts are successful, they cause policies to spread quite straightforwardly.

Turning first to IFIs, the empirical evidence is mixed. On the one hand, several quantitative studies could not document a correlation between IFIs' requirements and domestic reforms. For instance, Brooks (2005, 2007) found no relationship between

World Bank loans and credits and pension reforms in Latin America, OECD, and post-communist countries. These results are reinforced by the extensive qualitative evidence produced by Weyland (2007), who concludes that "even weak countries that depended on financial assistance from the IFIs deviated from WB recommendations on a number of important issues and resisted IFIs pressures [. . .] Therefore, IFI pressures cannot account for the Latin American wave of pension reform" (Weyland, 2007, 79). However, these negative results are driven in part by a selection effect: IFIs focus their efforts on the more recalcitrant countries, in which the success of their initiatives is likely to be more modest (Weyland, 2007, 70–71). In addition, national governments can exploit IFI pressures as an external constraint to push through reforms which they favor regardless of IFI involvement, but which are unpopular at the domestic level. As Mukherjee and Singer (2010) argue, this strategy can be successful especially when social policies are sufficiently developed to ensure domestic compensation for the losers.

Conditionality has also been a prominent feature of the interaction between the EU and Central and Eastern European countries. According to the external incentives model, "[t]he dominant logic underpinning EU conditionality is a bargaining strategy of reinforcement by reward, under which the EU provides external incentives for a target government to comply with its conditions" (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004, 662). EU demands include the *acquis communautaire* on the one hand (that is, the corpus of EU legislation), and broader political and institutional goals, such as the respect for general democratic principles and minorities on the other. To pressure states to comply with these requirements, the EU relies especially on material incentives, most importantly accession to the EU. Mattli and Plümper (2004) estimated that the prospect of joining the EU explains about 40% of the variance in regulatory quality among transition countries, which react promptly to the

credibility of EU commitments. Whether the expectation of joining the EU is sufficiently powerful to alter state behavior depends also on other factors, such as the clarity and formality of EU demands, the size and speed of rewards, and the size of adoption costs (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004, 664). The conditionality strategy worked well until the 2004 enlargement but, despite its continuing consistency, it has become less effective since, mainly because the domestic political costs of compliance, especially with respect to minority rights, have been too high in countries ridden with ethnic conflict, such as Serbia and Turkey (Schimmelfennig, 2008).

5.2 Competition

Competition can be defined as the process whereby policy makers anticipate or react to the behavior of other countries in order to attract or retain economic resources. The prototypical example is tax competition. All countries might be better off with higher tax rates but, to the extent that lower taxes help attract investment, they have incentives to set them a little lower than other countries. The decision is thus conditional on the policies of other countries, and if all policy makers reason alike, a race to the bottom in tax rates is to be expected. The logic is essentially that of the prisoner's dilemma, which highlights that interdependence and diffusion are an inherent component of game-theoretic models of international relations. It is also the line of reasoning that characterized early studies of economic globalization, which predicted a downward spiral in standards of social protection as a consequence of countries trying to preserve their competitiveness in a new era of mobile capital.

While international economic competition has been studied from several perspectives, the contribution of the diffusion literature has been a more precise analysis of competition dynamics. Typically, standard globalization studies operationalized competition as general

economic openness, for instance as imports plus exports as a share of GDP, foreign direct investment as a share of GDP, or financial openness (Garrett, 1998). On the other hand, diffusion scholars developed more accurate indicators of international competition relying on the spatial setup discussed in Section 4. Simmons and Elkins' (2004) idea of identifying exactly who each country is competing with by looking at correlations between trading patterns (or other relevant dimension of competition) has been adopted by several subsequent studies. In their study of the diffusion of BITs, for example, Elkins, Guzman, and Simmons (2006) construct three spatial lags in which the adoption of BITs by other countries is weighted by the degree to which they export to the same countries, have similar educational and infrastructural resources, and export the same basket of goods. All three indicators are strongly correlated with the adoption of BITs, controlling for a wide range of factors. Concretely, it means that a country that exports mainly coffee to Europe is more likely to sign a BIT if other countries that export coffee to European countries have already done so, but not if other signatories export mainly steel to North America. What matters is not simply the overall level of international economic openness but specific competition patterns. In this respect, Cao (2010) has shown that these patterns can be operationalized using network tools. Looking at capital taxation, he concluded that competition takes place especially among countries that are similarly positioned in networks of portfolio investment and exports.

Another way in which diffusion analyses have extended the globalization literature is by clarifying why there has been no generalized race to the bottom in social protection, tax policies, and other domestic regulations, which was a key finding of the 1990s. For example, Garrett (1998) showed that high exposure to international trade and high capital mobility have differential effects on government spending depending on the strength of left labor. Government spending is about the same regardless of left-labor

power if internationalization is low, but it is significantly higher if the left is strong in a highly internationalized economy. Diffusion studies have found similar results using the more precise measures mentioned earlier. For instance, a robust finding is that domestic politics filters competitive pressures in capital taxation and prevents a generalized race to the bottom (Basinger and Hallerberg, 2004; Plümper, Troeger, and Winner, 2009).

Beyond these refinements, the diffusion literature has shown that not only is international competition compatible with the existence of high domestic social and regulatory standards, but it can even contribute to their increase. The argument follows the famous “California effect” identified by Vogel (1995, 1997), namely, the idea that important export markets can push countries to improve their environmental standards by making access to the market conditional on them. This effect was originally observed in the case of American automobile emission standards. After California enacted stricter regulations in the 1970s and then again in the 1990s, automobile producers were compelled to abide by them in order not to lose that important market. As Vogel (1997, 561–562) explains, similar dynamics should be expected to occur also at the international level:

Political jurisdictions which have developed stricter product standards often force foreign producers in nations with weaker domestic standards either to design products that meet those standards, since otherwise they will be denied access to its markets. This, in turn, encourages those producers to make the investments required to produce these new products as efficiently as possible. Moreover, having made these initial investments, they now have a stake in encouraging their home markets to strengthen their standards as well, in part because their exports are already meeting those standards.

Prakash and Potoski (2006) demonstrated that this phenomenon can indeed be documented, and not only for product standards, which specify what characteristics products should have, but also for process standards, which regulate how the product is manufactured and

are more difficult to monitor. Their study of the diffusion of ISO 14001 certificates, which is a private voluntary standard that, if adopted, obliges firms to respect a series of measures to limit their environmental impact, showed that a given country had higher rates of adoptions of the ISO 14001 certificate among domestic firms if it traded extensively with countries where the use of this certificate was widespread. By contrast, export dependence, which is a general measure of economic openness, was not related with ISO 14001 certification rates. Greenhill, Mosley, and Prakash (2009) found a similar effect for labor rights, which tend to be strengthened in countries that trade extensively with partners where these rights are already well protected. Interestingly, the effect is stronger for the formal adoption of laws than for their actual implementation, suggesting that competitive pressures do not lead automatically to better conditions for workers. However, the California effect could be identified also in this case.

These findings lead to a somewhat paradoxical conclusion. On the one hand, economic interdependence gives rise to competition among countries but without causing a race to the bottom in domestic social and regulatory standards. In some cases, per the California effect, competition even pushes laggards to upgrade domestic regulations in important areas such as environmental protection and labor conditions. On the other hand, the improvement of domestic standards occurs ultimately because of external market pressures and not through a democratic process. How the final outcome should be evaluated from a normative point of view is an open question, to which we return in Section 6.

5.3 Learning

Learning can be defined as the process whereby policy makers use the experience of other countries to estimate the likely consequences of policy change. Before a policy is

introduced, its consequences are by definition uncertain. Policy makers may rely on expert reports and other assessments, but other countries can also be a useful source of information. Looking at outcomes in countries that have already introduced the policy, and maybe comparing them with those of countries that have not adopted it, can be a way for policy makers to evaluate what will likely happen if they choose to pursue the new policy. This process can be rational if policy makers elaborate information according to the laws of statistics, but it can also be bounded if they rely on cognitive shortcuts that may introduce errors in the process.

Rational learning can usefully be characterized as Bayesian updating. Within this perspective, policy makers have prior beliefs regarding the consequences of a policy, which they update on the basis of information coming from other countries. For instance, imagine that policy makers are considering the adoption of smoking bans in bars and restaurants. Before new information is revealed, policy makers have some sense of what is likely to happen. Some will think that smoking bans are an effective means of reducing cigarette consumption, while others will be more skeptical and argue that people will just change their smoking habits but not the overall number of cigarettes they smoke, but all will be significantly uncertain. Trends in cigarette consumption before and after the introduction of smoking bans in other countries, or a comparison of countries with and without smoking bans, can help reduce this uncertainty. If policy makers use this information to update their beliefs in a Bayesian process, their posterior beliefs will shift toward what the experience of others shows, although the extent of this adaptation depends on both the consistency of the information and the strength of prior beliefs.

Meseguer (2009) studied this argument empirically by examining the worldwide spread of economic policies such as privatization, capital account liberalization, development strategies, and IMF agreements. For

each policy, she constructed the posterior beliefs of policy makers in a Bayesian updating process in which the relevant outcome of all policies was assumed to be economic growth. Concretely, Meseguer (2009) computed both average results and their variance using three types of information: outcomes in the same country ("own experience"), in the same region ("regional experience"), and in the whole world ("world experience"). These variables were then used as the main explanatory factors in time-series-cross-section models that included also a number of controls. Although results are not entirely consistent across policies, Meseguer (2009) could show that the adoption of market reforms was significantly influenced by how policy makers perceived their expected consequences on economic growth, based on the experience not only of their own country but also of other countries. This is a strong result because the operationalization of learning follows directly from the Bayesian updating model, which suggests that not only do policy makers learn, but they do so in a very rational way.

Another test of rational learning arguments was carried out by Elkins, Guzman, and Simmons (2006), who studied the worldwide diffusion of bilateral investment treaties (BITs). BITs have a straightforward objective, namely creating a legal framework for the promotion of foreign investment. This allowed Elkins, Guzman, and Simmons (2006) to construct a meaningful indicator for learning, namely, the relationship between policies and outcomes measured by regressing, for each country, foreign investment on BITs in *other* countries. A positive coefficient means that, based on the experience of other countries, BITs seem to be positively associated with greater foreign investment. Elkins, Guzman, and Simmons' (2006) analysis showed that countries were more likely to sign BITs if the experience of others, operationalized as we have just discussed, indicated that this policy leads to the desired outcome. Using the same approach, Gilardi, Füglistner, and Luyet (2009) showed that

health-care reforms were more likely to be adopted by OECD countries if the experience of others suggested that they were correlated with a decrease in expenditures. An important point is that although, of course, correlation does not imply causation, this is not really problematic for the study of learning in the context of diffusion. What matters is the perception of a causal link, and it is safe to assume that correlations are very often taken as an indication of an underlying causal relationship.

A different perspective on learning is that although policy makers intend to learn from the experience of others, they are inherently limited by how the human brain processes new information. These arguments rely on the experimental findings of cognitive psychologists, which showed that people are not natural statisticians but rely on “cognitive shortcuts” such as “availability” and “representativeness” when they try to make sense of information in uncertain circumstances³ (Tversky and Kahneman, 1974; McDermott, 2001). As Kahneman and Tversky (1982, 32) synthesized, “apparently, people replace the laws of chance by heuristics, which sometimes yield reasonable estimates and quite often do not.”

In the context of diffusion, “availability” means that, unlike in the Bayesian setup, not all information is considered equally. Particularly vivid examples are more influential than less striking events although, in a rational process, the latter should not be downplayed (Weyland, 2005, 2007). For instance, Weyland (2007) showed that the 1981 pension privatization in Chile, an extremely bold reform, had a disproportionate impact on other Latin American countries, many of which also embraced similar policies in subsequent years. Similarly, the revolutionary wave in 1848 was influenced more by the violent example of France and its iconic status as the “mother of all revolutions” than by the peaceful democratic transition in the United States or the rebellions across Italy, even though conditions in France were significantly different from those of

many imitators in Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America (Weyland, 2009).

The second cognitive shortcut, “representativeness,” means that policy makers draw unwarranted inferences from a limited empirical basis, overestimate the extent to which the evidence can be generalized, and engage in slipshod extrapolations (Weyland, 2005, 2007). Chile’s pension reform is again a case in point. Based on initial outcomes such as a dramatic increase in savings, the reform was quickly judged to be a success and generated admiration and envy in other Latin American countries, even though, later, it became apparent that the increase in savings was mainly due to other factors, and the implementation of private pension plans turned out to be much more complicated than expected (Weyland, 2007). Likewise, the French revolution promised similar successes to foreign activists despite the fact that it was just a single case: the outcome in the French example was considered to be “representative” of all revolutionary attempts (Weyland, 2009).

Bounded learning could also explain why “least likely cases” seem to be powerful examples for other countries. Jensen and Lindstädt (2012) showed that OECD countries were more likely to reduce corporate taxes after leftist governments abroad enacted cuts. Tax cuts adopted by rightist governments do not convey much information because they are the type of policy that is expected from conservative parties, who could be willing to enact them more on ideological grounds than based on proven benefits. However, if leftist governments do it, the signal is stronger because this type of policy change is not expected from them, thus suggesting that policy makers acted on the basis of the compelling evidence on the effectiveness of tax cuts. A similar mechanism may have been at work in the diffusion of smoking bans. A convincing argument for their introduction in Switzerland was the Italian example, where the implementation of smoking bans was extremely unproblematic – which, given Italy’s reputation with respect

to rule enforcement, was also highly unexpected. A leading Swiss newspaper concluded that “what was possible without much trouble in Italy should be a piece of cake in Switzerland.”⁴

These works show that, even within a relatively narrow definition, learning is a complex phenomenon. Additional facets were highlighted by Gilardi (2010), who argued that all policy makers do not take the same information into account in the same way, and that policy makers may learn from both the *policy* and the *political* consequences of reforms. First, as Volden, Ting, and Carpenter (2008) also showed in a formal model, policy makers may discount information that is not in line with their preferences. Put differently, evidence that a policy is effective may be insufficient to sway the position of policy makers who have strong ideological reasons to oppose it. For instance, evidence that gun control helps save lives is unlikely to make conservative politicians support stricter rules in this domain, and evidence that the death penalty is an effective means of reducing crime rates will not convince progressive politicians that this is an appropriate policy. Similar points were made by Meseguer and Escribà-Folch (2011), who argued that policy makers in democracies are more prone to learning because, unlike their autocratic counterparts, electoral accountability makes them more sensitive to evidence of success.

Second, policy makers are certainly interested in the likely consequences of reforms on policy outcomes. For example, when considering whether to adopt family-friendly policies such as more time off from work for parents, the likely effects on birth rates are a relevant outcome that policy makers will take into consideration. However, the political fallout is also an important dimension. What are the electoral consequences if expenditures for social policies are cut? Politicians may try to answer this important question in part by looking at the experiences of other countries. If controversial reforms were politically feasible elsewhere, then they

might also be so at home. Gilardi (2010) examined unemployment benefits retrenchment in OECD countries and found that rightist governments tend to be more sensitive to information on the electoral consequences of reforms, while leftist governments are more likely to be influenced by their policy effects. These findings suggest that policy makers learn selectively from the available evidence concerning both the policy and political consequences of reforms. More generally, these arguments highlight the complexities that emerge whenever there are several relevant outcomes for a policy that possibly contradict one another.

To sum up, empirical evidence tends to support the idea that policy makers are more likely to adopt a policy if it was successful elsewhere, which suggests that they learn from the experience of others. At first sight, this is good news for an assessment of the consequences of diffusion. However, a closer look reveals that learning can be imperfect, conditional on ideology, and more oriented toward the selfish interests of politicians than the common good. We return to these normative considerations in Section 6.

5.4 Emulation

Emulation can be defined as the process whereby policies diffuse because of their normative and socially constructed properties instead of their objective characteristics. As Tolbert and Zucker (1983, 26) stated in a classic sociology article, “organizations conform to what is societally defined as appropriate and efficient, largely disregarding the actual impact on organizational performance.” This mechanism requires that political actors shift from the “logic of consequences” to the “logic of appropriateness” (Checkel, 2005). According to the former, “actors choose among alternatives by evaluating their likely consequences” (March and Olsen, 1998, 949). More or less implicitly, this assumption is at the basis of the diffusion mechanisms discussed earlier, namely, coercion, competition,

and learning. On the other hand, the logic of appropriateness means that “[a]ction involves evoking an identity or role to a specific situation” (March and Olsen, 1998, 951). Checkel (2005) distinguishes between three mechanisms that can operate this shift from one logic to the other in a socialization process. First, strategic calculations such as compliance with EU or IFI conditionality belong to the logic of consequences but can induce a change of preferences in the long term. Second, “role playing” involves the adoption of certain roles in particular settings, but without a full internalization of norms, which can happen via a third mechanism, “normative suasion,” in which actors can genuinely change their understanding of appropriateness through discursive interactions with others. International institutions have been considered as conducive to the internalization of new roles and interests, but the empirical evidence is mixed. Bearce and Bondanella (2007) showed that joint membership in intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) tends to align the interests of member states, and more so if the IGOs are more institutionalized; but other studies, notably in the context of the EU (for example, Hooghe, 2005), found that, while international norms do exist, their emergence is not caused by international institutions.

Emulation can also be understood as norm diffusion. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) argue that norm dynamics follow a three-stage process: norm emergence, cascade, and internalization. First, in the “norm emergence” phase, new rules of appropriate behavior are put on the radar by norm entrepreneurs with the support of organizational platforms. Henri Dunant, the founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross, is the prototypical example of an actor who helped redefine what is allowed and not in war, while UNESCO was described as a “teacher of norms” in the area of science policy (Finnemore, 1993). In the context of international election monitoring, the initial emergence of a new norm was promoted by actors such as NGOs, the UN Secretary

General, and state leaders such as former US president Jimmy Carter (Kelley, 2008). When a sufficient number of states have been persuaded to take up the new norm (according to Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 901, about a third of the potential adopters), a critical point is reached that pushes norm dynamics into their second stage, namely a “norm cascade.” Here, norms are promoted in a socialization process that rewards conformity and punishes noncompliance. States are sensitive to the reaction of the international community because it can affect their domestic legitimation and power. In the case of international election monitoring, the rhetoric employed by many governments made explicit reference to the need to conform with the expectations of the international community (Kelley, 2008, 247–248).

Finally, if this process is strong enough, norms may become so deeply accepted that they end up being taken for granted as the only appropriate type of behavior. This is the “internalization stage.” As Finnemore and Sikkink (1998, 85) exemplify, “few people today discuss whether women should be allowed to vote, whether slavery is useful, or whether medical personnel should be granted immunity during war.” While international election monitoring has not reached this stage, it has become progressively less contested, which hints to a certain degree of internalization (Kelley, 2008). At a more anecdotal level, it could be argued that some types of smoking bans, for instance in airplanes or theaters, are already taken for granted, while others, such as those in restaurants and bars, are well on their way to full internalization.

Although Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) do not put it this way, another perspective on norm dynamics is that the burden of proof shifts over time. In the early stages, it is the actors who wish to introduce women’s suffrage, smoking bans, or any other policy who need to demonstrate that these policies are needed, appropriate, and politically feasible. As the norm dynamic unfolds, the burden shifts to actors who do not want the policy to

be introduced, who need to work harder to make their case than those who support it. Because norm dynamics lead to a change in dominant norms, once the new norm has taken over or is about to do so (around the tipping point in the “norm cascade”), the new rules become orthodox and the old heterodox, which shifts the balance of power between proponents and opponents. In other words, late in the process it is opponents, and no longer proponents, who need to engage in “norm contestation” (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998, 897).

In Finnemore and Sikkink’s (1998) account, norms are essentially exogenous. Norm entrepreneurs play an important role at all stages of the process, and especially in the first two stages. They are crucial for the emergence of a norm, and they are instrumental in the naming and shaming that sustains a norm cascade (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998, 902). Other scholars, however, have put forward the view that powerful norms can develop also endogeneously. Using the example of election monitoring, Hyde (2011), in disagreement with Kelley (2008), argued that norms can develop endogeneously following a signaling process. For early adopters, the invitation of monitors is a credible signal of a commitment to democratization, which leads to benefits such as increased foreign aid and investment. After a sufficient number of true democrats have allowed election monitoring (when the dynamic has entered the “norm cascade” stage), not doing so becomes an unambiguous signal that a country has no intention to democratize, which pushes even pseudo-democracies to invite observers despite the risk of a negative report. Hyde (2011) documented that by 2006, over 80% of elections held in nonconsolidated democracies were monitored by international observers, which suggest that the norm is now internalized, or at least is powerful. Thus, active entrepreneurs are not a necessary condition for successful norm dynamics, which can unfold endogeneously.

What has the diffusion literature added to these insights? A significant problem, shared

with related literatures such as that on European socialization (Beyers, 2010), has been the operationalization of norms in empirical analyses. Most studies have relied on proxies such as the number of prior adoptions of the policy, either worldwide or in a specific region (Simmons and Elkins, 2004; Gilardi, 2005; Meseguer, 2009). This measure is not unreasonable. It is directly linked to the idea that the power of norms is related to how many countries have embraced them, and it has been used in numerous sociological studies emphasizing norm diffusion (Ramirez, Soysal, and Shanahan, 1997; Meyer, Frank, Hironaka, Schofer, and Tuma, 1997). However, the gap between the indicator and the underlying concept is large, so that the interpretation of the measure remains ambiguous. Indeed, some scholars used this same indicator but attached a different meaning to it. Brooks (2005, 2007), for instance, used the percentage of countries that had already adopted pension privatization (in the same region) as a measure of learning, while Basinger and Hallerberg (2004) used average capital tax rates in the sample as a measure of competition. Measuring norms directly is even more difficult than finding good indicators of competition and learning, for which reasonable solutions have been developed, as discussed in Sections 5.3 and 5.2. Therefore, a solution could be to capture this elusive phenomenon indirectly. For instance, Gilardi, Füglistler, and Luyet (2009) hypothesized that if policies diffuse because of emulation, then, as norms become stronger over time, the role of other factors should decline. Specifically, they hypothesized that learning plays a role early in the process but then loses significance as the socially constructed dimension of the policy becomes more important than its actual consequences. In that study, the authors actually found that the reverse is true; that is, learning becomes more relevant over time, which does not support norm-based accounts of diffusion. Nevertheless, such indirect strategies might prove more fruitful than attempts to measure norms directly.

The limited success of quantitative studies of emulation highlights the need for a better integration of qualitative information in diffusion analyses. Weyland (2007), one of the few examples of systematic qualitative studies of diffusion, found that international norms played a differential role in the diffusion of pension and of health-care reforms in Latin America. In the former, international financial institutions such as the World Bank did not seek to redefine the goals of pension systems, but merely supplied new blueprints that promised to solve long-standing problems (Weyland, 2007, 87–91). In health care, by contrast, the World Health Organization (WHO) managed to define universal coverage as an important objective for all countries since the end of the 1970s, before the World Bank developed an interest in health care (Weyland, 2007, 170–172). We will return to the relationship between quantitative and qualitative evidence in Section 6.

6 THE WAY FORWARD

The research program on transnational diffusion has been overall successful. Its achievements include at least the following points:

1. A consistent and general definition of diffusion. The characterization of diffusion as a consequence of interdependence allows researchers to focus on the process – the specific mechanisms that make policies spread – instead of the outcome, thus avoiding sterile debates on whether policies have converged or not (the answer is almost always a matter of degree).
2. A redefinition of debates on globalization. While most early studies focused on economic openness as the defining feature of globalization, the diffusion literature made the decisive step of unpacking interdependence, both theoretically and empirically. It is not so much the openness of a country *per se* that matters for domestic policy, but who this country competes with, who it learns from, and what norms shape its behavior.
3. A convincing empirical documentation of diffusion. While the specific mechanisms that drive diffusion are often elusive, the literature could produce an overwhelming amount of evidence in support of the general hypothesis that decisions in one country are systematically conditioned by decisions in other countries.
4. An effective application of methodological tools to analyze diffusion. While there has been little true methodological innovation in the diffusion literature, scholars have successfully applied existing techniques to uncover interesting patterns, especially for competition and learning.

However, there are still many problems that need to be addressed. The first is that much of the work and findings are redundant, considering what has been done in related (sub-)disciplines, especially sociology and American politics. In part, this is a consequence of the strategy taken by leading diffusion scholars, who explicitly aimed at blending classic international relations questions with approaches developed outside this subdiscipline (Simmons, Dobbin, and Garrett, 2006, 2008; Dobbin, Simmons, and Garrett, 2007). It should be stressed that this strategy has been successful: the achievements mentioned above were possible precisely because of it. However, the integration should be pushed further.

As discussed in Section 2, policy diffusion has been a staple of the American federalism literature for several decades. While it remained relatively atheoretical for a long time, focusing essentially on geographic patterns of diffusion, recent works made important contributions that are highly relevant to the study of transnational diffusion. In particular, Volden (2006) put forward a new approach to the empirical analysis of policy diffusion, namely, the dyadic approach, in which units of analysis are not countries but pairs of countries (dyads). Ironically, this setup is common in the literature on international relations, and ubiquitous in that on the democratic peace (e.g., Maoz and Russett, 1993), where the phenomenon of interest, namely conflict, is inherently relational. In his study of the spread of the Children's Health Insurance Program among US states, Volden (2006) defined the first country in the dyad as the potential "receiver" of

the policy, and the second as the potential “sender.” The dependent variable was then defined not simply as policy change, but as the subset of changes that moved the first state closer to the second. The advantage of this approach is that explanatory variables can include characteristics of the “sender,” of the “receiver,” and also of the relationship between the two. Specifically, Volden (2006) could correlate the probability of policy imitation with general political and demographic similarities between the two states in the dyad as well as, more interestingly, the success of the policy in the “sender” state. Results showed that policies that were associated with a decrease in the uninsured rate among poor children (one of the main objectives of the program) were more likely to be imitated in other states, suggesting that a learning process was at work. The dyadic approach has not been much used in cross-national studies but is a promising alternative to spatial models. Gilardi’s (2010) application of the dyadic approach to the transnational diffusion of the retrenchment of unemployment benefits, for instance, also found support for learning arguments.

Another lesson of the American federalism literature is that we should think more about diffusion across levels. Shipan and Volden (2006) investigated how antismoking policies diffused among US cities, but also from cities to states. They hypothesized two types of patterns. On the one hand, widespread adoption at the city level could remove the need for state-wide legislation, since the problem is addressed already at a lower level. The authors call this a “pressure-valve effect.” On the other hand, diffusion among cities could move up to the state level through a “snowball effect,” for instance, if the diversity of municipal provisions requires some harmonization. Interestingly, Shipan and Volden (2006) found that the pressure-valve effect predominates if the state legislature is weakly professionalized, while a snowball effect occurs in states where professionalism is stronger. The implications for transnational diffusion are quite straightforward: policies

do not spread only among countries, but also across levels of government. This point is illustrated clearly by the diffusion of smoking bans in Switzerland, which, like the United States, is a strongly federal system. Smoking bans were first adopted in Switzerland by the canton of Ticino, which is in an Italian-speaking region on the border with Italy, in the aftermath of Italy’s unexpectedly successful introduction of smoking restrictions in bars and restaurants (see the brief discussion in Section 5.3). After that, several other cantons decided to introduce similar policies, and the federal government eventually decided to set minimal antismoking rules across the whole country. In sum, this case illustrates that cross-national diffusion can take a detour via subnational units, and that Shipan and Volden’s (2006) arguments are relevant beyond the study of federalism.

With respect to the sociological literature, diffusion scholars could take inspiration from the more advanced use of network tools found in those works. In many cases, sociologists rely on similar indicators as do political scientists to operationalize international interdependencies. Trade patterns are a case in point. However, sociologists tend to look for structural similarities through concepts such as cohesion and structural equivalence, which help identify the position of countries in transnational networks (Henisz, Zelner, and Guillén, 2005; Polillo and Guillén, 2005; Cao, 2010). More generally, there is a definite potential in the networks literature, which has made significant progress in recent years and has been increasingly focused on diffusion, or, in social networks terminology, contagion (Aral, Muchnik, and Sundararajan, 2009). However, the caveats mentioned earlier should not be taken lightly (Shalizi and Thomas, 2011).

A second problem is that, while the literature has convincingly demonstrated that policies diffuse, why that occurs remains much less clear. The key problem here is that empirical measurement has lagged behind theorization. I reaffirm here that, as discussed in Section 5, there have been some creative

and generally useful ideas that have produced interesting findings, especially for competition and learning. Notwithstanding these contributions, the literature has not been able to generate conclusive evidence that demonstrates the presence of competition, learning, or emulation. What is worse, methodological sophistication has probably plateaued given the available data, and significant advances cannot be expected unless more innovative and creative research designs are developed.

First, we need to move beyond standard dependent variables such as democracy scores, policy levels and adoptions, and the like. We could learn a good deal, for instance, by leveraging recent advances in content analysis methods and looking at how the public debate in one country is shaped by its transnational environment and connections. The increasing quality and availability of data on policy agendas could also be used to investigate diffusion patterns.⁵ More generally, a wealth of data can be accessed online (WikiLeaks⁶ is a recent, dramatic example), and we should find a way to exploit it to improve our understanding of transnational diffusion. Second, a better integration of qualitative and quantitative data is necessary. The nature of diffusion processes cannot be elucidated satisfactorily unless broad patterns can be supported by detailed information on the underlying dynamics. How this should be done is an open question, but a number of guidelines exist (e.g., Lieberman, 2005). Third, to the extent that scholars are interested in identifying the factors that cause policies to diffuse, closer attention should be paid to the conditions under which causal inference is possible (Imai, King, and Stuart, 2008). Unfortunately, these conditions are usually not met in the type of time-series-cross-section datasets used in the diffusion literature (and many others, of course). A necessary condition for overcoming these problems (new dependent variables, more qualitative information, and better causal inferences) seems to be a movement away from standard cross-national research designs. We need more creative thinking on what

information is needed to identify diffusion mechanisms more convincingly. There is currently much hype in the social sciences about “natural experiments,” that is, broadly speaking, research designs that approximate the random assignment of the treatment that characterizes laboratory experiments. To some extent, this can be seen as just the latest academic fad, but integrating some of the insights of the causal inference literature in policy diffusion studies is likely to pay greater dividends than fitting slightly improved models to the same type of data. In sum, improving our knowledge of diffusion mechanisms requires a move away from the standard cross-national analyses we are accustomed to.

Finally, a major outstanding question pertains to the normative consequences of diffusion. Policies diffuse: is this good or bad? More generally, is greater transnational coordination needed, or should state autonomy be protected from supranational influences? The literature has not been much concerned with these important questions, but it has identified a set of conclusions showing that the answer is not straightforward. For instance, competition is a powerful diffusion mechanism but generally does not lead to a race to the bottom. On the contrary, it can push laggard countries to raise their standards, for instance, for environmental protection or workers' rights. However, this occurs by changing the incentives of firms, thus bypassing the democratic process. In this sense, competition is a coercive process, even though it works in a direction that many would find normatively desirable. Similar conundrums emerge in the analysis of learning. Several studies found evidence that policy makers learn from the experience of other countries. In principle, this seems a good finding from a normative standpoint. However, it was also shown that policy makers discount information that is at odds with their preferences or ideological orientations, and that they may learn about the consequences of policies on their reelection prospects more than on the effect on policy outcomes. Thus, even if learning characterizes diffusion processes, it

is not necessarily the case that it will contribute to the common good; it may just serve the selfish interests of policy makers. Emulation is equally ambiguous. This mechanism is premised on the idea that socially constructed properties, not objective characteristics, explain diffusion, which opens the way to all sorts of inefficiencies. However, many examples of norm diffusion, such as women's political rights and the abolition of slavery, point to normatively desirable outcomes. Last, even coercion is not a clear-cut case. Of course, the fact that some states and organizations are sufficiently powerful to dictate conditions to sovereign entities is, in itself, reprehensible. But the politics of conditionality enforced by the EU, for instance, has led to stronger democracy in Central and Eastern Europe. In sum, understanding the nature of diffusion processes is crucial for a normative assessment of decentralized decision making and international harmonization. The literature has contributed to the debate with interesting findings, but much more is needed for a coherent assessment of the consequences of diffusion.

7 CONCLUSION

Transnational diffusion means that decisions in one country depend not only on domestic factors and international pressures, but also on decisions made in other countries. This definition emphasizes processes, while outcomes, such as the extent of convergence that is achieved, are not a critical component of diffusion. Several diffusion mechanisms can be identified, which can be grouped in four broad categories: coercion, competition, learning, and emulation. The literature has demonstrated that diffusion does occur, and it has produced interesting insights on the specific mechanisms that drive the process, although their empirical identification has proved to be problematic. The main achievements of this research agenda have been the development of a consistent and general definition of diffusion, which has helped

redefine debates on globalization, and the convincing empirical documentation of diffusion. The next steps should include a better integration with the insights of related (sub) disciplines such as sociology and American politics, the development of innovative research designs that allow for a better identification of diffusion mechanisms, and a more serious engagement with the normative implications of transnational diffusion.

NOTES

1 Presidential news conference, April 7, 1954 (<http://goo.gl/d188v>, accessed January 17, 2010).

2 President Bush Discusses Freedom in Iraq and Middle East, Remarks at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy, United States Chamber of Commerce, November 6, 2003 (<http://goo.gl/QPFNN>, accessed January 17, 2010).

3 A third shortcut, "anchoring," is less relevant for diffusion and is not discussed here. See Weyland (2005, 2007) for an elaboration of the argument.

4 *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, October 12, 2008.

5 <http://www.comparativeagendas.org/>, accessed January 18, 2010.

6 <http://wikileaks.ch/>, accessed January 18, 2010.

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Domestic Politics and International Relations

Kenneth Schultz

The idea that politics within states influences politics among states is as old as the study of international relations. Though it is common to cite Thucydides as the progenitor of realism, his *History of the Peloponnesian War* is replete with examples in which domestic political considerations shaped the course and outcome of that event. If war was made inevitable by the rising power of Athens and the fear this caused in Sparta, it is also true that Athens' downfall had its roots in the corruption of its democratic system by demagogues who saw conquest as a means of enhancing their political power and personal fortunes.¹ Later thinkers, such as Machiavelli, Kant, Lenin, and Schumpeter, also theorized about the domestic determinants of international behavior (e.g., Doyle, 1997). That said, this is an area of international relations research that experienced its most dramatic growth relatively recently, in the last two decades.²

This more recent surge in interest likely arose due to events in the world and developments within the discipline of political science. The peaceful end of the Cold War, ushered in by domestic changes in the Soviet

Union, cast into doubt realist models that had not simply failed to predict this outcome but had not really considered it possible. At the same time, the emergence of democratic regimes in Eastern Europe and growing scholarly interest in the observation that would come to be called the “democratic peace” created an appealing possibility that stability based on bipolarity and nuclear deterrence would be replaced by a peace based on democracy and freedom. Interest in domestic political factors also coincided with the discipline's increased emphasis on empirical hypothesis testing and quantitative methods, which had become much easier to implement with the explosion of computing power at this time. Whatever other merits they had, theories based on domestic politics and institutions offered empirically oriented social scientists something generally lacking from realist theories: variation. In the place of “like units” differentiated only by their position in the (rarely changing) distribution of power (Waltz, 1979), domestic political theories offered variation across states and across time in political institutions, the interests and ideology of the governing coalition,

political conditions such as the state of the economy, the popularity of the leader, and so forth. Scholars who posited the importance of these factors could readily test for associations between them and dependent variables of interest, such as the incidence of militarized conflict or levels of trade.

Given the vastness of the resulting literature, any attempt at review requires some bounds. The theories reviewed here seek to explain outcomes at the international level with reference to interests and institutions at the domestic level. The main actor in these explanations is not the state, but the government – that is, the individual, or group of individuals, who wields control over the country's foreign policy and is variously referred to as the leader, the incumbent, or the executive. All of the theories considered here emphasize the relationship between the government – which acts on the international stage in the country's name, though not necessarily on its behalf – and the constituents upon whom the government depends in order to implement policies and stay in power. They also emphasize the importance of domestic institutions, which determine which domestic actors have influence on the government and whether and how the leadership is held accountable for foreign policy choices and outcomes.

This prioritization of the domestic level clearly differentiates these theories from those that give pride of place to the international level. For purposes of analytical clarity, we should also draw distinctions with two other theoretical approaches that refer to domestic factors but not to domestic politics *per se*. The first are those that deal with individual perception and decision making. While these theories share an emphasis on leaders, they prioritize cognitive and psychological factors over political ones (e.g., Jervis, 1976). Second, I exclude here organizational theories of decision making and policy implementation (e.g., Allison, 1971). There is no doubt that, when political leaders make decisions, they are influenced by the information and advice that they receive from bureaucratic actors, and

their orders are carried out by complex organizations in ways that might frustrate their intent. Some of the theories reviewed here consider one particular bureaucratic actor, the military, as a constituency whose needs may have to be satisfied for the government to remain in power, but the biases and constraints introduced by reliance on bureaucratic organizations is a separate topic.

In terms of their coverage, theories emphasizing domestic politics have been applied to virtually every major question in the study of international relations. After initially elaborating the common themes within this large literature, I organize this review around three major sets of questions that have produced the most attention:

- **Interests, alignments, and alliances:** To what extent do domestic considerations influence the interests and ambitions that countries pursue in international politics and, as a result, which countries are friends and which are enemies?
- **War and peace:** How do domestic interests and institutions affect the likelihood and outcome of military conflict between states?
- **Cooperation and institutions:** How do domestic politics help or hinder cooperation among states and the role that international institutions play in fostering cooperation?

Absent from this list are theories that deal specifically with topics in international political economy (IPE), such as trade, financial, and monetary relations, which are treated in more detail in other chapters in this volume. Some of the theories reviewed here speak to or are even derived from theories of IPE, so some reference will be made to these ideas when appropriate.

COMMON ASSUMPTIONS AND VARIATIONS ON A THEME

The literature on domestic politics and international relations is quite diverse, owing in part to the fact that every major school of thought has made arguments that

touch on these factors. From realism comes a strand of literature recognizing that the state confronts demands not only from the international system but also from its own society, with its responsiveness to the latter determined by its domestic institutional structure. As a result, states are not just weak or strong relative to other states, but also relative to their publics and organized interests (e.g., Evangelista, 1997; Krasner, 1978; Mastanduno et al., 1989). Foreign policy is still dominated by a state pursuing some enduring “national interests,” but weak states are constrained in their ability to extract resources for foreign policy goals and have less room for maneuver internationally. Often implicit in this statist model is the view that domestic influences are disruptive, since they make it hard for the state to do the things that realists believe states should do: that is, amass power, balance external threats, and preserve autonomy (e.g., Nincic, 1992: ch. 1). States that are strong relative to society are expected to conform most closely to realist predictions.

The liberal tradition, which informs the bulk of the literature reviewed here, departs from this realist view in several ways.³ Rather than starting with a state that stands separate from society, writers in this tradition assume that all of the relevant actors, including those that make up the “state” (i.e., political leaders and bureaucratic agencies), have particularistic interests which may or may not align with the realist view of the national interest. As a result, foreign policy choices emerge from the interaction of domestic actors, operating within the institutions that determine how interests get aggregated and how coalitions form. This tradition is skeptical of the realist claim that the government, if unencumbered by domestic constraints, will pursue some idealized national interest. Instead, liberals tend to assume that governments will only work for the common good when institutions make them accountable to the broadest possible constituency, such as in democratic systems; unconstrained leaders, by contrast, are free to pursue selfish

aims and paranoid fantasies, often with disastrous consequences for their countries.

Finally, constructivists have argued that domestic politics is not just an arena of competing interests, but also a source of political culture and identity. In some applications, writers in this tradition speak of a national identity that flows from some internal characteristic, such as the nature of the polity (e.g., Risse-Kappen, 1995a) or the dominant ethnic/religious attachment (e.g., Barnett, 1996). If this national identity is effectively internalized by all actors within the country, then the theory does not involve domestic politics per se, even if it invokes a domestic source of behavior. In other applications, groups motivated by particular identities or attachments are treated as interest groups like any other, as in studies of “ethnic lobbies” in the United States (e.g., Bard, 1991; Rogers, 1993). More expansively, national identities and normative commitments can emerge from and be institutionalized through domestic political contestation (e.g., Berger, 1996; Katzenstein, 1996).

Despite this diversity in emphasis, most theories relating domestic politics to international relations rest on some common core assumptions. The first is that the most important actors in international politics are the governments or leaders of the states. Although theories of domestic politics admit the importance of a large variety of actors – including voters, organized interest groups, legislators, and bureaucratic actors – the choice of strategies at the international level is made by the leader or small group within the executive. It is here that authority is vested to wage war, to negotiate on behalf of the state, to sign treaties, and to name representatives to international bodies. For the most part, other actors within the state have only indirect influence over these decisions, through whatever influence they wield over the executive.

The second core assumption is that leaders care to some degree about staying in power. Holding executive power conveys all manner of benefits, including the ability to shape

policy in a desired direction, access to resources that can be distributed to allies, friends, and family, opportunities for personal enrichment, as well as the “ego rents” associated with wielding power. Thus, leaders, and those who wish to become leaders, spend time and effort thinking about how to get in office and, once there, how to remain in office. In some theories, office seeking is the sole motivation of leaders, and foreign policies are purely instrumental. Arguments about diversionary conflict – in which the purpose of war is to rally support from constituents – fit this description. More typically, office-seeking motivations coexist with other concerns. Leaders may care about the power, security, and reputation of the state; they may want to be responsive to international commitments and norms; or they may have strong ideological or religious convictions. In these cases, domestic considerations constrain the choice of strategies by making some more or less attractive.

The final core assumption is that, in order to acquire and hold office and in order to get policies enacted, leaders require the political support of some other actors within the country. Leaders are not free agents; rather, their tenure and effectiveness depend on their ability to put together a coalition of supporters from among those actors who have influence over policy and access to office. Who these other actors are, the manner in which coalitions are constructed, and the resources they have to influence policy depend on the political institutions within the country. In a highly autocratic political system, the leader needs the support of a relatively narrow set of elites, generally including the military. In democratic countries, access to office is determined by frequent and fair elections, which give greater influence to voters and organized interests who can promise votes and money. Within these two ideal extremes, there is variation in how interests organize and the channels of access they have to central decision makers.

There is no clear typology differentiating theories in this area, but one can distinguish

variations in emphasis along a few dimensions. One dimension is the extent of leeway leaders have to set the agenda or pursue their own interests. On one extreme are theories that see leaders as operating at the behest of domestic actors who have preferences over international outcomes and can readily ensure that leaders enact those preferences. Such theories often have roots in Marxist or pluralist traditions. Leaders are either *ex ante* responsive to the interests of domestic actors – that is, they figure out what influential constituents want and then pursue those goals at the international level – or they are selected precisely because they share those goals in the first place. Constructivist arguments can also have this quality to the extent that they assume leaders effectively internalize the dominant political culture and identity. At the other extreme are theories rooted in principal-agent logic that see control of the leader as more problematic, due to the latter’s informational and organizational advantages. In these models, leaders are, at most, *ex post* accountable: that is, they can enact whatever policies they like, but there are costs to delivering outcomes that are deemed unacceptable (e.g., losing a war) and rewards for delivering outcomes that are deemed desirable (e.g., peace and prosperity).

A second dimension of variation distinguishes those theories that emphasize domestic interests and those that emphasize domestic institutions. The clearest way to think about this distinction is to identify the sources of variation in each theory. On one side are theories that emphasize that a country’s foreign policy choices change as the preferences of domestic actors change. On the other side are theories that prioritize variation in institutions, implicitly or explicitly holding the configuration of domestic interests constant. The vast majority of scholarly interest in this latter category has centered on the difference between democratic and nondemocratic political systems and, increasingly, variation within those broad categories.

AMBITION, ALIGNMENTS, AND ALLIANCES: DOMESTIC SOURCES OF STATE INTERESTS

States vary markedly in terms of their international interests and ambitions and the extent to which these bring them into competition with others. Because of this variation, some pairs of countries engage in continual and repeated conflict and, when not at war with each other, spend a great deal of effort preparing for the possibility of the next conflict. Other pairs of countries, by contrast, have close cooperative relations, engaging in robust economic exchange and even working together on military and security issues. Why do states' interests sometimes bring them into conflict and other times lead them cooperate?

An intellectual progenitor of the view that state interests are rooted in domestic politics is the British economist John Hobson (1965), whose analysis of late nineteenth-century imperialism informed Marxist thinking about international politics (Lenin, 1938) and has since been reclaimed by writers in a liberal tradition (e.g., Moravcsik, 1997). Trying to understand the intense colonial competition among European powers, epitomized by the "Scramble for Africa," Hobson argued that imperial policies had been dictated by financial interests who had more money than they knew what to do with at home. With colonial possessions came many opportunities for profitable investments. People could invest in railroads, mines, and other properties and receive very high rates of return. They could loan money to colonial governments at favorable interest rates. In pushing for colonial possessions, Hobson argued, financial interests found allies in what US president Dwight Eisenhower would later call the "military-industrial complex": military leaders seeking glory and larger budgets and arms manufacturers seeking profits.

Hobson's argument contains several key elements that are common to domestic political theories of international competition and

alignment. First, the interests pursued at the international level reflect the interests of groups within the country. Pursuit of these interests sometimes leads states into competitive relationships, such as for markets or colonial holdings, and at other times leads them into cooperative relationships in order to ensure smooth commercial or financial exchanges. Second, the interests that matter most are the economic interests of relatively small organized groups. The focus on small groups comes from a recognition of the collective action problem and an unflattering view of mass opinion, which saw the public as inattentive, hopelessly uninformed, and incapable of holding coherent preferences (Almond, 1950; Lippmann, 1955). Thus, the average citizen plays little role, except as the patsy who pays the costs.

The focus on economic interests derives from observation but also from convenience. Assuming that economic actors want to increase their income, it is straightforward to deduce their foreign policy interests by considering their position in the international economy. This kind of analysis is a staple of work in IPE, where economic theory makes clean predictions about sectoral and class preferences over trade (e.g., Milner, 1988; Rogowski, 1989) and monetary policies (e.g., Frieden, 1991). A similar exercise is used to deduce preferences over security policies. An actor who benefits from trade with a country will push for policies that promote stable relations with that country in the form of military alliances (Fordham, 1998a; Narizny, 2007) or institutions that promote conflict resolution (Narizny, 2003). An actor who is harmed by trade with a given country will promote protectionist policies at the expense of bilateral security relations. An actor who has made investments or loans in a foreign country will seek policies that ensure the return on those investments or repayment of those loans. This influence can lead to cooperative security relations, aid, and intervention to prop up friendly regimes; or it can lead to belligerent policies designed to destabilize or remove hostile government or even

imperial takeover, in the event that the foreign government cannot commit to protect investor interests (Frieden, 1994). Finally, there are actors in the military-industrial complex who can benefit when the country faces a menacing security environment and/or pursues an expansionist foreign policy. The potential relationship between the military, defense industries, and politicians is a special case of so-called “iron triangles” in the literature on agency capture by interest groups (for a review of studies on this topic, see Müller and Risse-Kappen, 1993: 36–8).

Thus, to cite only a few examples, Snyder (1991) seeks to explain overexpansion of great powers by showing how expansionist policies benefited influential interest groups within those countries. In Imperial Germany, for example, leaders depended upon a coalition of “Iron and Rye”: industrialists and admirals who benefited from building a large navy and agricultural interests who wanted protection from Russia wheat. In trying to cater to these actors, Germany pursued policies that were harmful or threatening to Britain and Russia, provoking the “encirclement” that helped bring about World War I. Similarly, Fordham (1998a) argues that US aid, alliance, and rearmament decisions at the outset of the Cold War were determined not solely by the bipolar distribution of international power but by the influence of economic actors who benefited from close ties to Western Europe. Solingen (2007) argues that domestic economic interests are also behind states’ decisions to acquire nuclear weapons. Leaders are less likely to take this course if their constituents benefit from globalization and integration in the international economy, while leaders whose constituents prefer economic nationalism are more likely to see a nuclear program as a driver of industrialization and less likely to fear international opprobrium.

This literature bears on the very large body of scholarship on the relationship between economic interdependence and international conflict and alignments (e.g., Russett and Oneal, 2001). The idea that trade and financial

relationships creates ties of dependence that dampen incentives for conflict is longstanding. Nonetheless, interdependence arguments, posed in this way, are often silent with respect to domestic politics. These arguments hinge on the presumption that trade increases aggregate wealth, improves the lot of consumers, and/or increases jobs and income in exporting sectors. These observations alone, however, do not ensure that countries will engage in trade with one another, and much of the literature on trade politics emphasizes the advantages that import-competing industries have in winning protection in spite of all the interests on the other side. Thus, the presumption that interests favoring commerce will generally be successful in tilting foreign policy toward cooperation with trading partners is, at best, underspecified with respect to domestic politics.

Because this literature has tended to privilege economic issues, comparatively less systematic attention has been paid to interests and alignments that arise from nonmaterial sources, such as ethnic or religious identity. Huntington’s (1996) “clash of civilizations” thesis has visibility in this respect, but there are serious questions about whether civilization is too broad and ill defined to be useful as the unit of analysis, and the few systematic empirical tests that have grappled with this hypothesis have found scant support (e.g., Gartzke and Gleditsch, 2006; Voeten, 2000). Nevertheless, scholars working at a lower level of aggregation have suggested that states with different ethnic, cultural, and/or religious majorities would be more likely to identify as enemies, or at least have a harder time identifying as friends. These kinds of incompatibilities can drive leaders, who both share and are responsive to prevailing conceptions of “us” and “them,” to orient alignment choices around those categories (Barnett, 1996). A related possibility is that ethnic lobbies may impact foreign policy interests in the same way that economic lobbies (see, e.g., Bard, 1991; Rogers, 1993). A growing literature on international intervention in civil wars includes similar arguments about the

role of cross-border ethnic ties, which can lead actors in one state to lobby for support of co-ethnic rebels in another (e.g., Saideman, 2001). Domestic actors could also be motivated by normative beliefs, such as a commitment to a pacifist identity, as Katzenstein (1996) argues in the case of Japan.

These arguments face the challenge of empirically substantiating what can be a politically controversial claim. Although few would raise eyebrows at the suggestion that foreign trade policy is influenced by domestic interest groups, the same suggestion made with respect to wars, interventions, or alliance decisions can be dismissed as overly cynical or conspiracy mongering. Moreover, even if decisions were made to satisfy parochial domestic interests, it is likely that they would be rationalized in national interest terms. As a result, it can be difficult to tease out the relative influence of domestic and international factors or to demonstrate that national-interest-based justifications are insincere. Snyder (1991), who examines a number of countries over long periods of time, works hard to cast doubt on alternative explanations for overexpansion based on strategic beliefs or misperceptions. Empirical evidence is more likely to be convincing if it exploits spatial or temporal variation in domestic interests. Thus, for example, Fordham (1998a) uses cross-state variation in commercial and financial interests to explain variation in US senators' votes for internationalist policies. Narizny (2003, 2007) exploits partisan alternation in office to show how changes in the governing party correlate with changes in foreign policy behavior in a way that is consistent with the interests of the parties' core constituents.

The domestic model of interest formation is also complicated by the intervening role of institutions, which determine how interest groups organize, the kinds of access they have to government officials, and the size of the coalitions that leaders need to put together. As a result, similar interest configurations can nonetheless lead to different foreign

policy outcomes. Snyder (1991), for example, argues that, while all major powers have groups that would benefit from expansionist policies, there are differences between cartelized, democratic, and totalitarian systems in the extent to which they fall prey to the pathology of overexpansion. Similarly, Risse-Kappen (1991) shows that there was marked variation in the ways Western democracies responded to the waning Soviet threat in the 1980s, even though there was broad similarity in societal preferences. The variation is explained in part by differences across political systems in the centralization of the policy-making process, which created variation in the influence of domestic pressures.

WAR AND PEACE: DEMOCRACY AND DIVERSION

Closely related to the question of interests and alignments is the variation across states and time in the incidence of war. Incompatible interests are a necessary condition for war, but are by no means sufficient: empirically, even hostile states are at peace most of the time, and, theoretically, there are alternative ways of resolving disputes that do not require costly conflict (Fearon, 1995). Here, I review the main arguments for how domestic politics and institutions influence the resort to war. There are two broad sets of arguments under this heading. The first focuses on variation in domestic institutions and particularly the differences between democratic and nondemocratic states; the second focuses on the potential for leaders to use war in response to political insecurity.

Democracy and war

By far the most prominent strand of literature on domestic politics and international relations arose in response to the now well-known finding that there are few, if any, clear

cases of war between mature democratic states – the so called “democratic peace.” Since this topic is treated at length elsewhere in this volume, this is not the place for a thorough review. Rather, we can use the various theories that arose to explain democratic peace to think about the different ways that institutions within states might affect the risk of war between them.

The main arguments about the distinctiveness of democracy come in three forms. The most common focuses on the role of institutions and argues that, even if there is nothing distinctive about the kinds of preferences held by actors within democracies, democratic institutions influence foreign policy choices by changing the set of actors to whom leaders are responsive or accountable. A more minimalist view suggests that there is nothing particularly distinctive about the preferences of democratic governments when it comes to war and peace, but democratic institutions make it easier to observe or learn about those preferences, whatever they may be. Finally, the most expansive arguments suggest that liberal democratic polities produce distinctive identities and normative commitments, fundamentally affecting the preferences of actors within them. I will discuss each of these kinds of arguments in turn.

Domestic institutions and the costs of war

The most common argument connecting democracy to conflict behavior is based on the idea that institutions shape leaders’ choices by influencing the constituencies to whom they are accountable. In particular, democratic governments are assumed to face higher costs of war, on average, because their political systems enfranchise a collective actor that has little voice in nondemocratic polities: the mass public. This argument is usually traced back to Immanuel Kant, who argued that, for the monarchs of his day, “the easiest thing in the world to do is to declare war” (Kant, 1983: 113) since the ruler could enjoy the benefits of war while the people paid its costs. In Kant’s view, political institutions

that fostered representation would increase the influence of the people who pay the costs of war and dilute the influence of special interests that stood to benefit.

There are two ways in which institutions associated with democracy, particularly elections and legislatures, could effectively increase the costs of war. The first mechanism is that the people, through their elected representatives, would share in the decision to go to war. The issue would be openly debated, the costs and benefits weighed, and the country would only commit to war once the people gave their consent. In this way, the decision to wage war would be made cautiously (Doyle, 1986). In more modern terms, representative institutions create additional “veto players” who can put the brakes on the march to war (Morgan and Campbell, 1991; Russett, 1993: 38–40). As a result, the government will act as if its costs of war were equal to those of the veto player with the highest costs. This would lead to democratic governments facing higher war costs, on average, as long as this veto player is more averse to war than the typical autocrat.

Of course, this latter assumption may or may not hold all the time, even if it does on average, and there are certainly cases in which democratic publics were as or more pro-war than their leaders (e.g., Layne, 1994). Moreover, this version of the democratic constraints story hinges on the existence of ex ante institutional checks on the executive’s ability to declare war. In reality, however, these checks may not be so impressive. Even in the United States, those who argue for Congressional influence over decision to use force (e.g., Howell and Pevehouse, 2007) concede that institutional constraints do not hold generally, but are instead conditional on divided government. Moreover, as Kaufmann (2004) argues in the context of the 2003 Iraq War, prewar debate in democratic systems can be muddied by deception and threat inflation. Although the literature on public opinion and foreign policy has moved beyond the entirely negative view cited earlier (e.g., Holsti, 1992; Shapiro and Page, 1988), there

is still considerable leeway for elites to shape public opinion (Zaller, 1992).

An alternative mechanism through which political institutions could affect the costs of war is through accountability. Even if voters cannot veto wars *ex ante*, they may be able to impose political costs on leaders *ex post* in the event that the war goes badly. This argument places a lighter cognitive burden on the public, requiring citizens only to judge the outcome after the fact, for which indicators (e.g., casualties, battlefield outcomes) are more readily accessible (Gelpi et al., 2009; Mueller, 1973). Democratic institutions, in this view, provide a low-cost mechanism for voters to remove leaders from office, a risk that the latter must take into account when deciding to wage war. By contrast, removing a leader in a nondemocratic system generally requires risky actions, such as participating in a revolution or a coup, making it harder for average citizens to oust such leaders (e.g., Lake, 1992). Bueno de Mesquita et al. (1999, 2003) add that nondemocratic leaders can insulate themselves from the effect of failed or costly wars by paying off the relatively small number of actors whose support they need to stay in power; democrats, by contrast, have a harder time escaping accountability for public policy failures.

In addition to its implications for war involvement, this mechanism has been extended to explain other, related phenomena. For example, democracies tend to incur lower casualties when they go to war (Siverson, 1995), a phenomenon that may be driven by avoidance of high-cost wars as well as by investments in military technologies designed to minimize the risks to soldiers (Schörning, 2007). Democracies also tend to win the wars they fight (e.g., Lake, 1992; Reiter and Stam, 2002; but see Desch, 2008). Though multiple explanations have been offered, the most prominent build on the accountability argument: because democratic leaders can be easily punished in the event that they lose a war, they are more selective about the wars they fight (Reiter

and Stam, 2002: ch. 2) and they fight hard in order to avoid politically costly defeats (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 1999).

Still, there are at least two main criticisms of the institutional constraints argument. First, the evidence that democrats face greater political risks from war is mixed. While some studies showed that democratic leaders are more likely to lose office in the wake of a failed or costly war (Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson, 1995; Goemans, 2000), empirical tests are complicated by the fact that democracies have higher turnover in general and, more importantly, that participation in war is endogenous to the expected political costs and benefits. Studies that have sought to address these concerns have produced results suggesting that the fate of autocratic leaders is in fact more sensitive to war outcomes (Chiozza and Goemans, 2004; Debs and Goemans, 2010). More fundamentally, Goemans (2000) observed that even though democratic institutions may increase the risk of removal, they also place limits on the consequences of losing office. While an ousted democrat can usually retire comfortably, ousted autocrats face a higher risk of death, imprisonment, or exile. Thus, even if democrats face a higher probability of losing office after a war, autocrats face worse consequences.

A second critique is that the conventional distinction between democracy and autocracy hinges on a stereotyped view of the latter, when in fact nondemocratic regimes come in many forms (e.g., Lai and Slater, 2006; Peceny et al., 2002; Weeks, 2008). As Weeks (2008: 36) notes, the stylized autocrat in this literature is a personalist dictator, such as Kim Jong Il, Saddam Hussein, or Joseph Stalin, who indeed faces few constraints on action or (internal) risks to political survival. However, other forms of nondemocratic polities, such as single-party dictatorships and military governments, have mechanisms through which elites can hold leaders accountable for failed policies. Indeed, Weeks (2008) shows that there are constrained

autocrats whose foreign policy behavior more closely resembles that of democracies than personalist dictators. This argument suggests the dichotomous view of democracy and autocracy that prevails in much of this literature requires greater nuance, as well as more effort to think about the dimensions of variation across autocratic regimes (Geddes, 2003).

Democracy and the availability of information

Whereas the preceding arguments suggested a systematic difference in the preferences of democratic and nondemocratic leaders, a second type of argument argues that the systematic difference across regime types is in the leader's ability to reveal her preferences, whatever they may be. The intellectual starting point for this argument comes from the "bargaining model of war," which has shown that uncertainty about one another's preferences can prevent states from finding peaceful bargains (Fearon, 1995). At the root of this argument is the assumption that when states bargain in the shadow of war, they generally lack full information about how their opponent evaluates the value of the good, the costs of war, and/or its chances of winning a war. Since states generally have an interest in misrepresenting their willingness to fight in the event their demands are not satisfied, a central dilemma is how to distinguish those with high resolve from those with low resolve. The informational argument about democracy hinges on the idea that domestic institutions create mechanisms for revealing this hidden information.

There are two main arguments along these lines. The first focuses on a screening mechanism that relies on costly signals. This argument is based on a view of crises as contests in which states bid up their commitment to fight unless they get their way. Each escalatory step increases the "audience costs" associated with backing down. Because of this, escalatory actions separate those states that are most willing to fight from those that are

not (Fearon, 1994). While these costs could come from international audiences who would be disinclined to believe future threats (e.g., Sartori, 2005), Fearon connected this view of crises to the literature on democratic peace by emphasizing the role of domestic audiences in punishing leaders that have backed down. Fearon assumed that if a government backed down in a crisis, political opponents would try to take advantage of a foreign policy failure that was seen as tarnishing the national honor. If it is easier for domestic audiences to punish democratic leaders than autocratic leaders, it follows that the former are better able to make use of this screening mechanism and better able to prevail in crises without resort to war.

A second informational argument focuses on the signals that emerge from the relatively open, transparent nature of decision making in democratic systems. Through free media and open debate, democratic systems generate a good deal of information for foreign observers (e.g., Van Belle, 2000). Schultz (2001a) argued further that informative signals could emerge from strategic interplay between government and opposition in democratic systems. In this view, the key attribute of democracy is the ability of opposition parties to announce a position on the use of force freely and openly, and the existence of signals from both parties reveals more information than can be revealed by the government alone (see also Ramsay, 2004). Critics of this view have argued that the vast flows of information coming out of democratic systems are just as likely to confuse and mislead outside observers, a contention that is supported in some cases (Finel and Lord, 1999).

Of these mechanisms, Fearon's (1994) audience costs argument has received the greatest attention, and it has been useful in thinking about other areas of international politics (see below). The theory has been further elaborated by scholars interested in understanding why and under what conditions domestic audiences would remove

leaders who backed down in a crisis (Guisinger and Smith, 2002; Slantchev, 2006; Smith, 1998). Empirically, the pendulum has swung both ways, with initially supportive results followed by more critical reexaminations. The hypothesis that democracies enjoy a superior ability to prevail in crises fared well in statistical tests (Eyerman and Hart, 1996; Gelpi and Griesdorf, 2001; Partell and Palmer, 1999; Schultz, 1999), but these findings have been criticized for using inappropriate data (Downes and Sechser, 2012) and for relying too much on the assumption that democracies are uniquely capable of generating audience costs (Weeks, 2008). It is hard to directly test the claim that leaders pay political costs for backing down in a crisis, and that these costs are higher for democratic leaders, since the higher those costs are, the less likely leaders are to actually incur them – making them very hard to observe in practice (Schultz, 2001b). In response, scholars have used survey experiments to show that voters disapprove when their leaders back down in crises, a reaction that is necessary but not sufficient for the existence of audience costs (Tomz, 2007; Trager and Vavreck, 2011). By contrast, scholars analyzing historical cases have struggled to find evidence that this mechanism is central to explaining behavior and outcomes in crises involving democracies (Snyder and Borghard, 2011; Trachtenberg, 2012). Audience costs resemble the “dark matter” of modern cosmology: they are a force whose existence is very useful to posit, and some of their hypothesized effects can be detected, but it has proven hard to observe them directly.

Democracy, norms, and identity

The final main strand in this literature sees democracy – and its ideological counterpart, liberalism – as producing distinctive political culture and identity, fundamentally affecting the way democratic states relate to one another. One variant of this argument, articulated in Russett (1993) and Maoz and Russett (1993), is based on the premise that different political systems inculcate different norms regarding

the legitimacy of violence as a means of conflict resolution. Democracy is associated with a number of institutions designed to promote compromise and nonviolent means of settling political disputes. In nondemocratic systems, by contrast, power often flows, in Mao’s famous words, “from the barrel of a gun.” If leaders externalize the political norms that prevail domestically, then a distinctive pattern of behavior could arise. Russett (1993) hypothesizes that, when democracies have disputes with one another, their mutual adherence to norms of nonviolent conflict resolution could generate a democratic peace; when democracies face off with leaders who do not share the same normative commitment, their preference for nonviolence makes them vulnerable and hence does not bind. In support of this argument, Maoz and Russett (1993) show that indicators of democratic norms – especially the frequency of political violence within a state and the duration of democracy – are superior to indicators of institutional constraints in explaining conflict behavior. Rousseau (2005: ch. 5), however, finds no evidence that the way a leader came into power affects her willingness to use force in international disputes. Moreover, the claim that the norm of nonviolence is discarded when it becomes a strategic liability has been criticized as ad hoc (Buono de Mesquita et al., 1999: 792) or incomplete (Risse-Kappen, 1995a).

A second normative argument that addresses this concern is found in constructivist approaches that emphasize the common identity shared by liberal states (esp., Doyle, 1986; Owen, 1997; Risse-Kappen, 1995a, 1996). In this view, the absence of conflict among liberal states is due not to a general commitment to nonviolence, but rather a mutual respect and common identity that liberal states only share with one another. Liberal governments recognize in one another states that rest on the free consent of their people, creating a normative obligation to accommodate one another’s interests. Moreover, the presumption of nonviolence in these relationships affects threat perceptions, creating the basis for a “security community” among

liberal states (Risse-Kappen, 1996). Thus, democracy serves as the basis not only for peaceful relations but also robust cooperation, such as in NATO or the European Union. By contrast, illiberal states rest on coercion, and their foreign policy interests do not reflect the will of their citizens. At a minimum, there is a presumption of enmity in these relationships; moreover, liberal states may sometimes be motivated to attack and transform illiberal adversaries. Thus, the violence that marks relations between liberal and illiberal states is not a departure from normative commitments but rather an extension of them.

Stated in these terms, domestic politics does not play a prominent role in these explanations. To the extent that the causal mechanism relies on (effectively) universal internalization of domestic norms, then states can be treated as unitary actors, if differentiated by regime type. Owen (1997) is an important exception, arguing that both liberal self-identification and the perception of other states as liberal or illiberal are fundamentally political processes, wrapped up in the contest between parties. Not all actors in democratic states are liberal or act on the basis of liberal identities, nor do they all agree as to whether foreign states are liberal. As a result, he argues, the outcomes of crises depend a great deal on the interaction of groups with different identities within the context of democratic institutions.

In addition to the fact that they are rooted in very different epistemological assumptions, the rationalist/institutionalist and constructivist arguments have different views of the kind of peace that prevails between democracies. The institutional constraints and informational arguments focus on “negative peace,” or the absence of war. Given a dispute between democratic states, these arguments identify factors that make it less likely that the dispute will lead to the use of force. Identity-based arguments, on the other hand, suggest the possibility of “positive peace”: that is, liberal states do not just avoid war, but they actually like each other.

Political insecurity and diversionary conflict

While the foregoing arguments tend to see domestic political considerations as a constraint on the resort to war, another influential strand of literature sees office-seeking motivations as increasing the incentive to use force under some circumstances. All of these theories depend on the observation that support for a leader tends to rise when the country gets involved in military conflict: a phenomenon known as the “rally around the flag” effect (see, e.g., Mueller, 1973). A variety of reasons have been posited to explain this effect: sociological theories emphasize that conflict with out-groups tends to increase cohesion within in-groups (e.g., Coser, 1956); theorists of public opinion argue that crises tend to mute dissent by opposition elites, thereby allowing the leader to monopolize the political discourse (Baum, 2002; Brody and Shapiro, 1989); rational choice theorists have suggested that the use of force permits leaders to reveal their foreign policy or war-fighting competence (Richards et al., 1993; Smith, 1996).

Whatever the underlying mechanism, all of these theories imply that the use of force is predictably tied to variation in the political security of leaders: the diversionary temptation would be greatest when the economy is doing poorly, in the lead-up to an election, and/or in response to domestic unrest. This intuition has given rise to an enormous literature looking for precisely such effects, many focusing on the United States (e.g., Fordham, 1998b; Morgan and Bickers, 1992; Ostrom and Job, 1986; Russett, 1990: chap. 2; Stoll, 1984) but also cross-nationally (e.g., Dassel and Reinhardt, 1999; Davies, 2002; Gelpi, 1997; Oneal and Tir, 2006).

A literature so large is hard to summarize succinctly without doing injustice to the variety in approaches and results. Nonetheless, James’ (1987) verdict on this literature remains true today: “seldom has so much common sense in theory found so little support in practice.” Although some studies have

shown diversionary effects, the results have been neither consistent, nor particularly strong. Often, authors report qualified support for modified versions of the theory. For example, Dassel and Reinhardt (1999) examine the effect of domestic strife on dispute initiation and argue that only domestic conflict over political institutions – and not, for example, over economic hardship – correlates with foreign aggression. Furthermore, several studies have shown the opposite: international conflict is more likely to be initiated by leaders who are politically secure (Chiozza and Goemans, 2003; Gaubatz, 1999).

There are also inconsistent results on whether the diversionary phenomenon is conditional on political institutions. Whereas the literature on democratic peace emphasizes the pacifying effect of democratic institutions, the literature on diversion has argued the opposite. Gelpi (1997) suggests that democratic leaders would have a greater incentive to engage in diversionary force due to their greater political insecurity and presents some evidence to this effect. Oneal and Tir (2006) show that while democratic countries are more likely than nondemocracies to initiate force during bad economic times the magnitude of the effect is small relative to other determinants of conflict, including joint democracy. Chiozza and Goemans (2011), on the other hand, show that political insecurity leads to external aggression primarily when leaders are at risk of being violently removed and punished – and not when they just face the possibility of a bad electoral outcome.

In a prominent set of publications, Mansfield and Snyder (1995, 2002, 2005) rely on diversionary logic to argue that the process of democratization is particularly dangerous since insecure elites in poorly institutionalized systems may resort to foreign aggression to legitimate their rule. This argument was particularly striking as it came in the midst of debate over the democratic peace and injected a cautionary element: though the democratic peace might motivate

policies to encourage democratization, the process of getting there could prove bumpy. This work engendered a debate about the empirical claim that democratizing states are in fact particularly conflict prone (e.g., Narang and Nelson, 2009; Ward and Gleditsch, 1998).

A major challenge in sorting out these results is that there is little agreement on the dependent and independent variables. Is the outcome to be explained war or lower-level disputes? Should we look at conflict initiation, participation, or escalation? In terms of the independent variables, the diversionary incentive is proxied by economic conditions, popularity measures, indicators of internal conflict, regime characteristics, and/or time in the electoral calendar. As this suggests, political insecurity can arise in many different ways, and studies that focus on only one source can miss the full picture. Moreover, only recently have scholars dealt with the fact that the underlying theory posits a reciprocal relationship between political insecurity and conflict behavior, which complicates empirical estimation (Chiozza and Goemans, 2003, 2011). Clearly, more work can be done to improve measures and estimation techniques.

It may turn out, however, that we already know the answer: while diversionary incentives play an important role in some cases, there is no strong or consistent pattern, nor any reason to believe that diversion accounts for most of the conflict behavior we observe. Why might this be? One possibility is that rally effects are simply too short and uncertain to motivate systematic behavior of this sort. Any boost generated by the onset of conflict can quickly evaporate once casualties start coming home. A broader criticism of the diversionary argument is that it does not adequately take into account the strategic context, particularly the behavior of potential targets. A line of argument suggests that, when an adversary faces short-term diversionary incentives, other states engage in “strategic avoidance”: lying low or making concessions in order to avoid being attacked

(e.g., Fordham, 2005; Leeds and Davis, 1997; Smith, 1996). The bargaining model of war suggests that domestic benefits from war are sufficient to prevent a peaceful bargain only if they are very large – a condition that may be rather rare (Tarat, 2006).

COOPERATION, COMMITMENT, AND INSTITUTIONS

The literature on international cooperation identifies two main obstacles to cooperation at the international level: disagreements over the distribution of joint gains and concerns about renegeing, or cheating, on a deal. Though realists and neoliberal institutionalists disagreed about the relative importance of these challenges, the idea that cooperation requires the solution to both a bargaining problem and a commitment problem has gained widespread acceptance. While much of this theoretical debate relied on unitary state assumptions, it did not take long for scholars interested in domestic politics to show how interests and institutions at the domestic level could affect both bargaining over the terms of cooperation and subsequent compliance. In addition, the literature on domestic politics identified additional roles that international institutions can play – roles that are rooted not in cooperation problems at the international level, but in principal-agent problems at the domestic level.

Bargaining and two-level games

The first strand of literature that emerged connecting domestic politics to international cooperation sprang from Putnam's (1988) influential essay on what he called "two-level games." The basic idea was that, when governments negotiate the terms of cooperation, they are playing a game simultaneously on the international and domestic levels. At the international level, the challenge is to find a deal that is acceptable to both countries; at

the domestic level, the challenge is to find a deal that is acceptable to domestic constituents as well as to legislators who must ratify a treaty or implement its terms through legislation. Putnam argued that the need for domestic approval would generally shrink the set of deals that could be reached at the international level by effectively adding veto players. In addition to making cooperation harder, all other things equal, Putnam hypothesized that domestically constrained leaders could exploit their constraints to get a more favorable deal. This idea has its roots in the work of Thomas Schelling (1960), who suggested that a negotiator can extract greater concessions by claiming that these concessions are necessary in order to get the deal ratified at home.

Putnam's article led to a number of subsequent works examining how domestic constraints affect international bargaining. One subset has used game-theoretic models to determine whether adding ratification requirements to bargaining games influences the likelihood of cooperation and negotiators' leverage (e.g., Iida, 1993; Milner, 1997; Milner and Rosendorff, 1997; Mo, 1995; Tarat, 2005). The overall thrust of this work is that the basic intuitions in Putnam's (1988) paper hold up in some simple scenarios, but can break down as things become more complicated. For example, while Milner (1997) shows that ratification requirements decrease the prospects for cooperation by shrinking the "win set" of acceptable deals, it is not generically true that smaller win sets make bargains less likely, unless the constraints eliminate the space of mutually acceptable bargains altogether. A greater threat is that negotiators may be uncertain about what deals the legislature will ratify, in which case cooperation can fail in spite of mutual interest in a deal (Iida, 1993; Milner and Rosendorff, 1997).

Similarly, while the Schelling conjecture has been shown to hold under some conditions, there are also plausible scenarios under which being constrained makes the executive worse off. A fundamental limitation of the

Schelling conjecture is that it only holds when the executive and the domestic ratifier have relatively similar, though not identical, preferences (Mo, 1995; Milner, 1997: 93–4; Milner and Rosendorff, 1997: 131–2; Tarar, 2005). While having a moderately hawkish legislature might allow the executive to extract more concessions from the foreign state, if the legislature's preferences are too extreme, then the executive might be forced either to cut a deal more extreme than she would like in order to ensure ratification, or to abandon negotiations altogether.

In addition to this theoretical work, the literature on two-level games has produced empirical hypotheses and tests (e.g., Evans et al., 1993). Since the relevance and effect of the domestic level depend crucially on (a) whether there exists a veto player who can take action independently of the executive (e.g., a legislature) and (b) how divergent the preferences of the executive and domestic veto player are, a number of sources of variation can be exploited. First, there is variation across domestic institutions: democracies are more likely to have independent legislatures than are autocratic systems (Mansfield et al., 2000), and presidential democracies are more likely than parliamentary democracies to produce legislatures in which the median voter has different preferences from the executive (Pahre, 1997). Second, there is potential variation within political systems as a function of partisan composition: within presidential systems, divided government creates different constraints from unified government (Milner, 1997), and within parliamentary systems, coalition or minority governments face different constraints from unified majority governments (Pahre, 1997; Tarar, 2005).

Cooperation and commitment

Concerns about enforcement and the credibility of commitments have been central to the modern literature on international cooperation. Most theories developed in this

context have modeled cooperation as a form of Prisoners' Dilemma or collective action problem, interactions in which cooperative strategies are collectively rational – in the sense that they make everyone better off – but not individually rational – because actors have an individual incentive to defect. The neoliberal institutionalist literature sought the solution to this problem at the international level, emphasizing the possibilities for cooperation generated by repeated interactions and the potential role of institutions in facilitating reciprocal strategies of cooperation (e.g., Keohane, 1984; Oye, 1986). Scholars interested in domestic politics sought additional sources of enforcement at the domestic level.

Though specifics vary, the basic thrust here is that responsiveness to domestic constituencies can alter a government's incentives to comply with agreements (Dai, 2005). Simmons (2009), for example, argues that international human rights agreements create the space for human rights movements or "watch groups" to form. These groups then lobby governments and try to hold them accountable to the commitments articulated in treaties. Milner (1988) argues that the liberal postwar trading regime created a constituency of exporting and multinational companies that lobby for continued liberalization. It is also likely, however, that demands from domestic actors can make compliance harder, such as when economic shocks lead to calls for protectionism from ailing industries. The potential for these kinds of demands can affect the design of agreements, creating greater flexibility and escape clauses (Downs and Rocke, 1995: ch. 4; Rosendorff and Milner, 2001).

One overwhelming focus of these arguments has been on the beneficial effects of democracy. This focus on democracy should not be surprising given the recent literature reviewed here, but, from a longer perspective, the idea that democracy enhances a state's ability to make international commitments could be surprising. It is intuitive to think that democratic systems imbue international

politics with instability, since today's government will only be in power for a short period and could easily be replaced tomorrow by a government with different preferences (e.g., Gartzke and Gleditsch, 2004). Nonetheless, the theory and evidence that have emerged in the last two decades suggest that cooperation involving democracies is deeper and longer lasting.

Arguments about the superiority of democratic commitments take three forms, analogous to those on democratic peace. As already noted, the liberal constructivist view naturally extends to an argument about robust cooperation among democracies based on shared identity. This identity is hypothesized not only to produce positive affect but also to prescribe consultative norms that promote trustworthy behavior (e.g., Risse-Kappen, 1995b, 1996). There is also a variant of the institutional constraints argument, which holds that institutions associated with democracy generate stable commitments by constraining large or capricious swings in government policy. One version of this argument emphasizes the role of elections. While democracies experience alternation in power between different parties, this alternation is moderated by rules that ensure that that winning parties or coalitions cannot stray too far from the preferences of the median voter (Gaubatz, 1996). By contrast, nondemocratic systems may experience stability during the reign of a particular autocrat, but they can also undergo rocky transitions and dramatic changes due to the unregularized nature of leadership succession. On this point, Leeds, Mattes, and Vogel (2009) show that leadership turnover is more likely to lead to alliance abrogation in nondemocratic states than in democracies. Another common argument focuses on the constraining role of democratic legislatures (Martin, 2000). The role of the legislature in ratification and implementation could make commitments more credible in two ways. First, they create a higher hurdle for a commitment to be undertaken in the first place. If, for example, ratification requires a supermajority vote in the legislature, then

those treaties which meet the standard must have broad-based support. Second, legislative participation can make it harder for the executive to renege on a commitment unilaterally.

The final argument along these lines builds on Fearon's (1994) idea of domestic audience costs. If domestic audiences dislike it when their governments break promises or treaty commitments, and if democratic governments are more sensitive to this disapproval, then a democratic leader might be more reluctant to undertake a commitment in the first place, but more likely to follow through conditional on having done so (e.g., Leeds, 1999, 2003). This conjecture raises the question, however, of why domestic audiences would punish leaders for breaking commitments. Does it make sense to assume that the public has a preference for compliance per se, regardless of what the treaty requires the country to do? As Dai (2006) argues, the effect of democracy on treaty compliance should depend on whether the constituencies empowered by democracy benefit from compliant behavior. To this question, the literature has suggested two tentative answers. One is that democratic publics might in fact have a distaste for breaking treaties, perhaps because they value the rule of law. A second possibility is that domestic punishment is a response to international punishment. In this view, developed by McGillivray and Smith (2008), when a leader defects from international cooperation, other states will withhold future cooperation unless the leader is replaced. These "agent-specific punishments" give domestic constituents an incentive to remove an unfaithful leader in order to restore the long-run benefits to cooperation.

International institutions and the principal-agent problem

A third strand of this literature takes a different approach, seeing international institutions as playing a role in resolving a challenge

that originates at the domestic level: the principal-agent problem between government and governed. Principal-agent problems arise when the principal and agent – in this case the leader and some set of constituents, such as voters – may have different preferences, and either the preferences or the actions of the agent are difficult to monitor. Two kinds of problem can arise in this context. The first is the problem of shirking, which happens when the agent enacts policies that the principal would not have chosen had it been in a position to make decisions. For example, a leader who is more belligerent than the median voter might take the country to war under conditions in which the median voter would not (Downs and Rocke, 1995). This possibility clearly presents a problem for voters, but their rational response also creates a problem for leaders. Faced with uncertainty about the preferences of the leader and the expected costs and benefits of war, voters should condition their behavior on the observed outcome. If the war goes badly, they will infer that the decision to go to war was probably a bad one and therefore remove the leader; if the war goes well, then they will infer that the decision to go to war was probably a good one, and the leader will be retained. This is a sensible response, but it does not necessarily lead to optimal outcomes for anyone. A war that was expected, *ex ante*, to serve the interests of the voters could go badly, and war that did not serve the interests of the voters could go well. Hence, good agents who turn out to be unlucky may be mistakenly removed, and bad agents who turn out to be lucky may be mistakenly retained. Moreover, the threat of the first mistake could lead good agents to avoid wars that would in fact serve their voters' interests. The possibility of the second mistake can lead bad agents to prolong bad wars in the hopes that they will be saved by a fortuitous outcome – a phenomenon that has been dubbed “gambling for resurrection” (Downs and Rocke, 1995).

Problems of this kind have been identified in other contexts as well. Consider the

problem of negotiating an arms control agreement or peace deal with a rival (Morrow, 1991; Schultz, 2005). Voters may be uncertain if their government is excessively hawkish – in which case it will reject deals that the voters would prefer – or excessively dovish – in which case it will make too many concessions or allow the country to be exploited. If so, voters may mistakenly reject good treaties or accept bad ones, and governments afraid of being punished for appearing too dovish may forego opportunities for mutually beneficial deals (Colaresi, 2004). In the area of trade politics, a principal-agent problem can arise if leaders are tempted to set tariffs higher than the median voter would prefer due to pressure from rent-seeking interest groups (Mansfield et al., 2003). If voters cannot tell whether a price shock was due to rent-seeking behavior or some exogenous factor, then leaders might get away with bad behavior, and leaders who behaved well might get punished anyway.

In each of these cases, the pathologies introduced by the principal-agent problem might be reduced by international institutions. Mansfield, Milner, and Rosendorff (2003) argue that trade agreements provide an “alarm mechanism” that goes off in the event that the government imposes tariffs higher than some agreed level. This mechanism might be another participating government or an independent body, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO). The alarm gives voters a way to monitor their leader's behavior and deter shirking. And while the alarm makes it harder for leaders to engage in rent seeking, leaders benefit because they will not be blamed for adverse price shocks that are not their fault. Thus, an international monitor can make both the principal and the agent better off than they would otherwise be.

The principal-agent problems associated with war and peace may also have institutional solutions. Thompson (2009), Chapman and Reiter (2004), Chapman (2009), and Fang (2008) all present arguments in which

the United Nations Security Council generates an informative signal that can help voters decide whether or not a proposed military operation is in their interests. The members of the council have heterogeneous interests, so their unanimous approval suggests that the case for war is compelling, and not the product of an overly belligerent president. Thus, public support should be higher when the Security Council gives its approval, and the president has a strong incentive to seek that approval. Both of these predictions find support in the above-mentioned studies, though not all of the evidence isolates the informational mechanism hypothesized here; it may be that UN support affects public support for war through expectations of burden sharing or by appealing to norms of international law.

A similar argument has been made for overcoming the domestic political obstacles to peace agreements. Simmons (2002) and Allee and Huth (2006) argue that governments that fear the political repercussions of compromising in territorial disputes may resolve the problem by appealing to international arbitration or adjudication, such as a ruling by the International Court of Justice. Such a ruling might play an informational role or it might bind the hands of the government, allowing it to say, in effect, "We have no choice but to comply." In this way, a government might escape the risk of being seen as too dovish by shifting the blame to an international body.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS, FUTURE AGENDAS

As this review attests, theories emphasizing the role of domestic politics and institutions have expanded in number and scope, touching all the major questions in international relations scholarship. I conclude with some thoughts on this literature and directions it might fruitfully go.

Much ado about democracy?

As is evident from this review, contemporary IR scholarship has come a long way from de Tocqueville's claim that "in the control of society's foreign affairs, democratic governments do appear decidedly inferior to others" (1988: 228). Indeed, the prevailing view has swung sharply in the other direction. Though dissenting views exist, democracy has been argued to promote a variety of desirable outcomes: they rarely, if ever, fight wars against one another; they tend to win the wars they fight; their threats are more effective; they are more likely to honor their alliance commitments; they cooperate more with each other; and they trade more with each other. Such triumphalism deserves a certain amount of skepticism, and not simply because it has emerged from scholars who live in a democratic country. Rather, the sheer number of distinct theories for why democracy is different should give some pause.

Consider, for example, the finding that democracies engage in more trade with one another than do other pairs of states. Mansfield, Milner, and Rosendorff offer two different explanations for this result: one emerging from the two-level games argument and emphasizing how ratification requirements can lead to cooperation with lower tariff levels (2000) and the other emphasizing the role of trade agreements in providing information for democratic publics (2003). Additional explanations for the same finding could emphasize democracies' greater incentive to uphold commitments (Leeds, 1999; McGillivray and Smith, 2008) or their greater concern for the public benefits of free trade over the private rents afforded by protectionism (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2003). Skeptics could counter that the explanation lies in a (temporary and perhaps accidental) convergence of the strategic interests of democratic states during the post-World War II period, which made the security externalities of trade less of a concern (Gartzke, 2000; Gowa, 1994, 1999). Still others might argue

that this convergence of interests, and the resulting high level of integration, rested on the collective identity of democratic states (Risse-Kappen, 1996).

As this exercise suggests, democracies differ from other kinds of states along a number of dimensions. Tests that show correlations between democracy and some outcome of interest seldom isolate the exact mechanism that gives rise to the observed correlation. More typically, arguments proceed as follows:

- (1) X is hypothesized to produce outcome Y,
- (2) X is a feature associated with democracy,
- (3) democracy is shown to correlate with Y, and therefore
- (4) the evidence suggests that X produces Y, as hypothesized.

While this kind of analysis has uncovered a large number of outcomes that vary with regime type, some of the steps here are perilous. As Weeks (2008) notes, some features associated with democracy, such as mechanisms for holding leaders accountable, may exist in nondemocratic states as well, making the reliance on step (2) potentially problematic. And the sheer number of ways in which democracies might differ from other states makes the leap from (3) to (4) daunting. Not only is democracy a bundle of many institutions, both formal and informal, but the states that became, and survived as, democracies are not representative of the full population of states. Concerns about this problem have led some scholars to turn to experimental methods (e.g., Tomz, 2007), though these can often be limited in their application to international relations.

Interests versus institutions

At the outset, it was noted that research on domestic politics and international relations generally falls into one of two broad classes: one emphasizing interests and the other emphasizing institutions. As this review attests, the latter represents the bulk of recent

research. But to what extent are the effects that have been attributed to institutions actually a product of interests? Gowa (1999) argues that democratic peace had nothing to do with democratic institutions, but instead reflected the common strategic interests that developed among democratic states starting in the early twentieth century and then especially after World War II. Though one might question whether coincidence brought democratic states together as allies in this period, regime type alone does not explain the absence of war between France and Germany after 1945. Thompson (1996) argues more provocatively that democracy tended to arise in zones which were already peaceful because states had settled their main conflicts, whereas states with unfulfilled international ambitions tend to be infertile soil for democracy to grow (see also, Gibler, 2007). Other scholars have noted that most advanced democracies have capitalist, market-based economies, which suggests that peace, cooperation, and trade among them might rest, not on political institutions, but a common interest in economic integration (Mousseau, 2003; Gartzke, 2007).

Second, to what extent are the effects of institutions conditional on the interests that prevail domestically? As Dai (2006) points out, the effect of democracy on compliance with international agreements must be contingent on the preferences of the constituencies empowered by elections. What if voters prefer noncompliance? Or consider the democratic peace argument. These theories imply, either explicitly or implicitly, that if a country were to become democratic but everything else about it remained the same, its relationships with other democracies would become more peaceful. This may be true, but there are reasons to be skeptical. Empirically, the reduction in conflict associated with joint democracy is more apparent in the cross-sectional than in the inter-temporal variation. That is, while we can be confident that democratic dyads are more peaceful than other kinds of dyads, the effect within any given dyad of transitioning to or from joint democracy is less robust (Green et al., 2001).

There is, for example, not much evidence that India and Pakistan have been more peaceful during their periods of joint democracy, and the 1999 Kargil War is a prominent exception to the democratic peace claim (e.g., Kapur, 2007). Moreover, common sense leads one to wonder whether democratization anywhere and everywhere would have pacifying effects (e.g., Zakaria, 2003). If Egypt or Saudi Arabia were to become democratic, how would their relationship with Israel change? Democratization could, at least in the short run, make the leaders of those countries responsive to people with more belligerent preferences (Anderson, 1997).

More generally, though, the emphasis on institutions has overshadowed the need for more work on the domestic sources of international interests. Most of the variation in the world between states that fight each other and those that do not, or between states that cooperate with each other and those that do not, is driven by variation in interests (Moravcsik, 1997). If two states have no conflicts worth fighting over, then marginal changes in the costs of war or in the ability to send credible signals will have little effect on their risk of war. Similarly, if two states have no common interests, then their ability to make credible commitments is moot.

Structural realism originally downplayed the idea that variation in state interests mattered. Waltz's (1979) basic argument was that, whatever states want, they need first and foremost to survive. And since this fundamental interest is ever and always at risk, all states are forced by imperatives of the system to act as if they are security maximizers. In this formulation, neorealism is a theory of constraints which posits that the constraints are so binding that there is no need for a theory of interests. A problem arises, though, if the constraints do not always dictate a single course of action – in which case we need to know something about states' interests to predict what they will choose. Theories of domestic politics that emphasize institutional effects to the exclusion of everything else risk going down a similar road.

NOTES

1 See, e.g., Thucydides (1954: 163–4). For other examples of domestic political considerations in Thucydides, see Gaubatz (1999).

2 A search of article titles in the leading IR journal *International Organization* shows that titles containing the words 'domestic' or 'democracy' became much more frequent in the 1990s and thereafter.

3 A similar distinction is made by Skidmore and Hudson (1993), who identify 'weak statist' approaches that come from realism and 'societal approaches' that have liberal or Marxist origins.

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Comparative Regionalism: European Integration and Beyond

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After the end of the Cold War, students of International Relations observed an expansion of interstate activities at the regional level. Regional and subregional groupings appeared to gain momentum as the way in which countries cooperate and should cooperate to pursue peace, stability, wealth, and social justice. The surge and resurgence of regionalism has triggered the proliferation of concepts and approaches. There is new and old regionalism, regionalism in its first, second, and third generation; economic, monetary, security and cultural regionalism, state regionalism, shadow regionalism; cross-, inter- trans-, and multi-regionalism; pure and hybrid regionalism; offensive, extroverted, open, or neoliberal as opposed to defensive, introverted, closed, resistance, regulatory, and developmental regionalism; lower-level and higher-level regionalism; North, South, and North-South regionalism; informal and institutional regionalism – just to name a few of the labels the literature has come up with to account for the new trend in International Relations.

The concept of regionalism is as diverse as its object of study. There is no commonly

accepted definition of what a *region* is (cf. Sbragia 2008). Most would agree that a region implies some “geographical proximity and contiguity” (Hurrell 1995: 353), and mutual interdependence (Nye 1965: vii). Some would add a certain degree of cultural homogeneity (Russett 1967), sense of community (Deutsch et al. 1957), or “regioness” (Hettne and Söderbaum 2000). *Regionalism*, then, refers to processes and structures of region building in terms of closer economic, political, security, and sociocultural linkages between states and societies that are geographically proximate. In political science, regionalism is often used synonymously with regional cooperation and regional integration, which could be seen as the opposite ends of a continuum along which regionalism may vary.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to do justice to the various bodies of literature that have emerged in the field of (comparative) regionalism. Since the audience of this chapter is mainly students of International Relations, the focus will be on processes and structures of state-led regionalism with a focus on the delegation of policies and

political authority to regional institutions. Based on this more narrow understanding of regionalism, the existing literature will be reviewed with regard to three general questions. These questions do not only require research across regions but also allow developing a common research agenda to accumulate knowledge generated about specific regions. First, what are the outcomes of regionalism? How can we describe and compare the results of the delegation of policies and political authority? Second, what are the drivers of regionalism? Why do some governments choose to delegate policies and political authority while others do not? Finally, what are the internal effects of regionalism? How does the delegation of policies and political authority impact back on the domestic structures of the states involved? Before reviewing the state of the art on these three questions, the chapter will trace the history of the study of regionalism in IR.

THE HISTORY OF REGIONALISM

The study of regionalism has a long history and evolved in several waves, giving rise to quite diverse bodies of literature. The creation of the United Nations spurred a debate on whether regional organizations would be better suited than universal organization to settle disputes and conflicts among geographically proximate states (Haas 1956; Wilcox 1965). While the universalist-regionalist debate was about security issues, the emergence of European Integration in the 1950s shifted attention towards economic regionalism, particularly when attempts to establish a European Defence Community had failed in 1953. After European states had fought two major wars of global scale in less than 50 years, regionalism became the strategy for securing peace and reconciliation in Europe. The delegation of national sovereignty rights to a regional authority should tame nationalism and foster the peaceful

resolution of international conflict. The key question was how to overcome the reluctance of states to give up sovereignty. The so-called federalist approaches advocated a radical solution by which a constitutional convention of the peoples of Europe would create a United States of Europe. Students of International Relations were less optimistic that nation-states would simply transfer their sovereignty to a newly created European (federal) state (Spinelli and Rossi 2006 (1941)). Functionalism therefore recommended starting cooperation in limited functional, technical, and/or economic areas of 'low politics' where sovereignty losses would be limited while the pooling of technical expertise in administrative networks would yield tangible benefits by solving common problems. The experience of mutually beneficial cooperation and the functional linkage between issue areas was to create further incentives for the gradual expansion of tasks (Mitrany 1943).

Such spillover effects also formed the core of neofunctionalism as coined by Ernst Haas. Yet, he emphasized the importance of politics since regional integration always produced winners and losers (Haas 1958; Haas 1964; Lindberg 1963; Lindberg and Scheingold 1971). Moreover, neofunctionalism focussed on the role of transnational organized pressure groups rather than technocratic and administrative networks as the main actors behind functional task expansion to the regional level. Business interests were better served by market integration at the regional level, and therefore they would push for the delegation of policies and political authority to regional institutions. With policies increasingly made at the regional rather than the national level, economic and societal actors would increasingly shift their expectations and loyalties towards regional institutions, giving rise to a new political community in which states would settle their conflicts peacefully.

Community building was also at the core of transactionalist approaches as developed by Karl Deutsch (Deutsch et al. 1957). His "security community" was formed by a group

of states which renounced force as an acceptable means of solving conflicts. They remain formally independent in pluralistic security communities. If states engaged in peaceful change agreed to politically merge, they became amalgamated in the security community. While regional institutions helped solve conflicts, cross-border social and economic transactions and communication were seen as the main drivers of community building. Both neofunctionalism and transactionalism considered transnational interests as the main actors in overcoming the resistance of states against regionalism. Intergovernmentalism, by contrast, followed realist reasoning and insisted that states remained resilient to shifting policies and political authority to regional institutions, particularly in areas of 'high politics' (Hoffmann 1966).

The founding of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957 and its rapid deepening into a customs union had vindicated neofunctionalist thinking. It had also touched off a wave of regionalism in other parts of the world, particularly in Latin America and to a lesser extent in Africa (Malamud 2010; Fawcett and Gandois 2010), and induced some first attempts at comparative regionalism by testing neofunctionalist explanations beyond Europe (Haas and Schmitter 1964; Haas 1967; Nye 1965). Yet, plans for a European Economic and Monetary Union failed, and the integration process seemed to stall in the 1970s. Likewise, efforts at 'South-South' integration largely remained ineffective. The absence of certain context conditions, such as high level of economic and political pluralism, could account for why regionalism in other parts of the world proved far less successful (Haas 1970). Neofunctionalism could not explain, however, why European states abandoned collective problem solving in times of crisis. With regionalism not making progress in Europe and other parts of the world, Haas declared regional integration theory altogether obsolete (Haas 1975).

The Single European Act of 1986 and the Maastricht Treaty of 1990 ended the times of

"eurosclerosis." Together with the end of the Cold War, the broadening and deepening of the European Community into a European Union not only triggered another wave of regionalism outside Europe – with the United States departing from its exclusively multi-lateral approach to global free trade and states in Africa and Latin America revitalizing existing regional organizations (Fawcett and Gandois 2010; Malamud 2010) – but it also led to a revival of theorizing about European integration and a reformulation of both neofunctionalist and intergovernmentalist approaches. Supranational institutionalism explained the leap of 1986 and 1990 as a spillover from market integration to market regulation and emphasized not only the role of the European Commission (Sandholtz and Zysman 1989) but also of the European Court of Justice, whose dynamic interpretation of the Treaty of Rome had facilitated the gradual expansion of tasks as early as in the 1960s and 1970s, when European integration had allegedly been in the doldrums (Burley and Mattli 1993; Stone Sweet and Sandholtz 1998a). Liberal intergovernmentalists contended that national governments remained the masters of the treaties and explained the delegation of policies and political authority to supranational institutions as a way to improve collective problem solving at the regional level. They concurred with neofunctionalist and supranationalist approaches on the importance of domestic (economic) interests but insisted that their demand for more integration was channelled through national governments rather than transnational alliances with supranational actors, who could not simply circumvent national governments as the gatekeepers of EU decision making (Moravcsik 1998). The European Commission and the European Court of Justice were conceived as agents acting at the behest of the member states to advance collective problem solving at the regional level (Pollack 1997).

The debate between supranational and liberal intergovernmentalist theories shifted the focus of European integration studies from process towards outcome. Multi-level

governance approaches emphasized the sharing of political authority in the EU among a mix of state and nonstate actors at different levels of government (Hooghe and Marks 2001). The “governance turn” (Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2006) ended the dominance of IR theories and opened the field of EU studies for comparative politics and public policy analysis (Hix 1994; Wallace and Wallace 1996). Studying the EU as a polity with its own politics and policy making also paved the way for social constructivism, which engaged in a debate with rationalist and historical institutionalist approaches (Pierson 1996; Aspinwall and Schneider 2000) about how institutions mattered in European integration, emphasizing the importance of processes of socialization as well as collective identities and public discourse (Checkel 1999; Risse 2003; Diez 1999).

After the end of the Cold War, the EU grew from 12 to 27 member states, which required institutional reforms that eventually resulted in the drafting of a Constitutional Treaty by a European Convention in 2003. Its rejection by two referenda in France and the Netherlands, respectively, as well as the adoption of most of the reforms in the form of yet another intergovernmental treaty in Lisbon 2009, are likely to trigger new theoretical developments in (European) integration studies since neither supranationalist nor liberal intergovernmentalist approaches can fully account for the stop-and-go European integration process (Hooghe and Marks 2009).

EU studies have developed into a subdiscipline of IR, with distinctive concepts and theories. At the same time, regionalism gained prominence outside Europe, where the end of the Cold War and the Asian financial crisis seemed fuelled attempts at regional integration. Especially, students in area studies felt that both the IR and the EU literature had little to offer that could help them understand processes of regionalism in Africa or Asia. The so called “New Regionalism” literature has therefore taken a different approach that emphasizes the social construction of regions,

the role of nonstate actors other than pressure groups as well as the importance of cultural and environmental aspects (Hettne et al. 1999; Söderbaum and Shaw 2003; Farrell et al. 2005). Finally, International Political Economy (IPE) gave rise to another important body of research on regionalism focusing on regional trade and investment patterns and the design of regional institutions to foster liberalization and settle disputes over market access. The main dependent variable is the emergence and effectiveness of preferential and free trade areas (PTA and FTA), whose number is sufficiently large to apply statistical methods to test varied strands of (rational) institutionalist theories (*inter alia* Milner 1988; Mansfield and Milner 1997; Mansfield and Reinhardt 2003).

In sum, comparative regionalism as a field of study has been informed by various bodies of research that focus on different aspects and hardly engage with each other. The remainder of this chapter therefore seeks to cut across the different subdisciplines of IR when taking stock of our empirical and theoretical knowledge of regionalism.

THE OUTCOME OF REGIONALISM

International Relations treats regionalism as an instance of international cooperation (Haas 1970; Hoffmann 1966; Puchala 1972). Much of the early research concentrated on the European Community/European Union as a long-standing pathfinder in economic and political regionalism. Yet, by 1951 the European Community of Coal and Steel was already more than an international organization. The analytical tool box of IR scholars has always had its limits in capturing the nature of the EU (Puchala 1972). Ultimately, students of the EU declared it unique and described its *sui generis* nature with new concepts such as a “new, post-Hobbsian order” (Schmitter 1991), “a post-modern state” (Ruggie 1993; Caporaso 1996), “a network of pooling and sharing sovereignty” (Keohane

and Hoffmann 1991), a “system of multi-level governance” (Hooghe and Marks 2001), or “network governance” (Eising and Kohler-Koch 1999). Making the EU a singular case, however, precludes by definition any comparison with other regional institutions.

The IPE literature managed to avoid such conceptual problems in the first place by looking at economic rather than political regionalism. Existing typologies of economic integration focus on the issue-areas covered by regional agreements (trade and/or money) and the degree of interference with national authority on economic affairs (shallow vs. deep, cf. Balassa 1973). The shallowest and most frequent form of trade integration is a preferential trade area (PTA) between two or more countries, which reduces (rather than eliminates) tariffs for certain products. A free trade area (FTA) is a PTA in which all barriers to trade are eliminated. Customs unions are FTAs with a common external tariff, which involves the delegation of some trade authority to regional institutions. Common and single markets go even one step further by providing not only for the free movement of goods but also of services, capital, and labor. The final stage of trade integration is the economic union, which combines the single market with a monetary union. The depth of monetary integration can vary. While the pegging of a state’s currency to that of another state is a unilateral and informal commitment, currency boards maintain a fixed exchange rate with a foreign currency, for example, the US dollar or the euro. The deepest form of monetary integration is a currency or monetary union in which several states share the same currency and establish a supranational central bank to set interest rates. If states use a foreign currency, this is referred to as dollarization (cf. Hancock 2009: 23–25).

The typology of economic integration may be comprehensive. But it blurs two dimensions that ought to be kept separate because they may be causally related. The first dimension, which has been referred to as the scope or breadth of (policy) integration (Lindberg

1970; Lindberg and Scheingold 1970), relates to the issues to be dealt with at the regional level (what sector, how much of it, and how important). These issues do not only concern the dismantling of national barriers to economic exchange (market-making) and the dealing with negative externalities of liberalization (market-correcting; cf. Scharpf 1996). Next to trade and money (*economic regionalism*), security (*security regionalism*), constitutional issues referring to institutional norms, rules and procedures (*political regionalism*), and sociocultural policy, including sustainable development, health, social security, and culture (*socio-cultural regionalism*), can become subjects of regionalism. The more policy areas are dealt with at the regional level, the broader integration becomes.

The second dimension, sometimes called level or depth of integration (Lindberg 1970; Lindberg and Scheingold 1970), concerns the political authority regional institutions have over the issue delegated to them.¹ The delegation or centralization of policy tasks and political authority has provided the starting point for most of the literature that seeks to develop a comparative analytical framework for the outcomes of regionalism (Stone Sweet and Sandholtz 1998b; Hooghe and Marks 2001; Koremenos et al. 2004; Cooley and Spruyt 2009). The weakest form of delegation involves administrative tasks, such as the preparation of intergovernmental meetings or the compilation of information (administration). Substantial delegation, in turn, gives regional institutions the power to adopt collectively binding decisions (legislative authority) and to implement them (executive authority), as well as the autonomy to settle disputes (adjudicative authority). Depending on how much autonomy the regional agents have in exercising their authority and how much they can encroach on national sovereignty rights, regional institutions are intergovernmentalist (minimal autonomy) or supranationalist (maximum authority). Unlike in intergovernmentalist institutions, where states compromise their

sovereignty at best by allowing for majority decisions and only delegate certain policy functions to administrative or expert committees, states transfer political authority to supranationalist institutions, enabling them to take and enforce collectively binding decisions against their will (Scharpf 2001; Börzel 2010a).

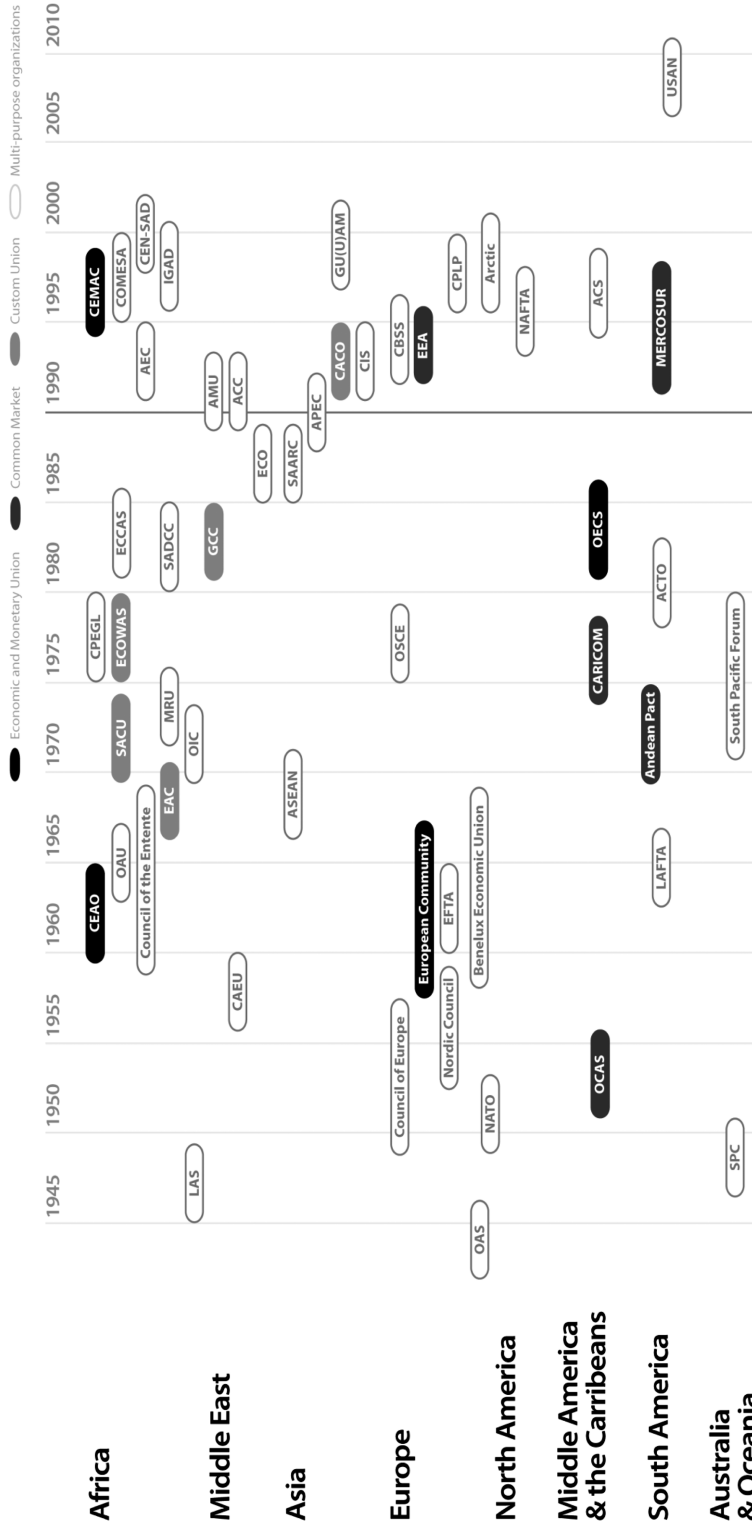
Regionalism can be placed on a continuum with *regional (intergovernmental) cooperation* and *regional (supranational) integration* as two opposite ends. Regional *cooperation* entails the joint exercise of state-based political authority in intergovernmental institutions to solve collective action problems related to economic, political, or security issues. Regional *integration*, by contrast, involves the setting up of supranational institutions to which political authority is delegated to make collectively binding decisions, for example, on dismantling national barriers to economic and social exchange (market making), on dealing with negative externalities of liberalization (market correcting; cf. Scharpf 1996) or on peacefully settling international conflicts (Adler and Barnett 1998).

The distinction between different outcomes offers some interesting insights regarding the quantity and quality of regionalism. It puts the widely shared observation that regionalism has surged after the end of the Cold War into context.² Claims about the “new urge to merge” (Schulz et al. 2001: 1) are often based on the “explosion” of regional agreements registered with the World Trade Organization (cf. Choi and Caporaso 2002; Hancock 2009: 17–25). By May 2010, the number of regional accords had increased more than five times compared to 1990. Yet, a closer look at the data reveals that the changes are less spectacular than the sheer increase in numbers may suggest. First, of the 467 regional accords registered with the WTO, only 271 are in force. Second, a considerable number of the regional trade agreements (about 40%) do not have more than two members, which are in the majority of cases not contiguous either.³ About 50% are bilateral and/or include partners from distant

regions. Third, the depth of (regional) integration is in the most cases rather shallow. 90% of the regional accords refer to preferential or free trade areas (PTAs and FTAs).⁴ There are only nine customs unions (four of which involve the EU), six common markets, and four economic unions.⁵ The number of regional organizations has not surged either.⁶ While they may have gained in importance, prominent regional organizations, including the League of Arab States (1945), the Organization of American States (1948), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (1949), the Council of Europe (1949), the European Union (1957), the European Free Trade Area (1960), the Association of South East Asian Nations (1967), the Caribbean Community and Common Market (1973), the Economic Community of West African States (1975), the Organization (formerly Conference) for Security and Cooperation in Europe (1975), the Gulf Cooperation Council (1981), or the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (1985), originated well before the end of the Cold War. Others, such as the South African Development Community (1992), the Andean Community (1996), and the African Union (2002), were reestablishments. Of the more than 50 ‘multiple issues’ regional organizations that exist to date, only 16 were founded after 1990. A third of them are located in the post-Soviet region, which has received little attention in the literature so far (but see Hancock 2009; Collins 2009). Undoubtedly, regionalism has increased over time. But the Cold War is not necessarily a watershed (see Table 20.1). We have seen waves of regionalism before, for example, in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly in Latin America (Fawcett and Serrano 2005).

Analyzing the delegation of policies and political authority to regional institutions also takes issue with claims on the emergence of a qualitatively “new regionalism.” First, whether the (quantitative) increase in PTA and FTA indicates a (qualitative) shift away from “introverted, defensive regional blocs” towards innovative and open forms of regionalism that is more compatible with the

Table 20.1 The Emergence of Regional Organizations since 1945



Legend: ACC - Arab Cooperation Council; ACS - Association of Caribbean States; ACTO - Association of Caribbean States; AMU - Arab Maghreb Union; APEC - Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation; ASEAN - Association of South East Asian Nations; CAEU - Central Asian Cooperation Organization; CAEU - Council for Arab Economic Unity; CARICOM - Caribbean Community; CBSS - Council of the Baltic Sea States; CEAO - Communauté Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest; CEMAC - Communauté Economique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale; CEN-SAD - Community of Sahel-Saharan States; COMESA - Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa; CPEGL - Economic Community of the Great Lake Countries; CPLP - Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries; EAC - Eastern African Community; ECCAS - Economic Community of Central African States; ECO - Economic Cooperation Organization; ECOWAS - Economic Community of West African States; ECU - Economic Community of the Horn of Africa; EFTA - European Free Trade Association; EFTA - European Free Trade Association; LAS - League of Arab States; MERCOSUR - Common Market of the South; MRU - Mano River Union; NAFTA - North American Free Trade Agreement; NATO - North Atlantic Treaty Organization; OAS - Organization of American States; OAU - Organization of African Unity; OCAS - Organization of Central American States; OECS - Organization of Eastern Caribbean States; OIC - Organization of the Islamic Conference; OSCE - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; SAARC - South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation; SACU - Southern African Customs Union; SADCC - South African Development Coordination Conference; SPC - Secretariat of the Pacific Community; USAN - Union of South American Nations

global trade regime remains an open question (Milner 1992; Bhagwati 2008). While these forms of shallow economic regionalism have been spreading, we also see a deepening and widening of existing forms that started in some cases well before the 1990s. Long-standing regional organizations, such as the League of Arab States, the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), or the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), have experienced the delegation of more authority and new policy competencies as well as the admission of new members. Second, it is unclear to what extent such quantitative and qualitative changes constitute a new phenomenon that calls for a new approach. Proponents of the “new regionalism approach” have claimed that mainstream theories are “neither designed for nor capable of capturing the multidimensionality, pluralism and comprehensiveness of contemporary regionalization processes, nor the way in which they are socially constructed” (Schulz et al. 2001: 2; Hettne and Söderbaum 2000). IR research might be biased towards state-driven forms of regionalism, neglecting more spontaneous and endogenous process which involve a variety of nonstate actors organized in formal and informal networks. How relevant these ‘new’ forms of regionalism are and to what extent existing theories are adequate to capture them is first of all an empirical question (cf. Hettne 2005: 543; Hettne and Söderbaum 2008; for a suggestion on how to overcome the “false divide,” see Warleigh-Lack 2006).

Finally, there is not only a trend towards the delegation of new policy competencies and more political authority within major regional organizations, but they have developed some interesting similarities despite differences in their original goals and institutional setup. Not only do the Arab League, the EU, ASEAN, ECOWAS, and Mercosur aspire to deeper forms of trade and monetary integration, for example, by seeking to turn their free trade area into a customs union or a common market, but they have also taken on new tasks in the realm of external and internal

security, dealing with issues such as nuclear nonproliferation, disarmament, territorial disputes, domestic political stability, migration, terrorism, or human trafficking. Even the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) has developed some albeit rudimentary forms of security cooperation (terrorism, drugs, and migration) in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. States are still reluctant to delegate political authority to regional organizations. But they have agreed to formalize decision-making procedures, opening them for majority decisions, and to set up enhanced dispute-settlement procedures, which may take the form of courts or tribunals. While legislative authority firmly remains in the hands of national governments, the powers of executive bodies have been strengthened, and in some cases, parliamentary assemblies with consultative status have been created. These institutional changes have emerged over a long period of time although the intensity and speed of reforms have increased in the last two decades. While regional institutions do not converge towards a particular model, they show increasing similarities with regard to the delegation of new policy competencies as well as of executive and adjudicative authority (Table 20.2). At the same time, important differences remain. The member states of Mercosur, ASEAN, and the Arab League have not been willing to match the delegation of political authority witnessed in the EU. ECOWAS and the African Union, by contrast, even acquired the coercive power to militarily intervene in their member states, which the EU still lacks. And the judicial authority of the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) with regard to dispute settlement is not matched by any legislative and or executive authority.

In sum, rather than the emergence of new forms of regionalism, there is a bifurcation between (rather classical) regional cooperation on the one hand and regional integration on the other. While shallow economic regionalism based on intergovernmental cooperation seems to proliferate, already existing forms of regionalism have not only moved

Table 20.2 The Progressing Delegation of Policies and Political Authority

| | <i>League of Arab States</i> | <i>European Union</i> | <i>ASEAN</i> | <i>ECOWAS</i> | <i>Mercosur</i> | <i>NAFTA</i> | |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Establishment Major Reforms | 1945 | 1951 | 1967 | 1975 | 1991 | 1994 | |
| | 1950 | 1957 | 1976 | 1993 | 1992 | 2005 | |
| | 1957 | 1986 | 2003 | 1999 | 1994 | | |
| | 1964 | 1992 | 2007 | 2005 | 1998 | | |
| | 1976 | 1998 | | 2006 | 2002 | | |
| | 1997 | 2000 | | | 2005 | | |
| | 2004 | 2009 | | | | | |
| Policies | Economic | Economic Unity Agreement (1957) | Customs Union and Common Market (1957) | ASEAN Free Trade Area (1992) | Customs Union and Common Market (1975) | Common Market (1991) | Free Trade Area (trade and investment) |
| | | Arab Common Market (1964) | Economic and Monetary Union (1992) | ASEAN Economic Community (2003) | Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development (1975) | | North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) |
| | | Arab Monetary Fund (1976) | | | Economic and Monetary Union (1993) | | North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation (NAALC) |
| | | Greater Arab Free Trade Area (1997) | | | ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (1993/99/01) | | |
| | | | | | Protocol on Non-Aggression (1978) | | |
| | Security | Arab Collective Security (1950) | European Political Cooperation (1981) | Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality Declaration (ZOPFAN, 1971) | Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence (1981) | Zone of Peace Declaration (1999) | Security and Prosperity Partnership (2005) |
| | | | Common Foreign and Security Policy (1992) | ASEAN Regional Forum (1994) | Regional Security (1993) | | |
| | | | European Security and Defense Policy (1999) | ASEAN+3 (1997) | Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-Keeping and Security (1999) | | |
| | | | Common Defense and Security Policy (2009) | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

(Continued)

Table 20.2 The Progressing Delegation of Policies and Political Authority

| | <i>League of Arab States</i> | <i>European Union</i> | <i>ASEAN</i> | <i>ECOWAS</i> | <i>Mercosur</i> | <i>NAFTA</i> |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| Political-constitutional | | Justice and Home Affairs (1992) | Democracy and human rights (2007) | Declaration on Political Principles (1991) Democracy and human rights (1993) Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001) | Democracy and human rights (1998) | |
| Authority | | | | | | |
| Administration | General-Secretariat (1945) | General Secretariat of the Council (1951) High Authority/European Commission (1951) | ASEAN Secretariat (1976) | Executive Secretariat (1975) ↓ ECOWAS Commission (2006) | Mercosur-Secretariat (1991) | National Secretariats |
| Decision-Making | Council of the League (1945) Joint Defense, Council (1950) Permanent Military Commission (1950) Economic Council (1950) Arab Transitional Parliament (2004) | European Council and Council of Ministers (1951) European Parliament (1951) | ASEAN-Summit (1976) Community Councils of Economics, Political Security and Socio-Cultural Affairs (2003) ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization (1977/2007) | Authority of Heads of States and Council of Ministers (1975) ECOWAS Parliament (1993) | Council of the Common Market (1992) Joint Parliamentary Commission (1994) ↓ Mercosur Parliament (2005) | |
| Implementation | | High Authority/European Commission (1951/57) | ASEAN Coordinating Council and the Community Councils | Executive Secretariat (1975) ECOWAS Commission (2006) | Common Market Group (1992) Mercosur Trade Commission (1994) | Free Trade Commission Commission for Environmental Cooperation Commission for Labor Cooperation |
| Adjudication | | European Court of Justice (1951) | Dispute-settlement mechanism (1996) ↓ Enhanced Dispute Settlement Mechanism (2004) | Arbitrary Tribunal (1975) Community Court of Justice (1993) | Dispute-settlement procedure (1991) Permanent Review Court (2002) Administrative Labour Court (2003) | Dispute Settlement Procedure |

towards regional integration by deepening and broadening; they have also developed some institutional similarities. This bifurcation has been largely overlooked since different bodies of literature have focussed on different forms of regionalism. Moreover, these developments raise the question: To what extent does regionalism differ between regions, not only with regard to outcomes but also with regard to its major drivers? Do states respond to a common demand for (enhanced) delegation of policies and political authority emanating from the challenges of globalization and transnationalization that is best satisfied at the regional level? Are regional institutions supplied by powerful states to pursue their national interests in market access and political stability of their “backyards”? Or is regionalism part of a global script which diffuses, depicting regional institutions as effective and legitimate governance structures in the 21st century?

THE DRIVERS OF REGIONALISM

The IR literature offers a multitude of approaches to regionalism. However, no single theory could possibly account for the variation in outcomes. International Political Economy (IPE) has mostly been concerned with economic regionalism explaining the emergence and evolution of preferential and free trade areas (shallow economic regionalism). In line with the general IR literature, IPE text books are organized around four major theoretical perspectives on regionalism, which draw on neorealism, neoliberal institutionalism, social constructivism, and Marxism-structuralism, respectively. While they offer important insights, these schools of thought are less appropriate to study broader and deeper forms of regionalism that involve the delegation of political authority across a wider range of issues.

Theories of European integration had to move beyond economic regionalism and developed explanations for the progressive

delegation of political authority and policies to the supranational institutions of the European Union also in other areas than market integration. Yet, neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism (and their various offspring) have only partially been able to account for the process and outcome of European integration. Nor do they travel easily to other regions of the world that do not share the same level of economic development and interdependence and are more heterogeneous with regard to their political regimes.

Since the literature has focused on different forms of regionalism, the scope of the various approaches is limited, and there is no theory that could possibly account for the two empirical trends we observe. Yet, theories in IPE, IR, EU, and Area Studies have identified important causes of regionalism, which deploy significant, albeit varying explanatory power across the globe. The next section will organize the various bodies of literature around major drivers of regionalism, which are distinguished as demand- and supply-driven factors (for a similar approach, see Mattli 1999a: 41–43). Their causal effects can follow either an instrumentalist (rationalist) or a norm-based (sociological) logic of social action (see Chapter 4 by Snidal and Chapter 5 by Adler in this volume). Such a factor-oriented approach should facilitate comparative research across regions and help engage the various bodies of literature.

The demand for regionalism

Rationalist approaches have predominantly focused on explaining *economic regionalism*. They point to expected (material) gains as the main drivers of the demand for (more) regionalism. Theories differ, then, with regard to what these gains exactly are. Economists emphasize welfare-enhancing effects, which tend to be greater among geographically proximate states. These include reduced transaction costs, economies of scale, technological innovation due to greater competition,

more foreign direct investments, and greater economic and political weight in international markets and institutions (cf. Mattli 1999b: 46–47; Hancock 2009: 25–29). Accordingly, globalization becomes a major driver for economic regionalism since global markets entail increased transborder mobility and economic linkages, and trade issues are less cumbersome to deal with at the regional than at the multilateral level (Schirm 2002). Coping with negative externalities such as diversions of trade and investment provides another rationale to pursue economic regionalism. States may either seek membership in regional institutions that generate the external effects as many European countries have done in the case of the EU and some of the South American countries do with NAFTA (Mattli 1999b: 59–61). Or they may create their own regional group. NAFTA can be interpreted as the US reaction to the fortification of the Single European Market and the emerging economic regionalism in Asia (Mattli 1999b: 183–185). A similar “domino effect” (Baldwin 1995) was triggered by the US turn towards regionalism, which has contributed to the proliferation of regional PTA, since states perceived the United States as no longer capable of or willing to ensure the stability of the global trading system (Mansfield 1998). The decision of 1992 to complement the ASEAN security community with an ASEAN free trade area is partly explained by concerns over the global positioning of ASEAN markets vis-à-vis NAFTA and the Single European Market (Means 1995).

Neofunctionalist and liberal intergovernmentalist approaches provide more ‘liberal’, society-centered explanations for economic regionalism. The demand is fuelled by those domestic interests that tend to benefit from (more) free trade and liberalization, more broadly speaking. While functionalism assumed a general demand for regionalism as a means of technocratic problem-solving across borders, neofunctionalists emphasize the role of interest groups, professional associations, producer groups, and labour unions, which do not equally benefit from regionalism.

Those who benefit from transnational coalitions with like-minded groups from other member states and ally with regional actors. Thus, European companies joined forces with the European Commission to propel the Single European Market and the European Currency (Sandholtz and Zysman 1989; Cowles 1995), and American business forcefully lobbied in favour of the NAFTA and APEC agreements (Milner 1995; Cameron and Tomlin 2002).

Liberal intergovernmentalism and second image approaches to International Relations (see Chapter 19 by Schultz and Chapter 29 by Milner in this volume) also take economic and social interests as the starting point of the demand for economic regionalism (Rogowski 1989; Solingen 1998; Hiscox 2006; Frieden 2002; Moravcsik 1997). Yet, these interests are channeled through the domestic political process of interest aggregation and interest representation rather than transnational channels. States are the master of regional organizations and gate-keep access to international decision-making processes. Domestic interest groups may try to circumvent them by forming transnational alliances, but when push comes to shove they have to rely on their governments if they want to influence regional policy outcomes and institutional reforms (Moravcsik 1998). Depending on their access to domestic decision-making processes and their action capacity, pro-integration interests are more or less successful in making their political demand for regional integration heard (Rogowski 1989; Milner 1997).

Rationalist society-centred theories, which focus on preferences in domestic and transnational society to generate the demand for economic regionalism explicitly or implicitly, presuppose liberal democracy and advanced market economy as context conditions for regionalism to unfold. Societal interests are unlikely to form and mobilize in favour of regionalism in authoritarian or semi-authoritarian countries with low levels of socioeconomic development and/or low levels of economic and social transactions (Haas 1961; Haas and

Schmitter 1964). This ‘liberal’ bias limits the applicability of society-centred theories to the OECD world of industrialized liberal democracies; they have a harder time explaining economic regionalism in other parts of the world. Moreover, societal demand is hardly sufficient – it takes political leadership and international institutions to propel regionalism (see below).

While rationalist approaches start from different levels of analysis, they take economic regionalism as a strategic response of states and economic actors to the challenges of globalization. The demand is hence driven by economic interdependence. Variation in (institutional) outcomes is explained by the higher degree of economic interdependence fuelling the demand for regional institutions to settle resulting conflicts (Mansfield 1998; Mansfield and Milner 1997; Mattli 1999b; Moravcsik 1998; Stone Sweet and Caporaso 1998), the level of uncertainty, the nature of the problem, and the number of actors and the asymmetry between them (Stein 1983; Koremenos et al. 2001; Koremenos et al. 2004). Geographic proximity and democracy seem to increase the intensity of economic exchange between countries, and hence foster regional cooperation (Mansfield et al. 2000). Such rationalist-interest-based reasoning has been extended to *political and security regionalism* focusing on so called spillover effects on the one hand and other benefits than increasing trade and investment on the other.

(Neo)functionalist approaches do not only provide an explanation for advancing economic regionalism by societal demand; economic regionalism is also a means of overcoming the resistance of national governments against the delegation of policies and political authority in the areas of defence and war, currency, and domestic law and order, which lie at the core of state sovereignty (Mitrany 1966: 25; Haas 1967: 323; Lindberg and Scheingold 1970: 263–266). The link between economic, political, and security regionalism is the so called “functional spillover” (Haas 1958). Member states are willing to delegate policy tasks and

political authority on economic issues of lower salience. Once the process is set into motion, however, further delegation is required in order to maintain and increase the economic benefits. Liberalizing trade not only leads to greater flows in goods but also in capital, services, and people, which are still subject to national control, reducing the economic gains of transborder transactions. Therefore, the EU has subsequently removed national barriers to the free movements of goods, services, capital, and labour. This process has not been limited to legal, technical, and fiscal barriers but has also led to the increasing elimination of physical border controls. Europe without borders, however, has given rise to significant problems for internal security, caused by illegal immigration, organized crime, and transnational terrorism. As a result, the member states gave the EU the authority to legislate on a whole range of internal security issues, including visa, migration, asylum, criminal prosecution, and law enforcement. The spillover from economic to security regionalism evolved over a period of more than 40 years. Moreover, the EU member states remain reluctant to delegate authority to the EU when it comes to external security; unlike justice and home affairs, foreign and defence policy is still largely intergovernmental (cf. Börzel 2005). While neofunctionalist approaches have a hard time explaining the gap between internal and external security integration, the EU is a prime example of how economic regionalism fosters political and security regionalism among states that engage in mutual economic exchange.

The delegation of economic and security policies to regional institutions can also be explained by political rather than economic rationalities. Milward argued that national governments seek to isolate political decisions with redistributive consequences from particularistic domestic interests by transferring them to the EU level (Milward 1992; cf. Moravcsik 1998). Unlike neofunctionalist reasoning, the political rationale also applies in regions that lack economic

interdependence as a major driver for regionalism. African, Latin American, Arab, and Asian leaders have supported regionalism as a source of domestic power and consolidation of national sovereignty (Herbst 2007; Okolo 1985; Nesadurai 2008; Barnett and Solingen 2007; Morales 2002). Weak states, in particular, should be more inclined to engage in “regime-boosting regionalism” (Söderbaum 2004) because they are more dependent on economic growth to forge domestic stability, tackle societal problems, and strengthen their international standing in terms of bargaining power and legitimacy. Moreover, nonstate actors can more easily circumvent their governments in seeking transnational exchange (Bach 2005). Yet, states must not be too weak either – political instability can be a major obstacle to regionalism (Edi 2007). The same ambivalence can be found for neo-patrimonialism. While regional organizations provide governments with additional perks for buying off the loyalty of their clients, regionalism can also curb resources, for example, by decreasing tariff revenues (Allison 2008; Collins 2009). Finally, regionalism has served as a tool for settling conflicts and securing peace among (former) rival nations (Oelsner 2004; Acharya 2001; Francis 2006; Gruber 2000) and, more recently, for consolidating and promoting democracy in its member states (Pevehouse 2005; Ribeiro Hoffmann and van der Vleuten 2007). What national governments lose in authority to regional institutions, they gain in problem-solving capacity, particularly since many societal problems, such as environmental pollution, pandemics, drug trafficking, or migration, are no longer confined to the boundaries of the nation-state.

Constructivist approaches put ideas, norms, identities, and discourses as ideational drivers of regionalism centre stage. Long before the constructivist turn in IR (see Chapter 5 by Adler in this volume), transactionalism argued that successful integration requires a sense of community (Deutsch et al. 1957; Adler and Barnett 1998; Acharya 2001). It is unclear, however, whether collective identity is a

precondition for or rather an indicator of regional integration. Students of European integration still argue to what extent the EU has built a common identity and what it is based upon (Risse 2010). While the sense of community is weaker in North America, Africa, the Middle East, or Asia, the question remains whether this is because states are so diverse with regard to their political systems, societal structures, and cultures that there is no demand for (stronger) common institutions (Barnett and Solingen 2007), or whether regional institutions are not strong enough to breed a community (Clarkson 2008; Acharya 2005; Jones and Smith 2007; Barnett 1995; Okolo 1985)?

While the IPE and the European Integration literatures focus on different forms of regionalism, they both offer convincing arguments why states should delegate policy tasks and authority to regional institutions in the first place. They are less compelling in explaining the differential outcomes we find across different regions. Economic interdependence has been a key driver of economic regionalism both in Europe and North America. But why have the European states opted for subsequently deepening and widening the EU, while the United States, Canada, and Mexico concluded a “complete contract” (Cooley and Spruyt 2009), which does not preview any further delegation of policies and political authority to NAFTA? Why do we find a gap in the delegation of authority between internal and external security in the EU? Why have some of the African countries in the absence of any economic interdependence delegated more political authority to regional institutions than the EU member states? Likewise, why have China, Japan, and South Korea not been willing to set up any regional institutions despite their high levels of economic exchange?

The supply of regionalism

Rationalist approaches tend to assume that demand is sufficient for regionalism to emerge.

At the same time, regime theory and neo-liberal institutionalism contend that international cooperation requires political leadership and international institutions to work (see Chapter 13 by Simmons and Martin in this volume). Setting up institutions to overcome market failures and collective action problems involves costs, too, and may create a(nother) collective action problem. The rationalist solution is political or hegemonic leadership. For neofunctionalism, regional bureaucracies such as the European Commission are the most likely to exercise the necessary leadership to translate social demands into reforms of regional institutions. Supranational actors are the natural ally of interest groups in overcoming the resistance of national governments to delegating political authority and additional tasks to the regional level (Haas 1958; Lindberg 1963). Legal approaches and the so called supranational institutionalists emphasize the role of centralized dispute-settlement bodies and their judicialization as engines of regional integration (Burley and Mattli 1993; Stone Sweet and Sandholtz 1998a; Stone Sweet 2000).

Hegemonic stability theory, by contrast, points to powerful states which are willing to and capable of acting as “regional paymaster, easing distributional tensions and thus smoothing the path of integration” (Mattli 1999a: 56; cf. Gilpin 1987: 87–90; Yarbrough and Yarbrough 1992). The United States played a key role in the creation and prevalence of the European Community and ASEAN by mitigating the security dilemma in the region (Gruber 2000; Acharya 2001). Likewise, the United States has acted as a regional hegemon in NAFTA (Clarkson 2008). Regional powers can be engines of integration, as France and Germany have been in the EU and Brazil and Argentina are in Mercosur (Porrata-Doria Jr. 2005), although the latter have been criticized for not providing sufficient regional leadership (Mattli 1999a: 160). Conversely, the absence or ineffectiveness of regionalism in the Middle East or Asia is often blamed on the

absence of a regional or external hegemon (Fawcett and Gandois 2010; Hemmer and Katzenstein 2002).

Powerful states supply regionalism for different reasons. The United States, China, Russia, South Africa, or Nigeria supported and engaged in region building for their geostrategic and economic interests in strengthening military alliances, promoting stability in neighbouring countries, or securing access to new markets, cheap labour, and water and energy resources (Antkiewicz and Whalley 2005; Gowa 1994; Clarkson 2008; Coleman 2007: 155–184). Brazil and Venezuela champion Mercosur to establish themselves as regional powers and to counterbalance US influence in Latin America (Gomez Mera 2005; Tussie 2009). A similar competition for containing external and exercising regional hegemonic power through promoting (different forms of) regionalism can be observed between Iraq and Egypt in the League of Arab States (Khadhuri 1946), Malaysia and Indonesia in ASEAN (Dent 2008: 86–88), Japan and China in East Asia (Beeson 2006), Nigeria and South Africa in Sub-Saharan Africa (Francis 2006), and Russia and Uzbekistan in Central Asia (Kubicek 1997). Yet, while hegemonic leadership may help initiate and promote regionalism, powerful states also tend to be more reluctant to delegate authority to regional institutions. Moreover, their overbearing power may produce a backlash against and resentment of regionalism rather than support by other states.

Constructivist approaches have featured less prominently in explaining the supply of regional institutions. Hemmer and Katzenstein have argued that the United States was less enthusiastic to exercise hegemonic leadership in Asia than in Europe because of the lower cultural affinity (Hemmer and Katzenstein 2002; Katzenstein 2005). Cultural difference also accounts for the distinct approach ASEAN states have taken towards regional integration. The “ASEAN way,” which is based on informal consensus building, organizational minimalism, and

thin institutionalization, is incompatible with Western models of legalized institutions (Acharya 2004; Katzenstein 2005; Nesadurai 2009). Such explanations have an essentialist flavour and lose a lot of their explanatory power when applied across regions. More importantly, social constructivism has to offer more general explanations for why, when, and where regionalism emerges, focusing on processes of diffusion.

The supply of regional institutions can stem from other regions or international actors, which actively promote or passively provide blueprints for region building. Pax Americana and Pax Europaea are two 'global scripts' (Meyer et al. 1992) on regionalism. The first one is based on regional trade cooperation promoted by the United States and international organizations, including the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (Grugel 2004). The second is advocated by the EU, striving for regional integration, which is broader in scope and infringes more strongly on the sovereignty of states (Börzel and Risse 2009). As we have seen in the previous section, there are interesting institutional similarities among major regional organizations, which are not easily explained by functionalist approaches. Market or problem pressures may increase the demand for (more) regional institutions. But even if certain institutions effectively serve specific functions and help solve similar problems, states always have choices. Institutions can be "contagious" (Levi-Faur 2005) under conditions of uncertainty, policy failure, and dissatisfaction with the status quo. Regional organizations that struggle to become more effective may look to other organizations that are considered as success cases for policies and rules that effectively solved similar problems and are transferable into their context (Meyer and Rowan 1977; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000). Next to lesson drawing, which is still based on instrumental rationality (cf. Rose 1993), regions may also emulate others for normative reasons, to increase their legitimization (symbolic imitation; cf. Polillo and

Guillén 2005), or to simply imitate their behavior because its appropriateness is taken for granted (mimicry; cf. Meyer and Rowan 1977; Haveman 1993). Emulation might be driving the recent deepening and broadening of ASEAN, whose new Charta bears some striking resemblance with EU institutions (Katsumata 2009; Jetschke 2010).

The comparative evaluation of mainstream theories reveals important drivers of regionalism. While none of them is capable of fully explaining variation across time and regions, they may be combined as long as their ontological assumptions are compatible. The theoretically consistent rather than eclectic combination of demand and supply variables sheds new light on old puzzles. It remains to be seen to what extent they will form the basis for new approaches that can account for the spread of shallow economic regionalism on the one hand and the deepening and widening of existing forms of regionalism on the other.

THE DOMESTIC IMPACT OF REGIONALISM

Second, image-reversed approaches in IR explore the impact of the international system upon domestic politics (Gourevitch 1978; see Chapter 19 by Schultz in this volume). They have made little headway in comparative regionalism. Economists have explored the economic effects of regional free trade agreements on trade and investment flows, economic growth, poverty, and social inequality (Weintraub 2004; Preusse 2004; Musila 2005). Their impact on domestic policies, institutions, and political processes has remained largely ignored. Studies have looked for policy harmonization in different sectors for individual countries, particularly in the case of NAFTA. The literature has also started to explore processes of 'differential empowerment' in the case of subnational actors (regional and local authorities, companies, civil society organizations) through their access to new markets and policy-making

arenas (Aspinwall 2009; Acharya 2001: 48). Yet, the findings are hardly generalizable and seldom guided by theoretical considerations.

A noticeable exception is the study of Jon Pevehouse, who explores the effect of regional organizations on democratization (Pevehouse 2005; cf. Anderson 1999). He argues that the “democratic density” of regional organizations is associated with the democratic consolidation of their members due to conditionality and assistance. Governments of young democracies can bind themselves and their successors to political liberalization and democratic norms by external commitment (Pevehouse 2005: 37; Mansfield and Pevehouse 2006; Moravcsik and Vachudova 2003). His statistical analysis shows that joining a democratic regional organization significantly decreases the probability of democratic breakdown.

IPE and Compliance research (see Chapter 14 by Simmons in this volume) have more generally investigated the role of international institutions for domestic change. After all, international organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund substantially interfere with the governance institutions of developing countries. Likewise, most regional organizations can use conditionality to promote structural adjustments by promising or granting additional benefits, such as financial and technical assistance, a loan, debt relief, or membership in an organization. Or they incur costs through economic and diplomatic sanctions. “Reinforcement through reward” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2006) or “correction through punishment” offer the opportunity for a redistribution of resources among domestic actors empowering those who push for domestic change (Risse et al. 1999; Milner 1988; Rogowski 1989). Alternatively, regional organizations can resort to political dialogue and other instruments of socialization which seek to change actors’ behaviour through persuasion and learning, often with the help of change agents or entrepreneurs (Finnemore 1993; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Checkel 2005; Kelley 2004a). Conditionality and

political dialogue both aim at influencing the choice of actors, be they informed by cost-benefit calculations or guided by normative concerns about socially accepted behaviour. They thus contrast with coercion and assistance, which are not captured by the two general logics of domestic change. While coercion does not leave actors any choice, assistance provides unconditional financial and technical aid that enable actors to make choices in the first place.

The workings of these causal pathways through which regional organizations may impact upon the domestic structures of their members have so far only been systematically explored for the case of the EU.

Europeanization and domestic change

In the 1990s, students of European integration became increasingly interested in how the member states responded to the impact of European policies, processes, and institutions.⁷ The first generation of such ‘top-down’ studies focused on the consequences of European integration for the autonomy and authority of the member states. In order to theorize the domestic impact of Europe, the explanatory logics of the two major paradigms of European integration were essentially turned around. If intergovernmentalist approaches were correct in assuming that member state governments controlled European integration while supranational institutions themselves exercised little independent effect, the power of the member states would not be challenged. Rather, European integration should enhance the control of national governments over domestic affairs since it removed issues from domestic controversy into the arena of executive control at the European level (Milward 1992; Moravcsik 1994). Proponents of neofunctionalist or supranationalist approaches suggested exactly the opposite, namely, that European integration provided domestic actors, such as regions and interest groups, with independent

channels of political access and influence at the European level, enabling them to circumvent or bypass their member states in the EU policy process (Marks 1993; Marks et al. 1996). Between the two competing paradigms, a third group of scholars emerged that rejected the zero-sum game conception of the relationship between the EU and its member states, in which one level was to be empowered at the expense of the other. They argued that the different levels of government would become increasingly dependent on each other in European policy making. As a result, European integration would neither strengthen nor weaken but transform the member states by fostering the emergence of cooperative relationships between state and nonstate actors at the various levels of government (Kohler-Koch 1996; Rhodes 1996; Kohler-Koch and Eising 1999).

In recent years, the 'top-down' literature has grown significantly and developed its own approaches to analyzing the effect of the evolving European system of governance on the member states (cf. Cowles et al. 2001; Featherstone and Radaelli 2003; Bulmer and Lequesne 2005; Graziano and Vink 2006). Most studies agree that member state responses to Europeanization are differential, that is, they differ across policy sectors, institutions, and time. While EU policies and institutions are an impetus of domestic change that is a constant for all member states, they have facilitated domestic reforms but not necessarily led to convergence of national polities, politics, or policies. To solve the empirical puzzle, the literature has drawn on two different strands of institutionalist thinking. Rationalist and constructivist approaches of Europeanization both assume that the misfit between European and domestic policies, institutions, and political processes constitutes a necessary condition for domestic change and that institutions mediate or filter the domestic impact of Europe, which emanates from pressure of adaptation caused by such misfit. They differ, however, in their assumptions in exactly how institutions matter (cf. Börzel and Risse 2003).

Rational choice institutionalism argues that the EU facilitates domestic change through changing opportunity structures for domestic actors. In a first step, misfit between the EU and domestic norms creates demands for domestic adaptation. It takes agency, however, to translate misfit into domestic change. In a second step, the downloading of EU policies and institutions by the member states is shaped by cost/benefit calculations of strategic actors, whose interests are at stake. Institutions constrain or enable certain actions of rational actors by rendering some options more costly than others. From this perspective, Europeanization is largely conceived as an emerging political opportunity structure which offers some actors additional resources to exert influence, while severely constraining the ability of others to pursue their goals. Domestic change is facilitated if the institutions of the member states do not allow domestic actors to block adaptation to EU requirements through veto points or if, on the contrary, they empower domestic reform coalitions by providing them with additional resources to exploit the opportunities offered by Europeanization.

Other parts of the Europeanization literature draw on sociological institutionalism in order to specify change mechanisms based on ideational and normative processes of Europeanization. Unlike its rationalist counterpart, sociological institutionalism draws on a normative logic of appropriateness which argues that actors are guided by collectively shared understandings of what constitutes proper, socially accepted behaviour. These collective understandings and intersubjective meaning structures strongly influence the way actors define their goals and what they perceive as rational action. Rather than maximizing their egoistic self-interest, actors seek to meet social expectations in a given situation. From this perspective, Europeanization is understood as the emergence of new rules, norms, practices, and structures of meaning to which member states are exposed and which they have to incorporate into their domestic structures.

If there is such a misfit, it also takes agency to bring about domestic change. But the ways in which domestic actors facilitate reforms are different. Norm entrepreneurs, such as epistemic communities or advocacy networks, socialize domestic actors into new norms and rules of appropriateness through persuasion and social learning, who redefine their interests and identities accordingly. The more active norm entrepreneurs are and the more they succeed in making EU policies resonate with domestic norms and beliefs, the more successful they will be in bringing about domestic change. Moreover, collective understandings of appropriate behaviour strongly influence the ways in which domestic actors download EU requirements. First, a consensus-oriented or cooperative decision-making culture helps to overcome multiple veto points by rendering their use for actors inappropriate. Second, a consensus-oriented political culture allows for a sharing of adaptational costs, which facilitates the accommodation of pressure for adaptation. Rather than shifting adaptational costs upon a social or political minority, the “winners” of domestic change compensate the “losers.”

The eastern enlargement of the EU created a unique opportunity for the next generation of Europeanization research to test the approaches that had emerged to account for the conditions and causal mechanisms through which the EU triggers domestic change. The two logics of Europeanization were applied and adapted to studying the domestic impact of the EU's attempt to transfer its policies and institutions to candidate countries (cf. Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005; Sedelmeier 2006; Schimmelfennig 2007; Kelley 2004b; Epstein 2008), and increasingly, also to its eastern and southern neighbours in the former Soviet Union and the Mediterranean, respectively (Lavenex et al. 2007; Lavenex 2008; Schimmelfennig and Scholtz 2009; Börzel 2010b).

Findings on ‘Accession Europeanization’ and ‘Neighbourhood Europeanization’ have corroborated the differential impact of Europe. While domestic mediating factors

played a less prominent role than in ‘Membership Europeanization’, they did mitigate the domestic impact of accession, particularly beyond the legal implementation of EU policies. In the case of the CEE accession countries, the dominance of differential empowerment through conditionality has given rise to concerns about “shallow Europeanization” (Goetz 2005: 262) since sustainable compliance with (costly) EU policies ultimately requires internalization. The CEE countries formally adopted a massive amount of EU legislation, which, however, has often not been properly applied and enforced and thus has not changed actors’ behaviour (Falkner et al. 2008; Börzel 2009). The neighbourhood countries have largely resisted domestic change. Their deficient democratic institutions and/or their limited state capacity have mitigated and constrained the domestic impact of the EU. High misfit imposing prohibitive costs to incumbent governments, weak to nonexistent EU conditionality, the absence of domestic reform coalitions, and weak administrative capacities to orchestrate reforms render domestic change induced by Europeanization extremely unlikely (Schimmelfennig and Scholtz 2009; Börzel 2010b).

The literature on Europeanization yields important implications for the internal effects of regionalism in other parts of the world. The European Union is certainly a most likely case in this regard. EU institutions are strong and its policies comprehensive. While member states often face significant misfit, the resonance of EU policies and institutions with their domestic structures is comparatively high. Other regional institutions may be less likely to deploy a transformative effect on their members. Yet, the change mechanisms still apply. Similar to the EU, the Mercosur, ECOWAS, the African Union, or ASEAN have increasingly defined institutional requirements for ‘good governance’ which their members have to respect. Next to human rights, the rule of law, democracy, and the fight against corruption form part of the governance package many regional organizations

seek to promote. Moreover, they have developed instruments in trying to shape the governance institutions of their members which draw on similar causal mechanisms as the Europeanization approaches (Bruszt and McDermott 2009). To what extent regional organizations have had an impact on the governance structures of their members is yet to be explored.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has argued that the rise in regionalism does not constitute a new phenomenon. However, what is certainly distinct about regionalism in the 21st century is the extent to which it draws on existing forms. Due to its lasting success, the EU has become an important reference point in Latin America, Africa, and Asia as a model to emulate or to resist (Telò 2001; Farrell 2007; Henry 2007; Katsumata 2009; Jetschke 2010).⁸ The EU itself has sought to supply its institutions in region-to-region dialogue and interregional trade agreements (De Lombaerde and Schulz 2009; Söderbaum and Langenhove 2006; Farrel 2009). To foster the diffusion of regional governance structures, the EU has drawn on the same set of instruments it deployed in seeking to change the domestic structures of (prospective) member states and neighbouring countries (Börzel and Risse 2009).

The EU's partnership approach contrasts with that of the United States, whose 'hub and-spoke' model entails more asymmetrical relations and is largely restricted to economic regionalism (Grugel 2004; Farrell 2007; Clarkson 2008). To the extent that the United States promotes regional cooperation at all, it favours regional free trade areas rather than the deeper and broader integration schemes the EU seeks to promote. Whether the EU is really the "hub of a global pattern of interregional relations" (Hettne 2005: 558) from which it seeks to reconstruct a multilateral world order in a regionalized form (multiregionalism), and to what

extent this is part of its identity as a civilian or normative power or simply the attempt to expand its (liberal) empire (Manners 2002; Telò 2006; Whitman 1998; Cooper 2003) is another question.

If there is an "emerging regional architecture of world politics" (Acharya and Johnston 2007), the EU is not the only way for regional organizations to improve their effectiveness and legitimacy or shield themselves against external criticism. ECOWAS, for instance, has served as a role model in security integration for other African regional organizations (Holt and Shanahan 2005). While there is certainly not one dominant form, regionalism has become part of a global governance script, in which region building does not only feature as an effective and legitimate way to foster peace and prosperity but which sees "regions as the fundamental, even driving force of world politics" (Fawn 2009).

NOTES

This chapter has benefitted from comments and suggestions by Eugenia Conceicao-Heldt, Liesbet Hooghe, Vera van Hüllen, Jolyon Howorth, Anja Jetschke, Tobias Lenz, Ulrike, David Levi-Four, Lorenz, Gary Marks, Osvaldo Saldías, Vivien Schmidt, and the participants of the KFG Research Colloquium "Transformative Power of Europe". I am also grateful to the editors for their useful criticism.

1 Kathleen Hancock shows in her comparative study on "plutocratic" regional organizations that states can also delegate authority to the wealthiest member state (Hancock 2009).

2 Inter alia Mansfield and Milner 1999; Mattli 1999b; Fawcett and Hurrell 2000; Breslin 2002; Buzan and Weaver 2003; Katzenstein 2005; Acharya and Johnston 2007.

3 The WTO defines regional trade agreements as "agreements concluded between countries not necessarily belonging to the same geographical region" (http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/region_e/scope_rta_e.htm, last access March 31, 2010). RTAs are forms of preferential trade liberalization which by definition cannot be global (cf. Art. 24; http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/region_e/regatt_e.htm#gatt; last access March 31, 2010).

4 The numbers are drawn from the WTO database on regional trade agreements (RTA), which

includes only 207 RTA in force (http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/region_e/region_e.htm, last access March 30, 2010).

5 Note that each economic and monetary union is a common market and a custom union, and each common market is a custom union. We count every regional organization only once at its deepest stage of economic integration. The numbers are drawn from the WTO Regional Trade Agreements Information System (RTA-IS) <http://rtais.wto.org/UI/publicPreDefRepByRTAType.aspx>; and the McGill University PTA Database <http://ptas.mcgill.ca/index.php> (last access May 10, 2010).

6 There is no authoritative definition of regional organizations. Unlike international organizations, their geographic basis precludes global membership (Nye 1971: 8). While the Handbook of International Organizations lists about 100 regional organizations, only half of them cover a broader spectrum of functions and tasks that touch upon more than one issue area (Union of International Associations 2000).

7 Economists, of course, have been more interested in the economic effects of European integration; see, e.g., Winters and Venables 1991.

8 For a similar debate in the 1960s, see Haas 1961; Nye 1965.

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Nationalism and Ethnicity in International Relations

Lars-Erik Cederman

Today, most political scientists accept that ethnicity is highly relevant to their field. Yet, until the 1990s, International Relations (IR) studies on these topics were few and far between. It was only after considerable delay that the literature vindicated Donald Horowitz's (1985) comment that ethnicity has "fought and bled and burned its way into public and scholarly consciousness." In fact, it took an extraordinary amount of ethnic conflict in the early 1990s for scholars to begin to grapple with the challenge posed by these topics. Further boosted by the role played by religious and cultural cleavages in the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, this initial scholarship has grown into an avalanche of scholarly activity covering various aspects of ethnicity in domestic and international politics.

However, the same can certainly not be said of nationalism. While the events in the former Yugoslavia spawned fascination with nationalist conflict processes, the initial interest in the topic following the fall of the Berlin Wall appears to be subsiding. As I will argue in this chapter, many researchers focusing on conflict processes among ethnic groups have

been much more hesitant to grant the state an explicit role and instead tend to view ethnicity primarily in terms of demography. Yet, there are some signs that this trend may be turning. Indeed, recent quantitative studies on nationalism have started to employ improved theory and data that show how state representatives are far from ethnically neutral as they ethnicize their bureaucracies, favor or discriminate against specific ethnic groups, and intervene in conflict processes to help ethnic kin across their borders.

Because of the literature's richness, this review does not even come close to capturing all aspects of ethnicity and nationalism. First, as opposed to other reviews of these topics that cover the social science literature more broadly, the current chapter focuses primarily on contributions to political science.¹ Second, here I review literature on primarily conflict-related phenomena as opposed to identity processes in general.² Third, the present review highlights quantitative studies of ethnicity and nationalism in order to do justice to the ascendance of the quantitative civil war literature, which has enriched and further developed the first wave of statistical

work on ethnic conflict in the 1990s. However, since ethnicity and nationalism are capable of transgressing and transforming state borders, this chapter discusses ethnicity and nationalism in the context of both internal and external conflict, which means that it also often crosses the boundary between IR and comparative politics.

This chapter is organized as follows. The next section discusses definitions and introduces a simple classification of the literature, which indicates whether it covers ethnic or national conflict within or beyond state borders. The subsequent four sections cover each of these categories, followed by a concluding section that evaluates progress and discusses the direction of future research.

DEFINING THE MASTER CONCEPTS

It has become a cliché to characterize the key concepts relating to ethnicity and nationalism as hopelessly elusive. Nevertheless, despite some signs of improvement, observations to this effect remain pertinent. What is more, political science seems curiously resistant to repeated attempts at clarification of the fundamental ontology. The perhaps most obvious misunderstanding pertains to two central concepts, namely, the state and the nation. To disentangle these terms, it is helpful to start with Max Weber's (1946) classical definition of the *state* as an organization exercising legitimate control over its own bounded territory, unchallenged by internal power competition or external intervention. This definition contrasts with Weber's 1946 concept of the *nation*, which he defines as "a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own" and hence "tends to produce a state of its own" (p. 176, see also Haas 1986, p. 726; Cederman 1997, pp. 16–19).

This preliminary definition of the nation calls for several remarks. First, although the nation sometimes coincides with the state, such a coincidence should be treated as a

historical contingency rather than as a case of conceptual unity (Connor 1972, 1994). Where the state and the nation do coincide, it is legitimate to refer to the *nation-state*. Second, rather than being objectively given, Weber's definition requires the presence of an intersubjective understanding of belonging.³ This is precisely what Benedict Anderson (1991) aptly labels an "imagined community." In addition, the nation must be a bounded community defining citizenship for the masses. Third, Weber's nation concept depends directly on the state. The emergence of nations presupposes the existence of the state. By definition, there can be no nations independent of the state system.⁴ Yet, since some nations do not fight for full sovereignty but instead claim wide-ranging powers, it makes sense to extend Weber's demanding definition to self-defined communities that pursue territorial autonomy within an existing state framework (e.g., Brubaker 1998, p. 276; Snyder 2000, p. 19).

Having discussed the state and nation as basic social units, I now turn to the notion of *nationalism*. Again, there is a plethora of definitions to choose from, but this chapter limits the use of the term to a specific ideology with European origins stating that each nation should possess its own state or at least some degree of territorial self-determination. This definition is similar to, but more precise than, Gellner's (1983, p. 1) classical formula stating that "nationalism is primarily a political doctrine, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent."⁵ Viewed as a corollary, this simple definition implies (1) that the world is divided into nations, (2) that the nation is the source of all political power, and (3) that national loyalty overrides all other allegiances as a "trump card" (cf. Smith 1991, p. 72; Calhoun 1993; 1997).

The reference to the state highlights the second pernicious terminological blurring characterizing much of the political science literature, namely, the failure to separate nationalism from ethnicity. As argued in the introductory section, too often the two

are treated as if they were synonymous, especially in loose references to “ethnic conflict.” Again I follow Weber in defining *ethnicity* as any subjectively experienced sense of commonality based on the belief in common ancestry and shared culture (Weber 1978, pp. 385–98). An *ethnic group*, then, is as a cultural community based on a common belief in putative descent.⁶ This definition of ethnicity presupposes the existence of large-scale categorical identification that goes beyond direct lines of descent and therefore excludes clans. Ethnic groups can, but do not have to, be based on religious traits, as long as religious belief is understood to be passed on generation by generation.⁷ Clearly, ethnic groups differ from nations in that they do not necessarily claim statehood and can exist in a world without modern states. Conversely, it should also be noted that not all nations are ethnic groups. Although nations sometimes correspond closely to ethnic groups, in which case they are usually referred to as nations’ “ethnic cores,” other nations contain many ethnic groups and may in some cases be devoid of any strong sense of overarching ethnic identity, as illustrated by civic

nationalism in Switzerland and elsewhere (cf. Barrington 1997, p. 731).⁸

Equipped with this basic terminology, we are now in a position to confront the task of surveying the literatures on ethnicity and nationalism. In fact, the tendency to downplay nationalism in favor of narrow conceptions of ethnicity is clearly visible in terms of scholarly output. Based on a simple search for articles in political science journals referring to ethnicity or nationalism, Figure 21.1 shows that the number of articles covering the former conflict has increased steadily from the 1980s. The picture as regards articles on nationalism is very different. Here, the Cold War seems to have inspired a growth of interest, but the numbers are lower than those for ethnicity, and during the most recent five-year period, the trend has been sharply declining.

Beyond tracing the overall trend, this chapter reviews the relevant literature in greater detail along two dimensions. On the one hand, I divide the writings according to whether they focus on ethnicity or nationalism as their basic explanatory categories.⁹ On the other hand, I separate the literature

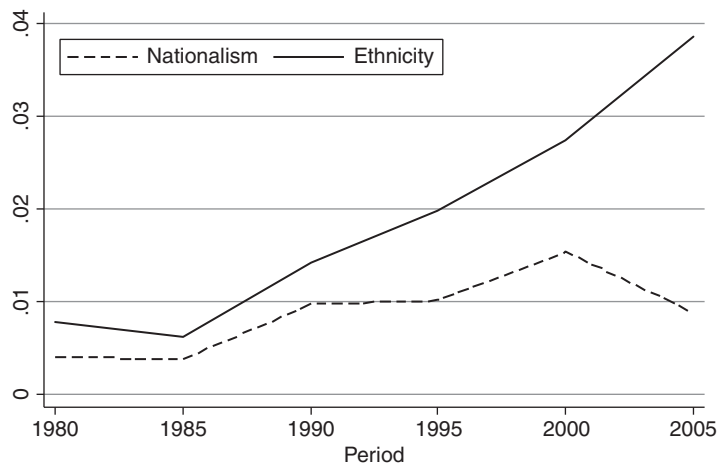


Figure 21.1 Relative number of political science articles about ethnicity and nationalism, measured as the share of all articles that include the keywords “ethnic” or “ethnicity” or the keywords “nationalist” or “nationalism,” respectively, in the title or the abstract compared to all political science articles, proxied as the five-year count of all entries from political science journals in JSTOR that include the keyword “political” somewhere in the text.

according to whether the main goal is to account for internal or external conflict.¹⁰ The following four sections of this chapter will be devoted to each of these categories in turn, starting with studies of ethnicity and internal conflict, followed by ethnicity and external conflict, nationalism and internal conflict, and finally nationalism and external conflict.

ETHNICITY AND INTERNAL CONFLICT

This review of the literature starts by considering studies of ethnicity and internal conflict. The often-used, but poorly defined, concept “ethnic conflict” usually refers to conflicts among ethnic groups within countries, including communal conflict and ethnic civil wars following state collapse. In these cases, the focus on ethnicity usually implies that the state plays a relatively passive role, and in some cases is almost entirely absent.

Ancient hatred

The end of the Cold War saw a remarkable surge of interest in ethnic conflict thus defined, both within IR and comparative politics. Reacting to the painful images broadcast from the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, politicians and journalists have tended to attribute the appalling acts of violence to long-standing, “centuries old” hatreds between ethnic groups. The metaphorically framed argument assumes that conflict erupts as soon as the state’s power wanes: once the lid is lifted the “seething cauldron” boils over (Brubaker 1998, pp. 281–5). Although most academic commentators disagree with this version of events, some scholars have adopted this line of argument. These studies rely heavily on immutable ethnic identities as the main factor perpetuating the animosities. In an often-cited interpretation of the Yugoslav conflict, Robert Kaplan (1993) attributes the violence to a specific trait characterizing the entire region’s allegedly belligerent culture.

However, most social scientists generally reject these essentialist perspectives as oversimplified (cf. Laitin 1998, ch. 12; Snyder 2000, ch. 1; Toft 2003, ch. 1). Countless studies have undermined nationalists’ claims about alleged unbroken historical bonds connecting modern ethnicity with ancient history (e.g., Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992). Moreover, essentialist perspectives treat ethnic identities as much more cohesive than they really are (e.g., Brubaker 1998). Yet, the rejection of conflict-reifying determinism does not imply that all arguments involving ethnic stability are tantamount to primordialism or that hatred plays no role in conflict processes (Petersen 2002). Indeed, it cannot be excluded that specific cultural types of discourse are violence inducing (Brubaker 1998, p. 283), nor does it seem implausible that violence does harden group boundaries (e.g., Kaufmann 1996, 1998; though see Kalyvas 2008b).¹¹

The security dilemma

Nevertheless, the fact that most violent conflicts usually cannot be traced back to “centuries old” conflict undermines “ancient hatred” accounts. To illustrate, most Yugoslavs lived peacefully side by side until shortly before the violence erupted (Woodward 1995; Sekulic et al. 1994). In order to resolve this anomaly, some IR theorists have thus attempted to account for conflictual outcomes by replacing the strong assumptions of long-standing hatred by weaker postulates.

In an analytical shift paralleling the neorealist move from classical realist “reductionism” to systemic reasoning, Barry Posen (1993b) suggests that the ethnic conflict in post-communist Europe should be seen as a situation of “emerging anarchy.” Using the same logic as in a traditional interstate setting, Posen contends that belligerent ethnic groups, such as Croats and Serbs in the early 1990s, are subject to a security dilemma (Jervis 1978), because without stable state-led

enforcement, they cannot trust each other and commit to liberal policies. On this view, ethnic conflict erupts due to offensive strategies and high degrees of uncertainty. According to Posen, the offense dominance and the risk of preemption stem from the nature of post-imperial groups, the fragmented geopolitical boundaries of which are particularly hard to defend. The poor information conditions derive from the heavy reliance on oral history that invites worst-case analysis.

Some rational-choice modelers have formalized variations on the security dilemma theme (see Weingast 1998). Viewed more broadly, this rationalistic literature stresses information failures and problems of credible commitments (Lake and Rothchild 1998). More philosophically, Russell Hardin (1995) proposes a rationalistic framework as an antidote to “primordialist” explanations, suggesting that ethnicity can solve collective action problems *within* groups while creating suboptimal outcomes *between* them driven by preemption and a lack of centralized control.

Security dilemma analysis usefully points to action–reaction effects that lock the participants into an escalating process of increasing radicalism and violence. Such phenomena have found recent statistical support in Melander’s (2009) careful study of regional ethnic diversity, which shows that ethnic groups with regionally diverse settlement areas are more likely to experience violence. Yet, these studies omit important elements of internal conflict processes. To begin with, anarchy is accepted as an assumption without further explanation, leaving ethnic conflict in strong states, such as Turkey, fundamentally puzzling. Moreover, Posen’s interpretation of the Yugoslav case reifies ethnic groups while “neglecting both the role of the state in constructing these identities and the cynical rewriting of history that is taking place to fit present political purposes” (Lapid and Kratochwil 1996, p. 115). Indeed, the substitution of ethnic groups for states confuses the fundamental nature of the

units and exaggerates the cohesion of ethnic groups (cf. Gagnon 1994/95; Laitin 1998, ch. 12).

Quantitative studies of ethnic conflict

In keeping with the growing influence of quantitative methods in political science, the empirical literature on ethnic conflict has come to rely more and more on statistical evidence. These advances are deeply indebted to Ted Gurr’s (1993) massive data collection effort under the rubric *Minorities at Risk* (MAR), which quickly established itself as the dominant data source on ethnicity and violence. Extending themes that were present in his classical work on relative deprivation theory, Gurr and his collaborators argue that ethnic groups experience different forms of conflict, including civil war, communal violence, and ethnic cleansing (Gurr 1993, 2000b). Based on similar, but independently created datasets, Ellingsen (2000) and Sambanis (2001) find that ethnic diversity is associated with ethnic civil wars.

These results have not remained unchallenged, however. In the late 1990s, a team of economists at the World Bank led by Paul Collier started publishing a series of influential papers on the causes of civil war. Contrasting their own approach explicitly with the grievance-based logic of political science theories, these authors claim that civil wars are instead caused by “greed” or “opportunities” (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). According to this “labor market” approach to civil wars, wars are more likely where potential rebels’ opportunity costs of fighting are especially low and natural resources invite warlords to enrich themselves by looting. In an influential article, Fearon and Laitin (2003) also argue that ethnic grievances are unrelated to political violence and instead propose a theory of insurgency that hinges on state weakness, especially in peripheral areas characterized by rough terrain.

This quantitative civil war literature typically operationalizes ethnic grievances with aggregated demographic proxies such as ethnic fractionalization or individual-level inequality operationalized as the Gini coefficient (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Collier and Hoeffler 2004), ethnic polarization (Reynal-Querol 2005), or ethnic domination measuring in terms of the largest group (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). Summing up these and other studies, Laitin (2007, p. 23) claims that quantitative data “undermine confidence in theories purporting to show that national aspirations, differences, or demographics are associated with communal violence or civil war.” Suspecting that these negative findings are due to selection bias and naïve interpretations of ethno-nationalist activists, Laitin (2007, p. 25) concludes that

ethnic grievances are commonly felt and latent; the factors that make these grievances vital and manifest differentiate the violent from the nonviolent cases. Ex ante measures of grievance levels are not good predictors of the transformation of latent grievances into manifest ones. And it is the factors that turn latent grievances into violent action that should be considered as explanatory for that violence.

Going even further, Mueller (2000) suggests that ethnic conflict is so banal that it could potentially take place in any society, as illustrated by British soccer hooligans and motorcycle gangs in Denmark: “Under the right conditions, thugs can rise to a dominant role, others can lend a hand or withdraw into terrified isolation or studied indifference, and any place can degenerate into a Bosnia or a Rwanda” (p. 68).

Nevertheless, one simple fact remains: about half of all civil wars since 1945 have been fought not primarily by soccer hooligans, motorcycle gangs, or for that matter by petty criminals and warlords, but by rebel organizations speaking with various degrees of legitimacy and support in the name of the ethno-nationalist causes that they represent. While criminals and other opportunistic actors certainly participate in many ethnic wars, this class of violence is

neither randomly distributed nor omnipresent: notwithstanding the fascination with violent sports fans and motorized marauders, ethno-nationalist violence is much more likely to erupt in Northern Ireland than in Denmark. In the sections on nationalism below, I will discuss literature that questions these attempts to trivialize ethnic claims. Before that, however, a section follows that reviews the literature on ethnic conflict beyond the state.

ETHNICITY AND EXTERNAL CONFLICT

If the role of ethnic politics has been controversial in the civil war literature, the same can also be said about the scholarly treatment of the link between ethnicity and external conflict. This is hardly surprising, especially in view of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001 that strongly influenced the debate about the role of ethnic and religious identities in transnational conflict processes during the past decade.

Ethnic similarity and interstate disputes

In a dramatic and highly publicized departure from the neorealist tradition, the late Samuel Huntington (1993, 1996) claimed that state behavior in the post-Cold War period would no longer primarily reflect power calculations or ideology but, rather, civilizational affiliations. Reifying civilizations as huge ethnic categories based on world religions, and anticipating violent action between them, Huntington suggests that specific “civilizational” traits are more violence-prone than others. In particular, Islamic culture allegedly provokes more conflicts than other civilizations. It is along the “fault lines” between the world religions that conflict will be most likely to erupt. In particular, the “kin-group syndrome” prompts intervention by distant

cultural relatives, as illustrated by Russian and Greek nationalists aligning themselves with Serbia.

Unsurprisingly, Huntington's thesis, with its overtly normative overtones, came in for immediate criticism because of its attempt to reify civilizations as large-scale ethnic categories despite their manifestly constructed and varying nature. The events on September 11, 2001, seemingly vindicated the civilizational perspective, but such an interpretation is fundamentally misleading given the deep cleavages within both the Western and Islamic "civilizations." For example, Fox (2003) shows that Moslems are more likely to fight their coreligionists than members of other religions. Indeed, it could even be argued that religious fanatics on both sides of the Islamic–Western cleavage have more in common with each other than with their religious kin.

The civilizational theory has also attracted critical scrutiny from scholars who, in contrast to Huntington himself, have exposed it to systematic evidence. As a rule, these statistical studies reject the theory. Using various data sources and controlling for other conflict correlates, Henderson and Tucker (2001), Henderson (2004), Chiozza (2002), and Fox (2005) fail to find empirical support that interstate disputes and wars are more common across civilizational fault lines than elsewhere.

In a comprehensive study of interstate identities and disputes, Gartzke and Gleditsch (2006) provide a statistical baseline for comparisons that improved on previous studies (cf. Henderson 1997) and warn against conflict-induced selection bias. Arguing that the fascination with the Huntingtonian thesis has tended to overshadow the more important question of whether ethnic ties affect interstate relations in general, they measure ethnic similarity explicitly in terms of both religion and language. Their study arrives at the surprising finding that violence is more likely among states with similar cultural ties, even when controlling for other determinants of conflict. However, mixed minority–majority dyads, that is, state pairs sharing an ethnic

group that is in a minority and a majority in the respective states, exhibit higher violence frequencies, a result that suggests a nationalist logic to which I will return below.

Diffusion of ethnic conflict

Besides influencing interstate relations directly, ethnic politics may also spread violence through contagion. In such cases, what started as an internal ethnic conflict spills over state borders, thus affecting other countries. In an edited volume, Lake and Rothchild (1996) and their colleagues study such processes. However, their proposed distinction between diffusion and escalation may not be the clearest distinction, and the contributors offer varying, if not conflicting, assessments of the risks of diffusion. Yet, the introductory chapter offers a useful discussion of the logic of spread that includes the following causal mechanisms. First, ethnic conflict may proliferate due to physical externalities through the spillover of violence from one state to the other, especially where ethnic rebels are able to establish cross-border bases and sanctuaries (Salehyan 2009). In some cases, such conflict processes also provoke significant flows of refugees that may disrupt the ethnic balance of the host state and some of whom use refugee camps for rebel recruitment (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006). Conflict diffusion of this type is illustrated by the destabilizing spread of conflict by Hutu refugees after the Rwandan genocide in 1994. While it is likely that ethnic kin affects such mechanisms, a lack of ethnic refugee data has so far prevented systematic generalization beyond well-known cases. Second, in addition to direct influences, behavioral demonstration effects may also drive diffusion. Political entrepreneurs could get inspiration from successful ethnic rebellions in neighboring countries (cf. Kuran 1998; see also Jenne 2007). Third, solidarity with ethnic kin fighting civil wars in neighboring states may inspire ethnic groups to get directly involved in cross-border combat, or to put pressure on their own governments to intervene in such

conflicts. Since the active involvement of the state implies that the ethnic-kin effect follows an explicitly nationalist logic in most cases, we will have reasons to return to such configurations under the heading of irredentism below.¹²

In sum, the literatures on ethnic conflict and civil wars both have difficulties in capturing transborder spread of violence. In the latter case, the “closed-polity” assumption inherent in most studies of civil war tends to obscure transborder mechanisms, though efforts are under way to overcome this limitation (Gleditsch 2007). Indeed, the writings reviewed in this section have made useful progress toward specifying the role of ethnicity in border-transgressing processes. However, Huntington’s civilizational approach has not been confirmed by systematic studies and has tended to overshadow less sweeping generalizations involving ethno-nationalist claim-making. Likewise, the literature on the diffusion of ethnic conflict suffers from a lack of attention to the role played by the state in external conflict.

NATIONALISM AND INTERNAL CONFLICT

As illustrated by the two preceding sections, the state is relatively peripheral to most conventional theories of ethnic conflict.¹³ Indeed, some studies analyze conflict between ethnic groups under conditions of state failure, thus making the absence of the state the very core of the causal argument. Others assume that the state is ethnically neutral and try to relate ethno-demographic diversity measures, such as fractionalization and polarization, to civil war.¹⁴

To a large extent, theories of nationalism fill this theoretical void by bringing the state back into the very center of conflict processes. Indeed, most modern ethnic wars concern ethnic groups’ access to state power, whether their representatives defend their incumbent governmental power or challenge

existing power structures (Gellner 1983; 1991, 2002; see also Brass 1991). Since nationalist violence does not respect borders, the next section discusses nationalist conflict beyond the state. For now, however, the discussion will focus on the link between nationalism and civil war.

Given the principle of ethno-national representativity embodied by the modern nation-state, it can be expected that challengers seek to avoid the rule of ethnic others by gaining access to the polity or leaving it in favor of a new polity or an already existing kin state. According to Gellner (1983, p. 1), “ethnic boundaries within a given state ... should not separate the power-holders from the rest.” Power holders should want to maximize their share of state power – thus opening the possibility of infighting among power-sharing partners.

Civil wars confront incumbent governments with political and military organizations that challenge the governments’ claim to sovereign rule. This situation corresponds to standard definitions of civil war (Sambanis 2004; Kalyvas 2007), but excludes communal conflicts or pogroms in which the state plays less of an active role (though see Horowitz 2002; Wilkinson 2009). In conflicts that are fought in the name of excluded groups, rebel movements are composed of mobilized and militarized organizations that challenge the government. In the case of challenges launched in the name of groups that are already represented within government, other actors such as a faction within the army or newly created political organizations and militias might instigate a violent confrontation.

Although this logic seems straightforward, the mere presence of grievances does not automatically trigger mobilization, let alone collective violence. According to the ubiquity-of-ethnic-grievances argument referred to in the discussion of recent political economy approaches to civil war above, ethnic pretexts for rebellion drown in the omnipresence of political frustration, depriving them of any predictive value. Theories of

ethno-nationalist civil wars must therefore provide specific mechanisms that connect the structural asymmetries associated with alien rule and ethno-nationalist discrimination with the outbreak of violence. More precisely, first we need to know how objective political and economic inequalities can be transformed into collectively felt grievances. In a second step, it must be shown how such grievances trigger violent collective action through a process of mobilization.

From structural inequalities to grievances

By definition, grievances are subjectively perceived phenomena rather than objective conditions. As noted above, this makes them very hard to measure (Blattman and Miguel 2009), but the extensive experimental literature in social psychology suggests plausible mechanisms connecting structural asymmetries to collective violence (Hogg and Abrams 1988).

Yet, before grievances can be felt, they need to be cognitively linked to social identities through self-categorization (Hogg and Abrams 1988, p. 21). Clearly, the salience of ethnic distinctions varies over time and from case to case (Gurr 2000a), but once group identities become salient, members of the involved groups are prone to making social comparisons that hinge on the distinction between in-groups and out-groups (Turner 1981). While it is true that modern politics is to a large extent group based, and social life hinges on social categories (Simmel [1908] 1971; Gellner 1964; Hogg and Abrams 1988), the extent to which cohesive groups actually can be said to exist is ultimately a matter of empirical analysis and may vary from region to region. Some theorists cast doubt on the usefulness of collective identities and ethnic groups as analytical concepts (e.g., Brubaker 2004; Kalyvas 2008a). To be sure, pre-modern clan-based societies, including Afghanistan and Somalia, represent a poor

fit with nationalist politics, but in most other cases, even modest levels of development enable nationalist entrepreneurs to operate effectively.

Building on social-psychological theory, Horowitz (1985) argues that social comparison reflecting superiority or inferiority is likely to trigger conflict. According to “realistic conflict theory,” a social-psychological perspective pioneered by Sherif, conflicting claims to scarce resources, including power, prestige, and wealth, are likely to produce ethnocentric and antagonistic intergroup relations (Levine and Campbell 1972). In addition to such direct consequences of objective differences, social identity theory tells us that mere awareness of social outgroups may be sufficient to provoke competitive behavior even in the absence of objective issues of contention and could in itself create new stratification structures (Tajfel and Turner 1979).

The processes of social comparison and intergroup evaluation are far from emotionally neutral. In particular, violations of norms of justice and equality will typically arouse feelings of anger and resentment among members of the disadvantaged group. Pointing out that inequalities in themselves do not automatically trigger protest, Williams (2003, 131) argues that

a real grievance, regarded as the basis for complaint or redress, rests upon the claim that an *injustice* has been inflicted upon undeserving victims. Grievances are normative protests, claiming violations of rights or rules. Those who are intensively aggrieved may use the language of moral outrage.¹⁵

Along similar lines, Petersen (2002) shows that resentment based on intergroup comparisons involving horizontal inequalities often provokes ethnic mobilization (cf. Kaufman 2001). Inspired by Horowitz’ (1985) “positional psychology,” Petersen explains that “resentment is the feeling of being *politically* dominated by a group that has no right to be in a superior position. It is the everyday experience of these perceived status relations

that breeds the emotion” (p. 40). Thus, objective horizontal inequalities, combined with intergroup comparison, can lead to subjectively felt grievances.

From grievances to collective action

Clearly, emotions do not automatically trigger violent behavior. Under some institutional circumstances, redress can be sought through peaceful means (Hogg and Abrams 1988). Yet, most governmental incumbents will only reluctantly abandon their advantaged position by sharing power or letting minorities secede. Without resources and organization, anger alone can do little to challenge powerful defenders of the status quo (Tilly 1978; Oberschall 1978). Moreover, since Olson’s classical treatment of the free-rider problem, it has been known that collective action cannot be taken for granted, especially where the costs incurred by volunteering individuals may be high (Lichbach 1995).

However, there are good reasons to believe that the collective-action dilemma may have been overstated in the context of civil wars. As convincingly argued by Kalyvas and Kocher (2007), the existence of a dilemma hinges on the assumption that participation in combat is costlier than nonparticipation. While armed conflict no doubt poses acute risks to members of rebel organizations, there is no guarantee that staying away from the fighting is the safer option, especially where collateral violence affects civilians more than combatants and where noncooperating civilians are exposed to targeted punishment for nonparticipation.

Collective-action theorists may object that punishment is also costly and should be subject to free-riding, but experimental evidence shows that individuals are often more than willing to invest in costly punishment of free-riders and norm violators (Fehr 2000; see also references in Blattman and Miguel 2009). Thanks to preexisting social networks, ethnic groups may also provide

organizational structure at the micro-level that can be used to overcome free-riding (Hechter and Okamoto 2001). Moreover, a series of studies show that collective identities, such as those constituting ethnic groups, facilitate collective action: “People who strongly identify with a group generally feel an obligation to act if the group acts, and believe that other group members will act with them” (Goldstone 2001, p. 164; see also Simpson and Macy 2004; Gates 2002; Wendt 1994).

While organizational and cognitive factors are central to mobilization, it would be a mistake to overlook the contribution of emotionally charged grievances (Wood 2003; Emirbayer and Goldberg 2005). Thus, rather than classifying inequality as a pure “grievance” factor, its impact should be seen as a mobilizational resource.

Evidence of ethno-nationalist civil wars

Having connected alien rule with violence through plausible mechanisms, the question remains whether there is evidence for such a connection. Whereas some studies attempt to trace the process in detail for selected cases (Beissinger 2002; Petersen 2002), here I focus on statistical assessments at a higher level of aggregation. Building on work in the relative deprivation tradition, the Minorities at Risk (MAR) dataset established by Gurr and his colleagues remains the most prominent data source used to evaluate ethnic mobilizations and violence at the group level (Gurr 1993, 2000b). Most scholars in this tradition study the consequences of economic, political, and cultural discrimination and report a positive effect of these factors on conflict, although the effect is indirect through ethnic mobilization (Gurr 1993, 2000b; Regan and Norton 2005).

However, the MAR dataset is not ideally suited to study groups’ access to power since it restricts its sample primarily to mobilized minorities and thus largely overlooks the ethno-political constellation of power at the

center. Therefore, a series of studies have relied on other samples of ethnic groups. In a replication and critique of Fearon and Laitin (2003), Cederman and Girardin (2007) propose a new index of ethno-ethnic exclusion, called N^* , that is based on preliminary measurements of power access for the Eurasian and North African groups, and find a strong influence of ethno-nationalist exclusion of large groups on civil war onset. Disaggregating geo-coded group-level data from the Soviet *Atlas Narodov Mira*, Buhaug, Cederman, and Rød (2008) confirm these results at the group level (see also Cederman, Buhaug, and Rød 2009 for an extension to the entire world). This center-periphery approach indicates that exclusion of powerful ethnic groups increases the likelihood of conflict considerably, especially if the excluded group is located far from the country's capital and if its settlement area is characterized by rough terrain.¹⁶

Based on an online expert survey, the dataset on Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) attempts to overcome many of the shortcomings of previous datasets by providing a comprehensive power-access coding for all politically relevant ethnic groups around the world from 1946 through 2005.¹⁷ In a disaggregated study, Cederman, Wimmer, and Min (2010) use this data source to establish that political exclusion, especially recent loss of power, is strongly linked to the outbreak of civil wars while controlling for groups' demographic size and conflict history (see also Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009 for a study of power configurations and conflict at the country level).

Offering an even broader, multidimensional assessment of structural inequalities within states, Stewart (2009) has introduced the notion of "horizontal inequality" as a response to "vertical" inequality among individual households. Defining this concept as "inequalities in economic, social or political dimensions or cultural status between culturally defined groups" (p. 3), Stewart argues that to a large extent, political economists have failed to find evidence of inequality's war-causing effect because of their reliance on individualist, rather than group-based,

measures of income and power differences. Recognizing the difficulties of measuring horizontal inequalities, Stewart's team relies primarily on cases studies rather than large-N comparisons (see the contributions in Stewart 2009). The picture that emerges from these studies suggests that both disadvantaged and advanced groups have a higher likelihood of getting involved in internal conflict than groups closer to the country mean. Relying on household surveys conducted in 39 developing countries, Østby (2008) finds evidence that social horizontal inequality causes civil war, although the economic dimension appears to be weaker (see also her contribution to Stewart 2009).

Group-level inequalities are especially likely to trigger secessionist conflict, whether the ethno-nationalist group in question is wealthier or poorer than the country average (Horowitz 1985; Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011).¹⁸ Recent empirical research, most of it quantitative, shows that separatist nationalism is more likely to provoke collective violence where ethnic groups are highly concentrated (Toft 2003; Weidmann 2009), enjoyed a higher level of autonomy in the past (Hechter 2001; Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009), were exposed to state-led repression (Lustick, Miodownik, and Eidelson 2004), and reside in resource-rich regions (Sambanis and Milanovic 2009), or where the country in question contains many other potential secessionist groups (Walter 2006).

Although structural conditions are important determinants of secessionist violence, state policies also influence the probability of conflict. Blocked demands for sovereignty (Sambanis and Milanovic 2009), possibly combined with state-led repression and discrimination (Gurr 2000b), may inspire separatist movements and provoke armed resistance. Under such conditions, granting the secessionist minority regional autonomy could help foster collaboration among moderates, thus stabilizing the situation (Hechter 2001). However, other scholars have found that while decentralization may curb ethno-nationalist mobilization in the

short run, the long-run consequences of “ethnic federalism” will be even more destabilizing (Bunce 1999; Roeder 2005; Brancati 2009; cf. Deiwiks 2011). The next section considers the external consequences of secession under the heading of partition.

By highlighting the active part played by the state, the current section has shown how inequalities have emerged in history that violate nationalist norms of equitable distribution of political representation and public goods. Furthermore, the section proposed a set of mechanisms capable of triggering grievances that in turn often provoke mobilization processes, with collective violence as an increasingly likely outcome. Recent quantitative evidence appears to show that both political and economic inequality at the group level can be associated with civil war outcomes, thus resolving the puzzle left open by ethno-demographic approaches that fail to appreciate the state’s role in such conflict processes.

NATIONALISM AND EXTERNAL CONFLICT

Although nationalism has the capacity to destabilize multi-ethnic states through rebellion and civil war, its destabilizing potential goes well beyond the borders of particular states. This section reviews theories and evidence of nationalist conflict processes among states. In fact, nationalism not only transgresses state borders, it also transforms them. Thus, at the systemic or regional level, it makes very little sense to study internal and external conflict separately. Under such conditions, what was literally “inside” yesterday becomes “outside” tomorrow and vice versa. Theoretical schemes and disciplinary categorizations that “hard-wire” the internal–external distinction into units of analysis and causal explanations rule out changes of territorial and national boundaries by assumption.

Nationalist systems change

Drawing on Gilpin’s (1981) terminology, this type of transformation can be classified as “nationalist systems change.”¹⁹ Viewed as a special case of the broader category of systems change, this type of macro-historical process prompted nations to play the main role on the world stage along with states, roughly from the time of the French Revolution (Cederman, Warren, and Sornette 2011; see also Hall 1999). The importance of the nation can be found in the way that this entity legitimizes the state. As opposed to the “descending” principle of territorial sovereignty that justifies governance in personal, dynastic, and possibly even divine, terms, the French Revolution introduced an “ascending” logic that defines the people, conceived of as the nation, as the locus of political legitimacy (Calhoun 1997).

Despite the obvious historical significance of nationalist systems change, contemporary theorists have been slow to realize the explosiveness of nationalism. To a large extent this is due to theoretical barriers that continue to haunt IR scholarship. Aspiring to a high level of abstraction, scholars in that field typically refer to “units” and “states” in sweeping and often ahistorical ways (Hobson 2002). Unsurprisingly, realist IR scholars have also tended to lose sight of nationalist systems change (e.g., Krasner 1988; though see Bull 1977), but the most important constructivist analyses of sovereignty suffer from a similar blind spot since they focus entirely on state identities, as opposed to national ones (Philpott 2001; Wendt 1999; though see Hall 1999; Bukovansky 1999).

As soon as the conceptual independence of the nation is realized, it becomes possible to study the geopolitical consequences of nationalist systems change. In order to do so, I propose a simple, historically inspired taxonomy that will help to identify the main types of nationalism. Following up the distinction between the state and the nation given above, Figure 21.2 introduces a two-dimensional scheme depicting stylized

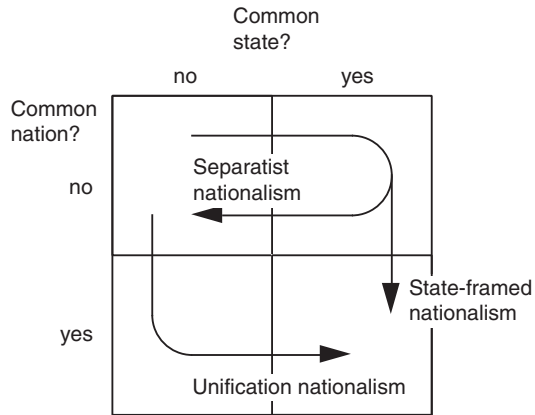


Figure 21.2 Three historical types of nationalism.

historical situations. Logically speaking, such situations can be characterized by either the presence or absence of a *common* state and/or nation.

Starting with the anarchical configuration in the upper-left quadrant, where neither entity dominates the entire area, I sketch three developmental paths that can, but do not have to, lead to the formation of a nation-state in the lower-right corner. This dynamic categorization draws on Theodor Schieder's (1991) three ideal types of nationalism (see also Cederman 1997, ch. 6). Depending on the initial geo-cultural configuration, either a common state emerges before the nation or nation building precedes state formation. The former "Western European" possibility leads *state-framed nationalism* (Brubaker 1996). In Germany and Italy, the order was arguably reversed, such that a cultural nation preceded the state, thus generating *unification nationalism*. Finally, when the East European empires collapsed, *separatist nationalism* appeared in their wake. While originally associated with European cases, these three trajectories are quite general, and could be applied to both decolonization (e.g., Mayall 1990) and post-communist nationalism (e.g., Bunce 1999).

Consequences of nationalist systems-change

Since nationalism requires national and territorial units to coincide, pressures will be exerted on existing state frameworks where this is not the case, that is, in the "mixed situations" corresponding to the upper-right and the lower-left cells. In a very simplified way, the diagram thus illustrates that nationalist activity can lead to both strengthening of states (state-framed nationalism), and instability, leading to either political integration (unification nationalism) or to territorial fragmentation (separatist nationalism).

In the case of successful state-framed nationalism, nationalist mobilization implies a number of advantages relating to resources, motivations, and tactical advantages that can be exploited in warfare. As realized by Clausewitz (1984), the most obvious advantage pertains to the sheer scale of combat that became possible thanks to the *levée en masse*. By tapping into the demographic resources of the entire state rather than relying on mercenaries or professional troops organized in standing armies, Napoleon and his successors eroded the distinction between warriors and the citizenry (Hintze 1975;

Howard 1976; Posen 1993a; Cederman, Warren, and Sornette 2011). In more narrow technical terms, the stronger motivation associated with nationalist combat also implies important tactical advantages. Whereas the military leaders of earlier generations had to rely on large “cellular formations” in order to prevent deserters from leaving the battle field, the new era made it possible and necessary to allow soldiers to operate in thin lines or even in detached small combat groups (Martin 2005; Hintze 1975).

Nationalist systems change does not only affect geopolitics through changes of the internal workings of states. In addition, and at least as importantly, this type of transformation affects profoundly the very shape and boundaries of the units in question. The notion of “corporate identity” captures what is at stake (Cederman and Daase 2003). Whereas most constructivist scholarship has focused on “type identities,” relating to the roles and attitudes of given actors, such as enmity and friendship (e.g., Wendt 1999), corporate identities define the geographic extent and demographic membership criteria of states. It can be expected that such a reconfiguration has profound repercussions for the scale of warfare.

Wherever the nation happens to coincide with the state, the boundary issue will cause little difficulty.²⁰ However, where the national and state boundaries do not coincide, nationalist systems change will trigger tensions that increase the likelihood of both internal and external conflict (Gellner 1983, p. 1). The correspondence between state and national borders can be helpfully operationalized in terms of state-to-nation balance (Miller 2007; see also Van Evera 1994). Specific types of conflict are likely to erupt depending on the value of this structural variable. It is possible to identify three main situations, each of which is directly linked to a particular conflict pattern:

First, regions characterized by a *state-to-nation deficit* tend to generate separatist nationalism because stateless nations try to attain statehood by seceding from existing

multinational entities for reasons discussed in the previous section. This is the most common type of conflict-inducing nationalism, as illustrated by the breakup of both colonial and land empires and other multi-ethnic states, from the Habsburg Empire to the former Soviet Union. Secessionist conflict has already been discussed under the heading of internal conflict in the previous section. Here it should be mentioned that the geopolitical consequences of secession continue to be intensively debated. Kaufmann’s (1996, 1998) essentialist argument in favor of partition as the ultimate way to end conflict, “when all else fails,” has attracted sustained criticism from Sambanis (2000) and Fearon (2004a), who claim that partition may be associated with less rather than more geopolitical stability through diffusion mechanisms including the moral hazard of secession. Based on a replication of the Sambanis (2000) study, Chapman and Roeder (2007) insist that partition offers the best chances of pacifying secessionist conflicts, mainly thanks to its allegedly simplifying effect on bargaining. However, as shown by Sambanis and Schulhofer-Wohl (2009), their criticism hinges on questionable coding decisions. While under ideal circumstances, partition separates ethnic populations, such conditions are highly unrealistic, making ethnic cleansing the unavoidable outcome of this policy.

Second, a *state-to-nation surplus* may trigger unification nationalism due to competition among smaller states that fight over which unit will lead the new unified state. Such competition may also trigger war, as was the case with the Italian and German unification processes in the nineteenth century. In these cases, states compete for dominance as putative leaders of the emerging nation. Using statistical methods, Woodwell (2007) finds that “majority-majority” dyads confronting states dominated by the same ethnic group are much more likely to experience militarized interstate disputes than other types of dyads, as illustrated by the power competition among Arab states in the quest

for “pan-Arabism” (see also Miller 2007; Gartzke and Gleditsch 2006).

Third, combining the two previous cases, two neighboring states may suffer a state-to-nation deficit and a surplus at the same time, in the sense that one nationalist group experiences a deficit of statehood in the first “host” state that corresponds to a “surplus” in the second “homeland” state. This configuration, which is referred to as irredentism, creates a pressure for the homeland to take action against the host state in order to “liberate” and “redeem” the group in question, resulting in interstate conflict. Less drastic forms of irredentism entail intervention in support of ethnic groups fighting civil wars against their own governments (Saideman 2001), as with Russia’s military involvement in support of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in the 2008 war in Georgia. Since this conflict category is considered to be especially destabilizing, it needs to be discussed at some length.

Irredentist conflict

Originally, the concept of irredentism stems from the Italian state’s claim to “redeem” its ethnic brethren in the Habsburg provinces Venice and Trento at the end of the nineteenth century. It can be defined as the attempt to break loose and integrate a territory populated by a “kin” population into the state of its ethnic “homeland” (e.g., Chazan 1991). Either the homeland state already exists (as in the case of newly unified Italy) or it has to yet been created (as in the Kurdish case). Thus, irredentism can be seen as a combination of nationalist secession and integration: “Irredentism involves subtracting from one state and adding to another state, new or already existing; secession involves subtracting alone” (Horowitz 1991, p. 10).

In a pioneering article introducing the notion of the “Macedonian syndrome,” Myron Weiner (1971) showed that aggressive nation building often spills over state borders. This realization highlights a triad of

actor types including nationalizing states, national minorities, and national homelands (cf. Brubaker 1996, ch. 3). Inspired by this Balkan analogy, Weiner sketches a stylized scenario in which an irredentist claim by homeland or minority leaders unleashes a dynamic that radicalizes politics along national lines in the entire region, thus either creating or reinforcing the three community types. Because of the emotional polarization, democracy and territorial moderation usually fall victim to processes of this kind. In the end, violence typically follows, and sometimes secession as well.

Most dramatically, “ethnocidal jerryman-dering” features authoritarian power-holders threatened by sudden democratization, and represented some of the worst human rights abuses of the twentieth century (Mann 2005). In Rwanda, the Kigali government’s meticulously planned genocide served to reshape the nation by simply murdering the Tutsi ethnic group and the entire political opposition, whether Tutsi or Hutu (Prunier 1995). In the Yugoslav case, Milosevic’ notorious decision in 1990–1991 to combine assertion of Serbian identity within his own federation with its territorial “amputation” beyond Serbia proper secured his grasp of power for several years (Gagnon 2004).

In order to assess the actual likelihood of irredentist transfers of territory in a particular historical context, it is necessary to analyze the mechanisms producing the phenomenon (for an overview, see Saideman and Ayres 2008). These factors are typically regional, but also sometimes systemic. Regional explanations attribute irredentist pressures to a misfit between the ethnic and political maps in a particular area (Miller 2007; Woodwell 2007; though cf. Cetinyan 2002). For example, the more “stranded diasporas” there are, the more likely secessionist campaigns become (Chazan 1991; Van Evera 1994; for a recent review, see Saideman and Jenne 2009). However, the relative stability of Russia’s “near abroad” shows that that ethnic solidarity does not automatically trigger violence (King and Melvin 1999/2000).

As Horowitz (1985) explains, states and external kin groups think twice before they get involved in conflicts raging in neighboring states. Moreover, several scholars have recorded a tendency of states to pursue ethnic rebels across state borders where these rely on sanctuaries in neighboring countries, such as the Turkish raids against Kurdish strongholds in Iraq (Saideman 2001, 2002; Trumbore 2003). Far from being driven primarily by essentialist motivations, the probability of irredentist involvement appears to be linked to the relative power of the minority compared to the host state (Cederman, Girardin, and Gleditsch 2009) and of the kin group compared to the host state (Cederman, Gleditsch, Salehyan and Wucherpfennig forthcoming).

Macro-historical studies

Investigating nationalist conflict at the systemic level, a number of studies have found evidence of a connection between state-to-nation imbalance and various types of conflict. Based on a comprehensive classification of conflicts around the globe, Miller (2007) asserts that more wars are caused by state-to-nation issues than by other ones. Moreover, he argues that those regions where these imbalances are the most dramatic, such as the Middle East, also experience the most widespread fighting. These results find resonance in Holsti's (1991) historical comparison of issues that triggered interstate war. Offering an even more direct test of the consequences of nationalist systems change, Wimmer and Min (2006) show that such transformations tend to increase the probability of interstate and other types of wars. To support their claims, they rely on a dataset that documents changes of political units from empires to territorial states, and from the latter to nation-states. Along similar lines but relying on distributional analysis of war severity, Cederman, Warren, and Sornette (2011) find evidence of a major increase in war sizes following the French Revolution,

thus confirming the revolutionary geopolitical impact of nationalism.

However, much more work remains to be done before firmer conclusions can be reached about nationalism viewed as an endogenous, macro-historical process. As a reaction to the challenge of the civil war literature, an increasing share of today's scholarship on ethnic and nationalist conflict focuses on well-defined, but relatively narrow, empirical puzzles. This tendency has opened up a void in the literature that reflects a general shift away from systemic theorizing in IR that will hopefully be filled with new approaches drawing on new theories and methods (Albert, Cederman, and Wendt 2010).

CONCLUSION

What can be concluded from this inventory of the political science literature on nationalism and ethnicity? Given these topics' undertheorized status at the end of the Cold War, the current situation offers more reasons for optimism. After a somewhat hesitant start in the early 1990s, IR scholarship on these topics has begun to show signs of maturity, partly thanks to external influences that have given the field a healthy injection of systematic empirical evidence. Most importantly, it has become increasingly integrated with the quantitative literature on civil war that has emerged in comparative politics and the political economy tradition during the past decade. This development has helped to counter an unhealthy tendency of IR scholars to argue past each other based on rigid theoretical paradigms without any clear reference to empirical evidence.

As a negative side effect, however, scholarly attention has shifted away from nationalism. Limiting the focus to measurable aspects of ethnic politics within the "container" of the state has caused many researchers to lose sight of the institutional aspects of ethnicity, especially those associated with state organs

and policies. Bunching ethnic and nationalist phenomena together into highly aggregated, primarily ethno-demographic indices that tap into societal and demographic properties such as diversity and polarity, many of these scholars have been keen on proving that there is nothing special about ethnicity and that it has no statistically discernable impact on collective violence.

Fortunately, there are signs that the trend may be about to turn. More precise theories and better data are becoming available, thus improving the possibilities of studying ethno-nationalist grievances and the interaction between state institutions and ethno-nationalist movements. While the debate on the relevance of ethnicity for conflict is far from settled, most recent studies have produced strong evidence undermining the sweeping assumption that ethnic and nationalist grievances are so widespread that they have no explanatory value.

However, such structural findings need to be complemented with more systematic research that traces mobilization processes short of violence in greater detail (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Tarrow 2007). Rather than sticking to aggregated proxies at the country level, students of civil wars have started disaggregating conflict processes by a variety of methods, including process tracing, archival research, surveys, census and health statistics, GIS, and different types of formal modeling, including agent-based modeling (Kalyvas 2008b; Cederman 2008; Cederman and Gleditsch 2009). In particular, causal mechanisms relating to grievances and emotions also await closer and more systematic scrutiny beyond the pioneering contribution of Petersen (2002).

While most studies have focused on the outbreak of conflict, the dynamic properties of conflict processes relating to duration and conflict endings remain relatively uncharted terrain. It could be postulated that the same reasons that trigger onset should also be responsible for the end of conflict (Blainey 1973). In contrast, prominent research on the duration of civil wars has come to the

opposite conclusion.²¹ Some scholars have suggested that ethno-nationalist wars last longer because nationalist politics frames territory as indivisible, thus undermining the search for bargaining solutions (Toft 2003; see also Miller 2007, p. 109). By using uncompromising strategies of legitimation, leaders appealing to nationalism imbue contested territory with strongly emotional and symbolic meaning, as argued by Goddard (2006), who provides convincing examples from Kashmir, the Northern Ireland, and Kosovo. Clearly, more research is needed before it can be established whether conflict processes involving ethnic and national identities really do last longer and are harder to resolve.

Finally, the intense focus on civil wars in the recent years has contributed greatly to rendering debates about ethnicity and nationalism more precise. Yet, to some extent this has obscured types of conflict other than civil wars. But, as illustrated by the sections on external conflict, there are hopeful signs in the literature. Scholars have made progress in tracing the link between civil wars and interstate conflict (e.g., Gleditsch 2007).

In the wake of 9/11, it may be tempting to prioritize demographic dynamics and religious fanaticism, but the fact remains that some of the most intractable and politically important conflict processes in the current world, such as the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, are indeed ultimately about ethnic nationalism. It is very unlikely that such conflicts can ever be solved without taking seriously the ethno-nationalist claims of excluded populations. Following Gellner's example of scholarly detachment, students of ethnicity and nationalism can do so without naively accepting the nationalists' claims literally or choosing sides.

NOTES

The author would like to thank the editors of the handbook, as well as Nils-Christian Bormann, Manuel Vogt, Camber Warren, and Nils Weidmann for their helpful comments.

1 For more extensive introductions to ethnicity and/or nationalism, see the previous version of the review, Cederman (2002), as well as Calhoun (1993, 1997), Smith (1995, 2009) and Hall (1998).

2 Again, cf. Cederman (2002). See also Brubaker and Laitin (1998), and Varshney (2007), who covers ethnic conflict in comparative politics. Obviously, neither ethnicity nor nationalism is inherently conflict-inducing (see Billig 1995). The scholarship covers phenomena that are not necessarily associated with violence, such as public goods provision (e.g., Bates 1983), ethnic voting and parties (e.g., Posner 2005).

3 For objective conceptualizations of the nation, see Calhoun (1997, 1995, pp. 98–103).

4 For a cultural definition that refrains from a link to the state, see A. D. Smith's (1991, 1991, p. 14).

5 For more extensive definitions, see A. D. Smith (1991, p. 72) and Calhoun (1997, pp. 4–5, 31).

6 For a broad definition see Horowitz (1985), who includes tribes, races and castes. Similarly, Chandra (2006) proposes a definition in terms of "descent-based attributes." Using the related concept *ethnie*, A. D. Smith (1991, p. 21) offers an extensive list of constitutive criteria.

7 Of course, religion thus construed can be invoked for nationalist purposes, but does not have to play that role. For example, El Qaeda draws on Islam to advance a more diffuse political project that does not aim at controlling state power in any particular country.

8 Ethnic groups differ from *ethnic categories*, which are based on cultural markers imposed by outside observers without the members necessarily attaching any importance to the characteristics. See Brass (1976, p. 226). As we will see below, other scholars question the very "groupness" of ethnicity (e.g., Brubaker 2004).

9 The main distinction is whether the explanation in question attributes an active role to the state or not. In the former case, I classify the approach as nationalist (which of course includes ethnic nationalism or ethno-nationalism), and in the latter as merely ethnic.

10 This taxonomy simplifies the exposition of the previous version of this chapter which relied on a 3 × 3 table of different "fields of construction" (see Cederman 2002). Without discounting the value of endogenizing ethnic and national identities, the current exposition does a better job at covering the main scholarly debates in the empirical literature during the past decade.

11 Constructivist analysis does not imply that identities can be easily manipulated or that they change often. Indeed, Eisenstadt and Giesen (1995) suggest that collective identities can be constructed along "primordialist" lines.

12 See also Saideman and Jenne (2009) for a more extensive review of recent approaches to diffusion of ethnic conflict.

13 This and the following two paragraphs draw directly on Cederman, Wimmer, and Min (2010).

14 For exceptions, see Wilkinson (2004), who analyzes electorally influenced state policies toward ethnic unrest in India, and Kalyvas's (2008a) finding that states often encourage "ethnic defection." See also Brass (1991) for a thorough theoretical discussion of the state's role in processes of ethno-nationalist conflict.

15 Modern sociological theories of emotions tell us that, contrary to the views of early crowd theorists, and contrary to lingering popular belief, emotions are not irrational, but serve distinctly goal-directed purposes in social and political life (e.g., Mercer 2005; Petersen 2002; Emirbayer and Goldberg 2005).

16 This result to some extent coincides with Fearon and Laitin's (2003) country-level analysis of peripheral state weakness civil wars, with the important difference that they reject the effect of ethnicity on conflict based on a conceptualization of ethnic politics that reduces it to ethno-demographic diversity.

17 An updated version, called EPR-ETH, can be found at <http://www.icr.ethz.ch/data>. The system includes a geocoded extension, GeoEPR-ETH (see Wucherpfennig et al. 2011). These databases can also be inspected through GROWup, an online data portal at <http://growup.ethz.ch>.

18 New evidence based on EPR-ETH data indicates that the finding pertaining to wealthier groups may not be completely robust.

19 According to Robert Gilpin (1981) systems change is the most fundamental type of transformation that the international system can undergo since it entails the nature of its constitutive members. Thus, it differs from more superficial types of change, such as interaction change, which refers to adjustments in interstate processes, and systemic change, which concerns major changes in the international hierarchy of prestige and balance of power, while keeping the actor type constant.

20 Of course, violence in the form of past conquest, assimilation, and ethnic cleansing may be responsible for such stability, but if such processes occurred before the onset of mass mobilization, the long-run outcome is usually peaceful, though often at the detriment of marginalized indigenous populations (Mann 2005).

21 Despite his skepticism as regards ethnicity's impact on civil-war onset as evidenced in Fearon and Laitin (2003), Fearon (2004b) suggests that Weiner's (1978) "sons of the soil" conflicts that pit governments against peripheral ethnic minorities tend to last longer than other conflicts. Questioning Kaufmann's (1996) claim that ethnic identities tend to be hardened by violent conflict, Kalyvas (2008a) provides suggestive, though not quantitative, evidence of "ethnic defection." Recent evidence

suggests that civil wars involving ethno-nationalist exclusion, rather than ethnic identities, tend to last longer (Wucherpfennig et al. 2012).

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Great Power Hierarchies and Strategies in Twenty-First Century World Politics

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America's unipolar moment is now entering its third decade. What for many theorists should never have happened and, if it did, should have been only a fleeting moment is now an enduring and, in fact, defining feature of world politics in the twenty-first century. Within this structure of unipolarity, the United States has sought to build a New World Order, positioned itself as the "indispensable nation" within a reaffirmed multilateralism, and proclaimed itself an "empire" that, in the words of one anonymous official in the administration of President George W. Bush, "makes its own reality" (quoted in Suskind 2004; more generally, see Soderberg 2005). Even after a decade of fighting two wars and growing federal budget deficits, unipolarity remains. Indeed, despite the financial crisis that began in the United States in 2008 and then spread rapidly outward, there has been a flight of capital to safety and stability in the dollar – a harbinger not of the country's decline but of its continued strength, at least relative to other developed economies.

Great power politics have always been at the center of the discipline of international relations, at least as developed and taught in the universities and classrooms of the great powers themselves. The obsession with the waxing and waning of unipolarity, and the rise of China as the principal challenger to the United States, reflects perhaps an enduring American parochialism in the field of international relations.¹ Nonetheless, world politics in the twenty-first century have challenged existing approaches to international relations, especially neorealist and power transition theories most popular in the United States. Structure appears far less constraining than even its most careful and cautious proponents believed. Balancing is less robust than many expected. These challenges have set off a vigorous debate and new theorizing that, on the one hand, attempt to preserve extant theory but modify it to incorporate current anomalies and, on the other hand, promote a very different understanding of world politics. At the core of this new theorizing is

the recognition that great power hierarchies and all international structures are not simply physical facts defined by material capabilities but, rather, social constructs produced by the strategies adopted by the great powers themselves. In other words, great powers have agency within an international structure that is of their own making. This has led to a new emphasis on the strategies of great powers and the social nature of interstate hierarchies. Out of this productive intellectual ferment, no single theory or approach has become dominant. The revolution in the world – and in the discipline – is still ongoing, and continuing developments limit and shape our understanding. Nonetheless, early twenty-first century international relations theory is already quite different from its twentieth century variant.²

This essay first reviews major theories of great power hierarchy and strategy developed before the end of the Cold War. In part two, it then surveys recent developments in theory, emphasizing the “social” turn begun around the turn of the century as the nature of the post-Cold War system became clearer. In two sub-sections, this social turn is evaluated in explaining the nature of international structure today, focusing on the absence of balancing by other great powers and the rise of China and the possible future of the international system. A final section asks whether great power politics are still relevant in an increasingly globalized world. The conclusion highlights key issues for future research.

STRUCTURE AND STRATEGY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

At the risk of gross over-generalization, it is possible to isolate two main schools of thought on great power politics in twentieth century international relations.³ What eventually became the neorealist school emphasized the structures of multipolarity in the nineteenth century and bipolarity in the

second half of the twentieth century. Equally important, neorealists described the strategy of balancing power within each structure as a core – even primordial – process of world politics. The power transition school, encompassing several variants, emphasized recurrent cycles or patterns hegemony in the world system and, in turn, the strategy of leadership by a dominant state in securing order. In both cases, scholars looked to the past to help interpret the present, but they viewed history through different lenses and disagreed on what they saw, rendering tests of these competing perspectives difficult. Nonetheless, both shared a view in which structure was largely determined by exogenous material capabilities that – though not deterministic – lead to certain predictable strategies.

Realism is a venerable tradition in international relations thought. With roots in Thucydides, Hobbes, and other classical thinkers, it was shaped into its modern form by Morgenthau (1978) in his classic textbook *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. Starting with Waltz (1979), neorealism sought to remake this approach into a scientific and structural theory of world politics. Waltz defined political structure as (1) the ordering principle, assumed to be anarchy (as opposed to domestic politics, which were assumed to be hierarchically ordered), (2) the differentiation of the units (states), assumed to be low to nil because in anarchy no state would risk becoming dependent on others, and (3) the distribution of capabilities, never formally operationalized but in practice assumed to be basic material forces (GDP, population, industry) capable of being mobilized by the state for war (transformed into military personnel and military expenditures).⁴ With the first dimension held constant, at least since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, and the second dimension irrelevant, international structure varied only by the distribution of capabilities, with the possible distributions limited to great powers and the key breakpoint lying between two, creating bipolarity,

and more than two, creating multipolarity (Waltz 1979, 161–163). Neorealists were self-consciously not structural determinists. In their view, structures constrain and shape, they do not dictate.⁵ Unit-level variables, anything outside of international structure, could at times and perhaps frequently incline states to act against their structurally defined interests. Yet, structure was believed to be sufficiently robust that states would be socialized into proper behavior, and those that routinely failed to heed structural incentives would be selected out of the system by some evolutionary but largely unspecified process.

Importantly, although neorealists recognized that states would occasionally fail to balance rising powers, anarchy required that states over the long run would balance externally (through alliances, especially in multipolarity) or internally (by extracting more resources from society, especially in bipolarity) against possible hegemon.⁶ That is, through shifting alliances, internal mobilization, or some combination of the two, states would act so as to prevent any one state from gaining disproportionate power over the system. As Waltz (1993, 77) observed, “hegemony leads to balance through all of the centuries we can contemplate.” As a result of this tendency to balance against rising powers, neorealists predicted that unipolarity could be nothing more than a passing or transient phase (Layne 1993; Waltz 1993), and thus they never developed a theory or even a serious analysis of unipolarity before the end of the Cold War (Brooks and Wohlforth 2008, 35).⁷

A key debate within this school focused on the stability of multipolar and bipolar structures.⁸ Two different conceptions of stability existed – sometimes in the work of the same author – causing the debate to be especially muddled. In one conception, stability was defined as the frequency and magnitude of interstate conflict. Multipolarity was believed to be more war prone because alliances, the primary form of balancing, would increase the risk of bargaining failures and therefore war.

Expected to be constantly shifting and fleeting, external balancing strategies were harder to identify by opponents, each of whom would therefore possess private information with incentives to misrepresent and be less credible.⁹ Bipolarity with its internal balancing strategies and intense competition produced, paradoxically, greater caution, better information, and thus fewer wars. Yet, bipolarity would also be plagued by numerous low-level proxy wars in the periphery, which were assumed to be largely irrelevant, and great power conflict, if it were to break out, would be more extreme because of the concentrated resources available and the higher stakes involved.

In the second conception, stability was defined as the persistence of a particular structure. Here, multipolarity was believed to be more robust, as one great power could fall without pushing the system across the key threshold to two great powers (except in tripolar systems with one declining great power). Conversely, bipolarity was said to be robust because the acute competition pushed each great power to try harder, forcing internal reforms or whatever was necessary to keep pace with each other. Yet, bipolarity was also fragile. In what is now claimed as a prescient description of the end of the Cold War, proponents understood that a key question was whether the Soviet Union could “keep up” with the United States (Waltz 1979, 180).

The power transition school interprets modern history very differently, seeing not long periods of multipolarity or bipolarity but cycles of hegemony, challenge, global war, and then rebirth. The main idea originated with Organski (1968, ch. 14) and was extended by Organski and Kugler (1980) and others. States were understood to pursue not just security in an anarchic world, as in neorealism, but to seek power to create an international order that reflected their interests. Given the tendency of national growth rates to converge over time, the rise of a dominant state able to impose its vision of world politics on others was inevitably followed by the

rise of a challenger with a different set of interests. As the challenger rose and struggled to revise the international order to reflect its preferences, a hegemonic war of larger-than-usual magnitude for control of the system was likely. Out of that war, a new power would emerge, and the cycle would begin again. The theory did not purport to explain all wars, only especially large and devastating ones. In this view, the competition between the United States and Soviet Union was only the latest in a series of power cycles, and the Soviet Union was merely a failed challenger that, fortunately, collapsed before a hegemonic war for control of the system occurred. China is expected to be the new challenger to America's continued hegemony (Tammen et al. 2000).

Similar in their core logic, multiple variants of this theory were put forth.¹⁰ A world systems variant, associated with Modelski (1987) and Modelski and Thompson (1988), tracked oscillating patterns of sea power to establish a fixed cycle. Long cycle theory, given concreteness by Goldstein (1988), understood cycles of relatively fixed duration to be driven by Kondratieff long wave business cycles. Hegemonic stability theory, often considered distinct but usefully grouped here with these other variants, focused on the fundamentally liberal nature of modern hegemonic states and the liberal international order they created (Gilpin 1977, 1981). In this view, liberal states were more likely to become hegemonic because of the superior performance of their democratic political institutions and capitalist markets, and these states, in turn, would seek to create a liberal international order that reflected – and advantaged – their domestic societies. America's declining technological prowess was expected to presage its hegemonic decline and ignite a new period of protectionism and beggar-thy-neighbor economic policies (Gilpin 1975).

Importantly, for all variants of power transition theory, the structure of the international system, though dynamic, was

essentially exogenous to the policies of the great powers. Driven by largely immutable rates of economic growth, hegemony was considered to be independent of whatever the dominant state and others might do. Hegemonic stability theory suggested at times that hegemons bore a greater burden than others in producing order and thus weakened themselves, but this was never developed theoretically nor proven empirically (Gilpin 1975, 1981). Thus, like neorealism, the material structure of the international system produced its own logic and consequences that created regular patterns – whether states understood their constraints or not.

Hegemony, in turn, produced great power strategies not of balancing but of leadership. Across the several variants of power transition theory, leadership implied that the dominant state actively created an international order that served its interests, although exactly how it accomplished this was often vague (Organski 1968; Gilpin 1981). More contentiously, the hegemon might be coercive, using its superior power resources to impose its preferred order on others who were left worse off than otherwise; or benevolent, creating an order that benefited not only itself but others as well (Snidal 1985). By implication, and again this was unfortunately vague, other states would not balance against the dominant state either because they were deterred or supported the order it produced. Although suggestive, this failure to develop fully the strategies of states at various phases in the power cycle was a major shortcoming of this approach.¹¹

During the Cold War, balance of power and power transition theories coexisted in uneasy analytic tension with one another. Very little in the contemporary period allowed scholars to choose between these two approaches, although proponents of each claimed victory in the historical record. With only two periods of hegemony to examine – the *Pax Britannica* in the nineteenth century and the *Pax Americana* in the twentieth, in

both of which the leading state was limited to economic, not military dominance – it was impossible to adjudicate between the two approaches. The end of the Cold War, on the other hand, has opened new opportunities for assessing these theories.

Balance of power theory clearly predicted a transient dominance for the United States after 1989, not because its resources would decline relative to others but because competitors would ally against its overweening economic and military power (Layne 1993). Some disagreement remains regarding the time span in which balancing must occur, but over twenty years of experience now indicates little if any balancing against the United States. From across the academic and political spectrum, analysts agree that there have been to date few if any efforts at balancing despite America's resurgent hegemony. As Mastanduno and Kapstein (1999, 5) write, "What is most striking, in the context of neorealist balance-of-power theory, is the reluctance of other major powers to engage in an individual or collective strategy of balancing against the preponderant power of the United States in an effort to create an alternative international order." Kagan (2008, 38–39) reaches a similar conclusion:

Sino-Russian hostility to American predominance has not yet produced a concerted and cooperative effort at balancing China and Russia cannot balance the United States without at least some help from Europe, Japan, India, and at least some of the other advanced democratic nations. But those powerful players are not joining the effort If anything, the most notable balancing over the past decade has been aimed not at American superpower but at the two large powers China and Russia.

Walt (2002, 127) echoes this same point:

From the perspective of structural balance-of-power theory, this situation is surely an anomaly. Power in the international system is about as unbalanced as it has ever been, yet balancing tendencies – while they do exist – are remarkably mild. It is possible to find them, but one has to squint pretty hard to do it. The propensity to

balance is weak even though the United States has not been shy about using its power in recent years.

At most, there have been efforts at "soft balancing" against the United States (see below), but not concerted attempts to offset its overweening power.¹²

Proponents continue to believe the theory's predictions will eventually be vindicated, most likely by the rise of China as a new peer competitor (Layne 2006). Yet, China's rise is not necessarily evidence of balancing by Beijing. Although China no doubt welcomes and even seeks the international influence that comes from its growing economic might, the regime is far more concerned about sustaining itself in power domestically by increasing standards of living for its more than 1.3 billion citizens (Shirk 2007). International power is not the driver of China's economic policies, but the happy by-product of policies adopted for other reasons. To call this balancing strains the concept. Rather, China's rise is a change in system structure brought about by unit-level factors. Balance-of-power theory, at least in its strongest, most deterministic forms, has likely been falsified by events in the post-Cold War period.¹³

Power transition theory appears to have fared somewhat better. Those variants that predicted cycles of fixed duration are problematic in the face of continued US hegemony, unless they consider the years since 1989 the beginning of a new period of American dominance with China as the likely future competitor, a pattern yet to be determined. For those variants without a fixed cyclicity, Russia is simply a failed challenger to the United States and China is a possible future contender, interpretations that stand unscathed by the empirical record only by being less specific in predicting when the United States is likely to be toppled from its throne. Although not disconfirmed by the end of the Cold War, power transition theory now contends with more social theories of international relations that do not see

conflict between the United States and China as inevitable in the future.

STRATEGY AND STRUCTURE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The largest break between twentieth and twenty-first century theorizing about great power politics is that structure is no longer considered to be exogenous and dependent only on material capabilities, but is now understood to be the product of the interests and interactions of the great powers and other states themselves. This “social” turn in international relations theory, of course, had already been made by some scholars well before the end of the Cold War, especially by the English School (see in particular Bull 1977; for other early social theorists, see Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986; Wendt 1987; Dessler 1989; Onuf 1989). Other scholars quickly recognized the implications of the fall of the Soviet Union, anticipating the direction in which theory would go and, indeed, doing much to steer the discipline around the social turn (Katzenstein 1996). Nonetheless, it took well over a decade of continued nonbalancing against the United States for the idea to become rooted in the discipline that great power strategy – and its determinants – matters deeply for how structure affects world politics.

A fully social theory of international relations has at least three major elements (Reus-Smit 2004, 43–44).¹⁴ First, a social theory is *relational*. The relevant attributes of states are defined only by comparison to other states. Just as master implies slave, and one cannot exist without the other, great powers imply nongreat powers. This is similar to neorealism’s focus on systemic attributes or how the units stand in relationship to one another (e.g., the *distribution* of capabilities rather than capabilities *per se*).¹⁵ Second, a social theory is *intersubjective*, in which the relevant (relational) attributes of states derive from a shared understanding of those

attributes. In other words, attributes are neither possessed by an actor nor rest on self-proclaimed assertions of dominance, rights, or other traits, but gain meaning and effect only from their mutual recognition.¹⁶ By contrast, both realism and power transition theory were “objective” theories in which material capabilities were understood to carry their own meaning independent of the actors themselves. Third, a social theory is *primarily ideational* or interpretive. That is, power is constituted not just by material conditions but “more fundamentally by social institutions, broadly construed as complexes of norms, rules, principles, and decision-making procedures” (Reus-Smit 2004, 43). To put this in another way, all attributes, both physical and relational, are mediated and, indeed, constituted by shared ideas and cultural frames.

Although any categorization is somewhat arbitrary, we can usefully identify five major schools on great power politics emerging in the current literature, ranging from the most thinly to most thickly social in their approach, embracing the elements of social theory in the order above. Each approach is summarized and discussed briefly below, emphasizing illustrative works rather than providing a comprehensive review. The discussion is focused in the first subsection on the absence of balancing against the United States and in the second on the rise of China. How these different literatures will develop and which will ultimately prove most useful remains open.

Balancing against the United States

The great anomaly for contemporary international relations theory is the relative absence of balancing by other states against the United States. American hegemony remains robust, at least for the near term. Although it declined from its immediate post-World War II heights, the US economy as a proportion of the global economy has remained relatively stable since the 1970s at about 25%. Militarily, and especially since the end of the

Cold War, the United States outspends its competitors by a substantial margin, accounting for 46% of global defense spending (2006) (Brooks and Wohlforth 2008, 29, 32). The latter fact should have already led, according to traditional theories of international relations, to counterbalancing by other states. Yet, while there is robust agreement on the absence of balancing (see above), there is much less agreement on why states are not aligning against the United States.

Theorizing unipolarity

A first, nearly asocial response to the end of the Cold War has been to accept neorealist theory but to extend it to unipolarity, which had gone untheorized in earlier work for reasons discussed above. Accepting the central tenets of neorealism, theorists posit that unipolarity may temporarily suspend balancing as overweening power deters and collective action problems inhibit challengers from rising against the hegemon. Yet, as anarchy creates an inherent competition between states, great powers will continue to struggle for positional advantage – a construct so closely related to that of balancing that it may be indistinguishable (Kapstein and Mastanduno 1999).

Precisely because unipolarity is even less constraining than other international structures, however, it is hard to deduce and identify its effects (see Ikenberry et al. 2009b). The hegemon may be a satisfied status quo state or a revisionist power bent on rewriting the rules of international order. It may provide public goods or pursue parochial interests. It may encourage others to buy into its international order or heighten insecurity by expelling “rogues” from that order and tightening its grip over the affairs of others. Since the structure itself requires little in the way of specific policies, how states act and how the system evolves depends fundamentally on unit-level factors outside the theory’s ken. Even revised to permit unipolarity as an essential form, this mostly asocial structural theory is, at best, incomplete and indeterminate.

Liberal self-restraint and soft balancing

Closely related to the theory of unipolarity is the hypothesis that *liberal* hegemons restrain their ambitions and, thus, do not threaten other states and do not provoke a balancing response (Ikenberry 2001, 2002). In this approach, not all hegemons are the same. Had Nazi Germany won World War II or communist Russia won the Cold War, their autocratic regimes and nonmarket economies would have required greater territorial and political control over their subordinates, as in the informal Soviet empire in Eastern Europe, and this need for control would have spawned greater resistance by other states. Conversely, a democratic and market-oriented hegemon, such as the United States, has a limited and restrained state at home, and is more likely to reproduce this model at the global level (see Deudney 2007). As such, it does not threaten other countries sufficiently to induce balancing. A synthesis of hegemonic stability theory and balance-of-threat theory (Walt 1987), updated to the present era, this approach explains the absence of balancing against the United States by emphasizing the internal characteristics of the unipole (Walt 2002, 2005). In a key departure from neorealism and other structural theories of the Cold War variety, however, agency matters – a lot.

A key problem in this approach, however, is identifying what liberalism requires. One variant of liberalism emphasizes limited night watchmen states that possess little authority over their citizens and firms. Optimists about the ability of the United States to transform the unipolar moment into a new constitutional order assume that this limited state can be easily and naturally extended to the international system to the benefit of all (Ikenberry 2001, 2004).¹⁷ A second variant, however, emphasizes liberalism’s crusading spirit – its revolutionary stance – that aims to “make the world safe for democracy” by promoting even violent regime change (Owen 2002; Smith 2009). Although progressive, this type of liberalism does indeed pose a threat to autocratic and economically closed regimes around the globe and, in turn, to the legitimacy of

American power (Hurd 2007). The administration of President George W. Bush and the war on Iraq make plain that this revolutionary spirit can arise and triumph in a form of liberal imperialism (Dobson 2002). Which liberalism will prevail is critical to the future of unipolarity (Ikenberry et al. 2009a). The pluralist critique and the potential for a crusading liberalism suggest that actual self-restraint by a hegemon may be rare. By implication, other states should be actively hedging their bets and, if risk averse as implied by neorealism, balancing against the United States pending greater clarity on which type of liberalism Americans will ultimately embrace. Although an advance over unipolarity theory alone, the approach is still indeterminate.

The complement to self-restraint is soft balancing by nonhegemonic states. Key here is that other states are hesitant to stand up to the United States or do not feel sufficiently threatened yet to explicitly ally against it. Nonetheless, analysts see states as beginning to balance American power more subtly and indirectly and as laying the groundwork for more explicit balancing should this become necessary later. Proponents of this approach see evidence of soft balancing in efforts to exploit international institutions and other instruments of traditional statecraft to “delay, frustrate, and undermine” US policies (Pape 2005, 10). Opposition to the U.S.-led intervention in Kosovo in 1999 and the Iraq War of 2003 are described as prime examples of soft balancing (Paul 2005), as well as Russia’s strategic partnership with China and India, Russia’s assistance to Iran’s nuclear program, and the European Union’s efforts to enhance its defense capability (Brooks and Wohlforth 2005). Central, though, is that states have agency in response to the United States and are not driven to balance simply by power disparities.

To its critics, soft balancing is less a real-world phenomenon and more a degenerative hypothesis intended to save balance-of-power theory (Brooks and Wohlforth 2005; Lieber and Alexander 2005). With the approach lacking strong theoretical foundations and

failing to produce any new predictions beyond soft balancing itself, this is not an unreasonable criticism. Critics further contend that soft balancing is observationally equivalent to “hard bargaining” that occurs in normal diplomatic intercourse, and even challenge the interpretation of events such as those just noted as responding to possible threats from the United States.

Together, liberal self-restraint and soft balancing form two sides of a single coin that explain the absence of threat from the United States and the lack of balancing by others. The theories both take a short step away from neorealism and theories of unipolarity and permit great powers a degree of agency in how they respond to the post-Cold War environment. Nonetheless, each side of the coin treats the other as given. The United States restrains its ambitions largely because others are not rising against it. Others do not balance because the United States is not threatening, but could in the future if American policy changes. With the exception of Ikenberry (2001), who argues that this equipoise can be institutionalized in a new constitutional order, many expect this equilibrium to fail easily as missteps and misperceptions by one side or the other provoke a return to a more “normal” world in which balance of power politics prevail (see Walt 2005). Missing from this two-sided coin is a more fully social or at least deeper relational understanding of international relations. Rather than each taking the other side as given, a more complete explanation might be obtained by explicitly theorizing the mutual constitution of self-restraint and soft balancing.

Status hierarchies

A third and more social strain in the emergent literature focuses on status hierarchies. Prestige or status has long been considered to be a key goal of states and a critical attribute of the international system (see Galtung 1964; Morgenthau 1978, ch. 6; Gilpin 1981, 28). Interest in status waned with the end of the Cold War but has returned in recent years with new vigor in an attempt to explain and

predict the responses of near-great and other great powers to American hegemony.

Still dependent on material capabilities, status is relational and intersubjective, ultimately conferred on a state by others who recognize its position in the system. Drawing on psychological and sociological theories of individual needs, and thus at risk of anthropomorphication, status is posited to be a basic goal of all social collectivities, especially states (Larson and Shevchenko 2010). Although it may be desired by states, and states themselves may need to assert a claim to status (Sylvan et al. 1998), status itself is attributed to a state by the community of states as a whole or by the club of already high-status members the state seeks to join (Volgy et al. 2010, 8). It is this relational and intersubjective element of status that renders the concept different from international structure as defined in neorealism.

Status shapes the behavior of states, with great powers expected to act differently from other states and, especially, to be involved in more alliances, more conflicts, and more conflicts further from their home territories.¹⁸ As suggested by power transition theory above, status inconsistency – including both overachievers who have greater status than their capabilities suggest and underachievers who have more capabilities than status – also affects the policies of states (Wallance 1971; East 1972; Volgy and Mayhall 1995; Wohlforth 2009). More recently, social identity theory, originally from psychology, suggests that the striving for status may lead states to select strategies for social mobility, in which states imitate the norms and practices of high-status groups to gain acceptance; social competition, in which states acquire attributes of high-status states (e.g., large navies) or seek to defeat or humiliate the dominant power; and social creativity, in which states redefine the meaning of status in ways that enhance their standing. The choice of strategy, in turn, is partly a function of the permeability of the club to which a state aspires and the legitimacy of the existing status hierarchy (Larson and Shevchenko 2009).

Status hierarchy offers several different explanations for the absence of balancing against the United States since the end of the Cold War. Wohlforth (2009) argues that more highly stratified distributions of capability generate less status competition and, in turn, less balancing. Larson and Shevchenko (2009) maintain that, having tried social mobility, only to be rebuffed by the United States, and social competition, without success, China and Russia are now trying social creativity to reconstruct their images as more responsible powers, a strategy likely to be more successful for Beijing than Moscow but at least temporarily obviating the need for balancing by either. Paul and Shankar (2009) suggest that India is enjoying social mobility, and may also be integrated eventually into the American-led club to which it desires to belong, also undercutting incentives to balance. As these examples suggest, it will be the interaction between the quest for status by rising powers and the granting of status, largely by the United States, that will determine whether states are integrated into the existing order or choose to challenge it. This is a promising direction for future research.

Authority hierarchies

A fourth approach conceives of hierarchy as authority, not just status, through which one state exercises *legitimate* power over many or fewer aspects of another's foreign security and economic policies.¹⁹ Like status hierarchies, authority hierarchies are both relational and intersubjective but go further in emphasizing legitimacy, which implies that subordinates not only recognize the different status and roles of states but accept those differences as rightful and perhaps natural. To put this another way, where status hierarchies examine the intersubjective nature of the distribution of capabilities, Waltz's (1979) third dimension of international structure, authority hierarchies focus on socially created variations in the ordering principle, his first dimension. Although nearly all of the research strains discussed here reference legitimacy as an important component of

great power relations (for example, Walt 2005), only authority hierarchies place legitimacy at the core of analysis and begin to theorize its effects (Clark 1989, 2001, 2005; Rapkin and Braaten 2009).

Authority is, simply put, rightful rule.²⁰ As a bundle of rights and obligations, authority entails (a) the right by a ruler, in this case a dominant state, to issue certain limited commands, (b) the duty by the ruled, here a collective of individuals organized into a subordinate state, to comply with these rules to the extent they are able, and (c) the right of the ruler or dominant state to enforce its commands in the event of noncompliance. Although authority can rest on many sources, including charisma, tradition, religion, and formal-legal institutions, in international relations authority hierarchies mostly rest on social contracts in which dominant states provide political orders to subordinate states of sufficient value to offset their loss of autonomy.²¹ These political orders, in turn, condition the behavior of dominant and subordinate states alike. Dominant states must produce the promised order, even when it is costly to do so. One manifestation of this responsibility is that dominant states are significantly more likely to join crises in which a subordinate state is involved. Dominant states must also credibly commit not to abuse their authority over subordinates, a task made more difficult in unipolarity and, thus, driving the United States today to tie its hands more firmly through multilateralism than past dominant states. Enjoying the fruits of the political order, subordinate states spend less on defense and engage in higher levels of international trade, especially with others tied to the same dominant state, than nonsubordinate states. Legitimizing the policies of their protector, subordinates are also more likely to follow dominant states in wars and, especially, to join coalitions of the willing, even though they often contribute little beyond their verbal support and could easily free ride on the efforts of others. Finally, dominant states discipline subordinates that violate their commands both by intervening

to replace local leaders, their agents, and ostracizing them from normal political intercourse through sanctions or other barriers to exchange (e.g., Cuba). This syndrome of behaviors by both dominant and subordinate states is not predicted by nor easily explained within other approaches.

Authority hierarchies explain the absence of balancing against the United States today by the legitimacy of its rule over others. It is not that the United States is simply coercive, with other states bridling under its control awaiting the moment when they can escape its hegemony. Rather, benefiting from the political order and recognizing the legitimacy of American rule, subordinate states buy into the American-led international order. Europe after 1945 is a primary example of this "empire by invitation" (Lundestad 1990). Although nonsubordinate states might potentially balance against the United States, enough states today remain in American hierarchies, including other ostensibly great powers (e.g., Germany, Japan), that their combined weight is greatly diminished and the collective action problems they face are greatly enhanced. Like Britain in the nineteenth century, this approach expects American authority to endure even after the country's material capabilities have waned.

Identity

A final stream of research, and the most thoroughly social, focuses on identity and great power politics. Like status and authority hierarchies, this constructivist approach is relational and intersubjective. However, unlike these alternatives, it is also primarily ideational. Where status and authority hierarchies require a mutual understanding of the relationship between parties but see structure as having a substantial material origin, identity theory posits that structure is almost entirely constituted by the shared ideas of reflexive agents (Reus-Smit 2004, 2005). In other words, identity theory assumes that material conditions are so heavily mediated by shared ideas that it is these ideas and not physical forces that primarily shape behavior.

Identity defines, and is defined by, appropriate roles and actions for both great powers and other states (Pouliot 2010a). Normally, states act within their intersubjectively and ideationally defined understandings of appropriate behavior, and in doing so they reaffirm the existing structure. Sometimes, however, states seek to overcome or challenge their identities, either transforming structure or more commonly precipitating conflict within the existing structure. Precisely because identity is relational, intersubjective, and ideational, it is difficult for any one state, no matter how capable in material terms, to transform structure.

Like self-restraint theory above, identity theory emphasizes the content of the current American-led international order (Owen 2002; Risse 2002). The particular norms and practices that constitute that order and, in turn, are reproduced by it are the important determinants of action for both great and smaller powers (Plunkett 2010). Unlike self-restraint theory, however, the “liberalness” of the American order is not taken for granted, but is itself constituted by that order. Katzenstein (2005) provides one of the most comprehensive descriptions of this order as an American imperium of porous regions with differing institutional forms, identities, and internal structures, especially the presence in Europe and Northeast Asia of regional intermediaries (e.g., Germany and Japan) and their absence elsewhere. Within the current American imperium, he argues, differing local cultures, identities, and networks produce different regional orders that, in turn, shape the imperium. Although the Bush administration’s overt grab at greater imperial control rendered the imperium more transparent, history and the various interests and identities embedded in the regional orders produce more continuity than change in world politics. Conversely, Reus-Smit (2004) excoriates the Bush administration for failing to understand the nature of contemporary American power and thereby putting the international order itself in jeopardy. Describing the Bush doctrine as

a “celebration of American predominance” based only on material capabilities, Reus-Smit (2004, 33) criticizes the former administration’s belief that American values are universal and seen as such by others. Highlighting the social nature of power, he describes how this idealism clashed with the norms of the American order accepted and supported by other states, led to the Iraq War, and failed to earn the backing of other great powers, thereby threatening to destroy the established order.

Identity theory offers a rich descriptive account of great power politics. More social than the alternatives here, it provides a deep understanding of how actors themselves constitute particular structures, and how these structures then shape agency. Lacking a theory of ideas, however, the approach is better at illuminating questions than providing specific answers or predictions of future behavior. Here, the contrast between Katzenstein and Reus-Smit is informative. Stressing culture and identity, Katzenstein envisions continuity in the American-led order. Highlighting how ideas create an understanding of power, Reus-Smit shows how the beliefs of one presidential administration can disrupt that order. More generally, how identities based on the norm of sovereignty coexist and compete with identities of empire is not well explained (Cox 2004a). The approach provides a compelling view through the rearview mirror of where we have been, but the road ahead remains hidden from view.²²

The rise of China

Over the long term, it is almost certain that China will emerge as a superpower equal to the United States. With its vast population, large territory, and rapidly growing economy, China’s aggregate economy will likely surpass that of the United States sometime in the second quarter of the twenty-first century (Tammen et al. 2000, 153–157; Mearsheimer 2001, 396–400). Between 2000 and 2040,

according to one extreme estimate, China will rise from 11% to 40% of global GDP, while the United States will shrink to only 14% of global GDP. In other words, China's economy will be nearly triple the size of the economy of the United States in 2040 and nearly double its proportion of global economic activity in 2000 (Fogel 2010). Although it will still be a relatively poor superpower with an average per capita income below that in the developed countries, its sheer economic size will permit it to be a major player on the world scene and to deploy global military reach equal to that of the United States if it chooses to do so. The key issue is how China will use its material power resources in the decades ahead (Callahan 2005; Shih 2005; Waldron 2005; Zha 2005; Beeson 2009). Will it rise to challenge the US-led international order, or will it be sufficiently integrated into the American system that it will seek perhaps to reform but not overthrow that order?

As in the previous section, there are five distinct responses to this question, which can be grouped into the same schools of thought. The discussion here is briefer as the central logic of each approach has already been summarized. This section merely extends the analyses to the rise of China.

Theorizing (renewed) bipolarity

Neorealists, even those who now accept unipolarity as an enduring trait, see the rise of China as inevitably threatening to the United States. The return to bipolarity is expected to look a lot like bipolarity during the Cold War: a tense standoff between two highly competitive giants that always carries the potential for catastrophic war (Mearsheimer 2001). For power transition theorists, China will likewise challenge the United States (Tammen et al. 2000). Given its imperial history, still autocratic regime, and relative poverty, its interests are expected to clash with those of the United States. Its preferred order will necessarily differ from that desired in Washington, setting up a future contest between a declining status quo liberal

hegemon and a ebullient revisionist heir (on the differences, see Jacques 2009; Halper 2010). From either perspective, this is a bleak future of acute tensions between Washington and Beijing as they struggle for dominance.

Importantly, neither neorealists nor power transition theorists of China's rise appear to have learnt much from the period of American hegemony after the Cold War. Both expect a return to politics "as usual," where material power capabilities are trump and entail inevitable frictions and contests between great powers.

Self-restraint and soft balancing

The literatures on liberal self-restraint and soft balancing have focused primarily on American hegemony and touch on China only as it concerns current great power strategies.²³ The question, for most, is whether US policies now threaten China, and how China is likely to respond. Throughout the literatures, however, an implicit theme is that the United States and China do not face inevitable conflicts. As China integrates into the world economy and becomes dependent on exports to the West, the expectation is that it will be co-opted into the American system and conflicts will be diffused. Through economic interdependence, in short, the conflicts inherent in the power transition will be muted (Bergsten et al. 2009). Exactly how this process of co-optation occurs and with what enduring effects, however, remains largely addressed. This is, fortunately, the focus of the other, more social approaches.

Status hierarchies

Rebuffed by the West in its social mobility strategy and unable to compete socially, China is now, according to Larson and Shevchenko (2009), seeking new recognition as a responsible great power. Although others have interpreted the same moves more darkly as soft balancing, Larson and Shevchenko argue that China's "strategic partnerships" with Russia and France, its participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum,

its leadership within the Shanghai Cooperation Council (composed of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan), and its formulation of a new “Beijing Consensus” on economic sovereignty are not directed against any other state but, rather, at affirming its status as a great power. Likewise, Wohlforth (2009, 55) maintains that “notwithstanding an underlying preference for a flatter global status hierarchy, in terms of concrete policies China remains a status quo power under unipolarity, seeking to enhance its standing via strategies that accommodate the existing status quo.”

Although status is clearly relational, analysts differ as to whether it is zero- or multi-sum in nature. This has important implications for how easily China can be reconciled with the existing international status hierarchy. According to Schweller and Pu (2009), “prestige is a positional good and, as such, is a quintessentially realist concept: if one state has it, by definition, others have less of it.” Valued precisely because it is not available to everyone, and implying not just distinctiveness but a ranking of better and worse standing, it does not necessarily follow, however, that status is strictly redistributive. Larson and Shevchenko (2009, 5) explicitly note that the United States could recognize the status of China (and Russia) today without detracting from its own. This is a key disagreement on which more theoretical and empirical work must be done (see Gries 2005). If status is more purely redistributive, China may be willing to accept the status quo today but will not do so tomorrow when its material power capabilities and status demands grow even larger. On the other hand, if status is more open and not strictly limited, the prospects are considerably brighter for accommodation in the future and a melding of American and Chinese leadership of the global system.

Authority hierarchies

States subordinate to the authority of the United States are located mostly (but not exclusively) in the Western Hemisphere, Western Europe, and Northeast Asia (Lake

2009, ch. 3). China, along with most of the rest of Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, are outside the American spheres of influence. In turn, they neither enjoy the full benefits provided by the America-led order nor the constraints on their policies that follow from being subordinate to Washington. The question, as for all the social approaches here, is whether extending the benefits of the American order to China would induce it to cede some control over its own economic and security policies.

Advocates of engagement see the integration of Western Europe and Northeast Asia into the American order after 1945 as a possible model for China today. By providing a political order that benefited both itself and its subordinates during the Cold War, the United States earned substantial authority and legitimacy to lead the community of states that grew up around it, including major powers such as Britain and Germany and rising economic powerhouses such as Japan and South Korea. This system created both security against the Soviet Union and tremendous economic prosperity for the United States and its subordinates. Even after the European states recovered from the war and Japan and South Korea industrialized and joined the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – the rich nations’ club – the domestic interests that benefited from their American-led orders helped preserve the hierarchical relations formed earlier.

Although China’s position today is quite different from the war-torn economics of Europe and Northeast Asia that facilitated the construction of this American-led order, a similar integration of Beijing may be possible. Following the path of Japan, South Korea, and the other Asian “tigers,” China is pursuing a strategy of export-led growth that depends on the continued openness and health of the open world economy dominated by the United States and its current subordinates and governed by rules agreed upon by those same countries. To date, China is largely conforming to the existing system as

it develops (Johnston 2003; but see Halper 2010). In turn, it is accumulating important domestic interests that are vested in the current international order and which may, in the years ahead, become an important political force that backs living within rather than challenging American authority. At the same time, however, China today is far less dependent on the United States for security than either Western Europe or Northeast Asia after 1945. The benefits of the economic order are substantial, but the benefits to China from the existing security order are quite small. China is more than prepared to defend and even assert itself on the world stage. Conversely, the loss of policy autonomy were it to join the American sphere is not insignificant. This is an exchange of order for subordination that only a truly status-quo-oriented China would be willing to make.

If a strategy of integrating China proves impossible, authority hierarchies may still create a different future than that envisioned by neorealists and power transition theorists. Although declining in material terms, the United States could still expect to wield its authority over others to confront an antagonistic rival with a phalanx of loyal subordinates who remain vested in the American-led order. Even as the economies of the United States and China and their coercive capabilities become more equal, the American-dominated bloc may still remain larger and, in the aggregate, more powerful than China. The analogy again is to the Western bloc during the Cold War. In 1985, at the height of the second Cold War under President Ronald Reagan, the GDP of the United States alone outdistanced the Soviet Union's by a ratio of 1.8:1. But the combined GDP of NATO members was even larger than that of Warsaw Pact states by a ratio of nearly 3:1 (Walt 1987, 289–291). The network of subordinates constructed by the United States, and on whom it could rely in any major confrontation, significantly augmented its power relative to the Soviet Union. Today, the United States, Europe, and Japan dwarf China by a ratio of over 4.5:1. This advantage

will shrink. If China grows to the 40% of the world economy expected in the most extreme forecasts, the United States will need virtually all of the rest of the world under its sway to offset Beijing's weight. Nonetheless, if the United States maintains its authority over its current subordinates and perhaps extends this authority over new subordinates in South and Southeast Asia, it will continue to lead a formidable coalition against any revisionist China. Looking beyond material capabilities to authority hierarchies changes how we see the course of international relations. In this view, the United States is likely to retain its position of leadership longer than a simple count of material power resources suggests.

Identity

Rather than focusing on whether China can be successfully integrated into existing status or authority hierarchies, identity theorists address the questions of *which* China is likely to emerge as a global superpower in the years ahead, and how the United States and others might shape its identity in the process. China possesses multiple possible identities. The central analytic and policy question is which one it will choose.

As one example, Johnston (2003, 2008) argues that, despite a centuries long tradition of realpolitik thought in China, Beijing is tentatively and perhaps incrementally being socialized into existing international security institutions, the least likely and therefore most interesting area of potential identity change. In one of the first major analytic and empirical treatments of socialization in international relations, Johnston (2008, xxv–xxvi) posits three microprocesses by which countries may (1) mimic “the language, habits, and ways of acting” of others when encountering a novel environment, (2) seek social influence by conforming with established practices in anticipation of rewards of social status, and (3) be persuaded by internalizing “fundamental new causal understandings” of their environment. Using plausibility probes of each process, Johnston finds that China

mimicked the West in its first interactions in major international arms control institutions, joined the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Protocol II of the Conventional Weapons Convention in pursuit of social influence, and may have been persuaded to accept a “limited, protomultilateralist discourse and practice” within the ASEAN Regional Forum. Importantly, recognizing the limits of his intentionally selected cases, Johnston does not claim that China has been socialized significantly, only that it possibly can be socialized into existing institutions.

By contrast, Kang (2003, 2007) examines the identities that constitute China’s imperial hierarchy within the Asia regional system. Rather than seeing a traditional identity put under pressure by China’s participation in international institutions, Kang argues that China’s imperial identity is reemerging with its growing political power. Focusing largely on the absence of balancing against China, equivalent here to the absence of balancing against the United States above, Kang maintains this imperial identity creates both an absence of threats by China, as it requires only obeisance by subordinates and not direct territorial control, and in turn an absence of fear by subordinates, who are accustomed to accepting an unequal status in a Chinese-dominated system. Claiming that future identities are unknowable and eschewing predictions as mere speculation, Kang nonetheless suggests that if the United States turns from a strategy of accommodation to one of confrontation with China, the imperial hierarchy deeply internalized by states in the region may lead subordinates to stay neutral or perhaps side with Beijing (2007, 201–202). Unlike proponents of authority hierarchy above, Kang does not expect the United States to receive much assistance from other states in the region in confronting a revisionist China.

In a world in which ideas are primary, which ideas are selected by a community of states is crucial. But here, as in the case of the United States above, the process by which ideas get selected from the pool of possible

ideas is untheorized. China has long intellectual and social traditions of both *realpolitik* and imperial hierarchy. Socialization in which these ideas are updated and potentially transformed is also clearly possible. But which China will emerge in the future and how the choice of identity will be shaped by interactions with others remains theoretically and perhaps politically underdetermined.

BEYOND GREAT POWER POLITICS?

Despite current attention in international relations to the lack of balancing against the United States and the rise of China, some scholars view great power politics as increasingly anachronistic. Rather, deep globalization, the rise of transnational actors and global civil society, and increasingly cosmopolitan norms and identities are making nationalism and competition between nation-states nearly irrelevant (see Risse-Kappen 1995; Ruggie 2004; Barnett and Sikkink 2008). In this view, not past cycles of great power politics but Europe and its Union are the model for the future. In even more extreme forms, the world is entering the age of the “virtual” state in which transnational networks are reconfiguring the nature of world politics.²⁴

Although transnational relations are proliferating quickly and global civil society is growing rapidly, the implications of these trends are seen differently by different scholars in ways similar to the several schools on great power politics outlined above. Neorealists predict that states will remain the dominant units of analysis into the foreseeable future. Assuming that sovereignty is indivisible and vested in the state, they believe transnational interactions occur only with the implicit consent if not active support of states (Gilpin 1972). In this view, states could – if they wanted to – regulate who and what moves across their borders, much as China today is attempting and partly succeeding in regulating Internet access by its citizens.

Theorists of hierarchy expect more variegated outcomes, depending on what states and other social actors recognize as legitimate and appropriate. Although states are likely to remain important authorities in world politics, they do not themselves define the meaning and scope of their sovereignty. Rather, like all forms of authority, sovereignty is negotiated and contingent. In this view, private and supranational entities can and do acquire real authority in some issue-areas. Operating not just under authority delegated by states, as would be consistent with neorealism, private and supranational actors have earned autonomous authority – sometimes, as in the case of credit rating agencies, over states themselves (Sinclair 2005; Lake 2010). If so, this suggests that the powers of even great powers are attenuated, and that the future may not be the same as the past.

Finally, identity theorists see the future as relatively open, dependent on the constitutive ideas and identities of world politics. Here, the European model of the post-national state has its greatest impact, perhaps foretelling a future in which multi-level governance (Hooghe and Marks 2001) is matched by multi-level political identities that mitigate old-style, twentieth-century nationalisms. The age of global governance may be dawning (Young 1994; Hewson and Sinclair 1999; Prakash and Hart 1999; Hall and Biersteker 2002; Held and McGrew 2002; Kahler and Lake 2003; Avant et al. 2010; Koppell 2010; Neumann and Sending 2010). This alternate vision, of course, may be as Euro-centric as the focus on unipolarity is American-centric. Even if Europe is moving into a post-nationalist era, few other regions appear to be following that same path. “The West,” embodied in the so-called Atlantic Order, appears to be splintering into many divergent paths (Risse 2008). And as the financial crisis finally hit Greece and Ireland in late 2010, even the European Union itself appears more divided by national interests and rivalries than many had anticipated.

For better or worse, international relations, in my view, will continue to be massively

affected by cooperation and competition between the great powers for the foreseeable future. Globalization is changing world politics. And as the new, more social theories of international relations suggest, current trends are less determinative and more contingent on the relational, intersubjective, and ideational dimensions of power. Nonetheless, the great powers will play essential roles in constructing the future that we will all inhabit.

CONCLUSION

The end of the Cold War, and especially the absence of balancing against the United States, has prompted a substantial rethinking of international relations theory. Although some adherents remain – as the old canard goes, academic theories never die, just their proponents – gone are structural theories reliant only on “objective” conceptions of material power capabilities. Present are more social theories that in their thinnest form permit a high degree of agency by great powers and in their thickest versions see structure as constituted primarily by ideas. Gone is the structuralist view of inevitable conflict between the United States and China. Present are theories that suggest a more open future dependent on the choices of these great powers and other states, permitting a degree of optimism about great power relations in the twenty-first century.

More troubling, however, are the many and still contested theories of great power politics before the discipline – and policy makers. During the Cold War, two major approaches prevailed, neorealist balance of power theory and power preponderance theory. These theories offer starkly different interpretations of the same historical events, and scholars seldom assessed these theories directly against one another. Proponents of each approach talked largely to themselves, and failed to engage the propositions of the other. Few attempted to formulate decisive tests that would have allowed the community

of scholars to adjudicate between these alternative visions of great power politics. Today, we have five approaches, none of which are, to date, sufficiently well specified so as to yield clearly testable propositions. This is, in part, the product of more social theories, where the actions of any single state are contingent on the relations and intersubjective understandings of other states. The very openness of the theories, praised above, makes deriving even probabilistic propositions more difficult. Nonetheless, much is riding on the differences between these approaches. How we understand US policy today, the rise of China tomorrow, and even whether great powers are still relevant hinges on subtle differences in assumptions and their implications. Scholars working on the future of great power politics in the twenty-first century should not repeat the mistakes of the past. They must not engage only in internal conversations within hermetically sealed communities of like-minded theorists. Much greater effort should be devoted to articulating theories clearly, identifying propositions that distinguish between theories, and designing imaginative empirical strategies for assessing theories relative to each other.

The key analytic issue today is not whether structure is socially constructed, but whether it is thinly social – relational and intersubjective – or thickly social – relational, intersubjective, and primarily ideational. In other words, the principal divide is how thoroughly the material conditions of social life are mediated by shared ideas and, in turn, how plastic these shared ideas may be. In my personal view, more an epistemological and methodological bet than a confirmed fact, states and individual political leaders usually understand the material costs and benefits of status and authority hierarchies relatively well, and provide order or yield autonomy over their policies only when reasonably accurate assessments suggest they should.²⁵ This is not to say that ideas never matter – a foolish position – only that material conditions are a reasonable baseline for making

predictions about state behavior. Other scholars make a different bet that material conditions are so highly mediated by prevailing ideas that they are all but irrelevant in predicting policy and outcomes. The greatest challenge for such an approach, and the main reason for my skepticism, is explaining which ideas bundled into which identity are selected from the set of possible ideas and identities. Thickly social approaches, as I have suggested above, do not have a good explanation of how and why some ideas and some identities win out over others. In retrospect, the narratives offered make sense and provide a full account of the choices and actions of states. But given that ideas are malleable and open to transformation, these same narratives lack strong predictive power. Progress in understanding this process of identity selection is critical to the future success of the research approach – and to predicting and even shaping the future of US–Chinese relations in the decades ahead.

NOTES

1 On the American-centrism of international relations, see Wæver (1998) and Tickner and Wæver (2009). The focus on China's rise, however, appears more general. See the forum on China's rise in *Review of International Studies* 31, 4 (2005) and "Friend or Foe? A Special Report on China's Place in the World," *The Economist*, December 4, 2010.

2 I divide theory by century rather than pre- and post-1989, as is now common, because the full implications of the end of bipolarity were not realized for several years. The turn of the century appears to be a more accurate dividing line for theory, if not history.

3 This review ignores the very large literature on the domestic sources of foreign policy in both the United States and Soviet Union that developed in this same period.

4 These are the elements of the widely used Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) developed by the Correlations of War project. See Singer (1988).

5 There was a vigorous internal debate over the motives of great powers and, in turn, how constraining structure might be. Waltz came to be known as a defensive realist, in which states sought merely

security and structure was only loosely constraining, while Mearsheimer (2001) staked out a more offensive realist view, in which states sought hegemony and as a result structure was more constraining.

6 On balance of power theory, see Haas (1953), Levy (2003) and Levy and Thompson (2005).

7 The same is true of the English School of international relations. See Clark (2009).

8 For the foundational works on this debate, see Kaplan (1957), Deutsch and Singer (1964), Waltz (1964), and Rosecrance (1966). For a review of the polarity literature, see Buzan (2004). For a synthesis of this literature, see Jervis (1997, ch. 3).

9 Waltz (1979, 163–176) captured much of what later came to be the bargaining theory of war in his discussion of stability. On bargaining theory, see Fearon (1995) and Powell (1999).

10 For a regional subsystem approach, see Lemke (2002).

11 Moreover, different states would likely respond differently at the same stage in the cycle, with some sympathetic states supporting the hegemon, others free riding, and only some seeking to challenge its position. For an attempt to theorize different structurally induced strategies of non-hegemonic states, see Lake (1988). See also Lobell (2003).

12 On the strategies by France to navigate around American unipolarity, see Petras and Morley (2000).

13 For critical treatments of balance of power theory from a longer-term perspective, see Schroeder (1976; 1992; 1994), Schweller (1994; 1997), Christensen and Snyder (1990), Rosecrance and Lo (1996), and Levy and Thompson (2005).

14 Reus-Smit (2004, 43–44) uses these dimensions to distinguish a social theory of power from material theories of power, but it generalizes nicely to all social theories. Reus-Smit also limits social theories of power to “legitimate capacity,” which I discuss more specifically as authority below. On social forms of power in international relations, see Barnett and Duvall (2005).

15 In this sense, neorealism is relational, but it is neither intersubjective nor primarily ideational.

16 But note, mutual *acceptance* or *approval* is not necessary. A state can recognize another as a great power without approving or condoning that status.

17 On this score alone, traditional pluralists might expect that liberal states are prone to capture by various politically powerful groups, who will then use state power to advance their special interests, whether in the form of support for particular countries (e.g., Israel; see Mearsheimer and Walt 2008) or industries (e.g., oil or finance). This suggests the possible perversion of even this optimistic view of liberalism in ways that make it less universal and desirable.

18 For the unique behaviors of great powers, see among others Levy (1983), Gochman and Maoz

(1984), Siverson and Starr (1991), Siverson and Emmons (1991), Bremer (1992), Huth (1998), Lemke and Reed (2001).

19 On authority hierarchies, see Lake (2009). See also Cooley (2005), Cooley and Spruyt (2009), Donnelly (2006), Hancock (2009), Hobson and Sharmon (2005), and Weber (2000). A related literature, which concentrates on how the United States has overstepped the bounds of legitimacy and become an empire or, at least, an imperial state, see Bacevich (2002), Cox (2004b), Johnson (2000; 2004), Mann (2003; 2004), and Odom and Dujarric (2004).

20 For an extended discussion of authority and its behavioral manifestations in international relations described in this paragraph, see Lake (2009).

21 For a critique of this materialist (as opposed to ideational) conception of order and the social contract in international relations, see Finnemore (2003, ch. 4) and Pouliot (2010b).

22 For a similar critique of rationalist theories from which I draw the metaphor, see Wendt (2001).

23 For a perspective on China’s soft power “charm offensive,” similar to the argument about self-restraint by the United States above, see Kurlantzick (2008). On China’s soft balancing, see Beeson (2009, 103–106).

24 On the networked state, see Slaughter (2004); on virtual states, see Rosecrance (2000); on challenges to the state, see Lipschutz (2000). For a review, see Kahler (2002). For a defense of the state as a primordial unit of analysis in international relations, see Lake (2008).

25 On methodological bets in international relations, see Lake and Powell (1999).

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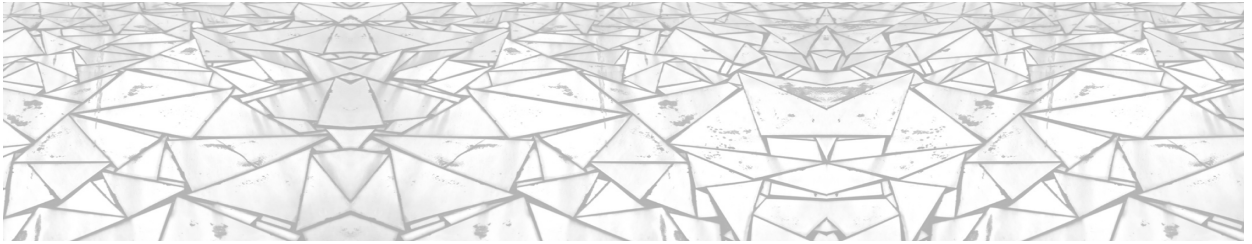
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PART THREE

Substantive Issues in International Relations



Interstate War and Peace

Jack S. Levy

Ever since Thucydides' (1996) account of the Peloponnesian War over 2,400 years ago, scholars from a wide range of disciplines have studied war in the hope of facilitating efforts to prevent its occurrence, reduce its frequency, or mitigate its consequences. A complete understanding of war needs to draw on many disciplinary perspectives, but political science is central. Clausewitz's ([1832]1976) influential conceptualization of war as a "continuation of politics by other means," along with the common definition of war as large-scale or sustained violence between political organizations,¹ suggest that war is intrinsically political. To explain war, we must explain why political leaders choose to adopt military force rather than other strategies to achieve their desired ends.

The study of war in international relations varies enormously in theoretical orientation, methodological approach, ontological assumptions, and empirical domain. This reflects broader trends in the field, in the discipline, and in the social sciences, as international relations scholars have engaged in increasingly productive dialogues with scholars in comparative politics and with economists, sociologists, anthropologists,

psychologists, and historians. The study of war also reflects significant cross-national differences in theory and method (Wæver, 1998; Suganami, 1996).

There has been a notable shift in the kinds of wars that scholars study. This parallels the significant shift in warfare since World War II – from the major powers to minor powers, from Europe to other regions, and from interstate war to intrastate war.² Scholars now devote as much or more attention to civil wars, ethnic wars, and terrorism as to the interstate wars, and particularly great power wars, that previously dominated international conflict research.³ Scholars have also increasingly questioned the relevance of traditional "Clausewitzian" conceptions of warfare, while debating the extent to which the "new wars" are radically different from "old wars" (Kaldor, 1999; Kalyvas, 2001; Münkler, 2004; Duyvesteyn and Angstrom, 2005).

The theoretical literature on war is far too vast to cover in its entirety in a single essay. I limit my attention to theories of interstate war, in part because civil war and terrorism are covered elsewhere in this volume, and in part because the primary explanations for these different forms of warfare remain quite

distinct, though there has been some recent convergence.⁴ Continued attention to interstate war is also warranted by its potential systemic consequences and its human and economic destructiveness, and by the number of interstate disputes in the contemporary world that have the potential to escalate.

Within interstate war, I focus primarily on the causes of war, which has dominated the attention of conflict theorists for many years, though recently scholars have begun to give more attention to the conduct of war and the termination of war (King, 1997; Goemans, 2000; Reiter, 2009; Stanley, 2009).⁵ My orientation is more explanatory than normative.⁶ I focus on theories that attempt to explain variations in war and peace over time and space, as opposed to theories that try to explain “enabling” conditions for war (Suganami, 1996: ch. 1], “root” causes of war, or the evolutionary origins of propensities toward aggression (Gat, 2006). The question guiding this essay is “Who Fights Whom, Where, When, and Why?” (Bremer, 2000).

I examine a handful of leading research programs in some detail rather than provide an encyclopedic coverage of a larger number of approaches. I focus on realist theories of war, liberal theories about the “democratic peace” and the “capitalist peace,” the bargaining model of war, and individual-level psychological theories. Admittedly, this still leaves a lot of ground uncovered. At the governmental level, I neglect the dynamics of decision making in bureaucratic organizations and small groups (Allison and Zelikow, 1999; ‘t Hart, Stern, and Sundelius, 1997) and the role of strategic culture (Johnston, 1995; Rosen, 1996; Kier, 1997). At the societal level, I neglect Marxist-Leninist theories (Lenin, 1939; Semmel, 1981), the role of domestic interest groups and ideology (Snyder, 1991; Lobell, 2004; Haas, 2005; Narizny, 2007), and the clash of civilizations (Huntington, 1996). I give little attention to constructivist approaches (Schroeder, 1994; Katzenstein, 1996; Farrell, 2005; Lebow, 2003, 2010) or to feminist approaches,⁷ in

part because these are covered in Part I of this volume.⁸

REALIST THEORIES OF WAR

The realist tradition, which includes intellectual descendants of Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Rousseau, has long dominated the study of interstate war (Vasquez, 1998). Realists share a common set of assumptions: the key actors in world politics are sovereign states or other territorially based groups that act rationally to advance their security, power, and wealth in an anarchic international system.⁹ Given uncertainties regarding the current and future intentions of the adversary, political leaders focus on short-term security needs, adopt worst-case thinking, engage in a struggle for power and security, and utilize coercive threats to influence the adversary and maintain or advance their interests and reputations (Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1979; Mearsheimer, 2001).

The vast majority of realists acknowledge that war can come about through either predatory aggression, in which a dissatisfied state concludes that it can best advance its interests through military force, or through an inadvertent conflict spiral, in which two relatively satisfied states, each interested primarily in maintaining its security, may still end up in war as a result of an escalating conflict spiral. Uncertainty about the adversary’s intentions may lead a purely “security-seeking” state to increase its military power solely for defensive purposes, but its adversary often perceives those actions as threatening and responds with its own defensive actions, triggering an action–reaction cycle. The resulting “security dilemma” (Jervis, 1978; Glaser, 2010) and conflict spiral, which can be exacerbated by psychological dynamics (Jervis, 1976), can be difficult to reverse and can escalate to an “inadvertent war” that neither side wanted or expected at the onset of the dispute.¹⁰

Realists are divided over how compelling anarchic structures and the security dilemma actually are in forcing states into conflictual relationships. “Offensive realists” argue that the international system is so hostile and unforgiving that uncertainty about the future intentions of the adversary combined with extreme worst-case analysis lead great powers to adopt offensive strategies and pursue regional hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2001). “Defensive realists” argue that international anarchy does not in itself force states into conflict and war. Balancing, evaluation of adversary intentions independently of capabilities, defensive strategies, and careful signaling generally work to provide security. If states behave aggressively, it is not because of external threats but instead because of domestic pressures and pathologies. Defensive realists argue that war will not arise in a world of purely security-seeking states in the absence of domestically induced revisionist goals or extreme misperceptions of external threats (Snyder, 1991; Schweller, 1996; Van Evera, 1999; Glaser, 2010). The analytic distinction between predatory and security-seeking states is an ideal type, of course. As Snyder and Jervis (1999: 21) argue, “the security dilemma gives rise to predators, and predation intensifies the security dilemma.”

A pure “preventive war” – one motivated only by the anticipation of a negative power shift, the fear of its consequences, and the temptation to degrade the adversary’s power while the opportunity is still available – is another path through which anarchic structures alone might induce war (Copeland, 2000; Levy, 2008a). However, Kydd (1997: 148) argues, from a defensive realist perspective, that “preventive wars sparked by fears about the future motivations of currently benign states almost never happen.” The preventive motivation leads to war only in conjunction with existing hostilities or conflicts of interest. The “purest” case of a preventive attack was Israel’s strike against Iraq’s nuclear reactor in 1981.

The core realist proposition is that variations in the distribution of power help to explain variations in the frequency of war and other forms of international behavior (Waltz, 1979, 1988; Mearsheimer, 2001). As many critics have argued, however, the distribution of power alone does not explain enough of the variance in war and peace across time and space, much less system transformations, and in this sense war and other outcomes are underdetermined in neo-realist theory (Keohane, 1986; Buzan, Jones, and Little, 1993; Ruggie, 1998).

Realists have increasingly come to acknowledge this limitation, and have begun to incorporate other variables in an attempt to explain more of the variation in international conflict. Thus, “defensive realists” emphasize the role of the offensive–defensive balance (Van Evera, 1999; Brown et al., 2004) and domestic variables (Snyder, 1991), and “neoclassical realists” emphasize the intervening role of the state in evaluating the external distribution of power, the external threats and opportunities it creates, and the capacity to mobilize societal resources for state ends (Lobell, Ripsman, and Taliaferro, 2009). The incorporation of domestic variables into realist theory, however, raises questions about the theory’s “hard core” assumptions (Lakatos, 1970), and about the point at which a significantly modified realist theory ceases to be realist.

Balance of power and hegemonic theories

It is useful to distinguish between “balance of power realism” and hegemonic-power-based theories (Levy and Thompson, 2010: 38). Balance of power approaches include both classical theories as formulated by Morgenthau (1948), Gulick (1955), Claude (1962), Aron (1973), and Bull (1977), and the more systematic structural realism of Waltz (1979). Hegemonic theories include both self-consciously realist theories like hegemonic stability theory (Gilpin, 1981)

and other theories that posit hierarchical international orders but that reject the realist label, like power transition theory (Organski and Kugler, 1980) and long cycle theory (Thompson, 1988).

Balance of power theories stress the importance of anarchy and posit that the avoidance of hegemony is the primary goal of states (or at least of the great powers) and that the maintenance of an equilibrium of power in the system is an essential means to that end. The theory predicts that states will build up their arms and form alliances to balance against those who constitute the primary threats to their interests and particularly against any state which threatens to secure a hegemonic position over the system. Balance of power theorists argue that the balancing mechanism almost always works successfully to avoid hegemony, either because potential hegemons are deterred by their anticipation of a military coalition forming against them or because they are defeated in war after deterrence fails. Balance of power theories have been criticized on a number of grounds (Vasquez and Elman, 2003), but since the mid-1990s there has been a resurgence of interest in these approaches (Little, 2007; Kaufman, Little, and Wohlforth, 2007).

Hegemonic theories share realist assumptions but de-emphasize the importance of anarchy while emphasizing authority structures and system management within a hierarchical order. The most influential hegemonic theory is power transition theory (Organski and Kugler, 1980; Kugler and Lemke, 1996; Tammen et al., 2000). Hegemons commonly arise and use their strength to create a set of political and economic structures and norms that enhance both the stability of the system and their own interests. Differential rates of growth lead to the rise and fall of hegemons (Kennedy, 1987), and the probability of a major war is greatest at the point when the declining leader is being overtaken by a rising and dissatisfied challenger. Either the challenger initiates a war to bring its benefits from the system into line with its rising military

power, or the declining leader initiates a preventive war to block the rising challenger while the opportunity is still available (though most power transition theorists minimize the role of preventive war strategies). Debates about the rise of China and its implications for the future of the international system and the Sino-American relationship have generated renewed interest in power transition theory.¹¹

Hegemonic theorists argue, quite correctly, that balancing often fails and that hegemonies often form, at least outside of Europe, as emphasized by recent research (Watson, 1992; Kaufman, Little, and Wohlforth, 2007). The discrepancy between the European system and some non-Western systems has led "English School" theorists to argue that the difference is due to the emergence in European society of an institutionalized balance of power, defined by a system of diplomacy and set of rules and norms that evolved beginning in the sixteenth century (Bull, 1977; Little, 2007).¹²

Balance of power and hegemonic theories appear to posit contradictory hypotheses about the consequences of concentrations of power in the international system.¹³ These contradictions disappear if we recognize that most applications of the two theories define the key concepts of power and system differently. Most balance of power theories have a strong Eurocentric bias and implicitly conceive of power in terms of land-based military power and of hegemony in terms of dominance over Europe. Most applications of hegemonic theories define hegemony in terms of dominance in global finance, trade, and naval power. Power transition theory, for example, uses gross national product per capita as its indicator of power (Kugler and Lemke, 1996), and long cycle theory uses naval power and leading economic sector technologies (Rasler and Thompson, 1994). Thus, their hypotheses about power concentrations refer to different dimensions of power in different systems. A combined hypothesis is that the European system is most stable under an equilibrium of military power,

whereas the global system is most stable in the presence of a single dominant economic and naval power. Levy and Thompson (2010: ch. 2) argue that land powers and sea powers have different interests and pose different threats to others. They find a systematic tendency toward balancing against high concentrations of power in the European system but not in the global system.

While empirical studies have demonstrated that structural systemic theories of war have only been able to account for a limited amount of the variation in war and peace, even among the great powers (Bennett and Stam, 2004), rational choice theorists have questioned the logical coherence of structural theories and their absence of a clear set of microfoundations. Those microfoundations are developed in the bargaining model of war, to which we now turn.

THE BARGAINING MODEL OF WAR

The bargaining model of war begins with the recognition that war is a costly and inefficient means of resolving conflict because it destroys resources that might otherwise be distributed among adversaries. It should be possible in principle for contending parties to reach a negotiated settlement that avoids the costs of war and that is therefore mutually preferred to war. This leads Fearon (1995) to argue that the central question that any theory of war must answer is why opposing parties are sometimes unable to reach such a settlement and instead end up in war. Fearon recognized that psychological variables might provide one answer to this question and domestic politics another, but he focused on rational unitary actors. He identified three sets of conditions under which they could end up in war: private information and incentives to misrepresent that information, commitment problems, and indivisible issues.

The *private information* path to war refines and formalizes Blainey's (1988) emphasis

on disagreements about relative power and hence about the likely outcome of fighting as the fundamental cause of war. Actors that share similar expectations regarding the outcome of war should be able to negotiate a settlement that gives each party the same payoffs that it expects to receive from war but without its economic and human costs. Fearon argued that private information can generate different expectations about relative power and the likely outcome of war and, therefore, different incentives to reach a negotiated settlement. Sharing information might eliminate the gap in expectations, but it might also undercut a state's negotiating position or give the adversary the opportunity to compensate for its weaknesses by securing allies, changing its strategy, or initiating a preemptive strike. If one or both actors conclude that it can do better by fighting than by accepting the best settlement the adversary is willing to offer, it will presumably fight unless additional concessions are forthcoming.

Bargaining theorists have applied the private information argument to the conduct and termination of war as well as to the causes of war. The process of fighting reveals information about relative military capabilities and hence the likely outcome of war. This leads to a convergence of expectations about the result of future fighting and consequently to an increase in the likelihood of the termination of war based on a negotiated settlement (Wagner, 2000; Goemans, 2000; Slantchev, 2003; Reiter, 2009).

A second path to war involves the *commitment problem* (Fearon, 1995; Wagner, 2000; Powell, 2006). If adversaries anticipate a shift in the relative distribution of power between them, they may have difficulty reaching a settlement that they mutually prefer to war, even in the absence of private information. A rising but weaker actor, recognizing that it is likely to lose any war fought now and that it will be in a stronger negotiating position later, has incentives to avoid war. The declining stronger state has incentives to reach a settlement that freezes

the status quo, but it cannot be sure whether its rising adversary would honor the agreement into the future, or whether it would initiate a new set of demands backed by its stronger power. The rising power might promise to abide by that settlement, but there is no mechanism to enforce that promise after the adversary acquires the military strength to back its demands for greater concessions. The only concessions that are likely to satisfy the declining state are those that would restrict the growth of the rising state, but the latter is unlikely to accept any settlement that would restrict its future bargaining power. This commitment problem, which is the key mechanism driving preventive war strategies, reduces the probability of a negotiated settlement and increases the probability of war. The concept has also been applied to ethnic conflicts (Fearon, 1998).

Fearon's (1995) third rationalist path to war involves *indivisible issues*. To be acceptable to both parties, a settlement requires a division of goods that is proportionate to the likely outcome of the war. This is theoretically possible if and only if the issues in dispute are infinitely divisible. Material goods are often divisible, and issue linkages (Morgan, 1994) or side payments might facilitate a settlement, but many ideological and religious issues are not divisible (Toft, 2006). Most bargaining theorists, however, give less attention to the indivisibility of issues than to informational problems and commitment problems as distinct paths to war.

The bargaining model of war is a major contribution to the literature on international conflict at both the interstate and intrastate levels. It directs students of the causes of war to the important question of why the contending parties cannot reach a negotiated settlement that both parties prefer to war. It also generates some important testable implications for the conduct of war and the termination of war. It is important to note, however, that Fearon's (1995) model applies only to rational unitary actors. If leaders perceive that the domestic political benefits

from war outweigh the costs of war, they might have political incentives to go to war despite the costs of war to society as a whole. Relatedly, leaders might prefer to back away from an earlier threat in order to help resolve a crisis, but be precluded from doing so by the anticipation of domestic "audience costs" (Fearon, 1994). In addition, psychological distortions in information processing, including tendencies toward overconfidence (Jervis, 1976; Johnson, 2004) and toward allowing evaluations of the desirability of war outcomes to shape estimates of the probability of those outcomes, might lead actors to conclude that they might get more from fighting than from a negotiated settlement. That is, the disagreements about relative power that can lead to war might result not only from private information and the incentives to misrepresent that information, as the bargaining model expects, but also from cognitive biases and motivated reasoning (Lake, 2010/11).

LIBERAL THEORIES OF WAR AND PEACE

Liberals have always questioned the pessimism of realist international theory and argued that under certain domestic and international conditions, and with the appropriate strategies, states can overcome the pressures of anarchy and significantly reduce the frequency and intensity of warfare. A classic statement of the liberal view is Kant's ([1795]1949) conception of perpetual peace based on democratic institutions, free trade, and international law and institutions. Social scientists began a rigorous and systematic investigation of the empirical validity of Kantian international theory in the 1980s with the democratic peace research program. Within a decade they began to test the hypothesis that economic interdependence promotes peace, explore the links between international institutions and conflict, and combine these into a single integrated liberal *theory* of peace and war. Here, I focus on the

hypotheses that democratic institutions and economic interdependence each promote peace. I leave aside arguments about the pacifying effects of law and international institutions.¹⁴

The democratic peace

The "democratic peace" emerged as a coherent and quite visible research program in the 1980s after scholars began to compile systematic evidence that democracies rarely if ever go to war with each other. This was an extraordinarily strong empirical correlation, one that was robust for a range of definitions of democracy, in a field that had identified few law-like relationships. The finding attracted additional interest because it contradicted realist assumptions that state behavior was insensitive to regime type and because it provided a strong foundation for an alternative liberal research program. Scholars devoted enormous energies to validating the basic finding, identifying the empirical domains over which it is valid, and identifying possible exceptions to the democratic peace proposition and other patterns associated with democratic war behavior.¹⁵ Most analysts have concluded that there are no unambiguous cases of wars between democracies (Ray, 1995), one exception being the 1999 Kargil War between India and Pakistan.

Scholars then engaged the question of whether or not the presumed causal link between democratic dyads and war was spurious and traceable to standard predictors of peace, such as the absence of territorial contiguity, high levels of trade between democratic states, the role of hegemonic power in suppressing conflicts, or by other economic or geopolitical factors correlated with democracy (Doyle, 1997; Maoz, 1997; Ray, 1995, 2000; Russett and Starr, 2000; Russett and Oneal, 2001).¹⁶ After controlling for these factors, most researchers have concluded that the link between "joint democracy" and peace is not spurious (though

there is an important debate about trade, which we discuss in the next section), so that the explanation for peace between democratic dyads must have something to do with the nature of democracy. Although some argue that it goes too far to claim that the absence of war between democracies "comes as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international relations" (Levy, in Levy and Thompson, 2010: 124fn.38), no one has identified a stronger empirical regularity, and many make the law-like claim that joint democracy is a sufficient condition for peace (Gleditsch, 1995; Chan, 1997; Russett and Starr, 2000).

The consensus that democracies rarely if ever fight each other is not matched by any agreement as to how to explain this strong empirical regularity. Most scholars agree, however, that a theoretical explanation of the democratic peace must be consistent with other patterns of democratic conflict behavior uncovered by researchers. Most analysts have accepted the monadic hypothesis that democracies are not significantly more peaceful than other kinds of states, though some research challenges this view (Rummel, 1995; Benoit, 1996; Ray, 2000).¹⁷ In addition, democracies frequently fight imperial and colonial wars; they are more likely to be the initiators than targets in wars between democracies and autocracies; they occasionally use covert action against each other (James and Mitchell, 1995; Bennett and Stam, 1998; Downes and Lilley, 2010); and democratic–authoritarian dyads are more war-prone than are authoritarian–authoritarian dyads. One implication is the system-level finding that an increase in the number of democracies increases the probability of war in a system with few democracies but decreases the probability of war in a system with many democracies.

An explanation for the democratic peace must also be consistent with evidence that democracies almost never fight on opposing sides in multilateral wars, win a disproportionate number of the wars they fight, suffer fewer casualties in the wars they initiate

(Reiter and Stam, 2002), and engage in more peaceful processes of conflict resolution when they get into disputes with other democracies (Dixon, 1994). Scholars have debated the monadic proposition of whether states involved in transitions to democracy are more likely to become involved in war than are other states (Snyder, 2000). Most evidence suggests that while democratizing states may be more prone to external conflict in the early stages of transition from authoritarian rule (Mansfield and Snyder, 2005), after that new democracies are no more war-prone than are other states (Ward and Gleditsch, 1998; Russett and Oneal, 2001).

An early explanation of the democratic peace was the "democratic culture and norms" model (Owen, 1997; Russett and Oneal, 2001), which posits that democracies are inherently averse to war because democratic cultures develop norms of bounded political competition and the peaceful resolution of disputes. These norms are extended to relations between democratic states but not to relations with nondemocratic states because democracies fear being exploited.

One problem with the normative model is that democratic states have frequently initiated imperial wars against weaker opponents despite the absence of any threat of being exploited by them, and they have fought highly destructive wars against autocracies that posed minimal security threats. This suggests that democratic states are not always constrained by norms of peaceful conflict resolution. This issue led some constructivists to modify the democratic culture argument by emphasizing the importance of shared identity among like-minded democratic states (Risse-Kappen, 1995). Yet democracies do engage in covert action against each other, and they occasionally use low levels of military force against each other (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 1999), which is not consistent with the idea of a shared identity of democratic states.

A closely related model of the democratic peace is the "institutional constraints" model, which emphasizes electoral institutions,

checks and balances, the dispersion of power, and the role of a free press. These institutions preclude political leaders from taking unilateral military action, ensure an open public debate, and require leaders to secure a broad base of public support before adopting risky policies. Consequently, leaders can resort to military force only in response to serious and immediate threats (Morgan and Campbell, 1991; Russett and Oneal, 2001).

The institutional constraints model has trouble explaining why democracies frequently fight autocracies, why they usually initiate those wars, and why they frequently fight colonial wars. In addition, most versions of the institutional constraints model assume that leaders have more warlike preferences than do their publics. This is not always true, however, and in fact belligerent publics sometimes push their leaders into wars those leaders prefer to avoid (the United States in the Spanish–American War, for example) or prevent leaders from making compromises that might reduce the likelihood of war (as illustrated by both the Israeli public and the Palestinian "street"). In addition, politically insecure leaders often are tempted by the diversionary motivation and resort to military force, which often triggers "rally round the flag" effects that bolster their domestic political support (Levy and Thompson, 2010: 99–104).

Bueno de Mesquita et al. (1999) provide an alternative institutional explanation of the democratic peace and other observed patterns of democratic conflict behavior. Their "selectorate" model emphasizes political survival as the primary goal of political leaders. It posits that leaders with larger winning coalitions (characteristic of democracies) depend on successful public policies for survival in office, whereas leaders with smaller winning coalitions (authoritarian states) depend on their ability to satisfy their core supporters through the distribution of private goods (an option not available to leaders with larger winning coalitions). This implies that democratic leaders are more sensitive to the outcome of wars than are authoritarian leaders, which is consistent with the finding

that democratic leaders are more likely than their authoritarian counterparts to be removed from office after an unsuccessful war (Buono de Mesquita and Siverson, 1995).¹⁸

Unlike the democratic norms and institutions models, the selectorate model incorporates strategic interaction between democracies and their adversaries. Because of the political benefits of successful wars and the political costs of unsuccessful wars, democratic leaders tend to initiate only those wars they are confident of winning and, once in war, to devote enormous resources to the war effort. Autocratic leaders devote fewer resources to war because the costs of military defeat are less and because they need those resources to distribute to their key supporters at home.

In a war between democracies, both sides would invest an enormous amount of resources, resulting in a war that is economically costly to both sides. Democratic leaders understand this and have strong incentives to seek a negotiated peace rather than to fight, which explains the dyadic democratic peace. The model also accounts for other empirical regularities regarding democratic war behavior. Democratic leaders benefit from successful wars, especially those involving low casualties, and therefore they do not hesitate to initiate wars against weaker autocracies or colonies. The model also explains why strong democracies sometimes initiate low levels of force against a much weaker democracy (there are few domestic political risks), why the target capitulates immediately (they anticipate that leaders in the more powerful state have strong incentives to win the war), and thus why militarized disputes between democracies do not escalate to war.

In conflicts between democratic and autocratic states, there are two conflicting tendencies. It is costly for an autocracy to fight a democracy because democratic leaders have strong domestic incentives to invest heavily in the war effort. On the other hand, autocrats also take greater gambles in war because the outcome of war has less of an

impact on their political survival. As a result, the selectorate model predicts that autocracies will initiate wars against weak democracies but rarely against strong democracies. The outcome of disputes between democratic–authoritarian dyads of roughly equal strength depends on the specific values of key variables in the model.

The selectorate model is a major contribution to the literature on the democratic peace as well as to international and comparative politics more generally. One concern, however, is that in its focus on the provision of public goods through good policies in states with large winning coalitions, and in defining those goods primarily in material terms, the selectorate model underestimates the importance of symbolic goods. These include “rally” effects following the diversionary use of force, where the population is mobilized around the regime as a symbol of the nation. Diversionary behavior is common in both democracies and autocracies (Gelpi, 1997), though the relative frequency and political impact has yet to be determined.

Schultz (2001) provides another institutional explanation for the democratic peace, in the form of an information-based signaling model of the interaction of governments, domestic political oppositions, and the adversary. Schultz assumes that democratic institutions and a free press make democracies far more transparent than autocracies, that the primary interest of governments and oppositions is maintaining or gaining political power (as opposed to advancing the national interest), and that the opposition has access to the same information as the government. Governments have incentives to bluff about their intent to follow through on a threat against the adversary, but oppositions do not. Consequently, the opposition’s behavior sends a credible signal to the adversary about the government’s likely resolve in a crisis. This reduces the dangers of crisis escalation due to misperceptions.

Schultz’s (2001) game-theoretic model begins with the government initiating a dispute by making a demand of the adversary.

If the opposition fails to support the government's threat – either because it believes that the government lacks the capabilities to implement its threat or that a war is likely to be unpopular – the government cannot stand firm in a crisis. The adversary understands this and adopts a harder line in crisis bargaining. Democratic leaders anticipate their adversary's heightened resolve and refrain from initiating the dispute in the first place.

If leaders expect the support of the opposition, however, they will initiate the dispute, knowing they will be able to stand firm if the adversary resists, and the anticipation of this leads the adversary to behave more cautiously. As a result, crises involving democratic states are less likely to be characterized by misperceptions regarding the adversary's resolve and less likely to escalate to war because of misperceptions than are crises involving nondemocratic states. This is critical given the link between misperceptions, private information, and the outbreak of war. In jointly democratic dyads, misperceptions are reduced even further, though whether this reduction is enough to account for the near absence of wars between democracies has not yet been established.

Schultz's (2001) informational model of crisis behavior of democratic states has been very influential, but it is based on rather strong assumptions. One is that the opposition is equally informed as the government about the nature of the crisis and the military capabilities of each side. The US government's distortion of information about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction in 2002–2003 (Rovner, 2011: chap. 7) is just one of countless cases that violate that assumption. If there are information asymmetries between government and opposition, and if the adversary understands this, the opposition's behavior does not necessarily send credible signals of the government's relative military strength and resolve.

The informational model also ignores the strategic implications of diversionary theory. If political leaders sometimes have incentives

to go to war to bolster their domestic political support, it follows that oppositions may have incentives to try to oppose war, and particularly a war expected to be successful, in an attempt to block a war that would benefit the leader at the expense of the opposition. As a result, the opposition's lack of support for the government in a crisis does not necessarily signal the government's lack of resolve, and Schultz's signaling model breaks down (Levy and Mabe, 2004).

This line of argument assumes that the opposition has the political resources to block war under certain conditions, which is likely to vary across political systems. It also assumes that the political benefits of military victory are lasting, validating the opposition's fear of the political consequences of a military victory. Although Schultz (2001) is correct that "rally" effects are often temporary, governments can use their increased power from rally effects to implement long-lasting institutional changes. As James Madison (in Hunt, 1906:174) argued, "War is ... the true nurse of executive aggrandizement."

Another explanation for the democratic peace emphasizes the shared interests among democratic states, rather than the inherent nature of democracy itself (Gartzke, 2000). This focus on issues is particularly interesting given the fact that for decades conflict theorists gave relatively little attention to the issues over which states fight, and focused instead on the issue of power, both internationally and domestically (Vasquez, 1998). That has gradually begun to change, and scholars have begun to generate datasets on issues and explored the escalatory potential of different issues (Mitchell and Prins, 1999; Hensel, 2001).¹⁹ The most significant finding here is that disputes over territory are far more likely to escalate to crises and war than are disputes over other issues (Huth, 1996; Vasquez and Henehan, 2011). This led Gibler (2012) to argue that peace between democracies is a "territorial peace": undisputed and stable borders between states promotes both democratic development and peace within the

dyad, whereas territorial disputes create fears of conflict and the centralization of political power to deal with the perceived external threat. This is an intriguing argument, but it has yet to be subject to critical scrutiny and comparative testing.

A more developed line of argument is that the shared interests that minimize conflict between democracies are economic, generated by market economies shared disproportionately by democratic dyads. This has led to several variants of a “capitalist peace” explanation for the near absence of wars between democracies. These arguments are the culmination of centuries of theorizing and over a decade of systematic empirical research on the relationship between economic interdependence and peace, to which we now turn.

Economic interdependence and peace

The idea that trade and other forms of economic interdependence promote peace was a central theme in nineteenth-century liberal economic theory. It superseded the mercantilist or economic nationalist ideology that prevailed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Mercantilism emphasized the mutually reinforcing nature of commerce and war: commerce enhanced the economic foundations of military power, and military power was useful in acquiring territory, resources, and colonies that contributed to wealth (Viner, 1948). Liberals rejected mercantilists’ zero-sum conception of international relations and their preferences for national economic monopolies and protectionist trade policies. Liberals argued that trade based on specialization and comparative advantage could improve the well-being of all states; that the efficiency of trade over conquest in enhancing wealth had increased as production and wealth became more mobile and less tied to territory (Rosecrance, 1986; Brooks, 2005); and that as a result of industrialization, war between

major states could no longer be cost-effective. Angell’s (1912) argument that the economic costs of a great power war would be so devastating that such a war was unthinkable was soon discredited by the experience of the two world wars, but it was resurrected by mid-century as a cornerstone of American liberal internationalist ideology. Economic liberalism (or “commercial pacifism” [Doyle, 1997]) is now the basis for optimistic forecasts about the beneficial effects of globalization on international security.

Liberal theorists advance a number of interrelated theoretical arguments in support of the proposition that trade promotes peace. The most influential is the “opportunity cost” or “trade-disruption” hypothesis: trade generates economic benefits for both parties, and the anticipation that war will disrupt trade and lead to a loss or reduction of the gains from trade deters political leaders from taking actions that are likely to lead to war (Polachek, 1980; Russett and Oneal, 2001). The higher the levels of trade between two states, the greater the economic deterrent effects of a bilateral war.

These dyadic-level effects are reinforced by domestic factors. Domestic actors that benefit from trade have incentives to use their influence to support policies that promote a peaceful international environment in which trade can thrive (Rogowski, 1989; Lobell, 2004; Narizny, 2007; Snyder, 1991). The converse is also true: domestic actors that benefit from war, or at least from the threat of war, have incentives (and enhanced power) to use their influence to promote policies likely to lead to war. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for example, war was profitable for many merchants, and this generated additional political support for war (Howard, 1976; Wilson, 1978).

Others argue that trade increases prosperity, and that prosperity often generates a culture of acquisitiveness that dampens the martial spirit and diverts resources away from the military sector (Veblen, [1915]1966; Schumpeter, [1919]1951; Aron, 1958). A common nineteenth-century argument was

that “Men were too busy growing rich to have time for war” (Blainey, 1988: 10). Prosperity also mitigates the domestic problems that sometimes lead to war, either through external scapegoating by elites to solidify their domestic political support, or through pressures for protectionism that can lead to countermeasures, increase hostilities, and trigger conflict spirals. As Wilson (1978: 150) argues, “economic depression [is] particularly favorable to war hysteria.” Others counter that prosperity also increases the size of war chests and thus increases the ability of states to wage war (Blainey, 1988). From a sociological perspective, some scholars argue that trade increases contact, communication, familiarity, and understanding, which in turn reduce the hostilities and misperceptions that contribute to war (Deutsch et al., 1957).

The commercial liberal hypothesis suffers from a number of analytic problems. One is that its hypothesized causal mechanism is monadic and hence logically incapable of explaining war/peace as a dyadic outcome of strategic interaction between states. Although it is possible that both parties in a dispute among trading partners will refrain from belligerent actions in order to preserve the benefits of trade, it is also possible that one side might try to exploit the adversary’s fear of war by standing firm or escalating its coercive threats. In the absence of additional information about expectations regarding the economic benefits of trade, the impact of war on trade, and each side’s risk orientation and domestic sensitivity to those costs, the net impact of economic interdependence on peace within a dyad is theoretically indeterminate (Morrow, 2003: 90).

This limitation of standard trade-promotes-peace arguments led rational choice theorists to posit another mechanism through which economic interdependence contributes to peace, one based on a “signaling game” model. The higher the level of economic interdependence, the greater the range of options that states have to demonstrate their resolve in a dispute while minimizing the

risk of escalation. Threats to reduce trade or financial ties can signal a state’s willingness to stand firm on an issue at less cost and risk of escalation than threats of the use of force (Morrow, 2003). Because economic sanctions are costly to the initiator as well as to the target, only states that are highly resolved will be willing to incur those costs, and consequently economic sanctions send a “costly signal” of a state’s resolve in a dispute. The adversary understands this logic, resulting in a reduction in uncertainty about adversary intentions and consequently a reduction in the likelihood of a war by miscalculation.

Strategies of coercion rather than cooperation with the trading partner are more likely if one side believes that it is more resolute than the other, whether because of differing risk orientations or perhaps different sensitivities to the domestic economic and political costs of a halt in trade. It is also more likely if economic interdependence is asymmetrical rather than symmetrical (Hirschman, [1945]1980; Barbieri, 2002). The least dependent state may be tempted to resort to economic coercion to exploit the adversary’s vulnerabilities and influence its behavior relating to security as well as economic issues. The potential for exploitation of the weak by the strong in a situation of asymmetrical interdependence is the basis of the argument, advanced by both realists and Marxist-Leninists, that interdependence, and particularly asymmetrical interdependence, increases rather than decreases the probability of militarized conflict. Just as crisis bargaining theorists have begun to incorporate the risk orientations and domestic cost sensitivity of political leaders into their models, analysts of the relationship between interdependence and peace must do the same.

Another basis for the realist argument that trade can increase rather than decrease the likelihood of militarized conflict involves relative gains concerns. Realists argue that political leaders are less influenced by the possibility of gains from trade in an absolute sense than by the fear that the adversary will

gain more from trade and convert those gains into further gains, political influence, and military power (Grieco, 1990; Gowa, 1994). Realists are not always clear, however, about the precise causal mechanisms leading from relative gains to war. To the extent that relative rather than absolute gains are important, they should have a greater impact on decisions to engage in trade (particularly with adversaries) than on the likelihood of conflict once trade is under way, because if states are already trading with each other they have presumably already partially discounted relative gains concerns.

Still, if diplomatic relations between trading partners begin to deteriorate, relative gains concerns may lead states to cut back on trade, which may exacerbate existing tensions and contribute to a conflict spiral. In addition, trading partners can simultaneously be engaged in a commercial rivalry with each other. Under certain conditions, economic rivalries may escalate to strategic rivalries and war, with domestic politics playing an important role in the process (Young and Levy, 2010). Illustrative cases include the Anglo-Dutch rivalry of the seventeenth century, the Anglo-Spanish rivalry of the eighteenth century, and the Anglo-German rivalry of the late nineteenth century.

Not all realists argue that trade significantly increases the likelihood of war. Some concede that trade and other forms of economic interdependence might have pacifying effects, but argue that these effects are negligible relative to the effects of military and diplomatic considerations (Buzan, 1984). Other scholars acknowledge that periods of trade might be peaceful, but argue that the causal arrow often points in the opposite direction: peace that creates the conditions under which trade flourishes (Blainey, 1988). The more general argument is that politics determines trade, or that “trade follows the flag,” rather than trade shaping politics (Pollins, 1989; Gowa, 1994). The true relationship is probably reciprocal. This suggests that studies of the trade-promotes-peace hypothesis need to consider possible endogeneity effects and explore the

simultaneous impact of trade on conflict and conflict on trade.

It is also possible that the inference that trade promotes peace is spurious, because the conditions that facilitate trade simultaneously promote peace. States with common interests tend to trade with each other, and they are also less inclined to fight each other. Trade also creates additional mutual interests, and it is these common interests, rather than economic interdependence per se, that minimizes the incidence of militarized conflicts between trading partners (Morrow et al., 1998; Gartzke, 2007).²⁰

Although many of the arguments in support of the trade-promotes-peace proposition are quite plausible, the same can be said of many of the counterarguments regarding the conflict-inducing effects of trade. Whether the deterrent effects of the gains from trade or the conflict-inhibiting effects of signaling mechanisms outweigh the potentially destabilizing effects of economic asymmetries and economic competitions, whether the latter escalate to trade wars and militarized conflicts, and whether the magnitude of these economic effects is outweighed by strategic considerations – these are ultimately empirical questions.

Most of the evidence so far suggests that on average trade reduces the probability of militarized conflict between trading partners (Russett and Oneal, 2001), though the pacifying effects of trade have a greater impact on the frequency of militarized interstate disputes than on the frequency of war (Barbieri, 2002). There are enough questions about the sensitivity of the relationship to different operationalizations of interdependence and of conflict, about proper model specification in light of endogeneity concerns, and about the relevance of some prominent historical cases that appear to run counter to the trade-promotes-peace hypothesis that the current evidence should be treated as provisional.²¹ Further research needs to focus as much on the conditions under which trade promotes peace as on the aggregate relationship between trade and peace.

Although most theoretical and empirical studies of the relationship between economic interdependence and peace have focused on trade, a growing number of scholars now argue that other elements of capitalism are have a greater impact than trade in reducing violence between states. Most of these scholars emphasize the role of free markets. Their models incorporate factors such as financial markets, the coordination of monetary policy, economic development, and the mobility of production (Hegre, 2000; Weede, 2005; Crescenzi, 2005; Brooks, 2005). Kirshner (2007) argues that bankers are consistently opposed to war and exert a restraining influence. Gartzke (2007), looking at the period from 1950 to 1992 and using indicators of economic development, free markets, and the globalization of capital, finds no wars between capitalist states. He concludes that capitalism, not democracy, explains the near absence of wars between democracies over time.

McDonald (2009) argues that governments with access to large amounts of public property are more likely to engage in military conflict (both as initiators and as targets) than governments that rule in more privatized economies. Access to public property generates fiscal autonomy, which decouples the domestic political survival of leaders from foreign policy performance, including the risks of an aggressive foreign policy. Fiscal autonomy also enables governments to engage in arms races, which increases a state's power relative to adversaries but at the same time creates incentives for adversaries to launch preventive attacks. Privatized economies are more conducive to peace.

Mousseau (2000, 2009) accepts the link between free markets and peace, but emphasizes the importance of the social and political foundations of free market economies. He distinguishes between contrast-intensive and contract-poor economies;²² develops the link between the enforcement of contracts, market cultures, and the maintenance of peace; and finds few cases of wars or militarized disputes between contract-intensive

economies. He concludes that his social democratic model can explain both the emergence of democracy and the near absence of war between democracies, and that the causal impact of democratic institutions is minimal.

In summary, although most international relations scholars have concluded that democratic states rarely if ever go to war with each other, they disagree as to whether this law-like pattern can be explained by democratic institutions and cultures, capitalist institutions, stable territorial borders, or other factors. This is a lively debate that shows no signs of an early resolution.

PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

Most applications of psychological theories of human behavior to international conflict focus on key individuals in authoritative decision-making roles; on their belief systems, personalities, emotional states; and on the psychological processes through which they acquire information, form judgments, and make decisions.²³ It is assumed that political socialization, personality, education, formative experiences, and a range of other factors lead to variations among political leaders along these dimensions, and that these variations produce variations in decision makers' conceptions of the national interest, the identity and nature of adversaries, the time frame within which goals and threats are evaluated, the trade-offs they make among conflicting interests, the strategies they consider and select for advancing those interests, and other important elements of their decision-making calculus.²⁴ As a result, different political leaders in the same situation will often make different decisions, and these differences are often significant enough to have a causal impact on the probability of war. The implication of many psychological explanations is that if the leader had been different, the outcome would have been different. It is often argued, for example,

that if Al Gore had been president, the United States would not have invaded Iraq in 2003.²⁵

Another implication of psychological models is that perceptions, judgments, and decisions often deviate from an idealized “rational” model of behavior, as defined by Bayesian updating of information and by decisions based on expected utility calculations. These deviations are driven by the biases in information processing and judgment that have been found to characterize most human behavior (Jervis, 1976; Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky, 1982). Political leaders, like most individuals, try to behave rationally, but their limited cognitive capacity in conjunction with an overload of information and conflicting goals leads to suboptimal, “boundedly rational” behavior (Simon, 1947).

These considerations have led a number of scholars to develop psychological explanations for foreign policy behavior, particularly security policy. The most important efforts have occurred in the last four decades, when social scientific approaches began to replace earlier psychoanalytic theories, which were seen as having limited value because of their failure to generate testable propositions. George (1969) developed the concept of an “operational code,” a systematic classification of the belief systems of political leaders that provided a basis for comparison across individuals. The operational code concept has generated an ongoing research tradition involving both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Walker, 2003). Another contribution was Jervis’ (1976) seminal study of perceptions and misperceptions, which included an influential analysis of how decision makers learn from history. These early studies focused primarily on cognitive rather than motivational sources of flawed judgment and decision making, reflecting the ongoing “cognitive revolution” in decision making in psychology (Larson, 1985: ch. 1). More recent work, building on some earlier efforts (Janis and Mann, 1977) and on subsequent

work in neuroscience, has begun to emphasize the role of emotions and motivated reasoning (McDermott, 2004, 2009; Rosen, 2005; Stein in this volume, chap. 8).

These psychological models have been applied to a number of different questions bearing on war and peace. There is substantial evidence that crisis decision making, defined in terms of short time for decision and high threat to basic values, differs from more routine decision making in a number of ways at the individual, small group, and bureaucratic organizational levels (Holsti, 1989). There are numerous studies of the impact of cognitive and motivated biases on threat perception and intelligence failure (Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, 1985; Jervis, 2010), though the best of these studies emphasize the interaction of psychology with politics.

Another important line of research involves applications of prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979) to security policy. The theory assumes that value is defined in terms of a subjectively defined reference point, that people overweight losses relative to comparable gains, and that they are risk averse in choices among gains (from the reference point) and risk averse in choices among losses. They also tend to underweight probabilities relative to utilities but to overweight small-probability outcomes. Among the many implications flowing from these assumptions are that actors take more risks to maintain interests, reputations, and domestic political support than to enhance them; domestic publics punish leaders more for incurring losses than for failing to make gains; deterring adversaries from making gains is easier than deterring them from recovering losses or compelling them to accept losses;²⁶ and actors are slow to accept losses and consequently are driven by sunk costs (Levy, 1997; McDermott, 2004).

Many of these psychological explanations are easier to apply to decision making in individual wars than to generalize about all wars, and easier to validate in the experimental lab than in the empirical world.

One implication, however, is that attempts to construct a general theory of war are limited by the role of individual-level variables that are often difficult to predict and to operationalize across cases.

CONCLUSIONS

It is not easy to characterize the state of the art with respect to the study of interstate war and peace, in part because of the many dimensions by which we might evaluate the extent of cumulation of knowledge. Some pessimists will emphasize the absence of consensus about what the causes of war are, what theoretical and methodological approaches are most useful for identifying and validating those causes, what criteria are appropriate for evaluating competing theories, and whether it is possible to generalize about anything as complex and context dependent as war. They will also emphasize the paucity of law-like propositions in the field and our limited predictive capacities regarding the outbreak of war, as reflected in the argument that “war is in the error term” (Gartzke, 1999).

But there is a more positive view. Although we lack an extensive set of empirical laws and a unified theory to explain them, in the last two decades or so scholars have empirically validated a limited number of law-like generalizations that provide an irreducible core that theories cannot violate: democracies (and capitalist states) rarely if ever fight each other; a disproportionate number of wars are fought between contiguous states and over territorial disputes (but most neighbors do not fight, and most territorial disputes do not lead to war); dyads with highly asymmetric power capabilities tend to be peaceful; and a disproportionate number of wars are fought between strategic rivals.

It is also true that over the last two decades, conflict researchers have become more rigorous in their theorizing and much more sophisticated in their use of both

statistical and qualitative methods. Formal models have become more sophisticated owing to the development of new equilibrium concepts and the capacity to handle incomplete information. The old (pre-1980s) separation between statistical and formal methods has been overcome, and most formal models of war and peace are either tested with statistical methods or illustrated with in-depth case studies. In addition, the gap between the assumptions of formal models and the statistical models used to test them has significantly narrowed. Case study research is more strongly guided by theory and by research designs constructed to rule out threats to valid causal inference. The study of war and peace is increasingly characterized by multi-method research, particularly the combination of formal, statistical, and case study approaches, whether in individual projects or larger research traditions, and there is also a growing interest in experimental approaches (Mintz et al., 1997).

A good example of the benefits of multi-method research is the democratic peace research program,²⁷ where large-N statistical methods, small-N case study methods, and formal modeling have each made a distinctive contribution to the cumulation of knowledge about the security policies and strategic interaction of democratic states. Quantitative methods were indispensable in establishing the empirical regularity that propelled the research program, demonstrating that the extraordinarily strong association between joint democracy and peace was not spurious, and identifying other empirical regularities that constrain any theoretical explanation of the democratic peace. Qualitative case studies were indispensable for exploring potentially anomalous cases, helping to resolve debates about whether states did or did not satisfy the definitional requirements for democracy, and assessing whether the inference of a causal connection between joint democracy and peace was valid or spurious in that particular case. Formal modeling helped in exploring possible causal paths

leading from joint democracy to peace, incorporating a theory of strategic interaction as well as the domestic sources of foreign policy, and in the process generating some very plausible theoretical explanations of the democratic peace and associated empirical regularities. The synergistic effects of each of these different methodological approaches have contributed enormously to our understanding of the democratic peace.

Scholars have also been more willing to think critically about the meta-theoretical assumptions underlying theoretical and empirical research. A social science orientation is more entrenched than ever in the field, but the conception of social science and the definition of the “mainstream” has broadened to include a wide range of empirically-oriented constructivist approaches. Debates between realists and liberals have been superseded by debates between rationalists and constructivists, and the norms of the field increasingly require case study researchers to test their arguments against an alternative constructivist explanation as well as against alternative realist and domestic politics explanations. At the same time, the gap between realist and constructivist approaches has begun to narrow (Johnston, 1995; Barkin, 2010). We have begun to see more engagement between positivists and non-positivists (Lebow and Lichbach, 2007), and, significantly, more debates among positivists (broadly defined) about the logic of inference, the meaning of causality, the proper relationship between theory and evidence, and the criteria for evaluating scientific progress (King, Keohane, and Verba, 1994; George and Bennett, 2005; Elman and Elman, 2003).

Another indicator of progress, in the eyes of many, is that conflict theorists continue to move away from the belief that a single monocausal theory can adequately explain the causes of interstate war. They have also abandoned single-level theories, accepted the idea that a complete explanation for war must incorporate variables from several levels of analysis, and recognized that the

causal weight of variables from a given level may vary depending on both the value of variables from other levels and on the particular stages in the temporal sequence leading to war. Individual-level variables, for example, probably have greater impact on decisions for war between rivals than on the origins of the rivalry.

This shift toward the recognition of multi-level causation and the importance of interaction effects and sequencing has combined with other trends to lead conflict analysts to begin to examine more complex forms of causal relationships in the processes leading to war. They have begun to incorporate causal chains into their explanations and to examine the possible role of necessary or sufficient conditions in the processes leading to war (Goertz and Levy, 2007). They have also begun to explore the utility of the concept of multiple paths to war (Vasquez and Henehan, 2010: 134–145; Levy, 2012), though they have yet to develop its methodological implications. For one thing, multiple causal paths might be better captured by INUS conceptions of causation (Mackie, 1965) – in which a factor is an insufficient but necessary element in a causal path that is unnecessary but sufficient for the outcome – than by standard conceptions of causality associated with linear regression models. Ragin’s (1987) conception of multiple conjunctural causation incorporates INUS conditions and reflects multiple causal pathways. In conflict analysis, Vasquez’s (2009) steps to war model explicitly posits one path to war (involving territorial disputes, rivalry, alliances, and arms races) but acknowledges other possible paths to war. The bargaining model of war can be interpreted as positing three analytically distinct paths to war for rational unitary actors.

Despite these many positive developments, it remains true that students of war lack the predictive power of physicists. That, however, is not the appropriate reference point by which to evaluate our knowledge of the social world. Bernstein et al. (2000) are right that “God gave physics the easy problems”. Clausewitz’ ([1832]1976) “fog of war”

envelopes the analyst as well as the battlefield. Given the enormous complexity of strategic decisions for war and the informational constraints on analysts as well as on decision-makers, one can argue that we have made enormous progress in the last three or four decades in trying to understand who fights whom, when, where, and why.

NOTES

1 On definitions of war see Bull (1977: 184), Vasquez (2009: 21–30), and Levy and Thompson (2010: 5–11). Peace is traditionally defined as the absence of war (or perhaps of militarized disputes), though some have begun to distinguish between peace and stable peace, or between cold peace and warm peace (Miller, 2007).

2 Great power wars have been declining in frequency steadily for the last half millennium, with the exception of the nineteenth century, to the point that the last six decades constitute the longest period without a great power war for five centuries (Wright, [1942]1965; Väyrynen, 2006). Meanwhile, the frequency of civil wars increased in the 1960s, peaked in the late 1980s, and declined somewhat erratically since then (Gleditsch, 2008). Some identify a general decline of political violence across a wide range of dimensions (Pinker, 2011). On longer trends, spanning millennia, see Gat (2006) and Levy and Thompson (2011).

3 The changing nature of war since World War II has led to the development of new data sets on war and other forms of militarized conflict (Petterson and Themner, 2010; Hewitt, Wilkenfeld, and Gurr, 2012). Singer and Small's (1972) *Correlates of War* data has been broadened and updated (Sarkees and Wayman, 2010). See also the Oxford Programme on the Changing Character of War (<http://www.history.ox.ac.uk/ccw/>) and the *Human Security Report 2009/2010*.

4 To mention a few differences: a disproportionate number of modern history's interstate wars have been fought by the most powerful states (Wright, 1965), whereas a disproportionate number of contemporary civil wars involve weak states or failed states (Hironaka, 2005); warring populations are politically separated after interstate wars but generally not after civil wars, which has a profound impact on bargaining over peace settlements (Licklider, 1995); and decision-making approaches have been applied far more to the study of interstate wars than to the study of civil wars. On the other hand, the concept of the security dilemma and the bargaining

model of war have been applied to both interstate war and to civil war.

5 The termination of war is closely linked to questions regarding the relationship between war and conditions for state-building, democratization, and durable peace settlements, and for international peacekeeping in the process (Licklider, 1995; Fortna, 2004, 2008; Werner and Yuen, 2005; Toft, 2010).

6 On theories of just war, see Walzer (1977).

7 Feminists have made important contributions to numerous aspects of war, but they generally give relatively little attention to the central question of explaining variations in war and peace over time and space. See Elstain (1987), Tickner (2001), Sylvester (2010), and Sjoberg (2012).

8 For general reviews of the political science literature on the causes of war, see Doyle (1997), Bennett and Stam (2004), Vasquez (2009), and Levy and Thompson (2010). For anthropological and sociological approaches, see Haas (1990) and Malešević (2010), respectively.

9 Anarchy is defined as the absence of a legitimate government authority to regulate disputes and enforce agreements between states or other actors. The importance of anarchy is de-emphasized by hegemonic realists like Gilpin (1981), and the state-centric assumption is relaxed by those applying the ethnic security dilemma to intrastate communal conflicts (Posen, 1993; Snyder and Jervis, 1999). Evolutionary theorists argue that power and wealth are proximate aims in the competition for scarce resources and reproductive opportunities needed for survival (Thayer, 2004; Gat, 2006: 667–68).

10 Most inadvertent wars begin with a calculated decision for war at the end of an inadvertent process, and possibly with a "preemptive strike" motivated primarily by the fear that the adversary is about to attack and by the belief that if war is inevitable it is best initiate it and gain first-mover advantages. Although preemption is theoretically quite plausible, Reiter (1995) argues that such wars rarely happen.

11 For an evaluation of power transition theory, see DiCicco and Levy (1999).

12 Schroeder (1994) argues that a rule-based balance of power system developed at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, driven by an ideational transformation among European political leaders.

13 The well-supported finding that war is associated with an equality rather than a preponderance of power at the dyadic level (the "power preponderance" hypothesis) (Kugler and Lemke, 1996) does not logically imply that a preponderance of power is stabilizing at the system level, where alliances play a role (Leeds, 2003).

14 Scholars have made considerable progress in advancing our understanding of the effects of

international law and institutions on cooperation between states, particularly on economic, environmental, and human rights issues (Keohane, 1984; see also chapters by Martin [13], Simmons [14], and Mitchell [32] in this volume). They have also applied institutionalist and constructivist approaches to collective security systems (Kupchan and Kupchan, 1991; Schroeder, 1994), regional security communities (Deutsch et al., 1957; Adler and Barnett, 1998), alliances (Haftendorn, Keohane, and Wallander, 1999), and national security policies (Katzenstein, 1996), and they have debated the general impact of international institutions on war and peace (Mearsheimer, 1994/95; Keohane and Martin, 1995). Still, there have been relatively few systematic empirical tests of these hypotheses (but see Russett and Oneal, 2001), and theories of institutions and war lag behind those of the democratic peace and capitalist peace.

15 Criteria for war include a military conflict involving at least 1,000 battle deaths. Criteria for democracy generally include regular and fair elections with unrestricted participation of opposition parties, voting franchise for a substantial proportion of citizens, at least one peaceful and constitutional transition of power, and a parliament that shares powers with the executive.

16 Some claim that the causal relationship is reversed, with peace creating the conditions under which democracy can flourish (Rasler and Thompson, 2005).

17 The differences are only modest, however, and this is unlikely to change with future research. Consequently, any explanation for the democratic peace that implies that democracies are *significantly* more peaceful than other states will probably not be viable.

18 The selectorate model focuses on the probability of removal from office and neglects its costs and risks, which can be much worse in personal terms for authoritarian leaders (Goemans, 2000).

19 On the Issues Correlates of War (ICOW) project (Paul Hensel and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell), see <http://www.paulhensel.org/icow.html>

20 Hegemonic stability theorists argue that one of the primary conditions facilitating trade is the existence of a liberal economic hegemon able and willing to maintain a stable political economy, and they strongly imply that liberal economic hegemony also promotes peace (Gilpin, 1981; Keohane, 1984; Brawley, 1993).

21 On the anomaly of World War I, where levels of interdependence were quite high, see Copeland (1996), Ripsman and Blanchard (1996/97), and Papayouanou (1999).

22 North, Wallis, and Weingast (2009) make a similar distinction between "open access" orders and "natural" orders.

23 For a survey of applications of political psychology to foreign policy, see Tetlock (1998), McDermott (2004), Stein in this volume (chap. 8),

and the relevant essays in Huddy, Sears, and Levy (forthcoming).

24 On time horizons, see Toft (2006) and Streich and Levy (2007).

25 For criteria for evaluating counterfactual arguments, see Levy (2008b).

26 This modifies Schelling's (1966) argument that deterrence is easier than compellence.

27 Other examples include research on economic interdependence and peace and on the diversionary theory of war.

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Security Cooperation

Harald Müller

INTRODUCTION

The definition of security as the absence of existential threats to one state emanating from another has come under fire (Booth, 2005). First, the state is said to not be the only and/or appropriate subject of security. Social, ethnical, religious minorities ('societal security') (see Waever et al., 1993), individuals ('human security') (Suhrke, 1999: 265–76), or humankind ('global/world security') (Klare and Thomas, 1994) have been proposed to have legitimate security needs. Second, it has been emphasized that the exclusive attention devoted to the physical, territorial, or political dimension of security is misplaced under conditions of complex interdependence. Other aspects are as important in security terms: economic resources, stability, institutions, welfare systems ('economic security'), (Kapstein, 1992; Sen, 1990: 203–18; Crawford, Beverly 1994: 25–55), the integrity of information systems ('information security') (Soo Hoo et al., 1997: 135–55; Keohane and Nye, Jr., 1998: 81–94; Feaver, 1998: 88–120), and the natural environment as the basis of all life ('environmental security') (Levy, 1995: 35–62; Homer-Dixon, 1994: 5–40).

This generalization of the term security has been criticized: What is its *diferencia*

specifica, and thus analytical utility, if it covers everything on earth? (e.g., Deudney, 1990: 461–76). This chapter applies a conventional understanding of security between *states*, and relates mainly to the organized instruments of force (Betts, 1997: 7–33; Buzan, 1987). Even so, the concept is not simple. States are not unitary objects. Security risks may apply to the idea of the state, its physical basis, and its institutional representation (Buzan, 1991: 65).

The following section defines puzzles that emerge from cooperative endeavors among actually or potentially mutually hostile actors. The rest of the chapter tries to disentangle the puzzle from the perspectives of the major international relations theories: How do they explain state cooperation in the security field and what opportunities and limits do they set for such cooperation? Each section discusses the shortcomings – in the author's view – of the respective explanation.

SECURITY COOPERATION

Security cooperation implies relying on other states for national survival, which is hard to reconcile with exclusive reliance on self-help. In addition, security cooperation limits the

freedom to act and constrains one's ability to maximize military power. Arms control aims at reducing offensive, destabilizing options, and enhanced transparency may reduce the chances of achieving surprise. In wartime alliances, mutual dependency is high. As a state's existence is at stake in war, relying on someone else is an existential issue; strategic choices have to be closely coordinated, and freedom of action might be lost. Peacetime alliances can be more relaxed and may be little more than token promises that might be broken in the moment of truth. But they may as well entail intimate structural cooperation or integration. The degree of mutual knowledge, transparency, and dependence within NATO is inexplicable, seen from the perspective of potential future hostilities. NATO member states put much more on the line than participants in average arms control or nonproliferation agreements: Alliance cooperation presents a puzzle as well.

Even during the East–West conflict, the growth of cooperative security endeavors was impressive, despite continuing rivalry (George et al., 1988). Its end brought an unprecedented intensification of collaboration, and was accelerated by it. From the mid-nineties on, the dynamic slowed down, came to a halt, and even reversed after 2001, but took off again at the end of the decade. Meanwhile, global cooperation such as the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions, the Conventional Arms Register, or the Anti-Personnel Mines Convention took security cooperation beyond the confines of the East–West conflict. Peacekeeping has brought countries from all over the world together; the same is true for the common fight against transnational terrorism (Cortright and Lopez, 2007; Katona et al., 2006). Also, regional efforts have grown. Nuclear-weapon-free zones exist in Latin America, the South Pacific, Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia. Regional activities dealing with small arms have become a topic for cooperation in the OSCE, West Africa, and Latin America. Confidence-building measures have been or

are being tried in the Middle East, Central Asia, and the ASEAN Regional Forum. This list is not exhaustive.

The puzzle for theories is the possibility of today's partners in security cooperation being faced with mutual hostility in the future. In the 'anarchy' of the international environment, this uncertainty about the future of interstate relationships informs the classic 'security dilemma' (Booth and Wheeler, 2008). States opting for security cooperation sacrifice one security asset to gain another which they believe helps them to better provide for their security: the collaboration with their potential enemies and the pursuant agreements and organizations. How states develop interests and perceptions that permit them to enter into security cooperation is the challenge which all explanations are facing.

Globalization has not fundamentally shattered this puzzle, but added more difficulties with which security cooperation has to cope. First, globalization has added new actors which affect the security of states.

Second, globalization has empowered new states as significant players in the international game, such as Brazil, South Africa, or maybe Indonesia, and a few that are destined to become world powers, such as China and India. With this trend, the risks of power transitions are back on the agenda. Such transitions show a propensity, but not necessity, to be decided by war. The probability of violent conflict hinges on attitudinal and behavioural factors such as the degree of "satisfaction" on part of both the "old" and the "new" powers, and the degree to which the old one accommodates the ambitions of the rising powers, and the latter are willing to be accommodated (Tammen et al., 2000). This puts emphasis on the cooperative skills of both.

Third, globalization undermined some territorial entities which enjoy international recognition as states but are incapable of implementing the monopoly of force, a primary element of sovereignty. Failing states can affect security beyond their own borders.

If they harbour natural resources of strategic value, their domestic instability can deprive the international community of essential supplies, to prey on them can become a temptation for major powers, and they can provide assets for criminals or terrorists. Violence can spread from a failed state to its neighbours, threatening to destabilize whole regions. Finally, migration flows can affect societal stability in places far away.

Fourth, globalization means that new issues enter the global security agenda. Contagious diseases, resource scarcity, catastrophic environmental damage, large-scale migration flows, and intentional misuse of the Internet to spread harm can impact global security to various degrees and with differing regional scope. As a rule of thumb, the threat to security is larger the less developed coping capabilities are.

None of the factors springing from globalization obviate the rationale for security cooperation or eliminate the obstacles in its way. Positive or negative effects can hardly be estimated abstractly but are a question of political practice. All factors add to the reasons why security cooperation makes a lot of sense for ostensibly autonomous political units, not out of idealism but in their own best interest. Simultaneously, they make the endeavour of cooperation more complex and difficult. Globalization does not decide as a *deus ex machina* for or against security cooperation, on specific forms of cooperation, or between the competing theories that tackle that puzzle.

REALIST ACCOUNTS

Realism's reformulation by Kenneth Waltz (1979) has claimed the place of honour for this theory because it follows the standards of natural science. We thus expect the coherence of axioms and strict deduction, only to discover that realists deduce contradictory hypotheses from the same theory.

Classical realists analyze state behaviour as built upon the innate human drive to

accumulate power. Competitive cumulation in an anarchical environment creates problems for state survival for which, in turn, accumulating further power is the obvious solution. Neorealists waive the anthropological assumption in favor of a systemic imperative: The need to survive in anarchy means that states are on their own in safeguarding their existence. While the initial assumptions vary between classical and neorealism, the consequences converge: The characterization of the system as anarchic and dangerous, and the formation of states' preferences are similar.

The problem of relative gains

In Waltz's formulation, and the ensuing interpretations by Grieco (Grieco, 1990) and Mearsheimer (Mearsheimer, 1990: 5–56; Mearsheimer, 1994/95: 5–49, 2001), realism is pessimistic about the prospects for cooperation beyond hegemony and/or imposition because of the preferences states are assumed to have as a consequence of anarchy (for example, Frankel, 1993: 37–78; for a critical analysis, see Grunenberg, 1990: 431–79). The problem lies in the shifting course of history: New polarities emerge from changes in capabilities, a new system structure evolves, and this may make our friend/cooperation partner of today our rival/enemy of tomorrow. We know neither what another government really wants, nor its future intentions. We therefore have to ensure that the gains from cooperation are not distributed in a way that may disadvantage us – however marginally – since the margin might be used by today's partner to impose his will upon us tomorrow. That we may gain from cooperation is not the factor controlling our strategic choice but the risk that the other could gain more: This is the problem of 'relative gains' that minimizes neorealist's expectations for security cooperation. Since symmetric distributions are hard to calculate, and even harder to execute, the opportunities for successful cooperation are very limited. Institutions are just epiphenomena that wax and wane with the interests

of states. They have no significant influence of their own on these interests and the ensuing behavior (Waltz, 1986: 322–46, part, 336).

Alliances

The type of security cooperation that plays a role in realist accounts is the alliance. The alliance is a balancing tool when states' resources are insufficient to create a counterweight to the hegemonial endeavours of one state or a group of states (Vasquez and Elman, 2003). Alliance formation appears to be stimulated at certain turning points in the evolution of the relative power of states, when the power development gradient of great powers suffers a steep decline or enjoys a strong rise; such shifts change the threat perceptions of other actors and thus enhance the motivations for alliances (Chious, 2003).

Alliances are also problematic under the 'relative gains' assumption, but they are inevitable tools if the alternative – succumbing to the risk of an overwhelming power – is imminent. Stephen Walt has modified the 'balancing-against-capabilities' hypothesis by proving that states usually balance against threat (see Walt, 1987). Since threat is a behavioural as well as a perceptual variable rather than a material one, realist theory is stretched to the limits. From another realist perspective, Randall Schweller has shown that bandwagoning – joining the stronger side rather than balancing – is compatible with realist premises if we assume that the objective of this type of alliance policy is not security, but gain (see Schweller, 1994: 72–10).

Glenn Snyder's work on alliances (Snyder, 1984: 461–95; Snyder, 1997) stays within the basic realist assumptions and catches the contradictory impulses that mutual security dependence produces. According to Snyder, there is an intra-alliance equivalent of the security dilemma. Since the interests of allies are never completely congruent, an allied state will quickly face the choice between supporting its ally in a conflict where the state itself has no vital interest, or keeping out of

this conflict. Opting for support may entrap that state in an unwanted deadly contest. Staying out, he may risk being abandoned by the ally. And vice versa, in the conflict in which the state's national interest is intimately involved, confronting the enemy may scare the ally away, while accommodating the enemy may induce the ally to pursue appeasement. As Snyder has shown, even within the basic assumptions of realism, alliance building is not a straightforward balancing act as popular versions of the theory would have it. Rather, it is a complex set of relations, fraught with dilemmas. Snyder, though writing in realist terms, finds it necessary to introduce the intrinsic binding quality of norms which persuade states to enter alliances and live up to their commitments, a notion hardly compatible with basic realist assumptions (Snyder 1997: 8, 35, 350, 355).

Optimist realists and the disappearance of the relative gains problem

Dealing with cooperation among enemies is more challenging to realists than explaining alliances. Charles Glaser has created a new brand of defensive or "neoclassical realism" that claims to account better for cooperation (Glaser, 1994/95: 50–90; Glaser, 1997: 171–201). Defensive realism does not refute the possibility of long-term security cooperation. Glaser defines cooperation as an instrument of self-help rather than its opposite, a problematic definition as cooperation relies on a partner. This does not fit a common-sense notion of self-help. Self-help provides an insurance against the uncertainties of an anarchic environment. Security cooperation imports this uncertainty into one's own preparations for survival.

Glaser argues that the risks of cooperation must be weighed against those of noncooperation, such as arms races that could be lost, an argument that applies only to weaker parties. A strong party can be confident of outracing its competitor(s), while in more evenly

matched cases, an incremental investment might suffice to maintain parity. Glaser notes – correctly – that what counts for security in the first place is not power as such, but how power translates into military capabilities. However, ‘reserve power resources’ can be transformed into additional military capabilities. Moreover, balances of military capabilities are precarious; thus, rational actor governments will wish to have a margin of insurance against a miscalculation of the balance, a margin that might look threatening to the other side. If all other realist assumptions hold, renouncing this insurance margin for the sake of cooperation might look risky.

Glaser opens up a new front against the realist argument that uncertainty about intentions prevents cooperation: It is possible to signal defensive intentions, he maintains, by sacrificing offensive capabilities. This implies a distinction between offensive and defensive. While the signal would become clearer the more advantages current military technology gives to offensive capabilities, signaling would become ever riskier as the clearest signals would probably mean serious dangers for the signaler if the other side did not join in cooperation (also van Evera, 2000; Christensen, 1997: 65–98). The major problem, however, is the intrinsic difficulty of sending signals that will be read correctly. The distinction between offensive and defensive is never really clear, and interpretations may deviate from reality – see the outset of World Wars I and II. What is meant as a defensive move – for example, NATO’s renunciation of conventional parity in Europe and the introduction of short-range tactical nuclear weapons as a stopgap measure during the Cold War – may be interpreted by the other side as outrageously offensive. Second, particularly in hostile relationships, the common ground for interpretation may be lacking. The West learned to understand Gorbachev’s signaling, but what did it take to achieve this? Not only did Gorbachev unilaterally reduce Soviet offensive capabilities, he opened up Soviet society, freed dissidents, and stopped competition in trouble spots

around the world. The receiver can never be certain that there is no piece of private information retained by the sender which might invalidate the benign interpretation, such as unknown priorities, different standards for evaluation, or hidden assets.

‘Defensive realism’ is better fitted to explain why major powers succeed in security cooperation (Taliaferro, 2001/2). But it changes basic realist assumptions about actors and structure: In the end, betting on compliance means relying on trust and thus excluding the risks of deception, strategic cheating, lulling, and surprise. Likewise, the assumption that signaling will succeed rests on the notion of a common language and interpretative culture, which is not part of the realist model of international relations. It could be read as drawing constructivist elements into realism through the back door.

Are realists still realists?

A particular puzzle for the realist creed is the robustness of the nuclear nonproliferation regime (Davis, 1993: 79–99). The quest for nuclear weapons as the ‘ultimate insurance’ against uncertain threats should be the primary choice for states acting in anarchy. If one sees risks emerging from unwanted escalation, rather than from intentional policies of rivals, one deviates significantly from the calculus that both classical and structural realism view as the rule for prudent statesmen. Relying on nuclear guarantees from others begs the question whether they are reliable, whether they may shy away from fulfilling alliance promises, or turn their superiority into blackmail in the future. All these arguments are not just hypothetical. ‘Deterring the uncertain’ is very much French and British nuclear doctrine today; the questionable reliability of allies has haunted NATO throughout the Cold War, and has influenced French and Israeli nuclear choices. It is hard to see how nonproliferation can be accounted for within the realist theoretical body without borrowing elements like trust

or the intrinsic binding force of norms from other theories.

Joseph Grieco, an erstwhile ‘pessimist’, later modified realist theory to accommodate the growing reality of cooperation more easily. He has specified conditions under which the ‘relative gains’ orientation may be relaxed, and cooperation may have better chances of being realized. The original, and problematic, deviation from standard realist theory is the admittance that the past – whether the other state has been a long-standing friend or foe – influences threat perception, and, consequently, the inclination to measure the relationship against the standard of relative gains or against some more relaxed referential system (Grieco, 1988: 600–24). But perception, interpretation of experience, and its transfer from one generation of policy makers to the next are arguments outside of realism. They bear no causal relation to anarchy, the distribution of capabilities, and polarity. They look like elements from a constructivist handbook. Obviously, they help to account better for variations in political reality, but at the cost of paradigmatic consistency.

The same verdict applies to Randall Schweller’s ‘motivational realism’. He finds that the security dilemma does not rest in the structure, but in the existence of predatory states, thereby moving the causes of insecurity from the systemic to the unit level, allowing problem-free security cooperation among nonpredatory powers (Schweller, 1996: 90–121). Correspondingly, Andrew Kydd argues that ‘security seekers’ create peaceful environments and thereby conditions for security cooperation (Kydd, 1997: 114–54).

Robert Jervis, the author of the classical realist statement of the *cooperation problematique* (Jervis, 1978: 167–214) has enumerated obstacles that anarchy presents for security cooperation (Jervis, 1983: 173–94; Jervis, 1985: 58–79; Jervis, 1988: 317–49). Yet he recognizes the capability of institutions to change preferences depending on outcomes, a break with the realist creed that state preferences, fixed by the survival imper-

ative in anarchy, are virtually unchangeable (Jervis, 1999: 42–63, part. 58–62).

The contradictions regarding cooperation divide ‘pessimistic’ and ‘optimistic’ realists (for the debates, see Brooks, 1997: 445–77; Schweller and Priess, 1997: Supplement I, 1–32; Rose, 1998). Pessimists deserve credit as they preserve an optimum of theoretical coherence. Yet optimists, sacrificing a measure of coherence, are at least able to explain some empirical security cooperation (Legro and Moravcsik, 1999: 5–55).

Unexpected realism from the left: The “schmittian turn”

Some scholars with postmodernist inclinations have resorted to a specific kind of realist analysis, proposed by the pro-Nazi legal scholar Carl Schmitt (Mouffe, 1999; Odysseos and Petite, 2007). Schmitt, like realists, views anarchy as fundamental and inevitable. He understands the *Political* as the difference between “us” and “them,” culminating in the distinction between “us” and “the enemy.” Cooperation among non-identical actors is brittle; international law is weak if not deceptive; and appeals to “humanity” as a standard for global cooperation are treacherous. Security depends on self-help, and the search for security results regularly in defending one’s interests by war against the main strategic challenger, the “enemy.” Security cooperation can only exist in the negative: in the agreement to preserve total sovereignty, to isolate the “duel” between two enemies from escalation to an all-out, contagious conflict that conflagrates the core region of Europe as in the two world wars, and to abstain from judgment on, or even interference in, the domestic politics of other state actors. Morals must be kept out of international politics; moralization changes war from a duel between two dignified contenders into a contest of elimination (Schmitt, 1938). Schmitt viewed the Westphalian System of sovereign states as being replaced by a new form of sovereignty

covering the *Großraum* (large realm). Security cooperation would extend the principles drafted for the world of states to the *Großraum* world: Mutual existential recognition, reduction of war to the fair duel among the *Großraum* sovereigns, and mutual nonintervention by the imperial leaders into each other's *Großraum* (Schmitt, 1939, 1950).

Latter-day Schmittians celebrate this system as the answer to a pluralist, globalizing world and an antidote against liberalist imperialism as epitomized by the Bush administration, but already founded in Kant's philosophy (Behnke, 2008). In the minimalist order of security cooperation which the Schmittian system offers, they see a guarantee of security autonomy for the variety of security subjects populating today's world (e.g., Bishai and Behnke, 2008; cf. the critique of Chandler, 2008). Fatally, the thrust of Schmitt's work is more trivial: Non-interventionism in the sovereign state was the cover under which Auschwitz could happen. Non-interventionism into the *Großraum* was meant to fend off moral assaults against German atrocities in the conquered spaces of Eastern Europe. Schmitt's recognition of international pluralism was always accompanied by the internal homogenization of the units, as in his defence of Nazi anti-Semitism (Schmitt, 1933, 1935, 1936). Once the units shift from states to *Großraum*, the autonomy of the people in the *Großraum* is surrendered to the homogenization dictates of the imperial master. The containment of total war and the opposition to a moral critique of warfare, which was implied by his return to the Westphalian *ius ad bellum*, made the German assault against Poland in September 1939 a legal normalcy (Eberl, 2008). How neo-Schmittians can paper over this obvious reality, reanimate and whitewash this ghost from the past, keep silent about his outrageous anti-Semitism, and call the whole operation an emancipatory move against the liberal-universalist juggernaut remains one of the mysteries of contemporary International Relations.

RATIONALIST-NEOINSTITUTIONALIST ACCOUNTS

Neoinstitutionalist analysts are rooted in the rationalist paradigm, its foundational texts in rational choice (Keohane, 1984; Oye, 1986), which has preserved dominance in the neoinstitutionalist discourse (Lake and Powell, 1999; see Chapter 13 by Martin and Simmons in this volume). Like realists, neoinstitutionalists start from the assumption of self-interested actors working in anarchy. However, their assumptions about the consequences of anarchy are more forgiving and less fixated on the survival imperative. Consequently, their assumptions about states' preferences are also not fixed on the relative gain assumption; they easily admit to the desire of states to achieve absolute gains in welfare and security. Some confusion emerges from the neoinstitutionalist claim that their assumptions were identical with those of realism; they are not. If the harsh propositions of realism are adopted, neoinstitutionalist reasoning has difficulties explaining the emergence of cooperation while, if those assumptions are relaxed, it can contribute to such an explanation (see below).

Situation structure and problem structure as constraints on cooperation

Institutionalists have identified factors that influence the propensity of given interactions for the creation of international cooperation. In particular, the Tübingen School in Germany has devised two relevant typologies. First, 'situation structure': The game that is played influences the likelihood that cooperation will emerge. The game 'leader', in which a player will always earn the best payoff from cooperation, independently of the moves of her partner, is most favourable to cooperation. 'Prisoners' dilemma' is in the middle, while 'Rambo', where one player reaps his best payoff by defecting, is least likely to result in cooperation. The second typology is

the value at stake in a conflict. Where parties struggle for absolutely assessed goods, cooperation is easy. Next is the conflict over the means to achieve an objective appreciated by all players. Third, the conflict over relatively assessed goods, and least favourable to cooperation is conflict about values. Since security normally lies in the third category, cooperation is difficult (Rittberger, 1990; Zürn, 1992).

Communication in neoinstitutionalism

The first neoinstitutionalist argument why security cooperation is possible *and* likely under anarchy is that rational actors are not prevented from communicating as long as the exchange of information does not involve prohibitive costs. In indicating their own interpretation of their situation and informing each other about their preferences, they may approach an outcome that is close to a Pareto-optimum and which either may accept, since it serves the security interests of both parties (Kydd and Snidal 1993: 112–35; Morrow, 1994: 387–88).

However, security talk is not cheap in a realist world. Since Sun Tzu, the classical Chinese strategist, it has been gospel in strategic thinking that surprise is the key to victory. Falling victim to surprise may be fatal, while deception is a useful instrument to achieve surprise. Taking information by a potential enemy at face value, then, is a treacherous endeavour. The intention could be sincere, but false information could also be conveyed – pretending, for example, to be weaker or stronger than one really is may lull the ‘cooperation partner’ into complacency, or it may intimidate him into surrender and the acceptance of an unequal distribution of the gains of cooperation. Countries considering security cooperation know this danger; they know the other side knows; they know the other side knows they know, and so on. It is hard to see, as long as we assume acute survival risks within anarchy, how seemingly

cheap talk helps to achieve cooperation (Johnson, 1993: 74–86).

Modifying the communication argument, neoinstitutionalists explain that the gap between cooperation motivation and actual agreement can be overcome if the partners prove credibly their commitment to cooperation by signals that are costly to themselves, for example, Sadat’s speech before the Knesset (Morrow, 1999: 77–114, part. 87–89; Fearon, 1997: 68–90; Kydd, 2000: 325–57). However, two questions arise: First, it is unclear why rational actors would give such signals, not knowing if the other side will reciprocate but knowing that the costs would have to be paid anyway. The willingness to do so enhances credibility. But the respective calculus remains unclear: Uncertainty about a partner’s responsiveness and a short time horizon make a cooperative opening inadvisable under rational choice assumptions (Downs and Rocke, 1990: 201–5). Successful signalling in this sense presumes a common reference system for evaluating the signal’s content. This condition is not a given, as research about security cultures (see below) has revealed, and the assumption of such an ideational superstructure is exogenous to rational choice neo-institutionalism.

The shadow of the future

A further argument is the shadow of the future (Axelrod, 1984; Axelrod and Keohane, 1986: 226–54). The spectre of repeated games lessens the risks of the first round; the higher the present net value of the future, the less imposing the value of ‘defecting’ appears. Three problems arise here: First, even if the game will be repeated frequently, getting a good deal becomes even more important and may drive negotiators to bargain harder, leading to a standoff rather than cooperation (Fearon, 1998: 269–306). Second, because survival is at stake, the future is heavily discounted, diminishing the expected cooperation payoffs and reducing related incentives (Stein, 1990, ch. 4). Third, it is uncertain how

many rounds of the game will take place; if security stakes are high, the risk of the 'partner's' defection with asymmetrical gains looms large (Lipson, 1984: 1–23).

The relativity of the relative gains problem

A third plausible rationalist argument is that the problem of relative gains does not kill the possibility of cooperation as long as asymmetries in gains are so small that they cannot be translated into a decisive military advantage (Powell, 1994: 313–44; Snidal, 1991a: 701–26; Snidal, 1991b: 387–402).

The asymmetry problem is twofold: First, it is hard to quantify cooperation gains. Given the fluid situation in international politics, the possibility of allies changing sides, and the evolution of military technology and the difficulties of assessing its meaning, the equal distribution of security cooperation gains is almost impossible.

Second, future consequences of the present distribution of gains remain uncertain. Every investment can carry enhanced profits. Small asymmetries may be amplified through smart use, and utilized for even more unequal distribution outcomes in later rounds. A slightly stronger party may be able to press its advantage against rivals, or to force a weaker party into bandwagoning. Relative gains may only matter if they accumulate in the future to dangerous levels (Matthews, 1996: 112–46); but how can a state be sure they will not? Thus, the shadow of the future, supposedly a benevolent element in security cooperation, may impede rather than foster collaboration among self-interested parties who behave according to the rules of rational choice textbooks. Even if we assume a threshold between small and big gains, small asymmetries are still able to make governments nervous as long as the rational choice paradigm rules within an anarchic environment. Only if we relax the assumption about the threat of survival and/or introduce common knowledge about the persistence of nonthreatening preferences can

institutionalist assumptions help explain security cooperation.

The perseverance of cooperative regimes

Rational choice institutionalism is better positioned to explain the perseverance of security cooperation once it has been established (Keohane, 1984). Security institutions help reduce parties' transaction costs. They open communication channels: Parties know what they have to report, what relevant information they can expect to receive from their partners, and they are given standards of evaluation to review that information (Mitchell, 1998: 109–30). Games played over extended rounds within an institution prolong the shadow of the future considerably. Means are available to clarify ambiguities, a vicious problem in an unregulated security environment. In multilateral frameworks, parties can rely on the solidarity of regime communities if ambiguities turn out to be a breach of the rules. Lowered transaction costs, provision of information, and institutionalized enforcement are incentives to cooperate (Downs et al., 1996: 379–406). Compared to the 'standing alone' posture in an uninstitutionalized world, these are advantages. They explain why countries abide by the institutions' rules most of the time – even if in their absence they would have pursued different policies – when the majority of their partners reciprocate (for example, Duffield, 1994: 369–88).

Another rationalist-institutionalist argument helps us understand why institutions show robustness despite challenging shifts in the international structures present at their founding. For instance, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty has survived the breakdown of its foundational condition of bipolarity, Iraq's and North Korea's rule-breaking, and India's and Pakistan's defiance of the treaty's objective of full universality. A second impressive example is the perseverance of NATO after the enemy against

which this alliance was established had disappeared; it is better understood in an institutionalist framework than in a realist one (Hellmann and Wolf, 1993: 3–43; McCalla, 1996: 445–75).

Rationalist institutionalists maintain that governments calculate the utility of current institutions against the investment costs for new ones. This calculation usually results in support for the existing institutional structures. In a study on alliance commitments in war, Leeds (2003b) found that most such commitments were honoured, and that the variables accounting for most broken alliances were great powers (which do not depend on alliances as much as the smaller states) and nondemocracies (which suffer lower domestic reputational costs due to broken commitments). Democracies, in contrast, are more inclined to keep alliance promises. This study shows how easily neoinstitutionalists can eclectically link realist (power) and liberal (domestic structure) in a single explanatory scheme.

Another factor in the robustness of security institutions is institutional design; this variable influences how well (regional) institutions can manage conflict among their members. An explicitly security-related mandate creates corresponding expectations and focuses attention. Institutional depth and membership cohesion binds members together and enhance their interest in institutional continuation (Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom, 2004). The same effects have been found in regional organizations with broad economic mandates and frequent high-level meetings (Haftel, 2007).

To summarize, rationalist neoinstitutionalism can explain why countries wish to cooperate in the security sector (Keohane and Martin, 1995: 39–51). Their rigorous models force us to clarify our assumptions about actors' preferences and the constellations they create.¹ It is also apt to overcome the domestic/international divide by constructing two-level games (Zangl, 1994: 279–312; Evans et al., 1993) or to model national leaders as replaceable 'principal-agents' of

domestic politics (Mesquita and Siverson, 1995: 841–55; Morrow, 1991: 245–65). However, it finds it difficult to explain how leaders can overcome the barriers and structural constraints that rationalism imports from realism – unfettered anarchy, self-interested actors, in order to move from the motivation to cooperate to real cooperation. The call to include cognitive factors into cooperation theory has thus been uttered even in a meticulous rationalist case study on security regime formation (Bernauer, 1993, ch. 7; see also Hasenclever et al., 1997, ch. 6).

LIBERAL ACCOUNTS

Liberal theory searches for the causes of external behaviour in domestic structures and processes.² Accordingly, different domestic structures will cause variations in the inclination to enter into security cooperation. At the general level, liberal theory understands security cooperation as the result of a convergence of benign, cooperation-prone national preferences, promoted by domestic coalitions for which such cooperation gains priority.

Liberal cooperation theory: democratic peace

One branch of liberalism has developed hypotheses about preference-formation in democracies bearing on security cooperation: The theory of 'Democratic Peace'.³ In its 'monadic' variant, it hypothesizes that democracies prefer peace to war because of citizen's interest in self-preservation and welfare, and their inclination to avoid costly external adventures. Another cause is the value orientation of citizens, who prefer nonviolent conflict management and solutions to arbitration by the sword, because they appreciate the value of human life (Russett, 1993).

Deducing from monadic democratic peace reasoning, we would expect democracies to seek understandings with potential

enemies – democracies or not – to settle conflicts peacefully by externalizing their internal mode of conflict management and to agree on minimalist military postures in order to prevent costly arms races. Kant had proposed international organization as a way to pacify international interactions (Crawford, Neta, 1994: 345–85; Deudney, 1995: 191–228). But the theory is ambivalent on whether this mode of cooperation is appropriate for relations between democracies and nondemocracies. However, since their intrinsic peacefulness would compel democracies to seek ways to settle their problems with nondemocratic states nonviolently, security cooperation and arms control/disarmament in a heteronomous setting would be a cogent deduction for the monadic version of this theory (Russett et al., 1998: 441–68; also Leeds, and Davis, 1999: 5–23). What presents a puzzle for other theories – relying on alliances as well as cooperative efforts to collaborate with rivals – liberal theory sees as the inevitable outgrowth of a particular form of internal rule. The reasoning allows for different forms of cooperation, alliances (among democracies), arms control, broader security regimes, and collective security arrangements.

The dyadic variation maintains that democratic ‘peacefulness’ applies only to interdemocratic relations. Initially, this insight forced itself upon theorists through empirical findings that democracies’ inclination for war was not statistically different from that of nondemocracies, but that ‘democratic wars’ were fought almost exclusively against nondemocratic states, while among democracies a ‘zone of peace’ prevailed (see the Chapter 23 by Jack Levy in this volume).

Empirical evidence presents a first confirmation of aspects of both versions of liberal theory. In favour of monadic liberalism, democracies have been promoting the growth of bilateral, regional, and global security cooperation. The League of Nations and the United Nations emerged from concepts developed in democratic countries (notably the United States). Arms control and nonproliferation were ‘invented’ in the United States.

The dyadic version finds some affirmation in the fact that security cooperation is broader in scope and more intense between democracies than between them and nondemocracies and among nondemocratic states (Mousseau, 1997: 73–87). NATO and the EU are the cases in point. It is plausible that the transfer of the principles which guide conflict management inside democracies to the security cooperation institutions of the Western world are primarily responsible for their relatively smooth operation and longevity (Ikenberry, 1998/99: 43–78).

Why do democracies behave differently in security cooperation?

Nevertheless, liberal theory leaves important questions unresolved. One should assume that the behavior of democracies in security cooperation would be similar, and variations for the same democracy over time limited. But if we compare the inclination of democratic states to expand security cooperation in ways that imply further constraints on national sovereignty, countries like Canada, Sweden, the Netherlands, or Germany are in the forefront, the United Kingdom somewhere in the middle, and France and the United States lag behind (Becker et al., 2008).

Democratic peace theory is a liberal theory predicting expected behavior based on unit attributes. Other variations of liberal theory rely on more detailed differentiations between various types of democratic society and its relation to the political system, and of democratic institutions. Thus, variations in security cooperation depend on the strength and weaknesses of countervailing forces within a democratic country: The pluralistic structure of policy making gives various interests different opportunities to wield influence; the outcome depends on the balance of opportunity structures for pro- and contra-security cooperation coalitions (cf. Risse-Kappen, 1994: 185–214; Knopf, 1998; Müller, 2004).

Interdemocratic security organization and the "league of democracies"

One evident difference in external behaviour caused by the governance system is the strong inclination of democracies to develop in-depth interdemocratic security organisations (Russett et al., 1998; Dembinski and Hasenclever, 2010). The contractualist approach explains this with democracies' singular capability to enter into reliable contracts which stabilize the mutual relationship and help realize mutual gains, enhancing the commitment to continued cooperation. This capability hinges on four institutional attributes of democracies (Lipson, 2003: 4–7, 11–15):

- *Transparency*: It allows insights into the 'inner fabric' of democratic deliberations and creates trust in the sincerity of leaders' public statements.
- *Audience costs*: Foreign policy commitments by leaders (e.g., support for treaties) cannot be retracted without a loss of reputation.
- *Constitutional procedures*: Ratification binds parliaments and opposition to international legal instruments.
- *Continuity*: Successor governments remain bound by existing treaty obligations.

However, findings by Peceny and Butler (2004) on cooperative security policies by autocracies disprove the proposition that contractual reliability is a unique feature of democracy. Moreover, autocrats too face audience costs (Weeks, 2008).

Can democracies cooperate with nondemocracies?

The answer to this question seems easy for the monadic version, as democracies are supposed to pursue collaboration 'tous azimuts'. However, since this approach locates the prerequisites of cooperative behavior exclusively in the structure of democratic systems, it can hardly explain how motivations to

reciprocate should emerge in nondemocracies. It must thus be assumed that democracies are offering such asymmetrical deals in their own disfavor that the gains accruing from agreements satisfy the nasty interest calculus of nondemocratic governments; but then it is difficult to understand how such cooperation results could resonate well with a democratic electorate.

The dyadic version faces a different problem with similar results: The increasing in-group feeling of democratic states, facilitated through their inclination to join together in international organizations and security alliances, produces a growing distrust of the nondemocratic 'other'. The personification of this hostility and demonization of a chosen person (Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosevic) creates the image of a dangerous, powerful, alien enemy who must be vanquished before he can hurt democracies and their security environment. This explains why democratic states gang up to solve conflicts with nondemocracies – Iraq, Yugoslavia – by force if necessary. But this reasoning falls short of a convincing explanation of how this distrust is overcome, thereby enabling existing and relatively successful intersystemic security cooperation (e.g., Haftel, 2007; Dembinski and Hasenclever, 2010). An obvious answer is a rational choice calculus, another would be cultural habits. None of these answers is rooted in liberal theory. The first borrows from rationalism, the second from constructivism: It is difficult for liberalism by itself to explain why security cooperation is possible (Müller and Wolff, 2006).

Antinomies within the theory

Three further puzzles and paradoxes deserve mentioning. The first concerns a contradiction between norm dynamics in democratic systems and the requirements of security cooperation. Privacy and ownership rights are important normative prescriptions in democracies. Transparency requirements,

however, cut into these rights of private actors.

The second concerns a vicious dynamic that applies to monadic and dyadic democratic peace theory. If democracies shy away from risking their citizens' lives in war, and even sympathize with the subjects of an enemy – because they value human rights and human lives – but still fear the possibility of being attacked, then they must try to develop weapons technologies that would protect their own country, limit casualties on both sides, and help finish a war quickly. Unfortunately, such superior arms technology runs counter to the requirements of security cooperation through arms control and feeds the security dilemma. The very motivations that drive democratic peace may tend to result in armament policies that prevent security cooperation. National missile defense and the “Revolution in Military Affairs” fit this hypothesis well (Becker and Müller, 2008; Schörnig, 2008; Minkwitz, 2008).

Finally, the extension of the zone of democratic peace is, by the logic of the theory, the secure way towards eternal global peace. However, an increasing number of democratic states working together in the security field may appear threatening for nondemocratic states who are not participating in security cooperation with the democratic community (Bellamy, 2004). Feeling overwhelmed, these countries may then seek security in more armament. Moscow's response to NATO enlargement, echoed in Beijing, confirms this mechanism.

Security governance

A final offspring of liberal theory that owes something to functionalist and rationalist inspirations is “security governance” (Kirchner and Sperling, 2007): Providing security, according to this notion, is no longer a state monopoly. States share this mission with other actors, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, private companies, including the type

that offers security services (Avant, 2005), and other substate actors. In these networks, coordination, the mere confluence of these actors' self-interested or normatively based operations, or simply standard operational procedures emerge (Krahmann, 2003). One example of such a multiple-actor security setting is large-scale peacekeeping operations (Hänggi, 2005).

The “governance” concept theorizes recent developments in the relation between state and society in Western democracies (Koiman, 1993); it is also contingent upon the observation that through globalization, societal needs for security transcend the traditional realm of territorial integrity and extend to transnational issues, from organized crime to migration, all of which lead to demands for enhanced security. Responses require contributions from nonstate actors if effective regulation is to be achieved (Krahmann, 2005). They are partially based on the normative commitment to “human security” with the individual as core subject of entitlements to security – an offspring of liberal normative theory (Kaldor, 2007).

Empirical work supports the relevance of a broader setting of actors in multiple forms of security cooperation and regulation. International organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency have acquired actor quality beyond the sum of their state members (Rittberger and Zangl, 2006, ch. 8). Nongovernmental organizations have been instrumental in establishing international conventions, notably the International Court of Justice, the Ottawa Convention prohibiting anti-personnel mines, and the Oslo Convention banning cluster munitions, engaging in monitoring state compliance (Price, 1998; Deitelhoff, 2009), and cooperating with international security organizations (Mayer, 2008). Security companies seem indispensable in larger peacekeeping operations, but even business firms without a security mandate participate in regulations or hold activities contributing to common security goals (Deitelhoff and Wolf, 2010).

The unresolved question is whether the state is being devaluated permanently, or whether the sharing of responsibility means that the state is just outsourcing part of its tasks to others, thereby instrumentalizing other actors for its own objectives. A comparison of security governance across sub-fields has concluded that states have not relinquished their security primacy (Rittberger et al., 2010, ch. 7). The jury is out on whether the increased role of international organizations empowers the executive to create pressure on domestic checks-and-balances systems to comply with policies determined in institutions beyond the state. The executive would thereby recover executive authority previously lost to controlling domestic institutions (Wolf, 1999).

CONSTRUCTIVIST ACCOUNTS

Constructivists do not believe in fixed structures, unchangeable individual preferences, or quasi-mechanic laws of system development and actor behavior (see the Chapter 5 by Adler in this volume). The emergence of security cooperation rests on two requirements:

- A structure permitting moderate nonaggressive moves without the immediate risk of perishing; this possibility existed throughout the 'Westphalian' age, and increased as the twentieth century drew to a close.
- Agents choosing such options as better alternatives to a risky perpetual race for superiority.

The malleability of security concerns

Structures in the constructivist paradigm are not primarily material. Matter can only be part of structure once it acquires social meaning. The primary quality of structure consists of the meaning ascribed to it by agents whose practice reproduces and changes it. This explains why the normative and the habitual dimensions loom large in

constructivist thinking. Habits tell actors what to do in most situations. Norms tell them how to consider possible courses of actions when mere habits are of no help. But norms and habits do not *determine* behavior. Situations may be ambiguous. Norms, expressed in language, are ambivalent, subject to interpretation and thus contested (Wiener, 2008). A residual creativity is thus always implied in new action: Habits and norms are changeable.

On this ontological basis, security cooperation is less of a puzzle than for other approaches. It is a plausible mode of interaction (Ruggie, 1998). Constructivist theory can take two approaches in exploring the subject: It can reconstruct conditions for cooperation in the structure–actor interface, and analyze empirically how cooperation develops, persists, and decays.

Alexander Wendt (1992) elaborated the first approach. He places two actors in an unstructured environment; their first encounter, incidentally, emerges through a series of mutual, more or less amicable, moves. He then shows how, as a result of repeated encounters, mutual expectations develop that the partner will behave cooperatively, and how a related norm ensues. What was originally spontaneous reciprocity turns into mutually expected habits. A normative structure that fosters cooperation develops, not prescriptions for fear-driven caution as in the classic security dilemma.

Security cooperation did not emerge in a no-man's-land, but in a competitive international environment. Constructivists emphasize change: individual and collective learning – that is, a development of basic ideas about security – and an ensuing adaptation of constitutive and regulative norms that shape the environment – that is, the mechanism through which change takes place. The constructivist ontology in which neither structure nor agency is unchangeable, but mutually modifiable and changeable, supports that emphasis (Stein, 1994: 155–84; Koslowski and Kratochwil, 1994: 215–48; Lebow, 1994: 249–77; Bonham et al., 1997).

Initiation of change in the normative structure

Normative entrepreneurs offer an alternative discourse to power politics and initiate learning and change. Much of the empirical work by constructivists has been devoted to identifying “norm entrepreneurs” (Björkdahl, 2002) and to analyzing the activities by which they persuade decision makers to adopt their suggestions.

Frequently, ideas for cooperation originated from nongovernmental individuals and organizations. The model of the ‘epistemic community’ – a transnational expert group sharing ideas about a policy field and developing cooperative action programs has been applied to the evolution of arms control regimes in the East–West context (Adler, 1992).

A second initiator of security cooperation is nongovernmental organizations. They follow a different logic of action from governments. Almost universally, they begin with a humanistic orientation that leads them to demand and support disarmament (Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Smith, Chatfield, and Paglucco 1997). Related successes were the landmine and anti-cluster munitions campaigns (Price, 1998: 613–44; Nash, 2010).

A third initiator is the benevolent individual. Martha Finnemore has traced the origins of modern humanitarian law – one of the most striking security cooperation projects – back to the efforts of a single person, Henri Dunant, the founder of the Committee of the Red Cross (Finnemore, 1996).

Norms, identity, and the process of preference shaping

This points to an important difference between rationalist and constructivist approaches. For constructivists, regimes are not just instrumental systems designed to regulate issue-specific state behavior with a view to enhancing all participants’ gains, with given preferences and identities. Rather, regimes

tend to *reshape* preferences. Their norms tell states not only what to do but what to *wish*; at a deeper level, this impacts what states believe they should be: A decent actor in international affairs does not even think of committing atrocities in war for the sake of victory, supports strengthening international rules, and does not have amiable relationships with states in noncompliance with them. Accepted norms that have enjoyed validity over time will thus shape states’ identities (Wendt, 1994: 384–96). The endorsement of democracy and human rights by the CSCE in its 1990 Paris Charter established the democratic state as the ideal identity in this region, depicted the nondemocratic state as a security concern, and established a new practice – hitherto contested – that interference in non-democratic internal affairs was desirable and necessary to overcome risks to security and peace (Flynn and Farrell, 1999: 505–35).

The interface between a normative structure, norm internalization, and behavioral and identity change has been investigated in the field of nuclear nonproliferation (Walker, 2004). Etel Solingen (2007) found that the inclination to go nuclear has been reduced by the shift of governments from an inward orientation to integration into the world economy and the international community. Jaques Hymans (2006) proved that the nationalist versus universalist orientations of leaders influenced the preference for a nuclear weapons option. Jim Walsh and Maria Rost Rublee demonstrated a causal relationship between the growing norm of nonproliferation and a change in government’s preferences (Walsh, 2000; Rublee, 2009); this finding was supported by a study of the complete set of terminated nuclear weapons programs (Müller and Schmidt, 2010).

Security cultures and subcultures

Policy aims at making the international and the domestic discourses on security compatible, while being shaped by both. Over time, the two discourses create a ‘security culture’,

a set of values, norms, rules, and practices that gives thinking and acting a particular national pattern; states in a region may share a security culture. Security cultures define identities and shape preferences. Thus, they frame action and reaction and help explain variations in security policies among states that share the same security environment and/or are have similar domestic institutions (Katzenstein, 1996; Krause, 1998).

Even specific *subcultures* may influence the cooperative capabilities of states. Traditions, value orientations, and deep-seated priorities in the military can impact security policy, including cooperation (Snyder, 1990: 39; Klein, 1991: 3–23; Johnston, 1995: 32–64; Farrell, 1998). Strategic culture can shape attitudes towards weapons of mass destruction (Johnson et al., 2009) and in turn be embedded in broader cultural systems such as religion (Hashmi and Lee, 2004). This is important for security cooperation, as the military can veto decisions on security collaboration (Legro, 1995; Sims, 2009), or their views may resonate with the rest of society and control the security culture of a country, such as in the ‘cult of the offensive’ on the eve of the first World War (Snyder, 1984; Evera, 1984: 58–107).

When benign security cultures converge, interests are interpreted similarly, and cooperative institutions abound, states may form security communities. This concept, which initially originated in functionalism (Deutsch et al., 1957), has been appropriated by constructivists (Adler and Barnett, 1998). Members of such communities develop images of each other that make the thought of violent conflict unthinkable – a result of converging interpretations, values, and security cultures. Dense communication helps incorporate the partners’ interests and preferences into one’s own decision making (Risse-Kappen, 1995). Research has shown that democratic countries have displayed a strong inclination to form such communities, an important contribution by constructivism to the ‘democratic peace’ debate.

The constructivist research program on security communities shows how material

factors (growing interdependencies and common security needs) merge with discursive and communicative practices to develop a shared normative framework⁴ and, eventually, a common identity. The equal weight given to structure and to agency avoids the one-sidedness in systemic (realism) and individualistic (rationalism) meta-theories. However, the more recent developments in security community research prove how quickly such gains can be lost through fashionable “turns”: The so-called “practical turn” (Adler, 2008) has overemphasised agency and devalued the precise meaning of “security community” by eliminating the distinctive characteristics (identity and “war being unthinkable”) (Pouliot, 2007).

Constructivism makes strong arguments that explain stability and change in preference formation and identity. It makes up for blind spots in rationalist theories, but it has not yet specified the contexts in which one or the other set of identity/preferences is more likely. The approach still remains indeterminate.

POSTMODERNIST ACCOUNTS

While constructivists pay attention to security discourses, they are also interested in how these discourses relate to the observable reality of power relations ‘out there’. In contrast, postmodernism exclusively focuses on discourses. While the existence of an ‘outer’ reality is not denied, its intelligibility is refuted (see the Chapter 6 by Zehfuss in this volume). The ‘out there’ can be dealt with only through the representational artifacts of perception and interpretation which are present in language. We can describe and analyze just discourses, without the hope of discovering the “real thing” behind the words: There is no corresponding theory of truth. Nevertheless, mainstream concepts of international relations assume a central position in postmodernist theory, too: power and hegemony. However, these concepts do not address the relationship between states,

classes, or individuals ‘out there’, but the hierarchical relationships of discourses. Postmodernists ask for the history of present interpretations and understandings (‘archeology’, ‘genealogy’), trying to dismantle their aura of necessity and incontestability. They identify alternative views that were “silenced” as the hegemonic discourse rose to ascendancy (Foucault, 1973, 1980).

Given the sense of urgency that common security discourses are imbued with, they are a natural target for postmodern analysis: Since a security discourse integrates the notion of fear and the threat of force, it is uniquely positioned to function in a discursive practice of power and hegemony (Walker, 1986: 485–504).

Securitization

The deconstruction of security discourses has been developed into a sophisticated theory and analytical methodology by the Copenhagen school (Buzan et al., 1997).⁵ In line with the core postmodernist argument, “objective” analysis of a constellation in order to identify security threats is rejected. Since a given constellation can motivate different, equally legitimate interpretations, and because the ‘out there’ is always perceived and analyzed through the lenses of language-bound cultural filters, the only object of analysis can be actors’ discourse. This is in agreement with the postmodernist argument (Campbell 1992: 1/2).

Analysis focuses on discourses of ‘securitization’. Constellations become a security problem by the application of specific speech acts called “securitization”. They consist of (a) the declaration of an existential threat to the community to which the speaker belongs, requiring prime attention for dealing with this situation and (b) the request for extraordinary measures to cope with the threat identified in (a). The process of securitization is complete when the performative effect intended by the speaker is obtained: The speech act is directed at an audience and is

only successful if the audience accepts the validity of (a) and (b), putting (b) into action (Waeber, 1989). The move is not interest-free: Since it gives the state the legitimate claim to transcend the limits of routine politics, and since securitization claims are most frequently made by power-holders, it serves to reaffirm their rule over society. By invoking extraordinary measures against the alleged threat, securitization threatens external actors; the spiral of the security dilemma is not about accumulating hardware, but about applying specific language to interpretable situations.

The way out cannot be sought in ‘national security policies’, with the big apparatuses of military defense and intelligence that tend to perpetuate the securitization process. Rather, *desecuritization* helps overcome it. Removing issues from a security language and submitting them to the non-extraordinary instruments of politics is the way out of the trap created by securitization.

The securitization approach is a useful tool to deal with risks embedded in security agendas. It creates an operational standard for analyzing security discourses (e.g., Caballero-Anthony et al., 2006; Higgott, 2006). However, questions remain to be answered. First, we cannot be satisfied with exclusively analyzing speech acts and their consequences: If we want to predict consequences of securitization, we need a model for how the ensuing action affects relations with other actors. We thus need an image of these actors. This amounts to a comprehensive analysis of structures and processes “out there” with which our discourse interacts. This reminds us that sometimes there *is* a clear and present danger “out there” and not just in the eye of the beholder – as in Poland 1939 (Knudsen 2001).

Second, security cooperation cannot be analyzed with the securitization approach. The opposite of securitization is *desecuritization*, removing an issue from the ambit of security (Buzan et al., 1997). But this is not what partners in security cooperation do. Rather, they recognize that an issue *is* relevant to security, bearing risks for all.

The mutual recognition that existential risks existed in nuclear arms with hair-trigger alert on both sides motivated the negotiations and agreements which established the field of nuclear arms control. These were 'extraordinary measures', that is, close cooperation of rivals in the most sensitive field. The field was not desecuritized, but repeated speech acts of securitization were used to motivate further steps towards disentangling the nuclear standoff.

Inclusion/exclusion

According to postmodernist analysis, the notion of security has to rely on a polar differentiation between 'self' and 'other'. This distinction is central to the deconstructivist endeavor in postmodernism. The centrality of the subject in modernist thinking and speech can only be upheld if that subject is sharply separated from the alien 'other' against which it defines and defends its identity. This distinction encompasses inclusion – who belongs – and exclusion – who is alien. The same process evolves at the state level (Walker, 1988).

The state, an artificial identity construct, cannot exist without this discursive mechanism of inclusion/exclusion. The exclusion of the 'other' construes the bounds between those included in the territorially enshrined boundaries of the construct. The ascription of danger (threat, disorder, anarchy) to the excluded 'other' produces the discipline for subordinating the inhabitants of that territory to the prevailing identity discourse centered on the state (Ashley, 1988: 227–62; Campbell, 1992). Human beings could adopt many identities, and the permanent risk of defection from the hegemonic one must be contained; the security discourse emerging from the self/other distinction serves that function.

Inclusion/exclusion applies to agent and to structure. It is not a value-free description of different entities, but contains ascriptions of positive and negative values.

The included is valued positively: The internal structure offers order, stability, safety, and security. The external disorder (anarchy) vibrates with threat, risk, and danger. The security discourse is thus instrumental to rallying strong support around the state, and to direct defensive energies against the outside.

The deconstructivist approach along the self/other, inclusion/exclusion line is useful to uncover the origins of enemy images, and to reveal the abuse of language to exaggerate threats and risks. It has, however, its shortcomings. It is ill-equipped to identify polarities beyond two poles, overlapping identities, partial compatibilities, though all these are theoretical possibilities that are found in practice and are the foundation on which security cooperation is built. For example, Simon Dalby analyses the process by which the Committee of the Present Danger established a security discourse that became hegemonic over time and eventually destroyed the previous détente discourse (Dalby, 1990). But it is hard to explain from the same vantage point how the détente discourse had emerged from the Cold War in the first place, and re-emerged later. Campbell's study of US foreign policy identifies all exclusions and constructions of enemies; it contains not a single word on the many cooperative relationships in which the United States has been involved, frequently as initiator (Campbell, 1992).

Does postmodernism recognize cooperation when it reads it?

Reading postmodern security studies reveals a lacuna of analysis of security cooperation. The few that we find are problematic in their application of the inclusion/exclusion and hegemony/subordination schemes. Given this orientation of postmodernist analysis, it is not incidental that certain types of security regimes that are ostensibly more symmetric than the hegemony/subordination divide would permit are not found, such as the Latin

American Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, the Berlin Four Powers Agreement, CSCE, the CFE Treaty, or superpower arms control (cf. Price, 2008).

Richard Price has tackled the genealogy of the Chemical Weapons Taboo as the successful imposition of appropriate behavior for a (Western) civilized community (Price, 1997). 'Belonging' to those included 'inside' means to behave according to this taboo. Nevertheless, the question remains why countries that have resisted Western attempts to impose a civilizational model embrace the legal form of this taboo, the Chemical Weapons Convention, such as Iran, India, Indonesia, or China.

The discriminatory nature of the nuclear nonproliferation regime is seen by postmodernist analyst James Keeley as the hegemonic imposition of a proliferation discourse over an alternative, suppressed discourse emphasizing nuclear disarmament. This hegemony serves the interests of the nuclear weapon states and is reproduced through the practices of regime members (Keeley, 1990: 83–105).

Along very similar lines (but curiously unaware of Keeley's study), David Mutimer has reconstructed the nonproliferation regime (Mutimer, 2000). While Keeley emphasizes its roots in the power hierarchy, Mutimer traces its back to an image of self-spreading technology. Technology, in his view, is at the heart of the 'proliferation discourse', and the inside/outside division is provided by the membership or nonmembership in the suppliers' groups; the discourse is hegemonic along a North/South divide. Mutimer proposes a disarmament discourse as a dissenting alternative.

Both accounts are flawed. For one, the disarmament discourse has been dominant in international diplomacy (though not in nuclear weapon states' *practices*) throughout the existence of the NPT, and became dominant in the 1990s, as the discursive contests during the 1995 and 2000 Extension and Review Conferences reveal (Johnson, 2000: 2–21; Müller, 2010).

Second, while parts of US academia and administrations overemphasized technical aspects, scholarly analysis of nuclear proliferation and nonproliferation focus on political factors and request priority for addressing them (e.g., Snyder and Wells, 1985; Goldblat, 1985; Müller, 1987; Reiss, 1988). Third, there is no fixed dichotomy between the 'nonproliferation' and 'disarmament' discourses. Countries with an impeccable disarmament record (Sweden, Ireland, New Zealand, and South Africa) participate in the suppliers group. Pretoria's participation shows that the North/South dichotomy has become blurred.

The postmodernist scheme of discursive inquiry, consisting of two dichotomies – inclusion/exclusion and hegemony/subordination – leads analysts to overlook aspects of discourses which do not fit: symmetries, compromises, cross-cutting identities, ambivalences, tri- or multipolar discourse structures, which are all conducive to security cooperation, and found in the respective regimes.⁶ Rescue from the security quagmire in which the reification of the modern state has put humankind is not expected from state discourses and related actions, but from the ascendancy of the alternative discourse promoted by the postmodernists for which they bet on civil society (Dalby, 1997: 3–32; Klein, 1988: 293–318). If state representatives like Mikhail Gorbachev promote such a changed discourse themselves, postmodernist analysis can at best describe it; how it could happen cannot be explained by the postmodernist approach, except by simply declaring Mikhail Gorbachev a 'critical strategic theorist'!⁷ Ironically, the structures that poststructuralist analysis has claimed to be typical in modernist discourses are used to construct a world of discourses that looks awfully similar to the world of realists: a world of dangerous hostility between 'we' and 'them', of hegemony, suppression and rebellion.⁸ What remains is the deconstructive method that is useful to critique the ideologies of national security policy and their academic analysis.

Emancipatory approaches: critical security studies

Related to postmodernists in their critical attitude are emancipatory approaches, notably feminist security studies and critical security studies (on feminist approaches, see Chapter 7 by Sjöberg and Tickner in this volume). They are distinct from mainstream postmodernism in taking an explicitly normative perspective that compels them to reconstruct social and political relationships which helped emancipate oppressed people. Consequently, they question security cooperation which may help minimize violence, but still serves to stabilize power hierarchies and keep oppressive structures in place.

Critical security studies (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, 2010; Booth, 2007, 2005; Krause and Williams, 1997) broaden the emancipatory ambition. Relying on the inheritance of enlightenment (thereby distancing themselves from postmodernism), the guiding perspective is that of a global community in which people hold multiple identities, neither of which dominates. The vicious circle of inclusion and exclusion feeding the security dilemma of states and other political units fades (Linklater, 1998; Booth, 2007, ch. 3). Like security communities, this global community of communities must be bound together by norms, institutions, laws, multi-level social interaction, complex interdependence, trust-affirming commitments, and the promotion of cosmopolitan sensibilities (Booth and Wheeler, 2008: 298). The individual is the legitimate subject of security concerns as in the concept of human security. Trust, one of the central terms in social relations, is central here too. Building trust among political entities, contrary to the viewpoint of realism, is a matter of attitude and practice, not of the alleged nature of political relations among political collectivities.

Emancipatory approaches remind us of the moral shortcomings even of violence-reducing and force-containing cooperative arrangements. They are a critical corrective which helps prevent inappropriate euphoria.

However, even these approaches cannot escape being bound to the Western path of cultural development since enlightenment and thus are forced to respect collectivities which have emerged from a different path. They must face the risk of all claims to speak for the oppressed, walking the fine line between a noble purpose and imperial usurpation.

CONCLUSION

None of the theoretical perspectives on security cooperation is fully satisfactory. Realism is useful in warning against illusions about cooperative possibilities in the light of power politics, but short on explaining why security cooperation has been relatively successful and abundant. Its counterpart, postmodernism, curiously mirrors that scepticism: It supplies welcome tools to uncover ideological roots of present security policies, but – as does realism – puts so much emphasis on hostility (i.e., the inclusion/exclusion divide) that real cooperative relationships are automatically suspected of being hegemonically imposed on the carriers of suppressed discourses. Rational choice informs us about constellations of preferences that are favorable to security cooperation, and about the role of institutions in reducing uncertainty and transaction costs. But it leaves us wondering how states can overcome the profound impediments to engaging with those institutions in the struggle for survival in anarchy. Liberalism, in the form of democratic peace theory, offers a rich theory on how security cooperation is motivated and maintained. But one (the dyadic) version falls short of explaining how democracies come to cooperate with non-democracies, and both versions have difficulties in accounting for the variation in cooperative behavior among democracies. Finally, constructivism, with its emphasis on ideas and the cultural grounding of behavior, its treatment of the interplay between material and ideational factors and between structure and agency may be best fit to explain security

cooperation. But it does so in hindsight; the theory is still too indeterminate to allow for the development of distinct hypotheses, let alone predictions. Postmodernist and critical accounts warn us against falling prey to ideology, but have an inbuilt bias preventing them from appreciating security cooperation when it occurs. Attempts at synthesizing various strands of theory are in too early a stage to be fairly assessed (cf. Hasenclever et al., 1997, ch. 6; Deudney, 2000: 77–107). More efforts that dare to employ reflected eclecticism are needed to create such a sensible synthesis.

NOTES

1 For example, Haftendorn, 1991, 3–17; Walt, 1991, 211–39; Kolodziej, 1992, 1–31; Betts, 1997, 7–33; Mathews, 1989, 162–77; Baldwin, 1995, 117–41; Crawford, 1991, 283–316; Croft and Terriff (eds.), 1999; Booth 2007.

2 The best formulation of this theory is Moravcsik (1997, 513–53). However, Czempiel (1981) has provided the first comprehensive elaboration of IR liberalism, widely ignored by the US IR community.

3 Doyle (1997) gives a detailed account of the argument. Doyle (1983a, 205–35) rescued Kant's theory in his article 'Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs' and (1993b, 323–57) 'Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs, Part 2'. Czempiel (1972) had revived Kant's theory eleven years before Doyle without the US IR community taking notice.

4 A similar process produced the 'nuclear taboo', the unwritten norm against the use of nuclear weapons cf. Tannenwald 2007.

5 Ole Waever and the Copenhagen school have made many contributions to the security debate based on non-postmodernist epistemology (e.g., Waever et al. 1993).

6 An exception is Fierke's (1999, 27–52) analysis of how NATO became captured by its own effort to expand a hegemonic dialogue to Eastern Europe.

7 Fierke (1997, 223–52); Klein (1994: 130).

8 A neorealist analysis of the nonproliferation regime is strikingly similar to Mutimer's: Bradley (1995, 463–519, notably, 506/7).

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Terrorism and Counterterrorism

Ethan Bueno de Mesquita

In the past decade, terrorism and counterterrorism have moved to the forefront of scholarly and policy discussions alike. My goal in this chapter is to provide an overview of some of the issues that animate the current scholarly debate, review some of the most convincing and/or controversial findings, and highlight areas where new work is likely to be particularly fruitful. Trying to review, let alone synthesize, scholarship in an area where ideas are changing and knowledge is being added so quickly is a daunting task; doing so with respect to terrorism is made all the more challenging by the fact that terrorism itself is so difficult to define.

The literature debates the proper definition of terrorism extensively. Such debates tend to bog down in normative arguments, distracting us from research aimed at understanding terrorism, ill defined though it may be. Thus, I will not spend much time defining terrorism. Instead, I will start with a few broad characteristics of violent acts that more or less typify the type of phenomenon I will attempt to elucidate below.

Terrorism, in my view, is best understood as a tactic – one of many tools employed by insurgents and rebels for a variety of reasons.

The borders that distinguish terrorism from other forms of political violence are fuzzy at best. Broadly speaking, an act of violence is terrorism, as I will use the term, if it satisfies several criteria:

1. It must be taken by a nonstate actor (though perhaps with state sponsorship).
2. It must have as its purpose some political, economic, religious, or social objective.
3. It must be intended to intimidate a population that is larger than the direct victims of the attack.

This proto-definition already rules out some acts that others might wish to label terrorism. The first point rules out the direct actions of states as terrorist attacks. States no doubt sometimes engage in violence meant to intimidate a large population. But the constraints and incentives that shape state behavior are different from those that shape the behavior of nonstate actors. As such, these two phenomena are best left analytically distinct for the purposes of social science. The second point distinguishes terrorism from violence by organized crime. The third point is key. Terrorism is a tactic that organizations use to try to leverage relatively low levels of

violence into larger influence. It is different from war fighting in ways that are of considerable analytic and empirical interest. But it may share much in common with other types of guerilla tactics.

These criteria are by no means universally accepted. Any particular take is sure to be both over and under inclusive. For instance, there are some who would insist that terrorist organizations be clandestine. Others would insist that for violence to be terrorism, it must be directed against civilians. In the former case, my view is that if terrorist groups are typically clandestine, this is a strategic fact to be explained rather than incorporated into a definition. In the latter case, my view is that social scientists should resist the urge to make terrorism a normative category. If there is a compelling analytic reason to distinguish attacks against civilians from attacks against government or military targets, then that is a reason to have two separate categories. However, the fact that one considers one type of attack more or less justifiable than another does not imply that the two types of attacks should be treated separately in matters of analysis.

In this chapter, I give an inevitably idiosyncratic view of ideas and directions in the study of terrorism. My discussion will be biased in the direction of two types of work: game-theoretic models and quantitative empirical studies. I do so for two reasons. First, and most important, is comparative advantage. There is a vast and valuable qualitative literature on terrorism and terrorist organizations. I am not particularly qualified to discuss it. Second, as the previous paragraphs highlight, defining the term terrorism is tricky and controversial. A model, at least partially, dispenses with definitional issues. If the author, or a reader, can make a convincing case that a particular group or strategic situation looks sufficiently like the actor or game formalized in the model, then the model can be applied, regardless of how one labels the actor or the actions taken.

ROOT CAUSES

A central concern in terrorism studies is to identify the so-called “root causes” of terrorism. What factors lead a society or a political movement to engage in terrorist violence?

The standard mode for investigating root causes is to look for correlations between various measures of terrorism and its putative causes: economic deprivation, political repression, religion, and so on. As we will see, making a convincing argument for a particular causal interpretation of such correlations is tricky. To take one example, unemployment may give rise to terrorism by creating a grievance. But terrorism may also give rise to unemployment by curtailing job-creating investment. Thus, the presence of a correlation between unemployment and terrorism does not, on its own, constitute compelling evidence for unemployment as a root cause.

Before turning to the specifics of the literature, it is worth considering one broader conceptual issue. Terrorism is one tactic among many employed by rebel groups for a variety of strategic reasons (Crenshaw 1990). Typically, the literature studies these various tactics – terrorism, guerilla warfare, insurgency – in isolation (though see Kalyvas 2004, Sambanis 2008, and Laitin and Shapiro 2008). Yet many of the hypothesized root causes of each of these types of political violence are the same. The reason is that many of our theoretical intuitions regarding root causes of a *tactic* are actually intuitions about root causes of rebellion more generally. For instance, the hypothesis that increased unemployment decreases opportunity costs and thereby increases mobilization has been considered in the literatures on the causes crime, riots, terrorism, and civil war.

This conceptual distinction may have important implications for empirical research. The argument suggests that in studying the causes of terrorism, we need to think about two margins. The first is people’s willingness to engage in armed resistance of any sort (be it terrorism, guerilla warfare, insurgency, or

some other form of rebellion). The second is, given a rebellion exists, the rebels' decision of whether to engage in terrorism or some other tactic.

It could well be that some of the factors that we think of as potential root causes of terrorism are, indeed, root causes of rebellion (i.e., affect the first margin). Yet they may not appear as correlates of terrorism if they simultaneously affect the second margin in a way that makes terrorism less attractive relative to other tactics. For instance, certain kinds of repression might make rebellion more attractive by inspiring anger at the government, yet make terrorism less likely by leading rebels to prefer a technology that does not require them to live in population centers (e.g., guerilla war fighting). In such cases, studying the causes of one rebel tactic, isolated from others, may be misleading.

With these issues in mind, I now turn to the existing literature on root causes of terrorism in particular.

Economic deprivation

A common intuition for scholars and policy makers alike is that economic deprivation of various forms leads to radical mobilization. The first wave of quantitative studies to address this hypothesis with respect to terrorism attempted to do so by exploiting both cross-country and over-time variation in the state of the economy and in the level of terrorism. These studies report different findings, depending on the choices of model specification, covariates, and the operationalization of the level of terrorism. Both Blomberg, Hess, and Weerapana (2004) and Drakos and Gofas (2006) report a statistically significant negative correlation between measures of economic performance and the level of terrorist violence. Krueger and Laitin (2008) study both the country in which an attack occurred and the home country of the terrorists who carried out the attack. They find that wealthy countries are more likely to suffer terrorist attacks and that economic

performance is not a statistically significant predictor of which countries terrorists emerge from. Li and Schaub (2004) find no relationship between terrorism and foreign direct investment (FDI) or portfolio investment, but do find that economic development in a country, or in its top trading partners, reduces terrorism in that country.

There are reasons to be concerned about what one can conclude from the studies discussed above on at least two dimensions: the quality of the data and the persuasiveness of the causal identification. The literature has gone about addressing these concerns in two ways. Abadie (2006) attempts to address both of these issues within a cross-country setting. On the data side, rather than using the standard data sources that provide counts of terrorist attacks or fatalities, Abadie bases his dependent variable on the World Market Research Center's Global Terrorism Index, which he writes, "encompasses five factors forecasting motivation, presence, scale, efficacy, and prevention of terrorism." More importantly, Abadie uses an instrumental variables approach to address the potential endogeneity between economic performance and the level of terrorism risk – that is, poor economic performance may cause terrorism, but terrorism (or the anticipation of terrorism) may also depress economic performance. Abadie's instrument for GDP is whether or not a country is landlocked. The assumption underlying the causal inference is that landlocked status directly affects GDP, but does not affect the risk of terrorism through any mechanism other than its effect on GDP. Abadie finds that, controlling for other factors (including level of political freedom), there is no statistically significant relationship between per capita GDP and terrorism risk in the instrumental variables estimates.

The other approach that has been taken to trying to shore up our empirical understanding of the links between the economy and terrorism is to abandon cross-country studies, focusing on micro-level details in important terrorist conflicts. For instance, Krueger and Maleckova (2003) and Berrebi (2003)

study the individual characteristics of terrorist operatives from *Hezbollah* and *Hamas*, respectively. They find that terrorist operatives are, themselves, neither poor nor poorly educated. Rather, their economic and educational statuses tend to lie around, or even slightly exceed, the averages in their societies. Krueger and Maleckova (2003) argue that, since terrorists are neither poor nor poorly educated, the economy and education must not be important determinants of terrorism. Indeed, based on this evidence, Krueger argues, “there is not much question that poverty has little to do with terrorism” (Krueger 2007).

This argument has been very influential. Indeed, based on this evidence, the view that economic hardship is not an important root cause of terrorism has become almost the conventional wisdom. However, it is not clear that this conclusion is warranted by the evidence.

Bueno de Mesquita (2005b) shows that one can generate the prediction that terrorists are not poor or ill educated in a model where there is nonetheless mobilization due to economic opportunity costs. The key is that terrorist organizations screen potential recruits on an ability dimension that is positively correlated with both efficacy as a terrorist and success in the labor market, a fact consistent with the qualitative evidence presented by Hassan (2001).

To see the problem this creates for the argument that the relatively high socioeconomic status of terrorist operatives implies that the economy is not an important determinant of terrorism, suppose that terrorist organizations accept recruits only over some competence threshold and that competence is positively correlated with income or education. Suppose, further, that economic downturns increase mobilization (perhaps by decreasing opportunity costs). In such a world, because of screening, the terrorist operatives actually observed are neither poor nor poorly educated, just as in Krueger’s data. Yet the conclusion is not true: the supply of acceptable operatives and, therefore, the

expected level of violence is affected by economic factors.

Of course, this theoretical argument does not establish that economic deprivation causes terrorism. But it does suggest that data showing that terrorist operatives are neither poor nor poorly educated doesn’t settle the question. Doing so requires answers to two questions: First, is there a correlation between socioeconomic status and effectiveness as a terrorist operative? Second, do economic downturns increase the supply of high-quality operatives?

Two recent empirical articles show that, at least for the case of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, the answers are yes.

Benmelech and Berrebi (2007) address the first question by studying detailed biographies of all Palestinian suicide bombers between 2000 and 2005. They find that more highly educated operatives are more likely to be assigned to high-value targets, suggesting that terrorist organizations do in fact use information correlated with “quality” in tactical decision making. Further, they show that better-educated operatives are more likely to successfully complete missions, suggesting that there is in fact a link between educational attainment and effectiveness as an operative.

Using similar data, Benmelech, Berrebi, and Klor (2009) address the second question. They find that regional and over-time variation in unemployment significantly affects the quality of suicide terrorist operatives, as measured by education, age, and experience. Moreover, they show, this improvement in the quality of operatives translates into a more effective terrorist organization. In particular, during bad economic times, terrorist organizations, having recruited higher-quality operatives, attack higher-value targets and do so with greater success.

Taken together, the theory and empirical studies seem to support the claim that there may well be an important relationship between economic deprivation, mobilization, and the effectiveness of terrorist organizations, even though terrorist operatives are

neither poor nor poorly educated. But to uncover this root cause relationship, we had to look in a more fine-grained way at the data in order to take account of both the terrorist organizations' demand for high-quality operatives and how the economy affects the supply of such operatives.

Occupation and repression

A second key intuition is that terrorism is a strategic response by weak, repressed groups who lack better means to oppose a government. The hypothesis that lack of political freedom causes terrorism takes various forms. One key idea is that terrorism emerges due to lack of democratic representation. Eubank and Weinberg (1994, 1998), Sandler (1995), and Eyerman (1998) (among others) investigate correlations between measures of democracy and terrorism and find varying results. In an attempt to reconcile competing claims in this literature, Li (2005), using two different measures of democracy, finds two competing effects. On the one hand, he argues, democratic participation is associated with fewer terrorist incidents in a country. On the other hand, increased constraints on the government is associated with more terrorism in a country. Drakos and Gofas (2006a) argue that all such estimates may be unreliable because autocracies systematically under-report terrorist incidents. Moving away from measures of democracy, Abadie (2006) and Krueger and Laitin (2008) find, in cross-country studies, that measures of terrorism are negatively correlated with measures of political freedom.

Pape (2003, 2005) offers a different, but related, hypothesis. Pape's work focuses exclusively on suicide terrorism and claims that its root cause is foreign occupation. Moreover, he argues, suicide terrorism is particularly effective against democratic governments, due to their sensitivity to public opinion. As a result, contrary to other theories of repression as a cause of terrorism, Pape argues that suicide terrorism is most

likely to be used against democratic governments, albeit only ones engaged in foreign occupation. Drawing on a data set of suicide attacks around the world, Pape (2003, 2005) shows that virtually all suicide terrorist campaigns have been targeted against such democratic occupiers.

There are reasons to be cautious about inferring a causal relationship from any of the results above. Ashworth et al. (2008) point out that because Pape focuses exclusively on cases where suicide terrorism was used, his research design is incapable of uncovering whether there is a relationship between occupation (or any other potential cause) and suicide terrorism. To empirically investigate Pape's hypothesis, one would want to establish that the probability of suicide terrorism is significantly higher during occupations than during non-occupations. To assess the probability of suicide terrorism given the presence of (resp. the absence of) requires information on occupations (resp. non-occupations) that did and *did not* result in suicide terrorism. Put differently, Pape's data show that the probability of occupation conditional on there being suicide terrorism is very high relative to the probability of no occupation conditional on suicide terrorism. But what he needs to establish is that the probability of suicide terrorism conditional occupation is much higher than the probability of suicide terrorism conditional on no occupation, and his data do not speak to this question. Wade and Reiter (2007) do precisely this. Looking at country-year data for all countries, they regress the presence of suicide terrorism on the presence of oppressed minorities (a proxy for occupation) and regime type. They find little evidence of a relationship. In their data, regime type is uncorrelated with suicide terrorism. And while the interaction between regime type and number of oppressed minorities is significant in some specifications, the effect size is very small – the upper bound on the effect on the probability of suicide terrorism is about two percentage points.

In the case of the relationship between political freedom (or lack of democracy) and terrorism, there are different concerns about the validity of the inference. Here the authors look at a set of cases that could, in principle, answer the question. However, convincingly establishing causality from the correlations observed in the data is difficult. In particular, a correlation between repression and terrorism could be due to repression causing terrorism. But it could just as plausibly be due to but terrorism (or its threat) causing governments to repress. Identifying a convincing source of exogenous variation in repression that allows us to credibly estimate its causal impact on terrorism remains an important and open challenge for the literature on terrorism.

It is worth noting, here, that the interrelation between terrorism and repression raises another interesting strategic issue: the cycle of violence. This is the idea that terrorism gives rise to repressive counterterrorism which, in turn, spurs further terrorism. While informed by the discussion of repression as a root cause, this strand of the literature moves beyond discussions of the causes of terrorism, into debates over counterterrorism policy. As such, I will consider these issues in greater depth in the counterterrorism section.

Religion

The hypothesis that religious faith or religious difference lies at the heart of the willingness to engage in terrorist violence has particular intuitive force for several reasons. First, it seems to help make sense of the motivations of people – such as suicide terrorists – who strike many as incomprehensible within a secular framework. Second, much of the public debate over terrorism, and over suicide terrorism especially, focuses on violent acts taken by organizations and individuals who come from a Muslim cultural and/or religious tradition. Thus, the conventional wisdom seems to be that there must be

some important connection between Islam and terrorism.

It may be surprising, then, how little support the idea of religion or religious difference as a root cause has among political scientists studying terrorism. Perhaps the deepest consideration of this question (along with many others) is provided by Atran (2010), who offers both a fascinating discussion of the science of religion and detailed reports of his own qualitative research involving interviews with terrorists, their families, and their supporters.

Bloom (2005) argues that the claim of a causal link between Islam and suicide terrorism is specious. While it is true that most organizations that engage in suicide terrorism are from Muslim cultures, the group that has engaged in the most suicide attacks is the secular, nationalist Tamil Tigers, whose operatives are largely of Hindu descent. Moreover, Bloom argues, the connection between Islam and suicide terrorism may simply be an historic accident. Modern suicide bombing was first employed as a tactic in Lebanon, with success. This experience may have made the tactic salient among related groups in the Middle East, creating a noncausal correlation between Islam and suicide terrorism.

Pape (2005) argues that religious difference may help to inspire terrorists to engage in suicide terrorism, but only within the framework of an existing occupation. His data show that from 1980 to 2003, there were 23 foreign occupations that inspired a rebellion. Of those, 14 had religious differences, of which half resulted in suicide campaigns. Of the remaining 9, only 1 inspired a suicide campaign. So, given occupation and rebellion, the frequency of suicide terrorism is 39 percentage points higher if there are religious differences than if there are not. Within these same data, the frequency of rebellion (with or without suicide attacks), given an occupation and religious differences, is 14/29. The frequency of rebellion, given an occupation and no religious differences, is 9/29.

Berman and Laitin (2008) offer the most systematic evidence on religion and terrorism.

They find that missions organized by certain kinds of religious organizations – those that also provide public goods to their members – are more lethal and more likely to be suicide attacks than missions organized by other terrorist groups with similar goals. They do not believe that this evidence suggests that terrorism has a theological root cause. Rather, using an account grounded in the economics of religion (Berman 2009; Iannaccone and Berman 2006), they argue that religions are likely to succeed at creating violent factions because their organizational structure is well suited to solving a fundamental problem for terrorists: mobilizing supporters while weeding out low-commitment types who might betray the organization. Successful religions do this by providing public goods to their members while imposing significant barriers to entry that exclude all but the most committed. Thus, the argument goes, religion does not cause terrorism. But effective religious groups have an advantage in organizing violence, creating a correlation between religion and violence. A question left at least partially unanswered by this theoretical approach is why nonreligious terrorist groups do not similarly impose high barriers to entry, if this is indeed such a valuable institutional feature for a clandestine, violent organization.

TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

Much of the literature suggests that, in order to understand government–terrorist negotiations and the strategic use of violence, it is critical to understand the inner workings of terrorist organizations. Chai (1993) applies some of the basic insights of agency theory to terrorist organizations and teases out a variety of implications for terrorist strategies. A recent literature has begun to refocus on these questions.

Shapiro and Siegel (2007) argue that it is common for terrorist organizations to underfund operatives relative to available resources. This phenomenon, they suggest, is

a consequence of principal-agent relationships within terrorist organizations. (Shapiro (2007) documents some of the lengths terrorist organizations go to in order to monitor and audit operative behavior.) The leaders in their model delegate financial and logistical tasks to middlemen, but because security concerns require weak linkages, the leaders cannot perfectly monitor these agents. The middlemen's interests sometimes diverge from the leaders, leading to rent-seeking. Given this, terrorist leaders will sometimes not fund (or will underfund) attacks that they otherwise would have been willing to support. One implication of their model is that the relationship between resources and the level of violence may not be continuous. When an organization is flush with resources, these agency problems do not loom large and small decreases in resources do not dramatically diminish the quality of funding for attacks. However, if resources become sufficiently scarce, cooperation within the terrorist organization begins to break down, and suboptimal funding becomes an issue (i.e., funding for attacks diminishes even beyond just the direct effect of having fewer resources). Thus, they argue, restricting terrorists' funds may be an ineffective counterterrorism tactic until a critical threshold is reached, at which point it becomes highly effective.

As already mentioned above, a literature linking terrorism to the economics of religion addresses similar concerns (e.g., Berman 2003; Iannaccone and Berman 2006). This literature argues that religious organizations, with their strong barriers to entry, are well designed to reduce agency problems, by selecting for members who are likely to be highly committed and willing to contribute to the group's mission without having ulterior motives. Benmelech, Berrebi, and Klor (2009) find that religious terrorist groups that provide public goods are better able to exploit the increased supply of high-quality operatives that results from an economic downturn.

Instead of agency relationships within a terrorist organization, Siqueira (2005) and

Bueno de Mesquita (2008) focus on the relationship among terrorist factions. Siqueira (2005) studies the interaction of militant and political wings of a terrorist organization. He shows that the actions of one of these factions can have spillovers on the other, whether or not the factions coordinate with one another. As a result, the existence of competing factions can increase or decrease the overall level of violence. The precise relationship between factionalization and violence depends on how internal divisions affect public (and donor) support for the terrorist movement and the complementarities or substitutabilities between attacks by the various factions. The model, thus, adds nuance to the argument in Bloom (2005) that factional competition is a key force behind escalation in terrorist conflicts.

Bueno de Mesquita (2008) studies the formation of a splinter faction in a model that endogenizes affiliation and mobilization as well as the strategic selection of ideological positions by terrorist leaders. The model highlights that, for strategic reasons, changes in the structural environment (e.g., the economy, the ability of terrorist leaders to provide public goods) often entail important trade-offs: many factors that decrease terrorist mobilization do so at the cost of increasing ideological extremism. For instance, a strong economy is found to decrease terrorist mobilization, increase the extremism of terrorist factions, and decrease the likelihood of a splinter faction forming. He argues that this suggests that economic shocks have competing micro-level effects on the expected level of violence that might not be observed in the type of macro-level data employed in many of the studies of relationship between terrorism and the economy described above. Thus, understanding the internal politics of terrorist organizations is critical, not only for understanding government–terrorist negotiations, but also for assessing the root causes of terror.

Another approach, emphasized in Chai's (1993) article, and which has regained prominence recently, focuses on networks and network effects. The modern literature

on terrorist network structure has tended to take two forms. The first is descriptive, employing the empirical tools of sociological network analysis. For instance, Krebs (2001) uses publicly available data to provide an empirical network analysis of the attack of September 11, 2001. The second approach is broadly theoretical. Arquilla, Ronfeldt, and Zanini (1999) discuss a variety of network structures and informally derive implications for terrorist behavior and counterterrorism strategy. Tsvetovat and Carley (2005) take an agent-based modeling approach in order to analyze the evolution of terrorist networks, as well as possible weaknesses that are exploitable by counterterrorists. A benefit of this more computational approach is that it allows the researchers to analyze a fairly rich model of the terrorist environment. The trade-off, of course, with this sort of agent-based modeling approach is the lack of micro-foundations for the behavior of agents. Enders and Su (2007) take the other side of the trade-off. They are among the first to study terrorist networks within a standard rational choice framework. Of course, in order to do so, they consider only a very stylized version of differences across networks, in particular, focusing on the level of connectivity. Within their model, highly connected groups are better able to engage in more complex attacks (for instance, attacks that require coordinated strikes in different locations). However, this operational advantage comes at a cost: interconnected groups are more easily infiltrated. They go on to show how increased counterterrorism activity or changes in the technology of communication may lead groups to change their network structure.

THE EFFICACY OF TERRORISM

Whether terrorism “works” is a matter of some contention. Theorists present a variety of arguments for how terrorism might be used to strengthen bargaining leverage (Lake

2002; Kydd and Walter 2006), derail peace negotiations (Kydd and Walter 2002), inspire insurrection or war (Bueno de Mesquita 2010; Baliga and Sjoström 2009), and so on. But confirming the effects of terrorism is complicated.

Pape (2003, 2005) argues that suicide terrorism, in particular, is a highly effective tactic. He finds that in six of the eleven suicide terrorist campaigns in his data, the terrorist organization achieved “significant policy changes.” Abrahms (2007) questions the reliability of this conclusion, since the number of countries considered is small. Six of the eleven campaigns took place in Israel and the combination of Israel, Turkey, and Sri Lanka make up 10 out of the 11 cases.

Abrahms (2006) examines a larger set of terrorist organizations: all 28 groups designated as foreign terrorist organizations by the State Department since 2001. His data show that these groups accomplish their stated policy goals only 7% of the time. Moreover, he finds that groups that attack civilian targets more often than military targets are much less likely to achieve their goals. He concludes that terrorism, and especially attacking civilians, is an inherently ineffective strategy for achieving policy objectives.

The validity of Abrahms’s (2006) inference depends on the validity of his counterfactual, which is unclear. In particular, in evaluating the efficacy of terrorism one wants to know not its absolute success rate, but rather its success rate relative to other tactics available to the same groups. Terrorism is a tool of the weak. As such, it is not surprising that terrorist groups rarely achieve their goals. But would those same groups have done better or worse had they used some other tool?

This question is very difficult to answer because we do not observe random assignment of tactics. However, by looking at fine-grained data within particular conflicts, empirical researchers have identified some plausibly exogenous sources of variation in exposure to terrorism. In so doing, they are able to provide a more credible assessment of

whether terrorism is having an effect on individual beliefs and behavior and, to some extent, to extrapolate from there to answer whether terrorism seems to be having a policy impact.

Gould and Klor (2010) examine whether terrorist attacks convince Israelis to support concessions. The basic empirical strategy is to exploit geographic variation in terrorist attacks. The idea is that a terrorist attack in, say, Haifa, should affect public opinion in Haifa more than it should in, say, Beer Sheva. The authors study whether changes in violence in a locality affect public opinion in that locality, relative to other localities in Israel. The analysis shows that, indeed, public opinion moves to the left as terrorism increases. That is, terrorism convinces Israelis to support concessions. Moreover, the authors show that none of the observable characteristics that predict the political views of a locality are correlated with the level of terrorism in that locality, suggesting that causal inference is unlikely to be confounded by strategic target selection by terrorist groups.

Berrebi and Klor (2008) use a similar empirical strategy to assess the impact of terrorism on electoral outcomes. Again, the key assumption is that violence matters more locally than it does in distant locales. The key finding is that terrorism close to an election increases the local right-wing bloc’s vote total by over a percentage point. Based on these estimates, the authors argue that it is plausible that the presence or absence of high levels of terrorism in certain locales has swung the outcome of several recent Israeli elections. The results are surprising, given that Gould and Klor (2010) find that terrorist attacks move public opinion toward concessions (i.e., the left). This apparent contradiction, however, is resolved by noting that as public opinion has moved leftward, so too have the political parties (e.g., even the right-leaning Likud now embraces the idea of a two-state solution). Hence, while there is a clear finding that terrorism increases support for policies that were considered left wing at the beginning of the peace process, this does

not generate a clear prediction about which party should benefit from that shift.

Carter (2012) studies the relationship between state sponsorship and the efficacy of terrorist groups, arguing that sponsorship is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, terrorist organizations gain resources from state sponsors, increasing capacity. On the other hand, sponsored terrorist groups are highly vulnerable to betrayal by their hosts.

Another type of impact that a terrorist campaign might have is disruption of the economy (Enders and Sandler 2006). While inflicting economic damage is not usually a direct policy objective of terrorists, if terrorist organizations are able to dramatically affect economic outcomes, this would suggest that they might, in fact, have considerable bargaining leverage.

It is very difficult to give a full accounting of the macro-economic effects of large-scale terrorist attacks. Consider, for example, the attacks of September 11, 2001. In calculating the costs, one has to consider a variety of direct effects: productive lives lost, infrastructure destroyed, work stoppages, and so on. Even if one can form reasonable estimates of these direct effects, there are indirect effects as well: time and efficiency lost to increased airport security, deadweight loss from the taxation needed to make payouts to victims of the attacks, short-term (and perhaps long-term) devaluation in the stock market due to changes in expected performance and risk, and so on, that are considerably more difficult to measure.

More precise estimates of the impact of terrorism on the economy are to be had from studies of longer-run (though less intense) terrorist conflicts. Such studies have taken two forms: focusing either on specific types of economic activity or on the economy of a specific country. With regard to the former strategy, Abadie and Gardeazabal (2005) argue that terrorism affects the allocation of investment capital by increasing risk and decreasing expected returns. Their estimates indicate that increased terrorism risk in a country significantly decreases foreign direct investment in that country. Enders and

Sandler (1996) also find large negative effects of terrorism on foreign direct investment in Greece and Spain. Similarly, Enders, Sandler, and Parise (1992) find that terrorism significantly reduces tourism in Greece, Italy, and Austria.

With respect to the latter strategy, Abadie and Gardeazabal (2003) consider how ETA terrorism has diminished economic growth in the Basque Country of Spain. They are able to do so because ETA terrorism has been overwhelmingly concentrated in this one region. Given this, they statistically construct a “synthetic” Basque Country based on other Spanish regions and compare its growth (free from terrorism) to the growth of the actual Basque Country. Their analysis suggests that ETA terrorism has decreased the per capita GDP in the Basque Country by 10 percentage points since the onset of Basque terrorism in the 1960s. Eckstein and Tsiddon (2004) employ an intervention-style time-series methodology to study the effects of terrorist attacks on the Israeli economy. They find that terrorism depresses growth, but that the effects of any given attack are relatively short-lived. Berrebi and Klor (2010) match Israeli companies in various industries (that trade on American markets) to American companies in the same industry with the closest expected returns. They find that, on average, terrorism has no effect on the valuation of Israeli stocks relative to the American companies’ stocks. However, disaggregating by industry, they find that terrorism has a significant positive impact (7%) on the valuation of Israeli companies in the security and defense industries and a significant negative impact (5%) on the valuation of Israeli companies in other industries.

COUNTERTERRORISM

The threat of terrorism, of course, raises important policy questions. And for a government facing an imminent threat, perhaps the most pressing is how to allocate counterterrorism resources. Below, I begin

by surveying recent work on how to think about the problems of designing an optimal counterterrorism program in the face of a strategic terrorist adversary. I then consider how various other strategic considerations may lead to suboptimal counterterrorism outcomes in equilibrium. Finally, I discuss a central counterterrorism dilemma for government's facing a separatist terrorist group: how to engage in counterterrorism while avoiding the counterproductive outcome of inflaming antigovernment sentiments.

Optimal counterterrorism

A key insight into the problem of optimal counterterrorism comes from Enders and Sandler's (1993) argument that terrorists respond strategically to counterterrorism measures, thereby generating "substitution effects." That is, terrorists, on observing an increase in a particular government counterterrorism program, can switch tactics, pursuing attacks less affected by the government's efforts. A variety of empirical studies find that counterterrorism generates such effects (Enders and Sandler 1993, 2002; Enders, Sandler, and Cauley 1990; Im, Cauley, and Sandler 1987). For instance, Enders and Sandler (1993) demonstrate that when the United States installed metal detectors in airports in the 1970s, hijackings decreased but other forms of terrorism increased.

Powell (2007a, c) builds on this insight in order to characterize the optimal division of counterterrorism resources in game-theoretic models. Interestingly, as the Powell articles demonstrate, the optimal allocation of counterterrorism resources is not sensitive to dynamics nor to the game being zero sum. In both articles, the optimal counterterrorism strategy involves minimizing the expected value of attacking the targets that are most valuable to the terrorists. Powell (2007c) describes the following algorithm for achieving this goal. The government first allocates resources to defending the target with highest expected value to the terrorists (where expected value is a function of

underlying value to the terrorists and vulnerability to attack). Doing so decreases that target's vulnerability and, therefore, its expected value to the terrorists. The government does this until that target has the same expected value to the terrorists as the target with the next highest expected value. It then spends counterterrorism resources on these two targets until they have the same expected value as the target with the next highest expected value. It continues this procedure until it runs out counterterrorism resources.

Bueno de Mesquita (2007) and Powell (2007c) also both consider the possibility that the government can invest in both target-specific and non-target-specific counterterrorism (e.g., border security or intelligence). One advantage of counterterrorism tactics that are not target specific is that terrorists cannot avoid the counterterrorism simply by changing targets. Thus, as the number of targets that need to be defended increases, counterterrorism that is not target specific becomes more attractive. Powell (2007c) argues that another advantage of some such measures is that they may provide protection against events other than terrorist attacks. For instance, increased investment in emergency response is of value when there are natural disasters as well as when there are terrorist attacks.

Suboptimal counterterrorism

Of course, while understanding the optimal counterterrorism policy is critical, a variety of political and strategic considerations may lead to equilibrium counterterrorism strategies that are far from optimal.

One impediment to implementing an optimal counterterrorism policy is that counterterrorism may impose externalities across countries. For instance, Sandler and Siqueira (2006) draw a distinction between proactive and defensive counterterrorism. They argue that proactive counterterrorism (such as driving terrorists out of safe havens or investing in intelligence prior to attacks) is a public good among countries and, consequently,

may be undersupplied. Sandler and Lapan (1988) and Rosendorff and Sandler (2004) suggest that one country's proactive counterterrorism may impose negative externalities on other countries by diverting attacks toward foreign targets. Thus, they argue, in some circumstances proactive measures may be oversupplied from the global perspective. Siqueira and Sandler (2007) embed these concerns in a model of domestic politics. They argue that voters will demand that politicians underinvest in proactive counterterrorism for two reasons: to free-ride on other countries' counterterrorism investments and to avoid reprisal attacks from terrorists. In a related argument, Azam and Delacroix (2006) find a positive correlation between the level of foreign aid a country receives and the number of terrorist attacks originating from that country. They argue that this relationship is caused by donors delegating counterterrorism responsibilities to governments whose countries are hosts to terrorist groups.

Bueno de Mesquita (2007) also embeds the choice of counterterrorism policy in a model of electoral accountability. He divides counterterrorism policy into those measures that are tactic-specific and observable by voters and terrorists (e.g., hardening targets) and those measures that are neither tactic-specific nor observable by voters and terrorists (e.g., intelligence). The analysis suggests that strategic substitution among different modes of attack by terrorists and agency problems between the voters and government create a situation in which the politically optimal counterterrorism strategy pursued by the government in response to electoral and institutional incentives is different from the security-maximizing counterterrorism strategy. In particular, the government allocates resources to observable counterterrorism in excess of the social optimum. This problem is particularly severe when terrorists have a large set of tactics from which to choose.

Powell (2007b) considers a different source of inefficiency in counterterrorism policy: informational asymmetries. In Powell's (2007b) model, governments have

private information about the vulnerability of various targets that the terrorists might like to attack. Consequently, if the government follows the optimal policy described above – defending those targets where the expected value of an attack (i.e., vulnerability times value) is highest for the terrorists – it will reveal information about which sites the terrorists ought to attack. The government, then, has competing interests. On the one hand, it wants to defend vulnerable targets. On the other hand, it wants to maintain secrecy. Powell (2007b) shows that if, independent of these signaling concerns, the marginal security return to resources devoted to defending more vulnerable targets is smaller than the marginal return to resources devoted to defending less vulnerable targets (i.e., if, on the margin, vulnerable targets are harder to defend), then secrecy dominates security. The government allocates resources by “pooling” on a common allocation for all targets (thereby revealing no information to the terrorists). The allocation chosen is the one that is optimal against the average level of target vulnerability – thus, it devotes too little to highly vulnerable targets and too much to safe targets, relative to the complete information optimal allocation. It is worth noting, however, that the existence of private information benefits the government (in this sense, then, this article is not really about ‘suboptimal’ counterterrorism). If this were not the case, the government would play the equilibrium from Powell (2007a), revealing all of its private information and allocating counterterrorism resources optimally given this revelation.

The cycle of violence and the counterterrorism dilemma

As mentioned earlier, a central issue in counterterrorism, as in all counterinsurgency, is how to achieve security without fanning the flames of conflict. The possibility that government repression will inspire mobilization and increase violence creates issues both

for thinking about the strategy of counterterrorism and the strategy of terrorist provocation that has inspired sizeable theoretical and empirical literatures.

A first set of theoretical models simply assumes that government crackdowns increase terrorist mobilization and considers the implications of that assumption for government decision making. For instance, Rosendorff and Sandler (2004) argue that, because harsh government crackdowns increase support for terrorists, they also increase the risk that the terrorists will have the capacity to engage in large-scale attacks that do significant damage. Of course, they argue, such crackdowns also increase the probability that the government prevents terrorist attacks more generally, creating a trade-off for the government.

Other theoretical models endogenize the effects of counterterrorism on terrorist mobilization, allowing for competing effects. Lichbach (1987) focuses on the consistency of government policies over time to explain variance in mobilization responses. When government policies are inconsistent, he claims, government counterterrorism increases violence. Bueno de Mesquita (2005b) also argues that government crackdowns can lead to an increase or decrease in support for terrorism. In his model, counterterrorism can increase terrorism by diminishing economic opportunities for potential terrorists (e.g., by destroying infrastructure) and thereby lowering the opportunity costs of mobilization and by ideologically inflaming the population of terrorist supporters. It can decrease terrorism by decreasing the likelihood that the terrorist organization succeeds at achieving its goals (conditional on a level of mobilization), thereby making mobilization less attractive. In the model, whether crackdowns increase or decrease terrorist violence depends on their relative impact on these competing margins.

The mechanisms underlying these models suggest a further question about terrorist tactics. In particular, it is often argued, by scholars and practitioners alike, that

terrorists can exploit the cycle of violence by using terrorist attacks to provoke governments into harsh and indiscriminate counterterrorism responses in order to radicalize and mobilize a population whose interests the terrorists claim to represent. That is, as suggested by the nineteenth-century anarchists, terrorism is powerful in part because it is “propaganda of the deed.” English (2003), for instance, writing about the Troubles in Northern Ireland, argues that “the British response to republican subversion frequently involved punishing the wider population for IRA activities: this had the unintended, indeed counterproductive, effect of strengthening the IRA that it was intended to undermine.” Similarly, describing the early tactics of the Basque separatist group ETA, Zirakzadeh (2002) writes, “The militants reasoned that selective attacks against government bullies would provoke the government into excessive and nondiscriminatory retaliation against all Basque residents ... the escalating spiral of government repression and civilian resistance would culminate with a Spanish government no longer able to afford an extensive, expensive and permanent occupation of the Basque country.” Of course, such examples raise the question, why do governments engage in counterterrorism if and when it might be counterproductive? Providing a game-theoretic account of such dynamics, however, is not trivial, since one wants an explanation that does not depend on the government making systematic and repeated blunders.

Siqueira and Sandler (2007) model a conflict between terrorists and governments in which governments face a trade-off between counterterrorism spending, which increases security, and the provision of public goods, which bolsters moderation in public opinion. Terrorist attacks can increase radicalism by diverting government money toward counterterrorism and away from public goods. Two scenarios can occur in equilibrium in their model. In the first, the terrorist group’s grassroots support is “fickle” in the sense of diminishing if the government cracks down.

As a result, terrorists take the initiative to diminish violence in order to avoid being crushed by the government and losing popular support. In the second scenario, government countermeasures increase support for the terrorists by diminishing social programs that would have benefited the population. Here, terrorist violence is valuable because it forces the government to engage in countermeasures that further fan the flames of conflict.

Bueno de Mesquita and Dickson (2007) model a scenario in which an extremist faction considers attacking a government in the hopes of provoking a counterterrorism response that will radicalize the population, increasing the extremists' support at the expense of a more moderate faction. In their signaling model, such radicalization can result either from the economic damage caused by counterterrorism operations or by the way in which such operations change the population's assessment of the government's motivations – that is, whether the government is in fact interested in the aggrieved population's welfare and how willing the government is to compromise. They find that terrorism is likely to be useful as a tool for mobilization when the population the terrorists claim to represent live in ethnic enclaves, making it difficult for the government to engage in counterterrorism without inflicting negative externalities on the population. They also argue that terrorist vanguards are likely to emerge in situations where radicals have some, but not overwhelming, support and some, but not overwhelming, reason to believe the government will crack down, since it is in these situations that radicals need to mobilize support and have some hope of successfully doing so.

All of these articles further complicate attempts to empirically disentangle the effects of repression on terrorism. The primary strategy empirical scholars have pursued to make progress on this thorny issue is to turn to micro-level data. In particular, a variety of articles restrict attention to a single country

in order to find more credible sources of exogenous variation or more fine-grained data.

Zussman and Zussman (2006) study the reaction of Israel's stock market to targeted assassinations of Palestinian militant leaders. They find that the market responds positively when Israel kills a Palestinian leader who is associated with the military wing of an extremist faction. However, the market responds negatively when Israel kills a Palestinian leader who is associated with the political wing of an extremist faction and when civilians are killed in the process of a targeted assassination. Thus, to the extent that we believe that the stock market reflects an aggregation of the best available information, this study suggests that certain types of government violence diminish conflict and that other types of government violence increase conflict.

Lyall (2009) uses two sources of indiscriminate government artillery strikes during the Second Chechen War to assess the impact of government repression on violent mobilization. The first source is harassment and interdiction fire, which is random shelling meant to suppress insurgent behavior. The second source is inebriation of Russian soldiers who fire artillery at random. Surprisingly, he finds that randomly shelled villages and their home districts are less likely to be the source of future violence. Moreover, neither the lethality nor the duration of indiscriminate violence are significant positive predictors of future violence.

In two complementary articles, Jaeger and Paserman (2006, 2007) use a time series of daily attacks to assess the impact of Israeli government violence on Palestinian violence and vice versa. They find that violence associated with the Palestinian faction Fatah "Granger causes" Israeli government violence. However, they do not find this relationship for violence associated with Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad, nor do they find that Israeli government violence "Granger causes" Palestinian violence.¹ They interpret

the latter finding as evidence against the claim that government violence spurs terrorism. However, using data on the geographic distribution of attacks and on public opinion, Jaeger et al. (2007) find that Palestinian deaths from Israeli government violence do increase support for radical factions among the Palestinian population.

GOVERNMENT–TERRORIST NEGOTIATIONS

The reason that political terrorists engage in violence in the first place is to extract concessions from the government or to change the political order. There are many questions associated with government–terrorist negotiations. When should or will governments negotiate with terrorist groups? What are the strategic issues associated with attempting to conciliate a militant adversary? How do the internal politics of terrorist organizations affect the dynamics of peace making? With whom should a government negotiate if it wants to end a terrorist conflict?

A standard intuition, and a policy to which many governments claim to subscribe, is that governments should never negotiate with terrorists. If governments make such a commitment, the argument goes, potential terrorists will be deterred because they will believe that violence will be unlikely to further their goals. Lapan and Sandler (1988), however, argue that such a policy is not credible – once, for example, terrorists have taken hostages, governments will want to negotiate, as long as the benefits of gaining the hostages release outweigh the costs in terms of concessions made as well as any signal of government irresoluteness that increases incentives for future terrorism. Atkinson, Sandler, and Tschirhart (1987) present empirical results on how various features of the strategic environment (e.g., terrorist demands, bluff attempts, types

of hostages taken) affect the ultimate willingness of governments to make concessions in hostage-taking environments.

As an empirical matter, governments do negotiate with terrorists. The question thus becomes what happens in such negotiations. Lapan and Sandler (1993) and Overgaard (1994) focus on the effects of private information, arguing that the level of violence chosen by terrorists may signal information about how strong or resource-rich the terrorists are. Higher levels of violence, then, may lead to greater concessions by signaling information about expected future violence. Arce and Sandler (2007) consider a model where the government faces a trade-off between target-specific counterterrorism and gathering intelligence, where intelligence does not prevent attacks but informs the government about the terrorists' type so the government can more accurately choose when conciliation is likely to be an effective counterterrorism strategy.

Kydd and Walter (2002) and Bueno de Mesquita (2005c) also both focus on government uncertainty about the type of terrorist group they are facing. But they do so in the context of a terrorist movement made up of competing factions: one moderate and one extremist. In both of these models, the government is uncertain whether the moderate terrorists with whom they are negotiating are willing and able to curtail extremist violence following concessions. In Kydd and Walter's (2002) framework, this gives rise to equilibria in which there is "spoiler violence" – the extremist faction attempts to derail peace negotiations by increasing violence in order to convince the government that the moderates are not valuable negotiating partners. Bueno de Mesquita (2005c) attempts to identify situations in which the negotiating process is best able to provide incentives for moderates to crack down on extremists. He finds that both promised future concessions and the threat of replacement with a substitute negotiating partner provide incentives for moderates to exert effort in order to

decrease extremist violence. This is particularly true when the potential substitute negotiating partner's expected capacity to curtail violence is moderate (i.e., neither too high nor too low) because in such a circumstance, an extra effort by the current negotiating partner can actually swing the government's decision about whether to continue with negotiations.

Bueno de Mesquita (2005a) also studies a case where the terrorist organization is made up of heterogeneous factions, but focuses on issues other than government uncertainty. In his model, terrorist organizations become more militant following government concessions because only moderate terrorist factions accept concessions, leaving extremist factions in control of the residual terrorist group. Governments nonetheless are willing to make concessions because their counterterrorism capabilities improve because of the collusion of former terrorists. The model also allows the government to choose its level of investment in counterterrorism endogenously and explores how both the expected level of violence and the aid of former terrorists affects this investment decision. The model yields additional hypotheses regarding the terms of negotiated settlements between governments and terrorists, when moderates accept concessions, the effect of concessions on the duration of terrorist conflicts, the incentives for moderate terrorists to radicalize their followers, reasons for governments to encourage radicals within a terrorist organization to challenge the moderate leadership, and changes in moderate control over extremists before and after negotiated settlement.

Berrebi and Klor (2006) present a model in which the public is uncertain whether terrorism is being produced by a moderate or an extremist faction. Hence, the public is uncertain whether or not concessions are likely to be effective at curtailing violence because they are uncertain, after granting concessions, whether the terrorists are likely to keep the peace. Their model yields two key predictions: First, the relative support for concessions is expected to decrease after

periods with high levels of terrorism because the population concludes that the terrorists are extremists. Second, the expected level of terrorism is higher when a government inclined to make concessions is in office because the terrorists want to signal that not making concessions will be costly in the long run.

Interestingly, Kydd and Walter (2002), Bueno de Mesquita (2005a), and Berrebi and Klor (2006) all argue that evidence from the Israeli–Palestinian conflict supports the causal mechanisms identified in their models.

Both Bueno de Mesquita (2005a) and Bapat (2006) are concerned with the question of how governments and terrorists can credibly commit to honor the terms of a negotiated settlement (for a discussion of such commitment problems in civil wars, see Walter 1997; Fearon 1998). In Bueno de Mesquita (2005a), negotiation is credible because terrorists who accept concessions use their knowledge of the inner workings of the remaining terrorist factions as bargaining leverage by withholding valuable counterterrorism aid if the government reneges on concessions. Similarly, the government can withhold concessions if former terrorists do not aid in counterterrorism. One implication of this approach is that, since concessions may not be credible in the absence of ongoing violence, it may be difficult for a government to end a conflict by reaching a negotiated settlement with all terrorist factions. In Bapat (2006), concessions are made credible through the efforts of a host country. In particular, if target governments are able to credibly threaten sanctions against hosts of international terror groups that they cannot threaten against the terrorists themselves, the host governments may have an incentive to force the terrorists to honor negotiated settlements. Bapat (2006) presents empirical data to explore several hypotheses regarding the relationship between the international context and government–terrorist negotiations that flow from his model.

CONCLUSION

I have attempted to provide an overview of some of the questions currently of interest in the study of terrorism. It is my hope that, in so doing, I will encourage others to participate in this research agenda. There are, of course, an enormous number of questions, both theoretical and empirical, yet to be addressed.

As discussed above, on both the empirical and theoretical sides, we lack a thorough understanding of the relationship between a variety of structural and strategic features of the political-economic environment (e.g., the economy, democracy, political freedom, counterterrorism, the structure of terrorist organizations) and terrorism. These relationships, plagued as they are by endogeneity, are extremely difficult to identify empirically. The problem is that everything seems to cause everything else – terrorism may cause and be caused by economic change; counterterrorism may cause and be caused by terrorism; counterterrorism may cause economic suffering by destroying infrastructure or may alleviate the same by encouraging investment; counterterrorism crackdowns may diminish political freedom, causing an increase in terrorism, resulting in more counterterrorism which damages the economy and diminishes political freedom in a seemingly never-ending chain. The same is true in the other areas I have mentioned.

On the empirical side, the best progress on these thorny issues has been made by studies that focus on a particular conflict, using micro-level variation and natural experiments to gain better identification. Overwhelmingly, such studies have used data from the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and often have analyzed only suicide missions. An important avenue for future research is to see whether some of the most convincing of the findings from these studies also hold in other conflicts and for other terrorist tactics. To do this, researchers will need to gather micro-data for other conflicts, so they can

carry out similarly careful quantitative case studies for those conflicts.

On the theory side, many questions remain unanswered. As alluded to earlier, it seems to me that a goal for terrorism studies should be to connect more directly with the enormous literatures on civil wars and other forms of domestic political violence. Too often, theoretical models of terrorism (certainly including some by the author) are actually just general models of conflict, with the decision to engage or invest in conflict labeled “terrorism.” For some purposes, this modeling choice is fine. But when we seek to model the empirical determinants of terrorism, this may be problematic.

Instead, in my view, terrorism is perhaps best thought of as a particular tactic in the rebel arsenal. An open research question is when rebels find terrorism to be a useful tactic and when other forms of insurgency are deemed more likely to be effective. To the extent that rebels are making this choice endogenously, dividing our data into, for example, separate datasets covering terrorism and civil wars may be a serious mistake, introducing important sources of bias if factors that we use to explain various forms of violence also affect what type of violence is employed. To see why this might be the case, suppose there is some factor that affects whether rebels choose to become urban terrorists or nonurban guerillas. To make the example stark, suppose this factor can take two values, high or low, and that when it is high insurgents choose terrorism and when it is low they choose guerilla warfare. Now suppose we have a dataset that reports, for each country, whether there is terrorism and the value of this factor. Studying this, we would find that high values of this factor cause terrorism and might, therefore, argue that good policy involves lowering this factor. Of course, had we studied a data set covering only guerilla warfare, we would have reached the opposite conclusion. A combined data set might reveal that this factor is not in fact a predictor of the occurrence of domestic political violence at all, but rather only a

predictor of what tactic is chosen by insurgents. Thus, it is important that both terrorism and civil wars scholars begin to think seriously about the interactions between these two forms of political violence, both theoretically and in the data.²

Let me end by once again noting that my survey has touched on only one branch of terrorism research. A large body of scholarship, working with methods other than formal models and quantitative empirics, has made important contributions to our understanding of the politics of terrorism that have gone all but unmentioned here.

NOTES

1 It is important to distinguish between Granger causality and actual causality. To say that x "Granger causes" y is, more or less, to say that information about x in time t is useful for forecasting y in t + 1. This need not reflect an actual causal relationship. For instance, the presence of Christmas cards at the local store Granger causes Christmas.

2 Of course, terrorism and civil war are also not mutually exclusive. Terrorism is a common tactic used in civil wars (e.g., Algeria or Chechnya). See Kalyvas (1999, 2004) for discussions.

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Civil Wars, Conflict Resolution, and Bargaining Theory¹

Barbara F. Walter

The study of civil war has become a major research agenda in international relations since the end of the Cold War.² This has occurred for two reasons. The first has to do with the prevalence of these types of wars. Since 1940, the number of civil wars being fought around the world has steadily increased. Even after peaking in 1991, almost all armed conflicts between 1991 and 2009 were civil wars, not interstate wars.³ The second reason has to do with the heavy economic, political, and social costs civil wars inflict on the countries affected by violence. Economically, civil wars destroy human and physical capital, depress GDP, and reduce economic growth (Rodrik, 1999; Collier, 1999; Cerra and Saxena, 2008; see also the World Bank's World Development Report, 2011). Politically, they contribute to the instability of governments and make weak states even weaker (Hewitt et al., 2010). Socially, they increase the likelihood that citizens die from infectious diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis even after the war has ended (Ghobarah et al., 2003). They also inflict heavy costs on neighboring states. Countries that adjoin a country experiencing

a civil war are significantly more likely to fight their own civil war, to have negative economic growth, and to suffer from destabilizing refugee problems (Murdoch and Sandler, 2004). All of these effects make civil war one of the most destructive forms of violence in the world today.

The prevalence and heavy costs of civil wars are due, in large part, to the fact that they are so difficult to end. Civil wars not only last longer than interstate wars, but they are also less likely to end in a negotiated settlement. Between 1991 and 2009, the average interstate war lasted about two years, while the average civil war lasted about eight.⁴ Once a civil war starts, therefore, it is far more likely to continue until one side decisively beats the other on the battlefield. Civil wars also tend to repeat themselves over time. Of the 103 countries that experienced some form of civil war between 1945 and 2009, only 44 avoided a subsequent return to civil war.⁵ Thus, even if combatants are able to temporarily end their war, violence tends to break out again over time.

The central puzzle of civil wars, therefore, is not why they begin (although this is

an important puzzle), but why they are so difficult to end. Civil wars last as long as they do, repeat themselves over time, and create heavy costs for the people involved chiefly because negotiated solutions short of decisive victories are so difficult to reach and implement. This leaves governments and rebels with few alternatives but to fight to a victory, something that often takes years to accomplish. This suggests that if we figure out why combatants in these types of wars have such difficulty negotiating and implementing compromise settlements, we will have figured out one of the most vexing problems in international security today.

What follows is organized into three parts. Part one presents the two main theories that currently exist in the IR literature regarding civil wars. The first focuses on the grievances or greed that motivate a group to challenge the state. According to this theory, a group will target its government with violence if it is sufficiently dissatisfied with the status quo policies to seek change, or if it will profit from war itself. The second focuses on the opportunities that are available to a group to mobilize support and build a viable movement. According to this theory, for a group to have any chance effectively to challenge the state it must be able to recruit soldiers, finance these soldiers over time, and evade government repression. What we will see is that both theories are necessary to explain why civil wars break out in some countries and not in others. They are not, however, sufficient to explain why civil wars last as long as they do and why they resist settlement. Parts three through five attempt to fill this gap by focusing on a third factor necessary for civil wars to occur, one that focuses on bargaining problems that stand in the way of a settlement before, during, and after a civil war. A closer look at these bargaining problems helps explain the very low rate of settlement in civil wars and reveals why combatants might prefer to end their war on the battlefield rather than at the bargaining table.

THE UNDERLYING CONDITIONS DRIVING CIVIL WAR

Grievances against the state

Civil wars would not emerge if groups did not have the motive to rebel. Two motivations for war are generally discussed in the literature (Horowitz, 1985; Gurr, 1993; Sambanis, 2002; Berdal and Malone, 2000). The first and most common has to do with group grievances against the central government. Groups are believed to be more likely to rebel if they disagree with the policies a government is pursuing and they believe violence is the only way to change government behavior. Dissatisfaction can stem from at least three sources. Horowitz (1985) argued that groups are more likely to rebel if they had been discriminated against by the state, either because of past colonial policies that have become entrenched, or because a dominant ethnic group has consolidated its power and instituted biased policies. Gurr (1993) argued that civil wars are most likely in countries where a particular group is economically, politically, or culturally disadvantaged relative to other groups in society (see also Gurr and Moore, 1997). Dissatisfaction, however, can also emerge in countries with high levels of poverty, low levels of economic growth, and poor living conditions. The greater the poverty and hardship a population must endure, the more likely a country is to experience rebellion (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Hegre and Sambanis, 2006; Murdoch and Sandler, 2002).

Economists have offered a second possible motive for rebellion. Some rebels are less concerned with righting wrongs than with making themselves rich through plunder (Collier, 2000; Collier and Hoeffler, 2002; Grossman, 1999; Hirshleifer, 1991). Those in favor of this view have argued that some wars may occur simply because groups can profit from various forms of resource extraction or illicit activities during war. If war allows rebels to capture territory rich in diamonds, drugs, or other easily confiscated

materials, then war may be an attractive money-making strategy to pursue. Colombian rebels, for example, have been less concerned with changing state policies than with enriching themselves through the sale of narcotics. Similarly, large alluvial diamond deposits have fueled several armed conflicts in Africa. The desire for profit, therefore, might be a reason to pursue war.

The opportunity to rebel

Grievances and greed, however, are not sufficient to explain why wars break out in some countries and not in others. Most countries around the world contain disaffected or greedy groups, yet most groups do not take up arms against the state. Indigenous populations in South America, for example, are some of the poorest and most discriminated groups in the world, yet few have chosen to rebel.

For groups to initiate a civil war, they must also have the *opportunity* to organize into an armed movement (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Hegre, 2001; Collier and Hoeffler, 2002). According to opportunity arguments, three conditions are necessary to make rebellion a feasible strategy for a group to pursue: (1) popular support, (2) money and supplies, and (3) a weak central government.

1. *Popular Support*: Any group that wishes to challenge the state and sustain itself over time must have the support of at least some portion of the population. Popular support is necessary for at least two reasons. First, it is necessary in order to recruit soldiers willing to do the hard work of fighting. Second, it is necessary to provide a safe haven from which the rebels can operate and leaders can evade government capture (Collier et al., 2003). Groups that do not have such a base of support, or are unable to retain their popularity – like the Red Brigades in Italy since 1988 – are unlikely to remain viable very long (Gates, 2002; Weinstein, 2005, 2008; Humphrey and Weinstein, 2008).
2. *Financing*: Recruiting soldiers and building popular support, however, will not be enough to effectively prosecute a war. In order for a

movement to persist, rebel groups must also obtain reliable sources of financing to pay their soldiers and supply them over time. Financing can come from outside patrons (such as diaspora groups, NGOs, or sympathetic third parties), from access to and trade in natural resources (such as diamonds, oil, or drugs), or from the production of agricultural products (such as cashew nuts and bananas) (Ballentine and Sherman, 2003; de Soysa and Neumayer, 2007; Gilmore et al., 2005; Humphreys, 2005; Le Billon, 2001; Ross, 2004). The greater the financing, the more likely a movement is to get off the ground.

3. *State Capacity*: Even wealthy, popular groups, however, will have difficulty launching a rebellion if the state is able to block any attempts to build it over time. Nascent rebel organizations are more likely to survive if they face a weak government, for at least three reasons (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Herbst, 2000). First, weak governments have less ability to effectively police all parts of the country, especially those areas far from the capital city and those located in rugged terrain (Buhaug and Rod, 2006; Buhaug et al., 2009). Second, weak governments are also likely to have poor repressive capacities and less ability to monitor and control the activities of nascent groups (Moore, 1998; Gupta, Singh, and Sprague, 1993). Third, weak governments will be easier to defeat in war, increasing the probability of a rebel victory and making rebellion a more attractive strategy to pursue. This suggests that groups facing a fragile state with limited administrative control of territory and limited military capabilities should be more likely to rebel than those that don't, all else being equal.

What's missing

Explanations that focus solely on grievances and opportunities, however, cannot explain the central puzzle of civil war. If grievances and opportunity drive the decision to rebel, why don't governments negotiate more settlements with the groups most likely to go to war? Governments, aware that poverty, low economic growth, and weak state capacity place them at higher risk of war, should take these conditions into account and offer deals that reduce the possibility of violence. Poverty should not cause civil war so much

as it should cause governments to compensate poor groups in some other way.

BARGAINING PROBLEMS AND THE OUTBREAK OF CIVIL WARS

To explain why governments and rebels are refusing to negotiate before a war breaks out, while it is being fought, and even after it has come to a temporary halt, one must address the obstacles that stand in the way of effective bargaining. The study of bargaining theory in interstate war has yielded a broad and productive research agenda, with new insights being applied to the microfoundations of strategy in war initiation and termination. Applying such insights to civil wars makes theoretical sense, given the similar dynamics involved with strategic interaction between the two opposing sides in conflict. But bargaining theory also highlights some crucial differences between the two types of wars. Bargaining theory not only helps to explain why civil war disputants resist negotiation, but also why they are more likely to do so than disputants in interstate wars (Fearon, 1995; Garfinkel and Skaperdas, 2000; Kalyvas, 2001; Powell, 1999; Walter, 2002, 2009). While theories of greed and grievance can help explain the necessary conditions for why civil wars occur, theories of bargaining can help explain the sufficient conditions for those wars to end as well as the dynamics of civil war progression.

The central insight of bargaining theory is that war is inefficient (Fearon, 1995). Combatants would be much better off negotiating a compromise settlement and dividing up the stakes without first suffering the pain of war.⁶ Successful negotiation, however, requires at least three conditions. First, governments and rebels must be fighting over stakes that are divisible. Second, governments and rebels must agree on their relative strength and the likely outcome of war so that a fair division of stakes can be agreed upon. Third, governments and rebels must

also be able to enforce the terms of a settlement over time. If war occurs, therefore, it is because the stakes are indivisible, the combatants disagree on their relative strength, or one or both sides cannot credibly commit to honoring the deal. What follows describes each of these problems in greater detail.

Divisibility problems

Negotiated settlements may sometimes be difficult to reach if combatants cannot divide the stakes over which they are fighting (Ikke, 2005; Pillar, 1983; Randle, 1973; Zartman, 1995). According to Pillar, “[t]he likelihood that the two sides in any dispute can negotiate a settlement depends greatly on whether compromise agreements are available. If the stakes are chiefly indivisible, so that neither side can get most of what it wants without depriving the other of most of what it wants, negotiations are less apt to be successful,” (Pillar, 1983: 24). If both sides seek sole ownership over a piece of territory or control over a single government, then a settlement short of war may be unworkable.⁷

In theory, divisibility issues should be easy to resolve (Fearon, 1995; Powell, 1999).⁸ Disputants should be able to divide the stakes – whether political or territorial – in a variety of different and sometimes creative ways. The two sides can, for example, alternate control over the Presidency, as the Conservatives and Liberals did in Colombia in 1958; they can allow one side to control all cabinet posts while the other side controls the Presidency; or they can transfer political autonomy down to the regional level, ensuring the rebels a share of control. Disputants can also offer side-payments to the party who relinquished claims to a stake, similar to ransoms offered in exchange for kidnapping victims.

In reality, combatants appear to be less willing to divide certain types of stakes, especially territory that holds great symbolic or strategic value to both populations (Goddard, 2006; Hassner, 2004; Toft, 2006).⁹ The war between Israel and the Palestinians – in particular,

the dispute over control of Jerusalem – is often offered as an example of stakes which combatants have deemed “indivisible.” “How else,” Toft (2003: 1) asks, “can we explain why, in places like Jerusalem and Kosovo, men and women not only are willing to die but also allow their sons and daughters to die just to remain in their homeland?” If two sides are unwilling to share a piece of territory, a decisive military victory may be the only acceptable means for them to resolve their dispute.

Information problems

Other scholars have focused more heavily on the private information governments and rebels have about their capabilities and resolve as well as the incentives they have to withhold or misrepresent this information. According to Fearon (1995), parties involved in a dispute may have incentives to hide various aspects of their military strength if this would reveal important strategic secrets. In other cases, they may have incentives to exaggerate how strong they are if this would convince their opponent to offer them better terms for peace. If governments and potential rebels feel the need to withhold or misrepresent information, and if reliable information is otherwise difficult to obtain, then agreement on the terms of a settlement will be difficult to reach.

Civil wars may be particularly susceptible to information problems for at least two reasons: (1) less information is generally known about nascent rebel groups than about states in the international system, and (2) governments may have greater incentives to withhold information if this allows them to build a reputation for toughness.

1. *Uncertainty Regarding Rebel Capabilities:* Negotiated settlements are less likely to be reached whenever governments are uncertain about the true strength of a group demanding concessions. In interstate disputes, governments have a fairly good (although not perfect) idea of their opponent’s strength. Independent

states interact frequently, have a long history of dealings with each other, and are heavily monitored by each other. The same is not true of governments and potential rebel movements. Nascent rebel groups are more likely to rely on unconventional forces and capricious funding sources that are difficult to observe and monitor; they are likely to have had less interaction with the government and have an easier time hiding from the government. This creates an environment of limited information and greater uncertainty about the terms that should be offered.

Ideally, governments would prefer to negotiate only with groups who have the ability to wage war if the government fails to grant concessions. They do not want to compromise with those groups that demand concessions but do not have the ability to inflict costs. Governments, therefore, have strong incentives to identify and reward only those groups able to punish the government if it refuses to yield.

The challenge for the government is to determine just how strong and well supplied a particular group is and to make concessions only to the ones willing and able to fight. War is one way for governments to obtain this information. By forcing all groups to fight before concessions are made, governments can distinguish serious from nonserious groups and determine when and with whom to settle. The longer a group is able to fight, the stronger it is likely to be, and the more likely a government is to agree to negotiate a deal.

2. *Uncertainty Regarding Government Resolve:* Governments, especially governments with many disaffected minority groups, may have incentives to go to war for a second reason (Walter, 2006, 2009). Governments understand that at any given time numerous unhappy groups exist that would like to challenge the state. Groups, however, are uncertain about whether they face a tough government (willing to fight no matter what), or a conciliatory government (willing to make concessions in exchange for peace). The trick for potential challengers is to determine whether a government is conciliatory or not. If a potential rebel group observes a government making concessions to another group making similar demands, it knows it faces a conciliatory government that is likely to make concessions again in the future. This uncertainty creates incentives for a government to signal toughness by fighting early challengers. In the case of the

rebels on the Indonesian island of Aceh, for instance, the Indonesian government felt it had to fight a costly war in order to forestall potential future rebels (Walter, 2009). Governments who fight hard against the first group that launches a challenge send a clear signal to other potential challengers that the government will not back down, deterring additional challengers in the process.

But again, not all governments have equal incentives to bluff (fight) all the time, and this may partly explain why war may break out in some countries but not others. Building a reputation for toughness only makes sense in those countries where a government anticipates a series of rebellions over time, not in countries with only a limited number of unhappy groups. War, therefore, should be significantly more likely in those countries with a large number of disaffected groups (such as a large number of ethnic minorities desiring self-determination). The greater the number of potential challengers, the greater the need to be tough, and the less likely a government is to settle.

Commitment problems and the outbreak of civil war

Incomplete information, together with incentives to misrepresent or withhold this information, is not the only reason why settlements may not be reached before a civil war breaks out. A second bargaining problem – commitment problems – helps explain those cases where disputants never attempt negotiations, or if they do, never sign or implement settlements.

Commitment problems may make war a rational strategy to pursue in situations where the disputants cannot credibly commit to adhere to an agreement over time (see especially Wagner, 2000; Fearon, 2004; Powell, 2006). For settlements to be signed and implemented, disputants must not only be able to agree on mutually acceptable terms, but they must also believe that the terms will

be implemented (or if the terms are not implemented, that they will not be exploited as a result). If commitment problems arise, they are likely to arise in situations where combatants have strong incentives to cheat on an agreement, where the “sucker” pays a high cost for being cheated upon, and where one or both sides cannot enforce compliance over time.

Civil war combatants are significantly more likely to encounter commitment problems compared to interstate combatants because of a unique demand that peace agreements place on them. Unlike negotiated settlements to interstate wars, negotiated settlements to civil wars require that the two combatants merge into a single military and a single political unit. This means that once the governments and rebels sign a peace agreement, one side (usually the rebels) must give up its army and cede its conquered territory to the new central government, one which it will not necessarily control. This creates two opportunities for easy exploitation. The first is the possibility of a surprise attack during demobilization. The second is the possibility of political exploitation, where the government refuses to share power and instead forms a one-party state (Walter, 1997, 2002; Hartzell and Hoddie, 2007).

The fact that civil wars require such a concentration of power in the hands of one side helps explain why civil war combatants resist signing and implementing settlements, and why civil wars have a lower rate of negotiated settlement than interstate wars. Still, at least three types of countries are likely to be plagued by especially challenging commitment problems: (1) those with particularly weak political and legal institutions,¹⁰ (2) those with highly politicized and fixed cleavages, and (3) those where large shifts in power are expected to occur over time.

1. *Weak Political and Legal Institutions*: At their heart, commitment problems are problems of treaty enforcement. Governments and potential rebel groups would have little to fear from a negotiated settlement if they were certain that

war would not resume and that power would be shared over time. If this were the case, both sides could sign an agreement, confident that peace would emerge and the deal would be faithfully implemented. Rebel groups, however, have much to fear from a settlement, especially one signed with a government with few constraints on executive power. In these cases, governments could easily renege on promises since no institutional mechanism exists to prevent the abuse of power. Leaders of these countries can promise that they will reform – they can promise to liberalize the political system, institute majority rule, grant greater political autonomy to a group – but unless the rebels have the ability to enforce compliance over time, these promises are likely to be viewed as meaningless.¹¹ All of this suggests that countries with weak political and legal institutions will *not* be attractive partners in a negotiated settlement. In these situations, rebels are likely to prefer to keep their arms and continue to fight to a decisive victory rather than sign a settlement they have little faith will be fulfilled.

2. *Cemented Cleavages*: Governments will also have greater difficulty credibly committing to a deal in countries with fixed political cleavages. According to Fearon (2004), negotiated settlements rarely emerge in countries where the majority or plurality of citizens does not approve of the terms being demanded by the rebels as their price for peace. In these cases, governments may sincerely wish to grant concessions, but unless politicians can insulate themselves from the play of majoritarian politics, they cannot credibly promise to follow through with any policy that is unpopular with core constituencies. Successive Presidents in the Philippines, for example, have found it difficult to reassure Muslims in Mindanao that they will faithfully transfer political autonomy given how unpopular the transfer is with the majority Christian population. In cases where governments do not have significant domestic political support for concessions, credible commitments to such deals will be difficult to make.
3. *Relative Gains Accrue Over Time*: A commitment problem, however, is also likely to arise in countries where the relative power of different groups is expected to change over time (Fearon, 1995, 2004; Powell, 2006). This can occur for a variety of demographic reasons including a rising birth rate or in-migration that favors one group over

another. The civil war in Lebanon in 1975 was partly in response to the refusal of the Christian minority to renegotiate the distribution of political power to reflect the increasing percentage of Muslims in the country. Commitment problems can also emerge due to demographic changes that occur as a result of changing international boundaries, as occurred shortly after the breakdown of the Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia. In both cases, newly independent governments had difficulty credibly committing to honor the rights of ethnic minorities that found themselves stranded on the wrong side of the newly drawn international borders. Changes in the distribution of power can also occur as a result of the settlement itself. Israel has been hesitant to transfer additional territory to the Palestinians fearing this will allow Hamas to increase its demands and to renew its attacks against Israel from an improved territorial position.

Commitment problems, therefore, can partly explain why civil wars have lower rates of negotiated settlement than interstate wars. The fact that civil war combatants must merge their military and political assets creates an easy opportunity for cheating, and makes commitments to a settlement less credible as a result. Commitment problems also can account for some of the variation in the outbreak of violence across countries. All else equal, fewer negotiated settlements would be signed and implemented in countries with weak political and legal institutions, highly politicized cleavages, and in countries where one side in the dispute is likely to gain strength over time.

BARGAINING PROBLEMS AND CIVIL WAR DURATION

The great strength of bargaining theory is that it not only explains the initial outbreak of civil war but also the variation in the duration, resolution, and recurrence of civil war. In what follows, I show how bargaining problems can make civil wars more likely to persist, to resist negotiated settlement, and to recur over time.

We know two things about civil war duration. First, civil wars last longer than interstate wars. Second, not all civil wars are of equal length. Some civil wars like Romania's 1989 war last only a few days, while others like the war in Sudan or in the Philippines are fought for decades. Again, the duration of war is likely to be affected by all three of the factors – grievances, opportunity, and bargaining problems – discussed above. Wars may last longer, for example, if one or both sides has particularly strong grievances or is particularly committed to a cause and is willing to fight longer and harder to obtain a specific outcome. According to Stedman (1991: 12), “what differentiates revolutionaries from others is that they will not compromise under any circumstance. They are ideologically and philosophically committed to their programs and will display an incredible indifference to costs in order to achieve their ideological goals.”

Wars may also last longer if the opportunity to rebel remains strong. This may occur because two combatants are fairly evenly matched, making it difficult for one side to defeat the other. War may also occur because rebels are able to successfully evade government punishment, even if they are smaller and weaker than state forces. Henry Kissinger, for example, has argued that, “the guerrilla wins if he does not lose.”¹² Wars may also continue, as Collier and Hoeffler (2004) have maintained, simply because they are profitable to one or more of the participants. UNITA's control of rich alluvial deposits in Angola and FARC's control over areas of coca production in Colombia may explain why both of these wars have resisted settlement.

But again, none of these arguments can answer the question of why more efficient settlements are not being drawn and why they are less likely to be drawn in civil wars than interstate wars. Groups that are highly committed to their principles and goals should not be averse to a negotiated settlement; they should simply require greater compensation to halt their effort. Similarly,

groups that are evenly matched on the battlefield need not fight to the finish; they should simply split the disputed stakes in an equitable manner. Finally, soldiers fighting for profits should not be averse to settlement; they should simply require some other form of remuneration. In what follows, we see that information and commitment problems help explain why settlements are so difficult to reach even after a civil war has started.

Information problems

We know from our earlier discussion that war can serve an important information-revealing role about the relative strength of the rebels. As Filson and Werner (2002: 820) observed: “war itself provides the information necessary for disputants to reach a settlement and to end the war.”¹³ Information, however, is not likely to be revealed at the same rate in all conflicts. In fact, two types of civil war are likely to be particularly slow at providing clear, reliable information: (1) guerrilla wars and (2) wars with multiple factions.

1. *Guerrilla Wars*: Not all civil wars will reveal information at the same speed, or with equal clarity. The speed at which a settlement is drawn will depend, in part, on how much information the war is able to uncover about different characteristics of each player over time. If a war is fought using unconventional methods such as guerrilla or terrorist tactics; or is characterized by many starts and stops; or involves difficult terrain, it will take longer to expose the true nature of rebel strength and resolve than if it was fought using more conventional means (DeRouen and Sobek, 2004). Similarly, governments fighting wars against opponents operating from remote regions or foreign base camps or within large sympathetic populations are likely to find it far more difficult to obtain high-quality information about these groups than governments fighting rebels operating in areas that are easy to access and patrol (Salehyan, 2007, 2009). The more difficult it is to ascertain the true strength of a rebel organization, the longer a war is likely to last.

2. *Multiple, Shifting Factions*: Cunningham (2006) offers a second reason why information may take longer to reveal in some civil wars than others. Some wars, such as Cambodia's civil war in the 1970s and the more recent war in Iraq, include multiple competing factions and a large number of outside actors, all of whom make it more difficult to locate a common bargaining range. Not only must a greater amount of information be collected before a mutually agreeable settlement can be reached, but the information that is collected may become obsolete as new alliances are formed. This is not the case in wars fought between a smaller number of parties with limited intervention from outside players.

Both of these factors – the conduct of war and the number of parties – will influence how rapidly combatants can agree on settlement terms and could explain why some civil wars take longer to end than others. Governments that fight unconventional wars against rebels living on difficult-to-monitor terrain will need more time to determine the true strength of their opponent. Combatants fighting against multiple factions or wars with many outside players will also find it more difficult and more time consuming to reach deals that makes everyone happy. The more information that needs to be collected and the harder it is to collect this information, the longer it will take combatants to agree on a deal.

But why do civil wars last so much longer than interstate wars? As discussed earlier, governments have less information about the strength and resolve of rebel groups than states do about each other. Not only do governments start with less information about rebels, but guerrilla wars and wars with multiple factions reveal less information over time. All of these factors contribute to a less information-rich environment and one that is less conducive to negotiated settlement as a result.

Commitment problems

Still, information problems cannot explain those cases where governments are willing to

make concessions (even offering generous terms) only to be turned down by the very rebels who demanded them. In these cases, governments appear to have enough information about their opponents to be willing to make a deal, yet war persists. The Nigerian government, for example, promised the Ibos general amnesty and offered them a fair share of employment in federal public services and policing in Ibo areas, yet the Ibos still returned to war in Biafra.

Cases where generous bargains are offered but then rejected (as was the case in Nigeria) or where settlements are signed but not implemented (as was the case in Rwanda in 1994) suggest classic commitment problems. Rebels may wish to settle but choose not to if the government could easily overpower them during demobilization or if the government could set up a one-party state and permanently shut them out of power once demobilization was complete.

At least two types of civil wars are likely to be particularly plagued with commitment problems once a war begins: civil wars with large asymmetries of power and civil wars with no chance of outside intervention.

Wars with Large Asymmetries of Power: Governments fighting rebels that are relatively weak will have greater difficulty credibly committing to a peace settlement for at least two reasons. First, since negotiated settlements often reflect the balance of power on the battlefield, unequal opponents usually translate into relatively unequal power-sharing terms in any settlement. Unequal power-sharing terms make it easier for the stronger side to exploit the weaker side, making commitments to the agreement less credible. Strong opponents can negotiate strong terms that better protect them from exploitation, weak opponents cannot. In this case, the weaker partner is likely to be wary of any promise by the stronger side to honor an agreement, and it is this party that is likely to walk away from a deal.

This commitment problem may be partially solved if the government is willing to offer the rebels a fairly equal distribution of

political and military power in any postwar government. Walter (2002) and Hartzell & Hoddie (2003) have found that peace agreements that included specific guarantees for political and territorial power sharing were more likely to last than those that did not. The Dayton Peace Accords ending the war in Bosnia divided the country into three separate zones, each controlled by one of the three groups that had fought the war. But again, such generous terms are usually only offered in cases where the combatants were already fairly equally matched.¹⁴ The less equally matched the combatants in a civil war, the less equal and extensive the power-sharing arrangements are likely to be, and the less enforceable any settlement.

Second, governments will also have difficulty credibly committing to a peace deal signed with weaker rebels because weak rebels are less able to credibly threaten to return to war should the government cheat. The threat of renewed (and costly) war has the effect of reducing the benefits of cheating and creating incentives for the government to adhere to a settlement's terms. A rebel group that is incapable of renewing a war in the face of cheating is less able to self-enforce an agreement over time and less likely to sign an agreement as a result. One example of this situation is the current struggle with the Lord's Resistance Army in East Africa; if the LRA agreed to a peace agreement, its relatively small size and hierarchical leadership would be in greater danger of a quick, decapitating strike.

Countries with No Possibility of Third Party Enforcement: Credible commitments to an agreement can still be made even in countries with weak political institutions and even between highly asymmetric groups if combatants are able to convince a third party to intervene to help enforce the terms for them. A third party can monitor and enforce compliance with the terms of a settlement and in so doing enhance a government's promise to abide by the terms. Studies by Walter (1997, 2002), Doyle and Sambanis (2000), Fortna (2003), and Hartzell and Hoddie (2003) have

all found that civil wars were significantly more likely to end in a negotiated settlement if an outside state or international organization was willing to send peacekeepers to help implement an agreement. The United Nations, for example, has sent peacekeepers to Cambodia, Mozambique, and El Salvador, and NATO has helped enforced the decades-long Dayton Peace Accord.

The international community, however, has not been keen to send peacekeepers to all countries at all times, and this may account for some of the variation in the duration of civil wars across cases. Fortna (2008) found that countries were especially hesitant to send peacekeepers to the following types of states: those with strong governments, those that were democratic, and those with relatively high living standards.¹⁵ Similarly, Gilligan and Stedman (2003) found that United Nations peacekeepers were significantly less likely to be sent to countries with large government armies. This suggests that rich, strong, democratic countries with large militaries are less likely to be offered peacekeepers, and are, therefore, more likely to experience particularly long civil wars. In the absence of third parties willing to guarantee the safety of the combatants during the demobilization period, rebels are likely to reject even generous overtures by the government toward settlement.

This discussion of commitment problems surrounding civil war duration also helps explain why civil wars last longer than interstate wars. Civil wars, almost by definition, are more likely to be asymmetric conflicts, fought between a more powerful government and a weaker insurgent group. They are also more likely to be concentrated in countries with weak political institutions (Hegre, 2001; Fearon, 2005). They are also uniquely dependent on the international community to help enforce the peace. All of this means that combatants engaged in a civil war will face more difficult commitment problems than combatants engaged in interstate war and that they are likely to reject negotiated settlements more frequently as a result. The effect

is likely to be longer wars with more decisive outcomes.

BARGAINING THEORY AND CIVIL WAR RECURRENCE

One final puzzle needs to be explained. Civil wars have a surprisingly high recidivism rate. Approximately 39% of all civil wars that broke out between 1960 and 2008 resumed within the first ten years post-conflict.¹⁶ Iraq, Afghanistan, Burundi, Rwanda, Angola, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, Somalia, Sudan, and Sri Lanka have all experienced recurring civil war where violence broke out not once, but repeatedly over time. In fact, one of the best predictors of whether a country will experience a civil war is whether it has experienced one in the past.¹⁷

Renewed war as a result of unresolved grievances or continued profit

Fighting one civil war can have the effect of aggravating the very conditions that encourage groups to rebel in the first place, making additional war more likely. To date, two sets of factors have been highlighted in the literature for why civil wars tend to recur in some countries but not others: economic underdevelopment and ethnic differences.

1. *Economic Underdevelopment*: One of the most frequent findings in the limited literature on civil war recurrence is the effect of economic development on recurrence (Collier et al., 2008; Doyle and Sambanis, 2000; Kreutz, 2010; Quinn et al., 2007; Walter, 2004). Countries that score low on a host of factors associated with income and development are at a significantly higher risk for recurring civil war. Gurr (1971, 2000), for example, has argued that groups are more likely to rebel when they feel disadvantaged vis-à-vis groups in society. Others cite poverty, poor public health, or other features related to low levels of

human development that can create anger and resentment against the state.¹⁸ Civil war is likely to exacerbate each of these conditions, where a country that was poor to begin with becomes even poorer as a result. If these conditions do not improve, or even deteriorate over time, a second civil war is likely.

2. *Ethnic and Religious Differences*: Civil wars, however, are likely to exacerbate other factors as well. Civil wars that are fought between competing identity groups are believed to be particularly intractable. According to Gurr (2000: 66) "cultural identities – those based on common descent, experience, language, and belief – tend to be stronger and more enduring than most civic and associational identities." Once violence breaks out, ethnic identities may become cemented in ways that make cooperation and coexistence between groups even more difficult.¹⁹ Countries with deep ethnic or religious cleavages and those with wars that break down along ethnic or religious lines may be more susceptible to recurring violence over time. The recurring conflict in the Balkans, as well as the repeated violence between groups such as the Hutus and Tutsis, Turks and Armenians, and Jew and Arabs are often identified as examples of this.

Renewed war as a result of opportunity costs

Some civil wars may have temporarily ended because one side could no longer prosecute the war. This may occur because one type of financing has been exhausted, a patron has withdrawn, or the market for a particular good has declined, reducing the resources for war. Recurring civil war, therefore, could be explained as temporary lulls in the fighting brought on by reduced opportunities for war.

This explanation, however, doesn't answer why governments fail to negotiate settlements with those rebels who keep re-emerging time and time again. To answer why some countries get stuck in the conflict trap, one must understand why more permanent settlements are not being reached in these cases and then explain why some countries may be more susceptible to these problems than others.

Renewed war as a result of continuing bargaining problems

Governments that are unable to defeat a rebel group will, at some point in the conflict, have strong incentives to settle. The costlier a war, the greater the benefits of settlement and the more incentive a government has to negotiate a deal. Repeat civil wars, therefore, represent the hardest civil wars to resolve. They are cases where governments and rebels have strong incentives to settle, but for whatever reason are choosing not to.

Long-standing repeat civil wars are unlikely to suffer from the information problems discussed earlier because combatants in these cases have had years to observe each other and assess each other's relative strength. After so many years of fighting, combatants should have relatively good information about each other's capabilities and resolve. This suggests that commitment problems are the biggest barrier to settlement.

Deep-seated commitment problems again help explain why civil wars behave differently from interstate wars, in this case recurring more often. Negotiated settlements to interstate wars do not require the two sides to share power over time and they do not require peacekeepers to help them weather a vulnerable demobilization period. Instead, independent states simply withdraw to their separate territories after a settlement is signed and use their independent militaries to enforce the terms over time. This means that once interstate opponents sign a negotiated settlement, it is more likely to last over time.

This is not the situation in civil wars. Negotiated settlements, if they are signed, are more likely to break down than negotiated settlements to interstate wars for at least two reasons. First, peacekeepers that were promised may not show up, or if they do show up they may not have a sufficient mandate to complete the job, or may leave before the job is done. If combatants do not believe that peacekeepers will fulfill their role of helping to enforce the agreement, they are

likely to walk away from a settlement and return to war. Second, negotiated settlements may still break down after demobilization has occurred if one side reneges on the power-sharing deal and attempts to concentrate political power.

Not surprisingly, most repeat civil wars have taken place in countries with two common characteristics: (1) those with weak political and legal institutions and (2) those that are located in economically and strategically poor parts of the world. Countries like Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo all had long-standing stop-and-go wars, all are characterized by highly corrupt and dictatorial governments, and all are located in regions with little strategic importance to the international community. Disaffected groups in these types of countries have few alternative means to resolve a conflict besides continued violence since there is little prospect of negotiating a credible compromise agreement with a government that is so untrustworthy. Once a war starts, groups have few means to end the conflict in any permanent way short of a decisive victory.

Bargaining theory, therefore, helps explain why some conflicts get stuck in cycles of violence. If combatants cannot decisively defeat each other, then the only solution to such a long-drawn-out battle is a negotiated settlement. But if a government is too poorly institutionalized to constrain incumbents from taking advantage of rebels, and too strategically unimportant to attract peacekeepers, then a negotiated solution is also not possible. The result is recurring civil war.

CONCLUSION

Three problems distinguish civil wars from interstate wars, and all three have to do with how civil wars are resolved. Civil wars last longer than interstate wars. They tend to be fought to decisive victories. And they tend to repeat themselves over time. This has made

civil wars the most prevalent form of violence in the world today.

To understand why civil wars are so difficult to end, one must understand why the combatants involved in these conflicts so often resist signing and implementing a negotiated settlement. Bargaining theory, and in particular the dual problems of private information and credible commitments, helps answer this question. Civil wars last as long as they do and resist settlement because they are more likely to take place in information-poor environments and because credible commitments to the terms of any settlement are more difficult to make by the combatants themselves. This is in large part due to the unique conditions in which civil wars occur: they occur between two parties occupying and fighting over the same territory. This is not the case with the vast majority of interstate wars, where independent states with independent armies can withdraw to their own territories to protect themselves after a treaty has been signed.

This chapter, therefore, offered a way to understand civil wars from the time they start until the time they finally end. It discussed how grievances and opportunity are important underlying conditions necessary to explain why civil wars emerge in the first place. But, more importantly, it revealed why bargaining problems are necessary to explain why civil wars tend to resist settlement and why so many of them last as long as they do.

Still, many questions remain to be answered. We still do not know, for example, why some groups are better able to organize and fight, or why they choose certain forms of violence and certain strategies and tactics over others. This would require a theory of political violence which we do not yet have. It would also require a theory of the group – how they recruit, how decisions are made and enforced, and how they overcome difficult collective action problems.

We also do not know why different governments respond differently to challenges. Why do some governments fight while others

negotiate? And if they do choose to fight, why are some governments more effective fighters than others? Answers to these questions would require a theory of state response which we also do not yet have.

Finally, our understanding of bargaining problems is still in its infancy. We do not know, for example, why some disputants are better able to transmit information than others. Or why some governments and rebels are better able to credibly commit to peace terms. Or how civil war settlements might be better enforced over time by the combatants themselves. These questions suggest a large and vibrant research agenda for future scholars that is only touched on in this chapter. Our understanding of civil wars has grown substantially since the early 1990s, when little research existed on the subject. This chapter offers a simple theoretical framework for thinking about civil wars and their resolution, but much additional work needs to be done.

NOTES

1 The author wishes to thank Chris Chiego for his helpful comments related to this chapter.

2 For excellent summaries of the literature on civil wars see: Blattman and Miguel, 2009; Collier and Hoeffler, 2007; Humphreys, 2003; Kalyvas, 2007; Sambanis, 2002; Wood, 2003.

3 Source: UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset version 4-2009. See Gleditsch et al., (2002) for details.

4 From the Uppsala Conflict Database Version 4-2009.

5 This includes all civil wars that resulted in at least 25 battle-related deaths. Source: UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, Version 4-2009.

6 This is especially true of civil wars given the heavy toll they inflict on the country involved.

7 Fearon (1995) briefly discusses and then dismisses divisibility problems, arguing that solutions short of war are almost always available. Similarly, Powell (1999) argues that divisibility issues are a subset of commitment problems, where disputants fear that the agreed-upon division will not be implemented.

8 In fact, some scholars argue that territorial partition is the only stable, long-term solution to civil war, especially ethnic civil war. See Kaufmann, (1998).

9 Constructivists often emphasize the issue of divisibility as a social construction and seek ways to understand how political actors decide which issues are truly indivisible or not. See the chapters in this handbook by Cederman and Müller.

10 Both Fearon and Laitin (2003) and Skaperdas (2008) found that countries with weak government institutions were more likely to experience civil war.

11 This problem has also been prevalent in Africa, where most attempts by postcolonial governments to democratize have dissolved into one-party states, military governments, or personalistic dictatorships. See Bates (2008) for an in-depth study on why this might be so.

12 Quoted in Zartman (1995).

13 Similarly, Smith and Stam (2004) have also argued that “[a]s a war progresses, each side’s beliefs about the likely outcome of continuing the war converge. Once the warring parties’ beliefs have converged sufficiently, they can find a bargained solution to the conflict.”

14 Studies by Walter (2002) have shown that negotiated settlements are more likely to be signed after combatants have fought to a military stalemate; a strong indicator that the combatants are fairly equally matched.

15 Fortna (2008), however, did find that the international community was more likely to send peacekeepers to countries where the rebels were strong, where citizens experienced low living standards, and where multiple factions were involved in the fighting. This suggests that more powerful countries will be less likely to receive third party assistance, but that poorer countries with weak central governments and multiple competing factions (such as Cambodia, Iraq, or Angola) would be more likely to enjoy these services.

16 Source: PRIO/Uppsala Armed Conflict dataset. This number represents only those civil wars with civil war intensity of 2 in the dataset (more than 1,000 battle deaths), and falling into civil war types 3 or 4 (internal civil war and internationalized civil war. This percentage is even higher if one looks at less violent conflicts (at least 25 deaths/year). This pattern has been confirmed by Licklider, 1995; Fortna, 2001 and 2008; Collier and Sambanis, 2002; Collier et al., 2003; Walter, 2004; Quinn, Mason, and Gurses, 2007; and Collier, Hoeffler, and Soderbom, 2008, although the percentages are slightly different depending on the time period under review, the coding of civil war, and the coding of civil war start and end dates.

17 See especially Collier et al. (2003).

18 Note that there is disagreement in the literature about how development levels affect rebellion. It can affect rebellion by creating grievances against the state, by lowering the opportunity costs for turning to violence (Collier and Hoeffler, 2001), or by weakening the state’s repressive capacity (Fearon

and Laitin, 2003). Statistical analysis is unable to determine which of these interpretations is a more accurate account of individual motivations.

19 A number of constructivist studies of civil wars take issue with this point and have noted how ethnic identities can shift during conflicts, either in reaction to changing circumstances or as a result of political entrepreneurs exploiting ethnic identity. See Kalyvas (2008) for a discussion of how fluid identities are in wars and Brown (1996) for how political entrepreneurs can manipulate ethnic identities for their own gain.

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Religion and International Relations Theory

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This chapter focuses on the implications of an important empirical trend, namely, the increasing number of individuals, communities, groups, organizations, and states who identify as “religious” worldwide, for international relations (IR) theory; and on the application of IR theory to both traditional (interstate conflict) and more contemporary (substate conflict, democratic governance, development, and the global environment) political issues.¹ These connections are particularly important because although religious ideas, actors, and institutions have increased both in number and in influence worldwide,² traditional international relations theory provides little guidance for those needing to understand the interplay of religion and politics in a global setting.

Until relatively recently, the subject of how religion might intersect with international relations theory was neither well canvassed nor seriously analyzed. In the decade following the religiously inspired terrorist attacks on New York’s World Trade Center and the Pentagon in September of 2001 (9-11) – and in particular the last five years – it has become increasingly commonplace to note

that (1) “religion”, once widely expected to fade away either in general or in public, is on the rise; and (2) that the IR and security studies communities have ignored this trend to such a degree that each is at risk of negligence in the questions asked, the methods employed, and the guidance offered.³ This chapter directly engages the question of why this is so.

The remainder of the chapter is organized as follows. I begin with conceptual issues; including a working definition of religion common to most religions, and in particular the three traditional Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).⁴ I then move on to a brief discussion of the trend; establishing that the rise in importance of religious actors in global politics is real, and does not reduce to an artifact of increased salience after 9-11. I follow this with a summary of the three main traditions of IR theory in the context of the contemporary trend toward increasing religious identity. In examining the fundamental underpinnings of the three major variants of IR theory, it becomes clear that secular assumptions of self and survival are integrated into these theories in

ways that have made it difficult, if not impossible, for IR scholars and policy practitioners to take religion and religious actors seriously.⁵ Finally, I conclude with a discussion of who religious actors are, and how and where they are affecting politics within and between states.

RELIGION DEFINED

What is religion? There are thousands of religions worldwide, each with practices and beliefs that adherents believe mark it off from other religions; and from other systems of practices and beliefs, such as political and economic activity. As a result, religion is a lumpy and complex concept. Yet when we think of religion and violence, we generally focus on three or four religions, and more importantly, on what those religions may share in common that makes them of such interest to scholars of violence, as well as policy makers grappling with ending or preventing religious violence and civil wars. For purposes of this analysis religion should be understood in terms of three key components: practice (one *is* religious on the basis of actions one chooses to undertake), identity (one *is* religious on the basis of a choice of identity), and interpretation (one *is* religious to the extent one can reconcile one's actions and identity with an established oral or written religious tradition). Above all, religion marks itself off from not-religion by an emphasis on an extra-sensory reality or goal. One cannot touch or hear faith, or scent or see a supreme being, or taste salvation.

Religion in the first sense means undertaking some action or other, in which the actions themselves constitute religious practice. These include but are not limited to: sacrifices, prayer, meditation, pilgrimage, war, proselytization, and charitable acts. Religion in the second or identity sense can be described in terms of an inheritance of identity, usually from one's family. One is generally born into a given religious tradition, and

initial membership in a community of faith is involuntary. This religious identity most often extends into adulthood. In most cases, one can be a Buddhist or Jew without having to actually "do" anything, though others who identify with the same religious community may qualify their assessment of an inactive member as "bad" (e.g., a Muslim who fails to pray four times a day is still a Muslim, but a bad Muslim). Religion in the third sense requires engagement, since most contemporary religions have ancient roots, prescriptions for how to be a Jew or a good Jew (for example) are often recorded in core texts. But text itself demands interpretation, especially since the passage of time – which gives the text and the associated religion much of its legitimacy – also tends to make it unclear how a contemporary person of faith is to act. Automobiles were not in existence, for example, when the Prophet Muhammad penned the Quran (c. 600 AD), so Muslims in the early 1900s will have had to seek guidance in the form of interpretation as to how or whether the use of an automobile can affect a Muslim's religious practice and identity. Over time this demand for interpretation has led to a process of religious fragmentation. This results in conflicts both within religious traditions and between them.

In sum, by religion I mean a system of practice and belief in the attainment of a beneficial personal or collective shift in existence (heaven, nirvana, paradise, salvation, ecstasy, transcendence, oneness, peace), by means of acting or not acting in specific ways which are constitutive of an established community practice, and for which empirical referents are either unnecessary or, indeed, anathema. This definition distinguishes religion from such political ideologies as Fascism or Marxism because although the latter share many characteristics of religion, empirical referents are necessary (progress toward "solutions" demands evidence that can be seen, for example). Nationalism is a system of beliefs which, like religion, does not require empirical referents (hence Benedict Anderson's famous formulation

“imagined communities”),⁶ but nationalism does not require practice (language might be so considered, but one need not “do” anything to *be* a Serb and indeed, many ethnic Serbs who identify as such may not speak Serbian but would nevertheless be recognized as Serbs by fellow nationals). In addition, nationalism does not promise anything positive (as can religion), but rather negative: membership provides the benefit of the nation’s immortality, but confers no other obvious benefit to individual members.

A GLOBAL RESURGENCE OF RELIGION?

For many academics or others with post-secondary education, the basic understanding of religion is a system of superstitious beliefs in a supreme being or other intangible force or power. Many others identify with a given religious tradition, but think of it as comforting tradition, or a social convention. Above all, for almost all educated people, religious belief and practice, however intense and personal, is a *private matter*. Part of the reason then, that a real rise in religious belief and practice has been missed by academics and policy makers (who themselves are virtually all college educated), or thought of as an artifact of salience after the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, has to do with the fact that in their daily lives these two groups – academics and policy makers – live and work in fairly tight-knit communities, and these communities systematically discount evidence that for an increasing number of the world’s people, religion is becoming a matter of *public* concern. Because of their own secular mindset, they either dismissed or simply missed the increased salience and desire for a public face for religion in the political arena. Religion, to put it more formally, was shuffled off into the error term.

But, with the exception of Europe and Japan, religion is on the rise worldwide. Upwards of 80% of the world’s population

believes that a god (or gods) exists, a number that has increased since the 1980s.⁷ Moreover, those who identify with the major religious traditions has increased from about 58% of the world’s population in 1900 to about 70% in 2000, while the number of atheists has declined substantially since the 1970s.⁸

There are three trends that combine to explain why religion has become integral to understanding interstate and substate conflicts of interest and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. These are (1) the failure of the promise of modernization; (2) the spread of democratic institutions (democratization); and (3) globalization.

At the turn of the twentieth century, three ideational systems – free-market capitalism, Marxism, and Fascism – each promised to harness the power of the machine to resolve human social problems which had persisted since the dawn of recorded history; in particular war, poverty, and disease. The ability of the machine to turn raw inputs into manufactured goods was thought to herald the beginning of the end of want and hunger. New chemical and metallurgical techniques promised further improvements in the quality of life and in safety. Without belaboring the details of each of the three major modernization programs however, in reality, none of the programs lived up to its promise. Marxism-Leninism, in particular, fell victim to its own contradictions, and cracks in its legitimacy appeared long before 1985, when Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms (in particular, *glasnost* or “openness”) dramatically lowered the costs to average Soviet citizens of making comparisons between their own quality of life and that of peoples living outside their “communist paradise.” It is no coincidence that the collapse of the USSR in 1991 by itself accounts for a substantial proportion of religion’s resurgence, because most Soviets replaced faith in Marxism-Leninism with faith in God. In sum, modernism made promises it could not keep, and thus one major component of religion’s global resurgence takes the form of a backlash against the failure of those promises.

A second cause of an increase in the distribution of people who identify as deeply religious is the global movement toward greater democratization, a trend that started in the 1970s and continues today. According to Freedom House data, in 1973, 46% of states were coded as “not free.”⁹ The populations in these countries faced severe restrictions on their freedom, both in terms of political rights and civil liberties. By the end of 2008, the number of countries coded as “not free” dropped by more than half, and more countries – 46% – are now coded as “free,” with few to no restrictions on political rights and civil liberties. The remaining – 32% – are considered “partly free.”

Because religious actors and organizations tended to remain active, despite harsh repression in a number of states, they managed to retain their legitimacy and capacity to mobilize against existing political authorities. Since 1972, there have been 78 cases of political liberalization, and religious actors played a role in 62% of them.¹⁰ For example, Roman Catholics challenged political authorities across Latin America as result of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) and its emphasis on dignity and freedom. And, in the 1980s, Pope John Paul II helped to delegitimize the communist regimes in Eastern Europe. The failure of modernization and secular ideologies – which were often seen as Western and corrupt – coupled with lower levels of repression and increasing liberalization, thus allowed for religious actors to enter the political fray, and facilitated their ability to challenge the political system.

Finally, globalization has facilitated the rise – not simply of religious faith and its spread per se – but of faiths whose memberships are dependent upon proselytization and conversion. Missionary work has always been a risky undertaking, but the plummeting costs of communication – including transport and communications technology – make getting a message out less costly than even a few decades ago. For so-called “peoples of the book,” one obstacle to “spreading the word” was always that many target audiences were

illiterate. But inexpensive radios and mobile phones make it possible to reach and convert even those who cannot read and write. Satellite communications and the Internet have made it much easier and much quicker for ideas to travel and to take hold, including religious ones. The 2005 Danish cartoon controversy, for instance, began as a local political struggle over freedom of expression in Denmark, but quickly became global, as news of the cartoons spread, resulting in a series of destructive and deadly demonstrations worldwide.¹¹

The result of this combination of trends has been a significant rise in the proportion of people worldwide who identify as religious and who incorporate the practices and commandments of their respective faiths into their political views and actions.

CONTEMPORARY IR THEORY

Contemporary IR theory is a rich field of ideas and arguments, and a full canvassing of the origins, development, and particulars of IR theory lie beyond the scope of this chapter. But by contemporary IR theory, I mean the three dominant or core traditions: (1) Realism (and its variants); (2) Liberalism (and its variants); and (3) Constructivism. Most readers will be familiar with the shared features of the first two traditions, insofar as they, in particular, share assumptions about key actors (the state) and about key principles, such as sovereignty. The third, tradition (Constructivist) is more difficult to identify as such simply because its entrance into the field of IR inquiry – in the United States at least – is relatively new, dating from about the time of the end of the Cold War (the early 1990s).

Each of the three main theoretical traditions corresponds roughly to the three main available means of changing another’s behavior when that person would not otherwise act as we wish: Realism goes with the power of credible threats of physical harm or promises

of protection; Liberalism goes with the power to impoverish or enrich; and social Constructivism goes with the power of ideas that can link, transcend, convert, or establish all human motivations. It follows that the strength of each tradition to explain and predict is bound to depend on context.

RELIGION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY

Naturally, the subject of religion may be as simple or as complicated as we choose to make it. Any definition – whether qualified as “working” or not – will leave some readers unsatisfied. My particular definition is therefore merely that. The only point to add here is that faiths and practices encompassed by my definition should not be considered favored by inclusion, any more than those excluded should be considered discounted. As a social scientist, my aim is to define the term usefully, and in such a way that it may apply as generally as possible.

Religious faith is one of three traditional challenges to the rational actor assumption of contemporary IR theory. The first was honor (as in aristocratic honor); and the second was (and remains) nationalism.¹² Rationality has as its twin components (1) self-preservation; and (2) calculation. Honor and nationalism share with religion a capacity to engender self-sacrifice. It is this connection with sacrifice that pushes Realist and Liberal IR theorists away from serious consideration of religious actors, especially as regards politics.

As a primary motivation for state action, honor perished along with aristocracy. Nationalism continues to exert this influence (self-sacrifice), but religion is more salient today for two reasons. First, nationalism is tethered to territory in a way that religious faith is not.¹³ There remain unresolved nationalist conflicts in the world, mostly artifacts of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, but most show signs (as in contemporary Sudan)

of being resolved or at least to stay contained within the borders of states. Second, as already observed, religious faith is on the rise worldwide.¹⁴ Historically, faith propagates by two main methods: (1) conversion and (2) birth socialization. As observed above, the combination of the Internet, mobile telephones, and the container ship have dramatically reduced the costs of communication globally, meaning that messages of all sorts – including conversion overtures – are relatively inexpensive to transmit and, most importantly, targets need not be literate. The costs of sending a message have therefore plummeted; making conversion easier.¹⁵

Yet historically, the distribution of birth-socialized adherents in relation to converts is far greater.¹⁶ This may explain why conservative adherents of every faith (and here one need look no further than the three Abrahamic faiths) object to post-primary – and especially post-secondary – education of women. Education takes up crucial time and competes with child birthing and rearing to such a degree that globally, we see a strong correlation between level of education and fertility rates. Biologically, women should begin bearing children soon after puberty (and the onset of puberty is itself dropping for reasons as yet unclear). Yet even allowing for the extended childhood common in the advanced-industrial world (from puberty to 18 years), many women will not complete a post-secondary education until the age of 21 at the earliest. A move or two, an advanced degree, a few years to get established in a chosen career, and most women who have pursued post-secondary education will not be ready to start having children until they are in their early thirties, a time when pregnancy becomes progressively more difficult and in some cases more dangerous. Fewer children, on average, mean fewer birth-socialized religious adherents.

But the corollary is true everywhere in the world where women are not able to acquire an education.¹⁷ This likely accounts for why, with the exception of the United States, the proportion of citizens who identify as people

of faith in advanced-industrial countries – where it is nowadays assumed as a matter of course that women will have the same opportunities in education and employment as men – has remained flat or has declined in the last four or five decades.¹⁸

Realism and its variants

Of the three traditions of IR theory, Realism's connection to religion may be the most interesting. This connection has two aspects. First, and as implied by the term itself, the real in Realism refers to things that are empirically verifiable. Realism's core concerns are things we may touch with our hands, hear with our ears, see with our eyes, taste with our tongues, and smell with our noses: in other words, the physical body or, understood as interstate politics theory, the state. Second, as extra- or super-state actors, organized religions do not map to the core unit of analysis in interstate political theory – the state – even though religious actors necessarily do live in specific states and some states identify as, for example, "Islamic."

Realism, survival, and rationality

Unlike ideas, which are not tethered to an empirical reality or, are only so tethered by social consensus, the physical body has a finite existence. The body dies. For Realists, it is axiomatic that a rational actor cares first and foremost about his or her physical existence, and that among the many competing cares and values, "survival," in this narrowest sense of a beating heart, ranks highest. The logic is that all else is contingent on life defined in this way: if we are not alive, we cannot "act." We cannot produce or enjoy food, write poetry, tickle our children, or make love. There can be no quality of life without a preceding fact of life.

Mapped onto the idea of the "state," the logic is the same: states – rational states – must care first and foremost about survival. Again, this concept of survival is shorn of all

but this most basic sense: it reduces to physical survival.

Again, as implied by its name, this close connection of Realism to the body or the state conceived of as a physical (bounded territorial) entity is both Realism's strength and its weakness. It is strong in that it reduces human experience to something universal: the body. Christians, Hindus, Zoroastrians, Seveners, Sufis, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and Branch Davidians all have bodies. They may, as individuals, be verifiably described as "alive" or "dead." Realism is also strong in its recognition that life ranks very high among the concerns each of us have as individuals. In short, Realism's most critical and powerful insight is that all humans care about their lives, regardless of their faith, ethnicity, and national origin; and that this concern has crucial political consequences. It is the master principle underlying every subsequent Realist argument. Concern for tangible and immediate physical existence is so critical to Realist theory that its absence is counted as an indicator of irrationality.

This core concern also happens to be Realism's key weakness. It cannot accept even in principle that a rational human being might systematically place some other value ahead of narrow physical existence. For most religions, however, the starting point for practice and belief is precisely the admission that the physical body ends. Death of the physical body is inevitable, so the key questions are not about being alive or dead but about the quality of a life or death, and the possibility of an existence after the end of the physical body. It follows that even though physical existence is important to a person of faith and a credible threat to that existence is a matter of some concern, it cannot be relied upon in the way assumed by Realist theory to effect coercion or deterrence.

Consider the counterargument that a dead believer ceases to be capable of exerting influence. This is a logically powerful argument insofar as individuals are carriers of ideas; including religious ideas. If such a person cannot speak or otherwise transmit an

idea, so the logic goes, that idea must necessarily lose its force. But this is actually no help, because humans invariably exist in society: that is, unless one could do away with the entire network of believers and witnesses, one runs the risk that killing some may inspire others, or that the idea may go underground in some way. Since as a historical matter it has proved difficult (one might more accurately say impossible) to eradicate ideas by killing their bearers, killing cannot work. This is more intensely true for faiths which expect persecution, and for whom the existence of persecution, including torture, imprisonment, and death, verifies and intensifies a believer's faith. Consider that the Romans, for much of their history, were never able to eradicate faiths such as Judaism and Christianity by seeking out and killing their adherents, even though Rome famously devoted its genius and its fantastic resources to generations of just such a project. Spectacular acts of violence and what we today would call genocide were not able to resolve the problems presented by Christians and Jews and intensified them (especially in relation to Christians) over the long run. Eventually, it was Christianity that captured Rome.

In sum then, Realism's concern with the body, the physical existence of individuals and, by extension, states, makes it a very powerful, useful, and widely applicable theoretical lens through which to understand human relations. Fear of death by individual humans causes them to seek security. Fear of conquest by states causes states to seek security as well, either or both by increasing their power to kill internally, or by forging alliances with other states. Realism's obsession with states as actors comes precisely from the capacity of states – only one of several alternative forms of political association – to cause death. Historically, states have been more lethal than clans, tribes, nations, and empires. Realist obsession with “great powers” follows from this same principle: larger states can pile up many more corpses than smaller states.

What Realism systematically misses is the possibility of rational self-sacrifice. This results in nontrivial gaps in Realism's ability to explain interstate politics and, in particular, the higher-than-expected degree of cooperation among states. As pithily observed by Alexander Wendt in “Anarchy Is What States Make of It,” Realism cannot even encompass so simple an idea as enduring friendship and rivalry among states without forcing such empirical facts into the error term (i.e., irrational action).

When it comes to coercion and deterrence, Realism – and here one includes all its variants – stumbles in its insistence that rational actors must fear death above all other values. Again, as a stable and cohesive theory of political action and outcomes, this insistence makes Realism both useful and dangerous as a way to understand and predict interstate politics.

Realism and the state

The most obvious and well-developed connection between the subject of the fit between states and believers is Samuel Huntington's “clash of civilizations” thesis, in which he implicates religion as a major component of culture, and then aggregates culture to a super-state concept he calls “civilization.”¹⁹ But whereas Realists since ancient times have attributed aggressive, insecure, and greedy intentions to political communities (anthropomorphizing states, clans, tribes, empires, city-states, principalities, kingdoms, nations, and so on), Huntington's conception of civilization demanded an alternative script in order to establish it as a unit of analysis worthy of those whose primary concern is with organized violence (war). The state, as pithily observed by Charles Tilly, emerged from a kind of Darwinian natural selection ferment as the most lethal of the forms of political association – war made the state, and the state made war.²⁰ For unmodified Realists, this lethality combined with anthropomorphization of the state are sufficient to generate all subsequent pessimism about peace. Huntington's task then is a

daunting one: on the strength of his own instincts and his authority as the most respected IR scholar of his time, can he convince us that civilizations will be (or are already) the next stage in the evolution of necessarily lethal political associations? Assuming for the sake of argument that we accept “civilization” as something real in the world, how does it follow that civilizations must come into violent conflict? Why must they clash?

Here is where religion comes in as the primary referent and supporting pillar of Huntington’s conception of culture. One of perhaps the most perplexing and ancient ironies of religion is that most generally command that individual adherents act with restraint; including tolerance, modesty, and above all nonviolence toward others. Yet historically many of the most horrific atrocities and transgressions of justice have had their origins in the sanctioned violence of people of faith.²¹ The three Abrahamic faiths alone have been repeatedly indicted with intransigence and intolerance; both within and between faiths. So that by including “religion” in his definition of civilization, Huntington effectively accomplishes what traditional Realists managed by modeling state motivations on the psychology of isolated individuals (as in Hobbes’s ‘state of nature’ arguments): namely, Huntington loads “civilizations” with menace; or at least he does so for those who, like he, imagine both religious organizations and their various individual adherents to be imminently and necessarily violent in support of their beliefs and believers.

Once provided with a script inseparable from the concept, we arrive, as does conventional Realist IR theory, at an expectation of perpetually menaced peace.

Conclusion

What might all this mean for students of interstate politics interested in how religion interacts with Realism and its variants? Realism’s insistence on the priority of the body and its focus on the individual as a

political unit (as opposed to a community) bracket the conditions under which it is more or less likely to prove useful. In times and places where conquest is a credible concern, Realism will be more useful. The power to kill, even if credible, depends for its coercive capacity on the assumption that the target – whether a state or individual – prefers to remain physically alive regardless of the consequences. The corollary is implied. So long as states or people do care about physical existence above all else, and so long as a society of actors is ignored, Realism and its variants do a credible job of explaining and predicting interstate political outcomes.

Realists, in other words, get a lot right even as they miss a lot. Realists have a difficult time, for example, credibly accounting for the lack of attention Canada pays to the security of its southern border from possible invasion by the United States. Mexicans, Britons, and Japanese do not appear to be sufficiently concerned about US military power either. Similarly, states attempting to use their “power” (mainly power to kill) to coerce nonstate actors – and this today takes up the lion’s share of the distribution of worldwide violence and war – may find their capacity to coerce discounted, and their efforts may even backfire.

In part, this is due to the power of religion to push other values besides physical existence to the top of an individual adherent’s core concerns. As noted above, honor and nationalism are two other traditional sources of a similar effect, and were (or are) thought to undermine fear-brokered security (stability) during times and in places where each reigned. Religion and the interaction of religious organizations and self-described people of faith is more salient today for reasons already discussed, but the impact on states and on the likelihood of war is something that remains to be worked out.²² For Realists of all sorts, the bottom line is that actors who do not axiomatically fear death undermine peace and stability, because in Realist theory since ancient times, the greatest thing to be feared was an untimely and violent end to

physical existence. Many religions – possibly most – offer an alternative to fear of death or to death itself; which is the promise of an existence not tethered to the empirical material world.

Liberalism and its variants

The relationship of religion to Liberalism is best understood by means of a different pathway. Like Realists, Liberal IR theorists accept the state as the primary unit of analysis and most important actor in world politics. Unlike Realists, however, Liberals imagine that peace in the sense of nonviolent competition is something that can and will emerge as a product of the interaction of self-interested rational actors. War, in other words, is not inevitable.

Liberals arrive at this prediction by a perhaps unsurprising mechanism: an “invisible hand.” I say unsurprising because it was this aspect of Adam Smith’s treatise, *Wealth of Nations*, that justified, if you will, what many people experienced as “natural” – that is, self-interest. Thus, rather than assuming good intentions or a desire for peace, contemporary Liberals share Realists’ appreciation of political actors as being individually menacing or greedy precisely because they are self-serving.

It is Immanuel Kant who best represents the consequence of each state pursuing its self-interest and best summarizes the Liberal argument: perpetual peace. In Kant’s famous formulation, nonviolent competition does “not require moral angels, only rational devils.” But whereas for Realists, the pursuit of self-interest reduces to the power to kill in the service of a universal need to physically survive, for Liberals, self-interest extends to wealth as well. Liberals ask: is it possible to survive physically without wealth? More to the point, can one support a military without wealth? Since for Liberals the answer to both questions is “no” (Realists might counter that if one is not physically secure one can hardly till fields or tend herds), it follows

that interest in wealth is an irreducible interest for states as well as individuals. More wealth implies more security.

The remainder of the chain of logic leading from self-interest to a common benefit is as follows: interest in wealth and security demand cooperation. Cooperation therefore increases security. Yet as Kant observed, once certain conditions are met, it will turn out that some forms of government are better for the accumulation of wealth and security than others, and that these same forms – republics – will strongly resist attacking one another physically. Over time, Kant argued, the distribution of republics as against other forms of government (say, authoritarian regimes of any sort) will reach a tipping point, beyond which competition and conflict will remain, but *violent* conflict (war) will have withered away. Hence, perpetual peace.

Leaving aside whether this characterization is entirely accurate or whether Kant’s predictions appear to be coming true (one thinks of Europe today as just such a place as Kant imagined: vibrant, at times bitter conflict, but war “off the table”), there are two points to add to this argument. First, Liberals reject a model of human motivation that extends from the psychology of an isolated human individual. Humans, as Rousseau observed of Hobbes’s assumptions, do not live in isolation but in society, and as such the qualities of friendship and enmity are irreducible components of human interaction and motivation. If the behavior of states (or their motives) may then be likened to those of humans, this creates precisely the possibility of society the Realism excludes. Realism imagines alliances, but Realist logic cannot explain how rational security-seeking (insecure) states might trust one another sufficiently to make even an obvious alliance of interest work. Second, whereas Realists assume an insecure individual and end up with a collective tragedy (perpetual war), Liberals assume self-interested actors and end up with a collective good (perpetual peace). But the Liberal assumption of self-interested action runs afoul

of most religious teaching, which, as observed above, revolves around some notion of self-restraint or self-sacrifice.

One especially recalls in this context that Muslims are not permitted to loan money at interest. That is, they are expected as individuals to forego some increment of self-interested accumulation in order to be “good” Muslims. Interestingly, if you imagine a people who axiomatically act in the interests of an imagined community (comrades) rather than self-interest, there is no mechanism in Liberal economic thinking that can clear markets and move toward collective benefit save a dictatorship. Dictatorships are notoriously inefficient as compared to say, republics, at the accumulation of wealth and, by extension, security. Thus, a Liberal argument must return to the idea that greed or self-interest are not only permitted, they are required in order to secure the blessings of perpetual sufficiency and peace.

It is this sort of thing that strikes most religious actors as sinful. The macro outcome of my micro action is not my concern, it is God’s or karma’s. My task, as a believer, is to live a life circumscribed by a constant and vigilant effort to overcome what I might call my base needs or desires (usually some pleasure or other). The value to me of this sort of self-restraint is salvation or paradise or eternal life and so on.

Beyond this link between whether self-restraint is necessary or good there is another pathway through which religious action or belief might intersect with Liberal IR theory. This has to do with the enduring Liberal notion that some forms of government are good and others bad (in a moral sense). It is not difficult to see how this idea might run afoul of religious practice or belief, insofar as many of the world’s religions are managed by males whose authority is based almost entirely on their ability to interpret holy texts. Many organized religions are therefore profoundly hierarchical and, moreover, have a kind of top-down authority which is imagined to reify on Earth what has been ordained in heaven (for the Abrahamic traditions at

least, a single all-powerful God whose power is not based on the consent of his/her followers but which flows down from him/her to believers and unbelievers alike). Bluntly, most organized religions resemble and at the same time require political associations roughly similar to those in existence at the time the latest edition of their most holy texts were published. These were not democracies in any sense of the word; nor were they republics. In Christianity, it was not possible to be both faithful and democratic until after the Reformation, when bottom-up practice became possible and legitimate.

As a practical consideration then, this association of faithful practice with top-down authority mitigates against the transformation of many terrestrial governments from authoritarian to democratic. This may be one reason why democracy has little appeal for states such as Saudi Arabia, it is wealthy (and by extension, powerful) for the single reason that it sits on a valuable natural resource (petroleum). Saudi Arabia has a government that is effectively medieval in its structure, and in the sense that opposition to the king is the equivalent of opposition to God. This is a key point often missed by those who cite opposition to the king as evidence that there is a popular desire for bottom-up government (popular sovereignty). The desire to overthrow the king and his family, where it exists, is unlikely to indicate a desire for democracy, so much as a desire to alter the distribution of socially valued goods (cash, for example) from one group to another: to get a better king. If at any time in the future such an effort should succeed, it is far more likely that the new ruler will claim that its success was the will of God, and then proceed to rule much as the previous group or leader did. It is also possible that the Sa’ud family has succeeded in maintaining its rule as well and as long as it has because a sufficient number of Saudis believe that the ruling family acts in God’s name. Should that change, one should expect the ruling family to change as well.

In sum, Liberal IR theory may sit most uneasily with religion, insofar as it generates its socially valued outcomes – collective wealth and peace – by means of a virtual insistence on individual selfishness. Naturally, in real life the choices are never dichotomous, but the commandment to “treat others as oneself” aggregates, in Liberal economic and IR theories, not to a social good but to social ills (those following from the writings of Marx and Engels being perhaps the most notorious examples). Marx might credibly be called a hyper-Liberal, insofar as his theories counted the impulse to self-interest as false consciousness. Marxism then, as with many (though hardly all) religions, promises paradise as an outcome of selflessness; whereas more traditional Liberals promise paradise (or at least collective betterment) as an outcome of individual selfishness.

Constructivism and its variants

If Realism contains and expounds the implications of fear of physical death and killing represented through the application of violent action, and Liberalism the implications of wealth and impoverishment on a broader and more social conception of security, then Constructivism represents the implications of how we come to know what we observe and the very real values we attach to our understandings. In short, Constructivism represents the *power of ideas*. As such, it offers perhaps the greatest potential of the three main IR traditions for religious practice and belief to explain both processes and outcomes in interstate politics.

A core insight of Constructivism accepts as axiomatic that humans exist in society (hence “intersubjectivity”): human society is thus the irreducible starting point of discourse analysis. Marx was often quoted as having opined that “men make their own history, but not as they please.” Constructivism makes the same argument: humans attach their own meanings to objects (to what they can feel and see and smell, and so on), but

not as they please. The process is iterative and interactive.

If a particular construction of “anarchy” leads to and supports a theory of perpetual war (Realism and its variants), then a reconstruction might lead to different expectations and outcomes. That stands as the core of the Constructivist contribution to IR theory insofar as one is concerned with matters such as war and peace. These need not be the only or even main concerns of course, but Constructivism’s logic would apply to virtually any interest one might have in the interactions of states or peoples in the world.

That said, missionaries are perhaps the foundational or original Constructivists – or as Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink put it, “norms entrepreneurs”.²³ Interestingly, putting it this way both identifies and obscures the constructions themselves. Missionaries have famously participated in a process of renegotiating the meanings of previously established objects. One thinks of “Christmas trees,” for example, in which a pagan object signifying survival through Winter (an “evergreen”) is transmuted into an object under which Christians place birthday presents for Jesus Christ. Or more directly, the cross, the crucifix – a symbol of heinous suffering and death – is transmuted through intersubjective discourse into an object of veneration and adornment. The process of bringing new meaning to objects is therefore a quintessential part of the story of religious propagation. The results of these renegotiations vary not only between faiths but within them: it was once legitimate or necessary for a Mormon man to have more than one wife; and the same faith, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, also once counted “black” people as children of Cain (or Satan). But like many religions, Mormonism contains within it mechanisms for renegotiating even meanings loaded with religious conviction. The faith’s abandonment of polygamy first in 1890 (and again in 1904), for example, was not accepted by all of the faithful, and led to divisions within the church that exist to this day. And in 1978, the church changed its

policy with respect to “blacks,” allowing them to participate fully in church rites.

Constructivism helps us understand a vast and crucial lever of power in interstate politics, but that understanding is circumscribed by a lack of development of positive Constructivist theory: we may understand that much of what we believe about the world has a history or is an artifact of some previous entrepreneur’s deliberate efforts to illuminate or conceal reality for political purposes (one thinks again of Marxist or some feminist arguments to this effect), but even that understanding does not instantly result in a shift in consciousness and with it a shift in conduct or expectations. Realities may be constructed, but once made, even recognizing their human-made nature does not make it a simple matter to abandon or reform them.

RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND POLITICS

While it is a relatively uncomplicated matter to quantify and analyze data on religious identity over time, it is much more difficult to assess the impact of the increasing number of people who identify as “religious” on contemporary local, national, regional, and international political processes and outcomes.

That said, while Europe, collectively, and Japan remain outliers, for the rest of the world religion has become increasingly political – that is, the social contract which established a separation of Church and State as a best practice in the West, and which has its origins in the resolution of the Thirty Years’ War, has increasingly come into question. The contemporary United States is a case in point.

Up until 1972, most US citizens and their leaders considered that politics and faith were, and should be, separate. Religious faith was an important yet private matter. Yet all of this changed in 1972, when the US Supreme Court ruled in *Roe v. Wade*

that the state could not interfere with a woman’s right to choose whether to terminate a pregnancy.

Almost all established religions were opposed to abortion, but in the United States it was evangelical Christian groups who protested the most vigorously. These groups organized and began to use the political process at the state and local level to elect politicians who would enact laws abridging the right of a woman to choose an abortion. In short, a decision by a branch of the federal government galvanized religious opposition and began the process of converting private convictions of faith into public policy. The Iranian revolution of 1979 had a similar mobilizing effect on conservative US Christians, who began to see Islam more generally as a new kind of threat to Christians worldwide. This process of radicalization and politicization of religious actors has continued, and has accelerated since the end of the Cold War, when security conservatives in the US Republican party began to fade into the background, and social conservatives began to gain increasing control over the party’s political agenda.

This is why today it has become accepted practice in the United States to question candidates for public office about their views on abortion – views that prior to 1972 had been private convictions of faith.

But what of the impact of religious actors (including individuals, churches, and even states) on regional and interstate politics? In terms of real-world consequences of the intersection of religion and IR theory, we can imagine two sorts of initiatives that have been and remain sites of intersection. First, there is the notion of “humanitarian” intervention, in which a wealthy and relatively secure state²⁴ offers to assume cost and risk by intervening to mitigate the destructive impact of a natural disaster such as a famine or flood, or to halt or reverse mass killing. Second, any given violent conflict in which the members of one or more religious faiths are killed has the potential to be reframed as a religious matter. Both initiatives or practices have involved a

process of social construction and both have engaged religion.²⁵

In the first instance (humanitarian intervention), the idea is simply that faith commands “us” to compassion and generosity, and that acting with compassion and being generous will be rewarded by God. Thus, when a Realist sees no earthly strategic interest or value in assuming the costs and risks of humanitarian intervention (whether in reaction to a natural disaster or to a human-made crisis), and a Liberal argues that such aid be contingent upon political and economic reforms (which suffer from the possibility that they might infringe on indigenous culture and tradition), the Constructivist notes that what appears to be generosity may in fact conceal compensation (guilt) for prior acquisition of disproportionate wealth or weaponry. In other words, intervention to help distracts us from a prior consideration of how a state offering assistance came to have so much wealth to begin with. In this sense, the very fact of accumulation may imply an obligation to “help” under a legal theory of remedy (as in “you acquired your wealth and security by violent (read: illegitimate or unjust) means and this obligates you to risk some increment of both in order to remedy our suffering and loss”). Interestingly, religion holds out little *general* guidance on how a state should respond: on one hand, for example, a “Christian” response might well be to undertake humanitarian intervention on a significant scale. Yet on the other, this same faith might hold that victims of a natural disaster or brutal dictator are suffering punishment for past sins, and that it might therefore be wrong to intervene to mitigate “God’s” judgment: this precise issue occupied US Christians in response to Haiti’s massive earthquake of 2010.²⁶

As regards the second or “religious outbidding” issue,²⁷ the social construction is more overtly seen as a series of efforts to subvert religious logic and tether it to instrumental considerations: namely, tenure maximization. By this means, a corrupt, incompetent, or otherwise unsuitable leader may, by

reframing a conflict as a religious conflict, attract sufficient resources (e.g., cash, arms, fighters) to keep his or her office.²⁸

Both examples serve to underline the potential for religion to alter state behavior in ways that Realist and Liberal theoretical traditions might consider irrational and in ways that have what most would consider both good (children who might otherwise starve or die of exposure will live) and ill (civil wars endure or escalate). This particular pathway follows a Constructivist line, because the behavior results from a reimagining of what legitimate and acceptable political action might be. The problem for Constructivism is just this, however: we have no guidance or theory to allow us to anticipate in which direction a given meaning might lean. It would be crucial for a foreign policy maker to know, for example, whether a proposed policy might run afoul of a powerful domestic political constituency before proposing it.

Note that a similar problem beset the central argument of John Mueller’s *Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War*,²⁹ in which he indicted social understandings of the legitimacy and acceptability (a Realist might say necessity) of warfare as a way to resolve conflicts. Major interstate war between advanced-industrial states has become increasingly obsolescent – not due to deterrence or to the structure of the interstate system – but simply because, like dueling, interstate war has gone out of fashion. Whether readers are persuaded of this first assertion proves to be beside the point, however. Since Mueller provides us no real mechanism by which we can recognize how or when a given practice will go into or out of fashion, we must ask: if a given practice can go out of fashion, what is to keep it (or something more odious) from coming back into fashion?

Yet, religious constructions are not infinitely variable; they are tethered to texts or to the pronouncements of charismatic leaders in ways that make them subject to predictability. For example, in the three Abrahamic traditions, special classes of interpreters

(rabbis, priests, and imams) can simply be asked whether a given policy or practice is consistent with a particular religion's prescriptions for conduct. The most famous contemporary example is Seyed Ali Hoseyni Khāmene'i's (Supreme Ayatollah of Iran) August 2005 pronouncement that nuclear weapons are "un-Islamic" and therefore *haram* (forbidden).³⁰ What makes this striking is that from a Realist perspective, it is rational (or necessary) that Iran pursue nuclear weapons for security reasons. Thus, having the capability to acquire them and deliberately not doing so must count as irrational action from a Realist perspective. It is this enduring association of religion with irrationality (and one thinks also of nationalism in the 1800s in this context) that makes it so dreaded by IR theorists and practitioners alike: irrational actors cannot stand as units of analysis in predictive theories, and cannot be deterred by credible threats of harm.

A final example worth citing follows the rise of Evangelical Christians in the United States, and their influence on US foreign policy – particularly during the administrations of George W. Bush (2001–2009). The US president himself frequently reminded interviewers that he considered himself a "born again" Christian, and his administration paid great attention to conservative Christians on issues ranging from support of Southern Sudan's independence (Christian minorities in Southern Sudan and Darfur had been persecuted by the Arabized and Islamic North during the second Sudanese Civil War),³¹ to support for Israel's settlement policies in the West Bank, its crackdown on Gaza in 2006, and a hard line against Iranian nuclearization. The most accessible example of an Evangelical Christian group's engagement in US foreign policy is Christians United for Israel (CUFI), a pro-Israeli lobby which supports a hard line against Iran and a free hand for Israel in Lebanon. Given that US support for Israel has been widely indicted as a major source of friction with Israel's Arab neighbors, Evangelical Christian influence on US foreign policy (admittedly

difficult to measure) would count at a minimum as a tax on an ideal US policy in the Middle East.³² What we can say with certainty is that the proportion of US citizens who identify as Evangelical Christians is on the rise, and that lobbies such as CUFI are directly engaged in politics and foreign policy. As a result, all other things being equal, we may expect their influence on US foreign policy to grow in the coming decades.

CONCLUSIONS

Realism extends from reasonable concerns about physical violence. Its origins lie in a conception of human existence as necessarily solitary and threatening. From premises that hold that humans – rational humans – must make their physical survival their first priority, it follows that a solitary actor cannot afford to assume that another actor does not intend harm. From there, we eventually come to the notion that all actors, whether states or individuals, must rely on themselves only and, that as a result, humans must live in a world of imminent violence or perpetual war. As a result, Realists of all sorts occupy themselves with the interesting and useful work of understanding how to make wars less frequent and less destructive.

Liberalism extends from reasonable concerns about food, shelter, and wealth; but these are irreducibly connected to the practice of exchange. Exchange, in turn, presupposes community and society. Autarky, even when it satisfies minimal needs, cannot compete in the long run with trade, and this pathway – a given community's concern with subsistence, wealth, and security – leads to incremental escalations in the quantity and quality of cooperation until competition, though assured, no longer rises to the level of a clash of arms. Perpetual "peace" is perhaps putting it too ambitiously, since Kant's understanding of peace is reduced to what we would call nonviolent conflict, but this would be a major achievement nonetheless.

Thus, unlike their more pessimistic colleagues, Liberal IR theorists can imagine a world in which war has become a thing of the past.

Constructivism extends from reasonable concern about the power of human beings to define the meaning of material objects: the power of ideas. If I cannot physically threaten you, and I have no money with which to bribe you, I may yet get you to act as I need even though such action is costly or risky to you so long as I can convince you I am right (or acting as I wish is in your interests). Perhaps a better way to understand how Constructivism might alter outcomes and processes independently of violence and material wealth, recall the Appendix to George Orwell's *1984*: "The Principles of Newspeak." Here Orwell elaborates a fictional "Party's" core method of control: change our relationship to language, and you change our relationship to thought and reality. Orwell argues that the party has succeeded, incrementally, in making it literally impossible to have certain thoughts and that it has done so by means of a succession of "dictionaries" and "grammars." That process is highlighted in a context more familiar to students of IR by Carol Cohn in her famous "Sex and Death in the World of Rational Defense Intellectuals."³³ Here she recalls how her mastery of a combination of new and old words in the pursuit of understanding of nuclear weapons and the strategies by which they are employed hindered her ability to frame certain questions, yet simultaneously facilitated new insights previously unavailable to her.

Religion intersects with all three traditions or perspectives of international politics in different ways. Realism – classical, neo, and neoclassical – finds it difficult to recognize and weigh the impact of religious practice and belief because religion is not strictly tethered to the empirical world. That is, adherents often act in ways that could only be counted rational if there were some way to verify that the rewards of their sacrifices exceeded the costs of those sacrifices. For Realists, the body – and by extension, the

physical existence of the state – is key. Yet for religious actors, the body is rarely crucial. On the contrary, death being inevitable, the crucial thing for religious adherents is some measure of the quality of a life – one lives righteously or centered. This may involve the deliberate sacrifice of the fact of life, an act which for Realists must count as irrational (perhaps not at an individual level, but certainly at the level of states). The trouble is that to the extent that Realists find peace (respite from inevitable and recurrent storms, to cite Hobbes's example in *Leviathan*), they find it in fear of death (deterrence). This drives Realist analysis such as offense-defense balances, offensive and defensive variations, and the possibility of coercion itself. The common Realist retort to such statements as "death before dishonor" has been to point out that death settles all arguments. What is not pointed out, however, is that this itself relies on an understanding of human psychology disconnected from society; from the regard of others. At no time in history, so far as we can tell, has any combination of killing power risen sufficiently to literally kill every witness. Thus, it matters how a person is killed, and others who survive to recount the killing become political agents capable of continuing or escalating resistance.

As to the second aspect in which religion and Realism interact – the priority of the state – it appears the Realists have a stronger argument. It has been noted that religious faith is generally not bounded by territory; which is to say it is truly trans-state. Yet civilizations, as imagined by Samuel Huntington, appear to be too abstract and unwieldy to acquire the agency that states – themselves often appearing as unwieldy aggregations of nations – have managed to acquire. In other words, if it is difficult to imagine attributing agency to multinational states, how much more difficult is it to attribute agency to "Islamic civilization?" One may note that cultures cross state boundaries as a descriptive matter, but this is hardly the same thing as showing that "Western civilization" can

and does act as such in world politics, whatever its alleged enemies might claim to the contrary.

Liberalism's link with religion rests on two related sets of issues. The first is whether right action conduces to positive outcomes. Strangely, there is little evidence that people acting on the basis of good conscience manage to effect good outcomes. On the contrary, what appears to be an easier argument to sustain is that managed greed, insecurity, and aggression conduce to positive outcomes. This is the root narrative of classical economics, in which individual self-interest conduces, through the mechanism of a minimally regulated market, to a broad social good: products constantly improve and constantly get cheaper at the same time. Similarly, in politics, it was once virtually common knowledge that "war" might be the midwife of "democracy." That is, a costly and tragic bloodletting tended to lead to enduring peace.³⁴ Edward Luttwak turns this idea to extreme account in "Give War a Chance."³⁵

In Liberal IR theory, self-interested states – states that regard wealth as both important in its own right and as a necessary component of security – are led by means of exchange to acquire more wealth and also increased cooperation.³⁶ This cooperation – not the same thing as an alliance – incrementally escalates (as do its rewards and benefits), until actors begin to reimagine themselves as other than imminent enemies. Over time, politics adapt to capture the gains of cooperation, and a process is set in motion by which states governed by republics (popular sovereignty is the key) multiply and war between such republics withers away. Conflict continues, but only nonviolent conflict.

The difficulty is that when one examines the root logic by which micro action conduces to macro outcomes, one finds that greed is not only beneficial, but necessary. Religion moves against this in that religion generally demands restraint in seeking pleasure (sin). This restraint may not have ill effects when aggregated, but it certainly is unlikely to drive prices down and quality up.

Finally, Constructivism and religion appear to be a natural pairing, insofar as religious practice and belief are themselves defined by a process of social interaction, the outcome of which is shared meanings that bound a given faith community. This is true even of religions "of the book," because the meanings of texts cannot be fixed. Once it is acknowledged that in order to live faithfully, one needs to understand the text, it is a short step toward seeking out those who can explain (negotiate) the meaning of texts and, to arguments about whether a person of faith is sufficiently endowed to understand the text unaided, or whether some assistance is necessary.

Constructivism highlights at least two pathways through which religion has affected and may affect interstate politics. In the first instance is the idea – not purely religious – that power demands responsibility. God's omnipotence is redeemed by his benevolence and omniscience. For powerful states, it may seem equally "necessary" to intervene to mitigate natural disasters or to protect defenseless people from violence. The impulse to humanitarian intervention may in this sense be intertwined with religious motivation.

A second feature of religion is the notion of coreligionist defense of the faith (or faithful). This can be activated in cynical or genuine form via the mechanism of religious outbidding, in which generally besieged political elites renegotiate the meaning of a given conflict to include defense of the faithful.³⁷ One reason Sudan's civil wars (two of them) lasted nearly half a century was that the North was able to redefine its civil war with the South (originally about shared offices and development resources) into a holy war; and by so doing attract cash, fighters, and arms from sympathetic governments that rationalized their interventions as acts of faith.

* * *

Moving forward, it may be more useful to disaggregate "religion" into subunits and evaluate say, Protestant or Baptist or Roman Catholic or Shi'a doctrine and practice

against traditional questions of interstate politics. What, if any, is the link between a specific faith community and French immigration or foreign policy? How, if at all, did the split between Seveners and Twelvers in the Shi'a branch of Islam affect Iran's foreign policy?

It may be that years after undertaking this sort of more specific and detailed work, patterns emerge that permit us to understand "religion's" impact on interstate politics.³⁸ But as my account here should make clear, those implications are likely to take years to emerge. My effort here has only been to suggest that this game is worth the candle.

NOTES

1 For other reviews of religion in international relations, not necessarily IR theory, see Jonathan Fox, "Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations," *International Studies Review* Vol. 3, No. 3 (2001), pp. 53–73; Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos *Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler, *Bringing Religion into International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Kenneth D. Wald and Clyde Wilcox, "Getting Religion: Has Political Science Rediscovered the Faith Factor?" *American Political Science Review* Vol. 100, No. 4 (November 2006), pp. 523–529; Eva Bellin, "Faith in Politics: New Trends in the Study of Religion and Politics," *World Politics* Vol. 60, No. 2 (January 2008), pp. 315–347; Daniel Philpott, "Has the Study of Global Politics Found Religion?" *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 12, (2009), pp. 183–202; Timothy Samuel Shah, Alfred Stepan, and Monica Duffy Toft, eds. *Rethinking Religion in Global Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); and Jack Snyder, "Introduction," *Religion and International Relations Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), Chapter 1.

2 For empirical support for the trend toward increasing distribution and intensity of religious identification and influence, see especially, Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shaw, *God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2011).

3 In his introduction to *Religion and International Relations Theory*, Jack Snyder examines how religion interacts with specific subcomponents of

Neorealism, Liberalism, Neoliberal Institutionalism, and Constructivism. The aim of the present analysis is similar, but takes the form of an exploration of these connections at a more basic level than Snyder's excellent analysis. See Jack Snyder, "Introduction," in Jack Snyder, ed., *Religion and International Relations Theory* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2011).

4 I follow a long tradition in emphasizing these three religious traditions. Here, the justification is primarily one of scope (there is simply no space to include the "other" three major religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism), but also audience: most readers of the handbook will be interested in the nexus of political issues at the intersection of the Abrahamic faiths in relation to national issues (say, abortion in the United States, or whether Muslim women in France should be permitted to wear a head scarf), or international issues (such as the long conflicts between Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Jerusalem; or the prospects for enduring peace between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland). Clearly, further work more fully integrating this additional tier of faiths remains to be undertaken.

5 Because of the centrality of states in Realism, and to some extent Liberalism, IR theory has tended to miss the influence of transnational actors, including religious ones – an important dimension not covered here with any depth due to the focus on core principals within IR theories. This oversight of nonstate, transnational actors has been well canvassed elsewhere and in relation to religious actors (cf. Snyder, "Introduction"). However, it is important to point out that one of the most comprehensive treatments in IR of transnational actors does not include consideration of religious actors at all. See Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998). Some early exceptions include Ivan Vallier, "The Roman Catholic Church: A Transnational Actor," in Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, eds. *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 129–152 and Samuel P. Huntington, "Transnational Organizations in World Politics," *World Politics*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (April 1973), pp. 333–368, which includes the Catholic Church as one of 12 transnational organizations in the analysis. More recent additions include Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996); Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James P. Piscatori, eds. *Transnational Religion and Fading States* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997); and Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein, eds. *Religion in an Expanding Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

6 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983).

7 Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the 21st Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Chapter 7.

8 *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2001 and Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross, eds., *Atlas of Global Christianity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

9 Data are available online at: <http://www.freedomhouse.org>.

10 Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah, *God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (New York, NY: Norton, 2011).

11 The cartoon controversy erupted after the publication of 12 cartoons depicting prophet Mohammed in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* on September 30, 2005. Many Muslims claimed them to be blasphemous and disrespectful, while others, including the newspaper itself, claimed that the publication was a matter of freedom of expression and a challenge to a sense of self-censorship in criticizing Islam they felt was taking hold in Denmark. Jytte Klausen, *The Cartoons that Shook the World*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009).

12 For recent treatments of status and honor see, Barry O'Neill, *Honor, Symbols and War* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Daniel Seth Markey, "Prestige and the Origins of War: Returning to Realism's Root," *Security Studies*, Vol. 8 No., 4 (1999), pp. 126–172; Barry O'Neill, "Mediating National Honor: Lessons from the Era of Dueling," *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, Vol. 159, No. 1 (2003). On the importance of nationalism in war, see Barry R. Posen, "Nationalism, the Mass Army, and Military Power," *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Fall 1993), pp. 80–124.

13 Nationalists are by definition attached to particular parcels of territory, often called homelands. When ethnonationalist civil war breaks out, it tends to be defensive and therefore self-contained. See Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence: Identity, Interests and Indivisibility* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003). Also see Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion, and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Anthony W. Marx, *Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

14 Toft, Philpott, and Shah, *God's Century*.

15 Monica Duffy Toft, "Religion and Political Violence," in *Oxford Handbook of Religion and Violence*, Mark Juergensmeyer, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

16 Estimating hard numbers of birth and socialization rates to conversion rates is difficult; however, the consensus among scholars of religion is that most adherents follow a faith due to birth and socialization into a given faith (there are some exceptions, such as Bahais). For 2010, the *Atlas of Global Christianity* estimates the ratio for Christians, for instance, at about 3:1 (birth to conversion). Johnson and Ross, eds., *The Atlas of Global Christianity*, p. 61.

17 On this point see, Steven M. Fish, "Islam and Authoritarianism," *World Politics*, Vol. 55, No. 1 (October 2002), pp. 4–37.

18 Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

19 Samuel P. Huntington, "Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3 (Summer 1993), pp. 22–49 and Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations*.

20 Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in *Bringing the State Back In*, Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. 169–191.

21 Which is why the Treaties of Westphalia removed religion from the global arena to preclude it as a source of conflict between states. See Stephen D. Krasner, "Westphalia and All That," in *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, ed. Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993); Daniel Philpott, "The Religious Roots of Modern International Relations," *World Politics*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (January 2000), pp. 206–245; Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Andreas Osiander, "Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Westphalian Myth," *International Organization* Vol. 55, No. 2 (2001); Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics, and the Making of Modern International Relations* (London: Verso, 2003); Monica Duffy Toft, "Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War," *International Security* Vol. 30 (2007), pp. 97–131; Benjamin Straumann, "The Peace of Westphalia (1648) as a Secular Constitution," *Constellations* Vol. 15, No. 2 (June 2008); and Daniel Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires, and International Change* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

22 For an excellent historical account of the interplay of religious ideas, political ideologies, and

states, see Michael Burleigh, *Earthly Powers: The Clash of Religion and Politics in Europe, from the French Revolution to the Great War* (New York: Harper Collins, 2005).

23 Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*.

24 Note that already in this characterization we have run afoul of a core assertion of Realism, which is whether such a thing as a "secure state" can even exist. All variants of Realism share the assumption that a constant (human nature or anarchy) makes states necessarily and perpetually insecure.

25 Michael Barnett and Janice Stein, eds., *Sacred Aid*. Oxford University Press 2012.

26 In an interview reported by *Huffington Post* on Wednesday, 13 January 2010, US televangelist Pat Robertson opined that "Something happened a long time ago in Haiti, and people might not want to talk about it," he said on Christian Broadcasting Network's "The 700 Club." "They were under the heel of the French. You know, Napoleon III, or whatever. And they got together and swore a pact to the devil. They said, we will serve you if you'll get us free from the French. True story. And so, the devil said, okay it's a deal." Robertson said that "ever since, they have been cursed by one thing after the other." As quoted in Huffpost Media (online), http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/01/16/pat-robertson-haiti-quote_n_425841.html.

27 On religious outbidding, see Monica Duffy Toft, "Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War," *International Security* Vol. 30 (2007).

28 Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000); Monica Duffy Toft, "Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War," *International Security* Vol. 30 (2007).

29 John Mueller, *Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

30 See *Asia Times Online*, March 16, 2006 (http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/HC17Ak02.html).

31 On the impact of religion on the politics of Sudan's civil wars, see Monica Duffy Toft, "Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War," *International Security* Vol. 30 (2007).

32 For the strongest argument along these lines, see John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).

33 Carol Cohn, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals" *Signs*, Vol. 12, No. 4, (Summer, 1987), pp. 687–718.

34 See, for example, the older state building literature for elaboration: Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966) and Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968).

35 Edward N. Luttwak, "Give War a Chance," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 4 (July/August 1999), pp. 36–44.

36 Andrew Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics," *International Organization*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (1997), pp. 513–53.

37 Monica Duffy Toft, "Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War," *International Security* Vol. 30 (2007).

38 In addition to those works referenced in footnote 31, other recent entrants include Scott Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Elizabeth Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); and Ronald Hassner, *War on Sacred Grounds* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009).

International Finance

Michael Tomz

International finance touches nearly every aspect of the world economy, and it affects the welfare of billions of people. Foreign investors can contribute to economic growth, but they can also trigger severe economic crises. Governments and international organizations have similarly profound effects; their approaches to exchange rates, foreign aid, and financial regulations can mean the difference between prosperity and penury. Finally, the financial activities of firms and migrants can be crucial for economic welfare. Today, one cannot understand the world economy without studying international finance.

This essay focuses on one major aspect of international finance: foreign investment. I begin by considering the rules governing foreign investment, which have varied in interesting ways across countries and over time. For example, some governments have used taxes and regulations to discourage cross-border investment; others have permitted funds to enter and exit their countries freely. Before World War I, investors had considerable latitude to acquire equity in foreign enterprises and lend to foreign governments. Between the two world wars, most countries imposed capital barriers. Although many have now removed the barriers, some

continue to regulate the inflow and outflow of investments.

I concentrate much of this essay on the theme of investment regulations for two reasons. First, research on the political and economic aspects of capital controls has proliferated in recent years. Scholars have amassed new data about regulatory policies and investment flows, and have used this newfound information to analyze the causes and effects of financial globalization. I introduce readers to the latest academic breakthroughs and suggest avenues for future research. Second, my focus on investment regulations complements the chapter by Milner in this volume on foreign trade. As Milner shows, there is a lively debate about why some countries are more protectionist than others, and about how protectionism affects economic performance. Academics have studied domestic and international influences on trade policy and assessed the explanatory power of ideology and material interests. I show that a parallel research program has taken place in international finance. Readers can, therefore, compare the uses of commercial and financial regulations.

After reviewing the literature on investment regulations, I examine one especially

important type of investment: sovereign lending. For centuries, bondholders and banks have lent money to foreign governments for a variety of objectives, including economic development, military procurement, and domestic consumption. The practice continues to this day. Private bondholders and banks now advance hundreds of billions of dollars per year to foreign governments around the world.

History is replete with examples of governments that defaulted on loans from foreign creditors. Some failed to pay interest and principal on schedule, as required by the loan contract; others took the more extreme step of repudiating their obligations altogether. Standard & Poor's, a rating agency that keeps track of sovereign defaults, reports that governments in more than 100 countries have shortchanged their private foreign creditors at least once in the past two centuries. Notwithstanding these numerous defaults, though, most countries honor their foreign debts most of the time.

This essay addresses some of the key questions about sovereign debt. In a condition of international anarchy, with no world government to enforce debt contracts, why do countries repay their foreign debts? Do they fear that foreign actors would deprive them of access to future loans? Are they worried about punishment in other spheres of world affairs, such as trade embargoes, diplomatic pressure, and even military intervention? Are they concerned that voters and interest groups would punish them for failing to pay in full and on time? The answers are important not only for understanding why capital moves across borders, but also for shedding light on the sources of international cooperation more generally.

My selective review of the literature on international finance proceeds in two sections. First, I describe regulations on international investment and consider how three factors – economic ideas, international forces, and domestic pressures – have shaped government decisions about capital controls. Second, I turn to the topic of sovereign debt, and analyze

how both international and domestic forces have contributed to cooperation between governments and foreign lenders.

DESCRIBING REGULATIONS

Governments can take various steps to discourage the movement of capital across borders. First, they can regulate the quantity of financial flows. Governments might, for example, forbid international transactions, limit their amounts, or require investors to obtain permission before moving money cross-nationally. Second, governments can tax capital transactions. For instance, they could charge fees for the conversion of foreign currency (Tobin 1979) or levy “stamp duties” on the purchase or sale of foreign securities. Finally, governments can pass regulations that make international investments less profitable. Unremunerated reserve requirements (URRs), for example, mandate that foreigners who wish to invest in a country deposit some portion of their funds with the central bank, typically at no interest (Ostry 2010). Governments can achieve similar effects by maintaining multiple exchange rates and charging higher prices for the categories of foreign exchange operations they would like to discourage.

De jure measures of capital controls

Until recently, data about capital controls were limited in scope. Scholars had produced high-quality case studies about particular countries, but no comprehensive database described the policies of many nations over many years. The situation began to change in the mid-1990s, when researchers started compiling measures that were comparable across countries and over time. Their efforts contributed to a flood of statistical research about capital controls.

The new databases systematically organized information that the International

Monetary Fund had been publishing since 1950 in its *Annual Report on Exchange Rate Arrangements and Exchange Restrictions*. For each country and year, Grilli (1989) and Alesina, Grilli, and Milesi-Ferretti (1994) recorded whether or not the IMF described the country as having capital controls. Subsequent researchers documented not only the presence but also the intensity of capital controls (Quinn 1997), and gathered precise information about the timing of reforms (Cardoso and Goldfajn 1998; Henry 2000; Kastner and Rector 2003).

The detailed timelines advanced scholarship in several ways. First, they exposed midyear changes in policy, such as the capital controls that Malaysia imposed temporarily in September 1998. Second, they included government actions that reinforced the status quo, even when such reforms were not radical enough to change the aggregate scores developed by Grilli (1989) and Quinn (1997). Third, by dating reforms precisely, researchers could monitor how new policies moved markets on a daily basis. When reforms were measured annually, by contrast, it was difficult to distinguish the effects of liberalization from other influences on economic outcomes. Finally, timelines revealed who was governing when the reforms occurred, thereby contributing to research about the politics of financial globalization.

In another major development, researchers collected details about the subcategories of transactions to which capital controls applied. They obtained much of this information from the IMF, which in 1996 had begun publishing separate comments about controls on inflows versus outflows; on short-term versus long-term investments; on equity, debt, and foreign direct investment; and on domestic versus foreign actors (Brune et al. 2001; Johnson and Tamirisa 1998; Miniane 2004; Schindler 2009). These databases made it feasible to study each type of regulation individually.

Finally, researchers built measures that reflected the potential for evasion. It is well known that firms can use creative accounting to evade specific regulations (Garber 1998).

To transfer money out of the country, for example, a firm might charge \$900,000 for exports that should have cost \$1 million, and ask importers to invest the surplus and share the returns. Given the ability of firms to evade narrow laws, Chinn and Ito (2008) constructed a *de jure* index that included not only restrictions on the capital account, but also restrictions on the current account (relating to payments for international trade) and foreign exchange. They touted their index as a “good proxy” for the overall intensity of capital controls because it addressed the possibility of evasion via the current account (see also Abiad and Mody 2005).

De facto measures of openness

Other scholars have measured financial openness by looking at outcomes instead of rules. There can be an enormous gap, they note, between law and practice. Some governments enforce their laws effectively, but others lack either the motivation or the capacity to make private actors comply. Moreover, enforcement within a single country can change over time, causing the effective level of openness to vary even while laws remain the same. Finally, many laws have loopholes that are hard to summarize in cross-country indices. It may, therefore, be better to monitor the *de facto* decisions of investors and infer, based on their behavior, how much freedom they actually enjoy.

Feldstein and Horioka (1980) developed one of the first popular measures of *de facto* capital mobility. If there were no capital restrictions, they reasoned, people could invest anywhere in the world, rather than being limited to opportunities at home. Building on this insight, they computed the correlation between domestic savings and domestic investment for each country and interpreted it as a measure of impediments to capital flows. Critics objected, however, that savings and investment could covary even in the absence of restrictions (Bayoumi 1990).

Other researchers have compared interest rates across countries (e.g., Frankel 1991). If capital could flow freely, similar financial instruments would carry the same interest rates, otherwise there would be opportunities for arbitrage. Any observed differences in interest rates could, therefore, signal the existence of capital controls. Unfortunately, it has been difficult to find comparable financial instruments over many countries and years, and to ascertain how much of the disparity in interest rates is due to capital controls instead of differences in exchange rates, illiquidity, and the possibility of default.

Finally, researchers have used stocks and flows of international investments as *de facto* measures of globalization. Many have taken advantage of work by Lane and Milesi-Ferretti (2007), who summarized the external assets and liabilities of 145 countries beginning in 1970. Their data provide a convenient measure of capital mobility, under the assumption that mobility is proportional to the value of assets held abroad or the amount of money flowing across borders each year.

Patterns of capital openness

Thanks to Grilli, Quinn, and others, we now have a trove of data about capital controls. *De jure* regulations have changed markedly over the past century. Before World War I, there were few legal impediments to cross-border financial flows (Eichengreen 1996, 3). In fact, Quinn (2003, 190) estimated that “financial openness, measured as the absence of official restrictions on international financial transactions, was more extensive between 1890 and 1913 than at any time subsequently.” After 1913, many countries imposed tough controls and maintained them for much of the century.

In the 1970s, rich countries began dismantling their legal barriers to capital. The United States abolished its already modest restrictions on capital movements in 1974, and the United Kingdom followed in 1979. Germany and Japan moved more haltingly but eventually

rescinded their barriers, as well. Liberalization gained momentum in the 1980s, when members of the European Community endeavored to create a common market. By the end of the 1980s, both the EC and the OECD required open capital accounts (Abdelal 2007). Thus, according to all *de jure* measures, developed countries have liberalized considerably since the 1970s.

The same cannot be said of developing countries. Whereas nearly all OECD countries liberalized their investment laws in the 1970s and 1980s, developing countries split into three camps: some removed capital controls, others kept regulations constant, and still others added restrictions (Edison et al. 2004). Regional differences also emerged. Developing countries in Asia had, by the late 1970s, achieved high levels of *de jure* openness, but the crisis of 1997–1998 interrupted the trend. Latin America moved to a different beat, restricting capital flows in the 1970s but liberalizing them in the 1980s. The greatest changes came in the newly independent countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, which opened their capital markets after the fall of Communism. In contrast, Africa, China, and South Asia maintained fairly significant legal restrictions (Chinn and Ito 2008).

De facto indicators show many of the same patterns. Financial flows as a share of GDP were higher before 1913 than at any subsequent time. Capital flows fell during the interwar and immediate postwar periods, but have surged in recent years (Lane and Milesi-Ferretti 2007). Between 1995 to 2005, gross global capital flows tripled, and the value of cross-border assets grew at a similarly impressive pace, from around 50% of world GDP in 1970 to more than 300% in 2006 (Schindler 2009). Thus, both *de jure* and *de facto* measures confirm that global capital markets have followed a U-shaped pattern, starting with high mobility before World War I, moving to low mobility between the 1920s and the 1970s, and returning to high mobility, especially among rich countries, since the 1980s.

In developing countries, however, *de jure* trends have recently diverged from *de facto* trends. *De jure* openness in the developing world has been fairly flat, on average, since the 1980s. Over that same time period, *de facto* openness, measured as the sum of foreign assets and liabilities to GDP, has grown. The picture gets even murkier if, following Kose et al. (2009), one partitions the developing world into emerging and non-emerging economies. *De facto* openness has skyrocketed in emerging economies but leveled off elsewhere. *De jure* openness has done the opposite: stagnating in emerging markets while rising in other developing countries. Clearly, more research is needed to document patterns in the developing world and to reconcile *de jure* and *de facto* measures of financial globalization.

EXPLAINING CAPITAL CONTROLS: THE ROLE OF ECONOMIC IDEAS

The case for capital mobility

There are four classic arguments for capital mobility. The first says that capital mobility increases economic efficiency. If people are permitted to move capital freely, they will invest their money where it can be used most productively. Standard theories predict, for example, that unfettered capital will flow from rich countries, where capital is abundant and the marginal returns to investment are low, to poor countries, where capital is scarce and the potential returns to investment are high. Second, capital mobility can incentivize businesses to improve their performance. When a country opens itself to capital inflows, domestic firms that were previously insulated from foreign competition must go toe to toe with multinational corporations. The competition will compel domestic firms to become more productive.

Third, capital mobility can improve the performance of governments. Other factors being equal, people prefer to invest in countries

where government policies are conducive to economic growth. This fact creates powerful incentives for policy makers to adopt business-friendly policies and create effective political institutions. Leaders might, for instance, cut taxes, streamline their bureaucracies, and stabilize their political systems to attract and retain foreign capital. The fourth argument says that capital mobility can smooth economic outcomes. Investors can build internationally diversified portfolios that provide insurance against economic shocks such as recessions, natural disasters, and financial crises that hit some countries more severely than others. And citizens and countries can smooth their consumption over time by borrowing and lending internationally. Nations with young and fast-growing populations, for example, can borrow from countries where populations are older and savings rates are higher.

The case against capital mobility

Nevertheless, leaders might regulate capital flows in order to achieve other macroeconomic objectives. Many leaders want to conduct counter-cyclical monetary policy, *i.e.*, manipulate the money supply and interest rates to prevent the economy from falling into recession, while simultaneously preventing it from overheating. Leaders might also seek to stabilize exchange rates between their own currency and the currencies of other nations. Stable exchange rates can contribute to trade and investment by reducing the uncertainty associated with international transactions.

These objectives are incompatible with capital mobility. Put simply, capital mobility, exchange rate stability, and monetary policy autonomy cannot coexist. At any given time, a country can achieve no more than two of these three goals (Fleming 1962; Mundell 1963). The fact that leaders must choose among these three desiderata has been called the macroeconomic policy “trilemma” (Obstfeld, Shambaugh, and Taylor 2005).

To see why the three goals form an impossible or “unholy” trinity (Cohen 1993), consider a country with a fixed exchange rate and complete capital mobility. If the government tried to stimulate the economy by lowering interest rates, investors would move their money to nations with higher rates. The domestic money supply would shrink, causing interest rates to rise and thwarting the intended stimulus. The financial exodus would continue until domestic interest rates climbed to levels in other parts of the world. A government that wants effective monetary policies must, therefore, let the exchange rate float and/or regulate the flow of capital.

A second economic rationale for capital controls is to correct for failures in the market. The classical case for capital mobility presumes that other parts of the market are working properly. It assumes that investors have good information about opportunities at home and abroad; that countries allow free trade in goods and services, since trade barriers would encourage investment in inefficient but protected industries; and that countries tax capital at similar rates, otherwise money would flow to jurisdictions because of their status as tax havens (Cooper et al. 1999).

When these assumptions do not hold, capital controls may be useful. For instance, governments might adopt capital controls to prevent speculative herding. Financial markets are prone to wild swings: if some investors move into a country, others may follow not because they believe the investments are fundamentally sound, but because they hope to ride the momentum and sell at the peak before the market crashes. Conversely, if some investors flee, others might rush for the exits, making the crisis a self-fulfilling prophecy. Taxes on international transactions can slow investors who are following the herd instead of acting on the basis of deep research on economic fundamentals. More generally, controls on inflows can prevent countries from getting exposed to crises, while controls on outflows can buy countries time when a crisis strikes.

Capital controls can also protect the health of the domestic banking system. When domestic institutions have free access to foreign capital, they may gamble by borrowing enormous sums from foreigners on a short-term basis, or by taking large positions in foreign currencies (Singer 2007). If the bets go bad, the resulting chain reaction could jeopardize financial institutions and the economy as a whole. By limiting access to foreign funds, capital controls may offer an attractive way to prevent banking crises. In summary, capital controls may be warranted not only to deal with the trilemma, but also to counteract market failures.

The effects of ideas about the trilemma

To what extent have these kinds of economic arguments influenced policy making? Many authors cite the trilemma as an explanation for capital controls after World War II (Abdelal 2007; Eichengreen 1996; Helleiner 1994b; Kirshner 1999; McNamara 1998).¹ The leaders who reconstructed the postwar economy had several macroeconomic goals. They wanted to stabilize exchange rates, not only to increase certainty about international transactions but also to prevent the kinds of competitive devaluations that had disrupted trade during the Great Depression.² At the same time, postwar leaders wanted to restore full employment and insure citizens against economic shocks (Ruggie 1982).

As a step toward achieving these goals, they created the Bretton Woods exchange rate system. Countries pegged their currencies to the U.S. dollar, and the U.S. committed to swap dollars for gold at a fixed rate of \$35 per ounce. This new exchange rate system had profound implications for capital mobility. To make monetary policy – and thereby sustain full employment – in a world of fixed exchange rates, leaders regulated capital. Restrictions on investment thus became prominent features of the postwar economy.

The Bretton Woods system stabilized exchange rates until the early 1970s, but it eventually became untenable. Several U.S. policies, including the Vietnam War and new social programs, contributed to high inflation, large budget deficits, and trade imbalances. Confidence in the dollar declined, and the U.S. eventually suspended convertibility of the dollar into gold. Other countries responded by decoupling their currencies from the U.S. dollar and allowing them to fluctuate with changes in supply and demand. Floating exchange rates added uncertainty, but they also reduced the need for capital controls, which leaders had previously adopted to sustain both fixed exchange rates and effective monetary policy. In the post-Bretton Woods era, leaders could liberalize their capital accounts without sapping the power of monetary policy.

In summary, it seems that economic theory has guided major decisions about capital controls. Leaders repeatedly did what seemed best for their own countries and the world economy, subject to the well-understood constraints of the trilemma. Having committed to exchange rate stability and monetary policy autonomy at the end of World War II, they restricted the flow of capital. After floating their currencies in the 1970s, leaders no longer faced the hard choice between monetary autonomy and capital mobility, so they decided to reap the benefits of both – while sacrificing stable exchange rates in the process.

This argument, though attractive, is incomplete. The trilemma requires hard choices about macroeconomic objectives, but it does not predict how leaders will choose. In recent years, U.S. leaders have opted for open capital markets and monetary policy autonomy while foregoing the potential benefits of a fixed exchange rate. European leaders, though sharing the U.S. commitment to free capital, have created a common currency. Today, the European Central Bank makes monetary policy on behalf of the continent as a whole. China has gone in a third direction: by limiting capital flows, it has maintained a

fixed exchange rate and retained control over its money supply.

We are, therefore, left with a puzzle. Why do different leaders choose different elements of the unholy trinity? Much depends on how leaders weigh the relative advantages of capital mobility, fixed exchange rates, and monetary policy autonomy. Those weights depend not only on economic ideas but also on interest groups, a topic I explore later in this essay.

The effects of ideas about market failures

Many economists recommend capital controls not only to deal with the trilemma, but also as a second-best solution to market failures. Leaders at the end of World War II were deeply concerned about market failures. John Maynard Keynes, one of the principal architects of the postwar system, characterized investors as speculators and advocated permanent capital controls to minimize the risk of manias and crashes (Kirshner 1999). Others sympathized. As Cohen (2002) points out, nearly all the negotiators at Bretton Woods shared the view that the world needed protection against “mass movements of nervous flight capital.” Thus, postwar leaders favored capital controls not only to maintain fixed exchange rates and monetary policy autonomy, but also because they believed that capital markets were inherently unstable. Their decisions reflected the prevailing Keynesian view that governments could increase welfare by intervening in the market.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the intellectual pendulum shifted, however; neoliberalism supplanted Keynesianism as the dominant economic paradigm. Neoliberals argued that government policies and regulations were inefficient in general, and that free enterprise, including the unfettered movement of international capital, would produce the best economic outcomes. The neoliberal tide was strongest in the developed world, where

“a wide consensus” emerged among professional economists that “capital account liberalization – allowing capital to flow freely in and out of countries without restrictions – was unambiguously good” (Tirole 2002, ix).

Authors argue that this shift in economic thinking propelled financial globalization. As neoliberalism gained prominence, leaders dismantled barriers to international capital. The most significant changes took place in countries where policy makers were under the influence of neoliberal ideas. Chwieroth (2007a) found that capital account liberalization was more likely in countries whose policy makers had been trained at universities known for neoliberal economic thinking, and Quinn and Toyoda (2007) added that financial openness was negatively correlated with support for Communist parties.

Neoliberal thinking became so influential that in 1997 leaders considered rewriting the charter of the International Monetary Fund. When the IMF was conceived in 1944, Keynesian ideas were still in vogue, and capital controls were considered orthodox. Consequently, the IMF was given no jurisdiction over the capital accounts of member nations. By 1997, ideas had changed so profoundly that leaders nearly declared capital liberalization to be a new *raison d'être* of the IMF. This was “as close as the world [had] come to a universal norm and legal rule in favor of capital mobility” (Abdelal 2006, 22).

At just that moment, though, two developments pushed the ideological pendulum back toward the Keynesian camp. First, the world confronted a series of financial crises, beginning with the Asian crisis of the late 1990s. In the years leading up to the crisis, Asian banks, enterprises, and governments had borrowed extensively from abroad, causing foreign debt to soar as a share of national income. Against this backdrop, Thailand's decision to float the Baht in 1997 sparked a panic that spread throughout East Asia and precipitated a massive bailout by the IMF. The crisis touched every country in the region, but nations with capital controls fared better than others. Prominent economists

began recommending new regulations on foreign investment (e.g., Bhagwati 1998).

The Asian crisis illustrated a general phenomenon: economic successes and failures can cause observers to update their beliefs about the wisdom of capital controls. Research shows that observers learn from the experiences of their own country. Chwieroth (2010), for one, documented how a crisis in Indonesia during the 1960s validated liberal ideas about capital. Other researchers tested whether countries learn from the experiences of other nations. In large-scale statistical studies, Simmons and Elkins (2004) found that governments did not mimic the policy innovations of countries with the highest rates of economic growth, but they did copy nations in their cultural reference group.

The second major development occurred within the ivory tower. Using newly available data, academics began quantifying the effects of capital account liberalization on economic performance. The first systematic study, by Quinn (1997), found that capital liberalization was positively related to economic growth in a sample of 58 countries during the years 1960–1989. When Rodrik (1998) examined a larger sample of countries over a different period of time, though, he found no connection between capital openness and economic performance. Subsequent studies failed to resolve the debate: some found that liberalization increased growth, but most failed to uncover any systematic relationship (for a review, see Kose et al. 2009).

These findings fueled an academic debate about the merits of capital liberalization. Some scholars concluded that capital liberalization was not beneficial. Others argued that the benefits would have been evident if researchers had known where to look. Neoclassical theory predicts that liberalization should cause investment and growth in developing countries to surge immediately, but not to continue rising indefinitely. Applying this insight, Henry (2000, 2007) found that investment jumped shortly after developing countries opened their stock markets to foreigners. Rodrik and Subramanian

(2009) responded that liberalization had not increased economic growth, even in the short run, nor had it increased the ratio of investment to GDP.

Other economists began asserting that the benefits of liberalization needed time to materialize. According to Kose et al. (2009), capital mobility helps countries indirectly by enhancing market discipline, deepening the financial sector, strengthening political institutions, and improving macroeconomic policy making. These reforms take time, however. Thus, capital liberalization may not bring immediate benefits, but it should improve economic performance in the long run.

Finally, some economists contended that capital liberalization should have different effects on different countries. If liberalization causes investments to flow from areas where capital is abundant to areas where it is scarce, then liberalization should increase growth in developing countries while having the opposite effect in developed ones. However, these benefits may not materialize in developing countries that lack the institutions to handle the inflows. This logic may explain why developing countries hesitated to open their capital markets, even as many rich countries were lowering barriers to international finance (Brooks 2004).

The role of ideas in economic policy making

We have seen a striking correlation between economic ideas and capital account policies. After World War II, leaders imposed capital controls as a way to stabilize exchange rates while maintaining the effectiveness of monetary policy. With the return of floating exchange rates after the collapse of Bretton Woods, policy makers could open their capital markets while still maintaining macroeconomic autonomy. Today's economic thinking stands somewhere between those two extremes. Financial crises and academic research have undermined support for capital liberalization, but many economists and

policy makers continue to believe that open markets are beneficial – at least for some countries, some of the time. Today, it is not obvious what policies a well-intentioned leader would adopt. Thus, the explanatory power of ideas may be lower now than at any point in the postwar period.

Future research should examine how policy makers behave when there is no intellectual consensus. How do well-intentioned leaders choose among competing ideas, especially when one can find theoretical and empirical support for various alternatives? Do leaders update their thinking in response to new information, or do they cling to views from earlier stages in their educational and professional careers? To the extent that leaders and social groups are self-interested, does intellectual dissensus make it easier to deploy ideas in self-serving ways?

INTERNATIONAL EXPLANATIONS FOR CAPITAL POLICY

International trends in technology

A large body of literature examines the effect of international forces on national policies. Some authors argue that technological changes at the international level have rendered capital controls ineffective. In the advanced technological age, they explain, it has become difficult to block capital flows. According to Ralph Bryant (1987, 69) technological changes “would have caused a progressive internationalization of financial activity even without changes in government separation fences.”

Technology has undermined capital controls by reducing the cost of moving money. With improved telecommunications, the marginal cost of routing capital through third parties or changing the mode of transmission is trivial. At the same time, technology has increased the speed of financial flows. Capital now moves at the speed of light via fiber-optic cables. It has, therefore,

become easier for financiers to avoid regulators by rerouting their capital flows, and more difficult for regulators to keep up with transactions. Finally, investors have devised new ways to move money. Cross-border financial holdings have grown, in part, because of “securitization, the rise of hedge funds, and the widespread use of offshore special purpose vehicles by financial and nonfinancial corporations” (Lane and Milesi-Ferretti 2008, 327).

Proponents of “technological determinism” – the view that advanced technology and financial creativity have rendered capital controls obsolete – cite various trends to support their case. Cross-border financial flows surged many years before countries dismantled their financial regulations (Garrett 2000, 949; Goodman and Pauly 1993). Moreover, as noted earlier, de facto globalization has been increasing in developing countries, despite the persistence of de jure restrictions on capital. Nevertheless, there are signs that regulations have remained consequential. For example, recent laws have changed the composition of inflows by pushing investors toward equity instead of debt, and toward long-term positions instead of short-term ones (Ostry et al. 2010).³

Given the rapid pace of technological change, we need more research about whether and when capital controls are effective. This scholarly agenda is easier articulated than implemented, however. Despite great advances in data over the past decade, most measures of capital controls are not ideal for pinpointing the effects of specific policy reforms. Moreover, capital controls are often bundled with other policies, making it difficult to distinguish the effect of controls from the impact of other interventions. Nevertheless, more research in this area would benefit both scholars and policy makers.

International trends in trade policy

The effectiveness of capital controls has declined not only because of technological

innovations but also because of the global trend toward free trade in goods and services. Between the world wars, countries devalued their currencies to stimulate exports and retard imports. Looking back on this episode of competitive devaluation, postwar leaders concluded that “currency instability was incompatible with a multilateral system of free international trade” (Eichengreen 1996, 192–94). They erected capital controls to protect the new Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates, which in turn would contribute to the revival of world trade.

Postwar leaders took two other measures to foster trade. They signed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (the GATT, now the WTO), which established a multilateral forum for reducing protectionism, and they urged nations to liberalize their current accounts, thereby allowing importers to obtain foreign exchange to pay exporters (Simmons 2000). These reforms took many years, but by the early 1960s developed countries had restored the convertibility of their current accounts.

As trade volumes grew and barriers to current account transactions dropped, it became easier to circumvent capital controls. Firms moved money across borders by falsifying trade invoices and exploiting leads and lags in commercial finance. Multinational firms were especially well positioned to engage in these forms of circumvention. As they became adept at evading capital controls, multinationals gained leverage over governments (Goodman and Pauly 1993). If multinationals disliked a government’s policies regarding capital flows, they could threaten to move production offshore. Commercial liberalization made this threat credible by creating a world in which companies could produce in one location and sell in another. The credible and increasing threat of exit put pressure on governments to liberalize their capital accounts. Overall, the expansion of trade, the restoration of current account convertibility, and the growth of multinationals made circumvention of capital controls more feasible and widespread.

Competition for foreign capital

Another body of literature argues that capital liberalization is contagious: when some governments liberalize, others follow suit (Simmons and Elkins 2004). Follow-the-leader effects could arise for several reasons. First, liberalization by some countries could make it harder for others to keep capital in check. The European Community (EC) provides a case in point. In 1992, European countries agreed to create a single market in which not only goods but also capital could move freely among members. This structure opened new opportunities for investors to move money into and out of the EC. Investors could, for example, identify the EC member with the least restrictive rules vis-à-vis the rest of the world, and use that country as a conduit for dealing with partners outside the community. Knowing this, members of the community converged on the practices of their most liberal members; they allowed the free movement of capital not only within the EC but also in relations with nations outside the community.

Second, liberalization could create a competitive dynamic. When one government lowers its regulations on capital, other countries may feel compelled to match that move, lest they lose business and investment. Andrews (1994), Helleiner (1994b), and others cite competition as a principal cause of American and British deregulation. When the British “permitted the Euromarket to operate within its territory free of regulation,” it attracted the participation of American banks and corporations. More and more multinationals shifted their financial activities to this offshore market, putting pressure on the U.S., which responded in 1974 by removing capital controls. The British, “driven in part by a desire to retain London’s competitiveness vis-à-vis New York,” relaxed its controls in 1979 (Helleiner 1994a, 301).

In deciding whether to follow the lead of others, governments have responded most strongly to liberalization by their economic peers. Simmons and Elkins (2004) classified

countries as peers if they offered similar combinations of risks and returns (as judged by agencies such as Standard & Poor’s), and were therefore interchangeable from the perspective of foreign investors. They showed that the capital account policies of countries moved in tandem with the policies of similarly rated nations.

Although countries seem to compete for capital, other possibilities deserve mention. Perhaps countries liberalized at roughly the same time as their economic peers, not because they were competing for capital, but because they were responding to common external shocks. Economic peers tend to experience similar technological breakthroughs, pursue similar trade policies, and face similar ideological and material pressures from foreign governments and international organizations. The tendency to behave like other countries at similar levels of development may be due to correlated changes in technology, commercial policy, ideas, and political pressure, rather than competition for capital.

To the extent that competition has spurred globalization, one would like to know how the process began. What motivated the first countries to liberalize, thereby creating pressure for peers to follow? Perhaps international organizations and domestic interest groups got the liberal ball rolling.

International organizations and foreign governments

A significant literature examines the effect of the International Monetary Fund on financial globalization. In early work, authors assumed that the IMF wanted free-flowing capital and would compel borrowers to liberalize capital policies. Statistical tests of this hypothesis produced mixed results, however. Quinn and Toyoda (2007) showed that the estimated effect of IMF programs was sometimes positive and other times negative, depending on which variables they included in their statistical model, but was never distinguishable

from zero with a high level of confidence. Many other studies have reached similar conclusions (e.g., Abiad and Mody 2005).

There are at least four plausible explanations for the apparent absence of IMF influence. First, the organization never had much authority to push for capital liberalization. At its birth, the fund was authorized to promote trade and oversee exchange rates but not to liberalize capital flows. Although the IMF has imposed many conditions on borrowers over the years (Gould 2006; Stone 2008), researchers have found almost no cases in which the organization demanded capital liberalization as a *quid pro quo* for loans. Capital controls received mention in only 3% of conditionality agreements (Dreher 2002) and in scarcely any IMF letters of intent (Quinn and Toyoda 2007). In private meetings with foreign leaders, some IMF staff members apparently recommended capital liberalization and warned against clamping down on capital flows (Chwioroth 2008). Future researchers should look for direct evidence that these informal meetings contributed to capital liberation.

Second, the preferences of IMF officials have changed over time. The first cadre of IMF employees were Keynesians who thought that capital controls were beneficial (Chwioroth 2008). During their tenure, one would not expect an association between IMF programs and capital liberalization. As the IMF recruited new economists, though, its ideological complexion became increasingly neoliberal. Thus, the correlation between IMF programs and capital openness should have been stronger in the 1980s and 1990s than when Keynesian ideas held sway. Indeed, during periods when the staff was steeped in neoclassical theory, there was a positive correlation between IMF programs and capital liberalization (Chwioroth 2007b).

Third, previous scholars may have mischaracterized the fund's relations with developing countries. According to Mukherjee and Singer (2010), many governments want to remove capital controls but will not take that step unless they can minimize the

political fallout by blaming the IMF. Mukherjee and Singer argue that countries use the IMF as a scapegoat for reforms they would have implemented otherwise. The authors find that IMF programs are correlated with capital liberalization, but only in countries that also have large enough welfare states to compensate citizens for the damage that reforms might cause. In follow-up research, scholars could investigate whether politicians publicly blame the IMF for capital liberalization, and whether citizens and interest groups accept the excuse. Researchers could also rethink the complex interaction between IMF programs and welfare states, since the need to blame the IMF should be particularly acute in countries that do not have strong safety nets.

Finally, the IMF may have appeared irrelevant in previous statistical analyses because the organization undertakes programs strategically, not randomly. IMF programs typically occur in response to financial crises. A null or negative correlation between IMF programs and capital liberalization could, therefore, reflect the fact that IMF programs occur at times when leaders would be most tempted to adopt emergency capital controls. This kind of "selection bias" is common in international relations research and can complicate inferences about cause and effect. No single method will solve the problem completely, but researchers can make progress by supplementing advanced statistical analyses with matched-case comparisons and, where possible, laboratory and survey experiments about the preferences of citizens and elites.

A smaller section of literature has examined the causal role of the U.S. and other developed countries. As the leading economic power in the world, the U.S. has a "hegemonic interest" in capital liberalization (Helleiner 1994b). It benefits when other countries use the dollar as a reserve currency, and when U.S. citizens and firms can invest freely. Consequently, the U.S. government might use its influence to promote capital liberalization around the world.

Research on the U.S. has produced mixed findings, however. Cohen (2002, 2003) concluded that U.S. policy was the “most decisive” reason why many countries kept their capital markets open in the 1980s and 1990s, despite pressure for closure. Abdelal (2007), in contrast, contended that the U.S. was “irrelevant” to the construction of liberal rules, which French and other European policy makers devised and promoted (Abdelal 2006, 1). Future research could reexamine these contradictory findings to clarify whether and how IMF and the U.S. have affected financial regulations.

DOMESTIC EXPLANATIONS FOR CAPITAL POLICY

Another important body of literature attributes capital liberalization to domestic forces, including interest groups. Contributors point out that capital liberalization has different effects on different groups: some groups gain, whereas others lose. These differential effects give people a motive to organize into pro-liberalization and anti-liberalization coalitions, and to lobby for or against capital controls.

Winners and losers from capital liberalization

Who wins and who loses from financial globalization? Three groups have received considerable attention in the literature: liquid capital, fixed capital, and labor. Liquid capital refers to financial institutions and investors who have liquid assets and could, if permitted, move their money into and out of countries. Fixed capital, in contrast, refers to factories, land, and other assets that would be difficult or impossible to relocate abroad. Finally, labor refers to workers. When theorizing about capital controls, scholars generally assume that emigration would be prohibitively expensive, and therefore treat workers as internationally immobile.

The effect of capital liberalization on each group will vary by country. In countries where capital is abundant but labor is relatively scarce, liberalization will bring economic benefits to people with liquid capital (Frieden 1991). The logic is that controls trap capital at home, forcing people with liquidity to accept lower interest rates than they could earn in other parts of the world. If controls are lifted, investors will shift their assets to countries with higher returns. At the same time, liberalization opens new opportunities for diversification, enabling investors to reduce their exposure to risk. Overall, liberalization should help liquid investors in developed countries by offering a more attractive combination of risk and return.

In capital-poor countries, by contrast, liberalization will have both negative and positive consequences for people with liquid assets. On the one hand, liberalization will reduce returns on investment. As capital controls are removed, foreign money will rush in, driving down domestic interest rates and depriving local capitalists of the benefits they enjoyed when the economy was shielded from foreign competition. On the other hand, liberalization will give capital holders more options. Instead of investing entirely at home, they can assemble an internationally diversified portfolio that reduces the volatility of their income. The net effect could be either positive or negative, depending on whether the benefits of diversification outweigh the losses associated with lower interest rates.

Next, consider the owners of fixed capital. Under financial autarky, they can borrow at low interest rates in capital-rich countries but must pay higher rates in capital-poor countries. Globalization reverses this pattern: as money flows from capital-rich to capital-poor countries, interest rates in both areas will converge toward the world level. Consequently, liberalization will increase the cost of borrowing for industrialists and landowners in the capital-rich world, while having the opposite effect on capital-poor nations (Frieden 1991).

Finally, consider the effects on labor. Capital controls will benefit workers in capital-rich countries by ensuring that money is invested domestically. When controls are lifted, capital will rush for the exits, causing domestic employment and wages to fall. One can expect the opposite in capital-poor countries. Thus, liberalization should help workers in capital-poor countries but hurt workers in capital-abundant ones.

Table 28.1 summarizes the anticipated effects of capital account liberalization on liquid capital, fixed capital, and labor. If groups organized according to their economic interests, the owners of liquid capital would take one side of the policy debate, whereas workers and the owners of fixed capital would take the other side of the debate. The policy outcome – the extent of regulation versus liberalization – would depend on the relative power of these opposing camps.

The predictions in Table 28.1 assume that governments, after restricting cross-border capital flows, would let the domestic forces of supply and demand determine interest rates. In many cases, though, governments in the developing world not only regulate international investment but also practice domestic “financial repression.” They force domestic capitalists to pay high taxes and/or to lend to the government at below-market interest rates. In such capital-poor countries, liberalization could give people with liquid assets cause for celebration, not only by creating opportunities for diversification, but also by allowing them to escape the financial repression that limited their earnings under autarky (Haggard and Maxfield 1996).

Table 28.1 also rests on the premise that capital would flow from developed countries to developing ones. As Frieden (1991) acknowledges, though, the distinction between capital-rich and capital-poor countries may be too simplistic. Rich countries may, in fact, be capital importers. A notable example, the U.S., has in recent decades been drawing capital from the rest of the world.

Finally, the predictions Table 28.1 presume that capital controls are effective. This point is worth emphasizing because it exposes a tension between technological determinism and theories about domestic politics. If technology makes capital controls obsolete by enabling firms to evade restrictions at a low cost, then the distributional consequences of *de jure* controls should be modest. Put another way, technological advances should reduce domestic political conflict over capital controls.

Winners and losers via government policy

Capital liberalization could affect domestic groups not only by changing interest rates and allowing financial diversification (the mechanisms in Table 28.1), but also by altering economic policies. First, openness could reduce the government’s ability to redistribute income from capitalists to laborers. In the twentieth century, governments expanded welfare programs for the poor and unemployed, and provided retirement benefits for the elderly. Some believe that capital controls helped make redistributive policies feasible, by allowing governments to tax the incomes, transactions, and wealth of liquid capitalists. Without controls, they fear, capital might flee to jurisdictions with lower tax rates, leaving the government with less revenue for social programs.

Second, the free flow of capital could undermine government regulations. In the presence of capital controls, investors must accept labor laws that guarantee workers a minimum wage and shield them from unsafe working conditions. Sans capital controls,

Table 28.1 The Effects of Liberalization on Economic Groups

| <i>Group</i> | <i>Capital-rich country</i> | <i>Capital-poor country</i> |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Liquid capital | Gain | Ambiguous |
| Fixed capital | Lose | Gain |
| Labor | Lose | Gain |

investors could head for countries with weaker labor standards. Thus, capital liberalization could trigger not only a fiscal but also a regulatory “race to the bottom” that would benefit mobile capitalists at the expense of labor.

Much research has examined whether globalization has caused a race to the bottom. Surprisingly, scholars have not found much affirmative evidence. Garrett (2000) connected capital mobility with low public spending, but Quinn (1997) found that capital liberalization was positively correlated with corporate taxes and policies that redistributed income to the poor. Hays (2003) contended that globalization was causing convergence around moderate policies, and Mosley (2003) added that even in an era of globalization, governments had considerable “room to move.” Indeed, corporate tax rates in OECD countries rose as a percentage of GDP between 1970 and 2005, the very years when OECD countries were dismantling capital controls (Freeman and Quinn 2012).

Why haven’t governments raced to the bottom? The literature offers two explanations, one focusing on the preferences of governments and the other focusing on the preferences of capital. Authors in the first category, such as Plümper, Troeger, and Winner (2009), point out that governments have conflicting objectives: they want to compete for capital, but they also need support from domestic constituents, many of whom demand social welfare programs and equitable tax rates. Domestic pressures for welfare and equity may have prevented governments from racing to the bottom (see also Basinger and Hallerberg 2004).

Authors in the second category emphasize the preferences of capital. When deciding where to invest, investors consider not only tax policies but also political institutions, infrastructure, and the overall business climate. Perhaps capitalists tolerate high taxes as the price of doing business in countries that are attractive for other reasons (Maxfield 1998). The main problem with this argument is that investors normally can choose among

several countries with similar infrastructures and political systems. Tax policy may be only one of many criteria in the minds of capitalists, but it should influence decisions at the margin.

The likelihood of collective action

Although globalization creates winners and losers, it is not a given that affected groups would mobilize politically. Many people are neither aware of capital regulations nor sophisticated enough to understand their effects. Moreover, even people who understand the stakes may not coalesce if they perceive capital liberalization as a “nonexcludable” policy. A nonexcludable policy is a benefit that is impossible to provide selectively; if the benefit is supplied at all, it must be offered to everyone. An excludable policy, on the other hand, is a targeted benefit, which can be offered to some people while being withheld from others. As Mancur Olson (1965) explained, individuals are more likely to collaborate to obtain excludable goods than to obtain nonexcludable ones.

The concept of excludability is useful for predicting political action. Trade protection is commonly seen an excludable good, which governments can offer to some industries but withhold from others. The exchange rate, on the other hand, is archetypically nonexcludable. If the government opts for a fixed exchange rate, the fixed rate will be available for all citizens, whether they lobbied for it or not. Because fixed exchange rates are nonexcludable, individuals and businesses may feel tempted to leave the lobbying to others. Consequently, lobbying about the exchange rate should be less common than lobbying about trade policy (Gowa 1988).

Capital controls fall somewhere between these extremes. Unlike fixed exchange rates, capital controls can be – and often are – applied selectively; the government can regulate specific types of flows, or specific industries, while giving others freedom to move. In practice, though, governments often

make sweeping changes to the entire capital control regime. For that reason, we might expect more free riding on the question of capital controls than on trade protection for specific industries.

Evidence about domestic interest groups

There has been surprisingly little empirical research about the role of domestic groups in capital liberalization. Haggard and Maxfield (1996) found that domestic groups shaped the capital account policies of four middle-income countries, and Goodman and Pauly (1993) reached a similar conclusion about four developed nations. Chwioroth (2007a), on the other hand, found no statistical support for interest-based theories, and noted that peak organizations in the U.S. (such as the Institute of International Finance, which represents the owners of mobile capital) have been remarkably circumspect about capital liberalization.

Other researchers have tested for a correlation between the ideological orientations of governments and the capital account policies they pursue. If left-wing governments favor workers whereas right-wing governments favor capitalists, then – at least in capital-rich countries, where liberalization would benefit capital – liberalization should be more common under right-wing governments.

When Alesina et al. (1994) tested this hypothesis on a sample of 20 OECD countries, though, they found no relationship between the ideological orientation of government and the use of capital controls. Subsequent research produced more definitive findings. Garrett (2000) concluded that capital restrictions in OECD countries were more likely under left-wing governments and in nations with powerful labor unions. Kastner and Rector (2003) probed the same question with fine-grained data from 19 OECD countries and confirmed that right-wing governments were more likely than left-wing ones to open the capital account.

Research has uncovered similar patterns in developing countries. After reviewing the experiences of 19 Latin American countries during the 1980s and 1990s, Brooks and Kurtz (2007) judged that right-wing executives were more likely to liberalize the capital account. Mukherjee and Singer (2010), too, found a positive association between right-wing governments and capital liberalization. These findings, though plausible, contradict standard theories about the distributional effects of capital controls. If capital liberalization in developing countries would help workers while hurting liquid investors (Table 28.1), then left-wing governments in the developed world should favor liberalization, whereas right-wing governments should oppose it.

Moreover, even in the developed world, it is unclear how to interpret the correlation between right-wing governments and financial liberalization. This correlation might arise because governments understand the distributional effects of capital controls and choose policies that are optimal for their constituents. Alternatively, the correlation could reflect neoliberal ideas, which are more prominent on the political right than on the left. Perhaps right-wing governments liberalize capital flows (and left-wing governments regulate them) not to promote the interests of favored domestic groups, but to implement policies that fit their ideological worldview.

Future research should proceed in several directions. We need more empirical studies about the effect of capital liberalization on groups, and the extent to which those groups organize politically. At the same time, we need more nuanced theories that address how different types of capital controls have different distributional effects. From a political and economic standpoint, it should matter whether capital regulations apply to residents or nonresidents, to inflows or outflows, and to portfolio or foreign direct investment. Finally, more work is needed to explain the seemingly anomalous behavior of developing countries, and to distinguish the effects of ideas from the effects of material interests.

The effects of democratic institutions

Decisions about capital controls depend not only on interest groups, but also on political institutions. In most countries, the preferences of citizens and interest groups are not immediately reflected in government policy. Instead, those preferences get filtered through domestic institutions, which amplify the voices of some groups while dampening or even silencing the voices of others. A growing body of literature examines how political institutions affect the translation of social preferences into policy outcomes. Here, I review what researchers have discovered about the consequences of democracy for capital controls.

Democracy is a mechanism for making leaders accountable to the electorate. By empowering citizens to select leaders who share their preferences and to remove leaders who step out of line, democracy increases the chance that public policy reflects the will of the people. To predict how democracy affects the capital account, researchers first need to specify what voters want.

In the 1980s and 1990s, many observers assumed that citizens would oppose liberal reforms, including capital liberalization. They argued that opening the capital account would bring economic pain, which citizens would instinctively resist. The preferences of citizens would loom larger in some political regimes than in others, however. Democratic leaders might feel reluctant to liberalize for fear that they might alienate voters. Autocratic leaders, in contrast, would be more willing to implement painful reforms, because they could upset the populace without jeopardizing their hold on power.

This logic misses the fact that citizens might gain from capital liberalization and want leaders to pursue it. If the predictions in Table 28.1 are valid, workers in developing countries should support capital liberalization. To the extent that democracy empowers those workers, it should make developing-country governments more likely to open

their capital accounts (for a similar argument about trade, see Milner and Kubota 2005). Conversely, democracy should impede liberalization in developed countries. Although rich countries have more capital than poor ones, the median voter in even the most advanced economies is a worker, not someone with abundant liquid capital. Workers in those countries would suffer from liberalization. Consequently, democracy should contribute to capital liberalization in developing countries but thwart liberalization in the developed world.

Many researchers have tested for a relationship between democracy and capital account openness, but no clear pattern has emerged. Instead, the estimated effect of democracy has varied from study to study, depending on the data and the statistical model. Simmons and Elkins (2003), for example, found some evidence that democracy slowed liberalization, but later reached the opposite conclusion (Simmons and Elkins 2004). Garrett (2000) contended that democracy was inconsequential for liberalization in OECD countries, but Brune et al. (2001) concluded that democracy caused liberalization in the developing world. Milner and Mukherjee (2009) detected a positive association between democracy and capital openness, but Mukherjee and Singer (2010) found that the effect of democracy was statistically indistinguishable from zero.

Long-run studies have not resolved the confusion. Although Eichengreen and Leblang (2008) found a positive relationship between democracy and liberalization over the sweep of an entire century, they did not report separate estimates for each time period in their sample. When Quinn (2003) broke his sample into periods, he estimated that democracy had a positive effect on capital openness after World War II, but a negative effect before World War I.

Why have researchers failed to find a clear connection between democracy and regulations on capital? One possibility is that voters do not understand how capital controls affect them (Brooks and Kurtz 2007).

A second conjecture is that capital controls are not salient enough to affect elections. Some aspects of globalization, including trade and immigration, have become central issues in political campaigns, but financial globalization has not figured so prominently. Even during the 1970s and 1980s, when developed countries opened their capital accounts, there was no “significant public debate of the type that regularly takes place concerning trade policy decisions” (Helleiner 1994a, 311).

Although obscure to most voters, capital account policies may nonetheless affect elections indirectly. In many models of democratic politics, citizens engage in retrospective economic voting: if the economy has improved, they retain the incumbent politicians, but if the economy has soured, they throw the incumbents out. Incumbent politicians therefore have incentives to adopt economic policies –including capital account policies – that would benefit the electorate. In still other models of economic policy, citizens take cues from interest groups and parties that understand the complex effects of globalization. More research is needed about how retrospective voting and cue-taking affect the likelihood of capital liberalization in democracies.

Another potential reason for the inconsistent empirical results is that the effect of democracy should vary across countries. For example, the association between democracy and capital liberalization should be stronger in capital-poor countries than in capital-rich ones (but c.f. Eichengreen and Leblang 2008, who make the opposite prediction). The impact of democracy may also vary with the cultural views of the electorate. A growing body of research shows that cultural variables such as ethnocentrism, isolationism, and nationalism predict attitudes toward trade and immigration (e.g., Mansfield and Mutz 2009). Perhaps cultural attitudes influence how voters think about financial globalization, as well. If so, democracy could either spur or retard globalization, depending on the cultural attitudes of voters.

Finally, democracy may be a consequence, rather than a cause, of financial liberalization. Maxfield (1998, 2000) argued that capital liberalization weakens authoritarian governments by depriving them of opportunities to buy political support in exchange for the right to move money across borders. In a large sample of countries, Eichengreen and Leblang (2008) discovered a two-way relationship, in which democracy caused globalization and vice versa. Milner and Mukherjee (2009), on the other hand, found that the effect ran in only one direction: from democracy to capital liberalization. Still other researchers have concluded that the effect of globalization on democracy depends on the size of the welfare state (Rudra 2005) and preexisting levels of inequality (Freeman and Quinn 2012). Clearly, more research is needed about the complex relationship between democracy and financial liberalization.

The effects of political fragmentation

Other political institutions, in addition to democracy, could affect financial policy making. Some scholars have studied the effects of “veto players,” which have the power to block policy changes. They hypothesize that veto players contribute to gridlock and “wars of attrition,” wherein each player delays reforms as long as possible in the hope of extracting concessions from others (Alesina et al. 1994).

Empirical research about veto players has led to mixed results. In an admirably detailed study that assigned exact dates to reforms in OECD countries, Kastner and Rector (2003) found that countries with a large number of veto players changed their capital account policies less often than countries with concentrated authority. Mukherjee and Singer (2010) also found a negative relationship between veto players and financial liberalization. Alesina et al. (1994) and Brooks and Kurtz (2007), on the other hand, found a

positive connection between political fragmentation and capital liberalization.

Why these contradictory findings? In theory, the effect of veto players should depend on their preferences. If all veto players have similar preferences, their existence should not impede reform. If, on the other hand, veto players have heterogeneous preferences, their existence could contribute to deadlock. The general point is that political institutions – democracy, veto players, and the like – translate preferences into policy. The effect of institutions should, therefore, vary with the desires of the actors whose preferences are getting translated.

Another relevant institution is the central bank. Central banks are independent to the extent that they can make monetary policy without interference from the government. Under the trilemma discussed earlier, no country can simultaneously maintain capital mobility, fixed exchange rates, and monetary policy autonomy. Thus, governments that want to retain control over monetary policy should favor capital controls. Governments that have delegated power to an independent central bank, on the other hand, should be more willing to accept capital mobility, since the opportunity costs to the government (in terms of monetary policy) would be lower.

Indeed, Alesina et al. (1994), Henning (1994), Grilli and Milesi-Ferretti (1995), and others have found a negative correlation between capital controls and central bank independence. There are several interpretations for this pattern, however. Some might infer that central bank independence leads to capital openness, but others might conclude that the process runs the other way around. Still others might suspect that the correlation between central bank independence and capital mobility is spurious: a third factor, such as neoliberal ideology or the desire for monetary policy autonomy, could explain decisions regarding both the central bank and the capital account. Future research should arbitrate among these interpretations.

Finally, scholars have scrutinized the relationship between political stability and

capital openness. In standard models of economic policy making, political instability shortens the time horizons of leaders, causing them to focus on the present instead of thinking about the long run. Leaders with short time horizons characteristically choose policies that bring immediate gains, even if doing so would risk disaster in the distant future. Way (2005) applied this logic to capital account liberalization. As financial barriers fell, he argued, capital would rush into developing countries, contributing to a short-term boom. A crash, if it occurred, would take place years in the future, beyond the reference point of myopic leaders. Indeed, Way found that unstable governments in the developing world were especially likely to open their capital accounts.

In summary, our understanding of capital controls has expanded tremendously in recent years. Aided by new data and sophisticated research methods, scholars have shown how economic ideas, international forces, and domestic pressures have shaped government decisions about the regulation of cross-border financial flows.

INTERNATIONAL EXPLANATIONS FOR SOVEREIGN DEBT

When investors can move money across borders, they engage in various types of foreign investments, including loans to foreign governments. International loans raise serious questions of credibility, however. After receiving funds from abroad, the government could refuse to pay interest and principal in full and on time, and in extreme cases it might even repudiate the debt. Moreover, without a world government to enforce property rights, it is not obvious to whom creditors would appeal, or how they could recover their money.

Why do governments ever repay their foreign debts, and what gives investors the confidence to lend? Much of the literature about sovereign debt has attempted to answer

this fundamental question.⁴ In general, scholars have identified two categories of reasons for lending and repayment. Some argue that governments repay because default would trigger an adverse *international* reaction, such as the loss of access to foreign credit or punishment in another sphere of foreign affairs. Others attribute repayment to *domestic* political factors, including voters, interest groups, and institutions. I discuss international explanations first, and consider domestic explanations in the next section of this essay.

Loss of access to foreign credit

In the seminal model by Eaton and Gersovitz (1981), creditors compel the foreign borrower to repay by threatening to apply a permanent credit embargo. Although intuitive, this form of punishment might not be credible. To bar a defaulter from global capital markets, an aggrieved creditor would need the cooperation of most – if not all – current and future lenders around the world. It is not obvious, however, why profit-seeking bondholders and banks would join forces to punish a government for defaulting on someone else's loans.

In theory, creditors might find ways to surmount this credibility problem, and thereby make the prospect of a credit embargo more plausible. Kletzer and Wright (2000) suggest “cheat the cheater” strategies in which each lender not only threatens to punish the borrower, but also threatens to punish lenders who fail to implement the retaliatory strategy. Wright (2004, 2005) adds that institutions, including syndicates, can help creditors coordinate their retaliatory efforts. Finally, major banks could coerce smaller ones, which depend on large partners for correspondent services and participation in international loans (Lipson 1985).

There is a second reason why defaulters might not be able to borrow. Perhaps defaulters lose access to funds, not because creditors are coordinating a vindictive embargo, but because default reveals negative information

about the country's creditworthiness. Default could, for example, signal that leaders lack the political will and administrative competence to honor international obligations, or that domestic economic conditions are worse than previously thought (Sandleris 2008). Having received this bad news, investors might refrain from making new loans, not as an act of financial retribution, but simply because they now estimate that additional loans would not pay off (Cole, Dow, and English 1995; Tomz 2007).

What does the evidence say? One major study, by Peter Lindert and Peter Morton (1989, 40) concluded that “investors seem to pay little attention to the past repayment record of the borrowing governments ... They do not punish governments with a prior default history, undercutting the belief in a penalty that compels faithful repayment.” Subsequent research has painted a different picture, though. Over the centuries, defaulters have indeed been rationed out of capital markets, at least in the short run. Most eventually regained access, but not before settling at least some of their arrears (Gelos, Sahay, and Sandleris 2004; Tomz 2007).

Related research has asked whether investors demand higher interest rates from countries with a history of default. Here, too, the academic consensus has shifted. Eichengreen and Portes (1989) and Jorgensen and Sachs (1989) claimed that countries that fell into arrears during the Great Depression did not subsequently receive worse terms of credit than countries that had paid in full. Subsequent research found that defaulters do, in fact, pay significantly higher interest rates, but the premiums decline over time (Borensztein and Panizza 2009; Flandreau and Zumer 2004; Özler 1993; Tomz 2007).

Historically, investors have also charged higher interest rates to new borrowers than to more established entities, to cover the risk of lending to a potential “lemon.” As borrowers acquired records (as they became more seasoned participants in capital markets), investors updated their beliefs and recalibrated the terms of credit. Countries that paid, thereby

distinguishing themselves from bad types, saw their risk premiums decline asymptotically toward a risk-free rate (Flandreau and Flores 2012; Tomz 2007). These patterns, too, are consistent with informational theories of sovereign debt.

Finally, we now know that investors do not respond to defaults in a knee-jerk fashion. Instead, as anticipated by Grossman and Van Huyck (1988), they examine the economic context in which the default took place and judge whether the default was excusable. Historically, investors have shown especially low regard for borrowers that defaulted without a valid economic excuse; they generally have not disparaged debtors for defaulting during hard times; and they have upgraded low-rated debtors that exceed expectations by servicing their debts under extreme hardship (Tomz 2007). Overall, countries have gained or lost access to loans based not only on their behavior but also on the circumstances they faced.

Other negative reactions by foreigners

Beyond losing access to capital, a country that defaults could suffer costs in other areas of international relations. For instance, it could become a target of military intervention. The idea of using arms to extract repayment may seem odd today, but many scholars believe this mode of enforcement prevailed until the early twentieth century. Martha Finnemore (2003), for example, writes that militarized debt collection was “accepted practice” in the nineteenth century and fell from favor only after the Second Hague Peace Conference in 1907. Mitchener and Weidenmier (2010) claim, as well, that gunboat diplomacy was “effective and commonly used” to enforce debts before 1913. Tomz (2007) maintains, however, that creditor governments generally did not use – or even threaten to use – force on behalf of bondholders, and that investors and borrowers expected default to trigger military intervention. Notwithstanding these historical

debates, all agree that today countries do not use military intervention to enforce debt contracts.

More commonly, scholars argue that default would lead to a decline in international trade (Bulow and Rogoff 1989). The trade of a defaulting country could suffer for at least three reasons. First, creditors could use tariff and nontariff barriers to reduce trade with the defaulter. As Philip Lane (2004, 2) notes, “The imposition of trade sanctions on the offending country” is “the classic punishment ... in the sovereign debt literature.” Second, default could lead to the collapse of commercial credit, thereby increasing the costs of trade (Kohlscheen and O’Connell 2007). Finally, creditors could seize the debtor’s foreign assets, including goods that are sitting abroad.

Researchers have begun to compile systematic evidence about the effect of default on trade. When countries default on official Paris Club debt, they experience a decline in imports and exports relative to the levels one would expect given the standard “gravity” model (Rose 2005; see also Borensztein and Panizza 2010). It remains unclear why these changes in trade occur, though. If the decline were due to trade sanctions, trade with creditor countries would fall faster than trade with other countries, but Martinez and Sandleris (2011) found the opposite: default disproportionately depressed trade with *non*-creditors. Tomz (2007) found no evidence that default triggered trade sanctions in earlier periods, either.

Evidence for other trade-related mechanisms is equally ambiguous. Borensztein and Panizza (2009) found that default caused commercial credit to shrink, but only for a short period and not by enough to explain the drop in trade that Rose (2005) had observed. The seizure of assets has also proved to be an unlikely suspect in this “missing trade” mystery. For much of history, the principle of sovereign immunity prevented creditors from suing a defaulter in foreign courts. Moreover, even if creditors could win a judgment, they would find little to take, since most borrowing countries do not own extensive assets in

foreign jurisdictions. In general, creditors have little legal recourse against defaulters, and most attempts to attach assets have failed (Panizza et al. 2009).

Cole and Kehoe (1998) suggested a different mechanism by which default could lead to costs in other spheres of international relations. Default could signal that the government is unreliable, not just in debt, but in international affairs more generally. Foreigners might, therefore, be less willing to make direct investments or enter into trade agreements, environmental pacts, and military alliances with the offending state. The concept of reputational spillovers seems plausible, but few have tried to test it empirically (Fuentes and Saravia 2010; Rose and Spiegel 2009; Tomz and Wright 2010). This seems like an especially promising area for future research.

DOMESTIC EXPLANATIONS FOR SOVEREIGN DEBT

Most theories of sovereign debt assume that governments honor their commitments to avoid losing access to foreign capital or provoking other negative reactions by foreigners. In recent years, though, scholars have examined how domestic politics affects the calculation to repay. This is a welcome development. When governments appropriate funds to service the foreign debt, they are making a political choice to prioritize obligations to foreigners instead of reneging on the foreign debt and channeling the savings into domestic programs. In this section, I review recent work about the effect of domestic institutions on sovereign debt.

The effect of checks and balances

Some authors argue that democracies are more creditworthy than autocracies, due to the higher frequency of checks and balances, or veto points, in democratic regimes. The classic reference in this literature is North

and Weingast (1989), who argued that the Glorious Revolution enhanced the creditworthiness of the government by empowering the parliament as a counterweight to the crown. Extending this line of research, Cox (2011) has developed a model in which “bonds will be repaid when a blocking coalition of office-holders owns enough bonds, because such coalitions have the constitutional power to ensure repayment.”

But the effect of checks and balances depends critically on the preferences of citizens and interest groups. As Stasavage (2003, 2007) rightly emphasizes, checks and balances will not change the outcome unless the groups with veto power have diverse attitudes about debt default. If, on the contrary, domestic groups concur about the best way to handle public debts, structural checks and balances will be irrelevant.

The effect of checks and balances should also depend on the reversion point, the policy to which government would revert if one or more players blocked action. Does default require an affirmative act by government officials, or could it occur passively, due to the failure of leaders to appropriate the funds for debt repayment? If repayment requires affirmative action, the presence of veto players could lead to a war of attrition (Alesina and Drazen 1991) between competing groups, which could delay or prevent payments to foreign creditors. Thus, the presence of veto players could either increase or decrease the probability of default, depending on the reversion point.

Preliminary research suggests that, on average, veto players increase creditworthiness. Coalition governments default less often than unified ones (Saiegh 2009), and parliamentary regimes pay their debts more often than other types of democracies (Kohlscheen 2010). It is not clear how to interpret these findings, though. After all, many presidential regimes – in which bills typically require the consent of both the executive and the legislature – have more veto points than parliamentary ones. We need more cross-country research about who enjoys veto power on issues of debt, and

what policies would prevail in the absence of agreement.

The effect of electoral democracy

Some authors argue that democracies are more creditworthy than autocracies, not because of constitutional checks and balances, but because voters in a democracy would punish incumbents for defaulting on the foreign debt (Schultz and Weingast 2003). But why would voters want to repay foreigners? Some authors assume that the government's foreign-currency debt is held not only by foreigners, but also by domestic citizens, who acquire the bonds on the secondary market. They further assume that, in the event of default, the government could not discriminate by repaying domestic investors while defaulting on foreign ones. Under these assumptions, if a sufficient number of voters hold bonds, politicians might repay foreign currency debts to avoid upsetting local voters (Giordano and Tommasino 2011; Guembel and Sussman 2009).⁵

There are several problems with this argument, however. First, as an empirical matter, it has been possible to discriminate among creditors by paying some but defaulting on others. Over the past two centuries, defaults against foreign creditors have been more common than defaults on domestic citizens, and debtors have discriminated even across investors that hold identical assets (Tomz 2007). Second, if it were impossible to repay investors selectively, the government could default on all its debts, and then use fiscal policy to compensate the domestic losers from default. Third, these models assume that voters hold large amounts of their own government's foreign currency debt. It is not clear why this assumption would be plausible, especially in the developing world, where governments need access to capital markets precisely because the opportunities for domestic borrowing are limited.

Research about the effect of electoral democracy on debt has generated contradictory

conclusions. Schultz and Weingast (2003) offer historical examples of democracies that could borrow more money, on better terms, than autocracies. In a large-scale statistical test, though, Saiegh (2005) found that democracies were more likely to reschedule their debts, and paid interest rates at least as high as autocracies. Parallel research found that democracies have not enjoyed higher credit ratings than autocracies (Archer et al. 2007). How can we reconcile these contradictory findings? Perhaps beliefs about creditworthiness are manifested most clearly in the volume of lending, rather than interest rates or default rates. Consistent with this idea, Nelson (2009) and Beaulieu et al. (2012) show that democracies attract more foreign capital than autocracies.

I have focused this essay on two important aspects of international finance: capital controls and sovereign lending. These two literatures are representative of the quality of work on international finance, and they illustrate the pace at which knowledge is progressing. In finance, as in other areas of international affairs, the behavior of governments and private actors depends on ideas, international forces, and domestic politics. Theorists have explained how these variables operate and interact. At the same time, empirical researchers have brought new data to the table. With impressive datasets and clever research designs, they have shed new light on how finance works, with potentially profound implications for the future of the world economy. Given that international finance is one of the most active areas of research in international relations, we can expect many discoveries in the years ahead.

NOTES

1 Most research about the role of ideas has focused on the period since 1945. There have been comparatively few studies about the effect of economic ideas on financial policies during the nineteenth century and the interwar period.

2 A country can stimulate its exports and restrain its imports by reducing the value of its currency. Competitive devaluations occur when many countries employ this tactic, with each country trying to undercut the others.

3 Controlling outflows has proven much harder, however (Edwards 1999).

4 One could also ask why governments repay domestic-currency debts, and what economic and political factors contribute to domestic debt crises. Two major contributions in this area are Reinhart and Rogoff (2009) and Chinn and Frieden (2011).

5 One could reach the same conclusion, without voters, by assuming that the government wants to maximize the welfare of its own citizens. See Broner et al. 2010.

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International Trade

Helen V. Milner

International trade is one of the most potent issues in domestic and international politics these days. As an element of globalization, international trade has become a contentious issue, as the protests and lack of agreement in the series of WTO conferences in Seattle, Cancun, and Geneva in the past decade have shown. The WTO's Doha Development Trade negotiations remain at an impasse as nations around the world fail to agree to a new compact. In international politics, trade is today a premier instrument of statecraft, as witnessed by the plethora of trade agreements being signed all over the world. How can we explain the trade policy choices that states make? What theories do we possess that illuminate the nature of countries' trade relations?

Trade has become a critical issue largely because countries' economies are now more open to flows of imports and exports than ever. This has occurred both because of technological changes as well as government policies. Since the 1970s, countries across the globe have adopted freer trade policies.¹ Many developing countries, like Mexico, India, Poland, Turkey, Ghana, and Morocco, unilaterally liberalized their trade policies. In addition, the successful conclusion in 1994 of the multilateral trade negotiations under

the GATT (the Uruguay Round) further liberalized trade among many developed countries and between them and developing ones. This global "rush to free trade", as Rodrik (1994) has called it, is important because it has helped further integrate countries into the world economy.² In 2004, UNCTAD data showed that almost 1/3 of total world GDP was accounted for by exports (UNCTAD, 2006). But it has also increased all countries' exposure to the pressures of quickly changing global markets, thus upsetting domestic politics at times. Furthermore, some evidence suggests that rising trade has brought growing income inequality (Goldberg and Pavcnik, 2007; Verhoogen, 2008; Harrison, 2007). International trade and domestic politics have never been more interrelated.

The scholarly literature on international trade is vast. Both economists and political scientists have contributed much to it, as recent surveys by economists such as Reizman and Wilson (1995), Rodrik (1995), Helpman (2006), and Bernard et al. (2007), and political scientists such as Cohen (1990) and Lake (1993) show. This chapter will focus more on the contributions of political scientists, but will include the research of economists where it is particularly important.

New theory and empirics have been developed in the past decade; these should inform the next generation of studies of trade.

Much of the research by economists in international trade has dealt with topics that political scientists have not examined. Economists remain very interested in the three issues: the composition and direction of trade flows, the welfare effects of trade, and trade barriers. Why certain countries import and export particular goods or services to certain other countries has been a central question. Much theory in international trade addresses this question; for instance, one of the central theorems in trade theory, the Heckscher–Ohlin theorem, explains trade flows. The developments in trade theory in the 1980s moved beyond the explanation of international inter-industry trade flows to explain intra-industry flows (Helpman and Krugman, 1985). This research produced a massive literature on the dynamics of trade in imperfectly competitive markets, emphasizing the importance of economies of scale and agglomeration effects. In the 2000s, a “new, new trade theory” developed. This theory, often known as firm heterogeneity models, has focused on individual firms and how differences among them can lead to intra-firm trade flows and help explain many of the industry dynamics in trade (Melitz, 2003; Helpman et al., 2004; Helpman, 2006). These three generations of trade theory concentrate mostly on explaining trade flows and their welfare consequences.

Economists have also devoted attention to the issue of trade barriers, initially focusing on the welfare consequences but later on the politics. The central theoretical conclusion of the field has been that free trade is the best policy for most countries most of the time. Thus, economists have puzzled over why, given this finding, countries invariably employ at least some protectionist policies. They have tended to ask why countries protect some of their industries, when free trade would be better economically. By and large, the answers have focused on the preferences

of domestic actors for protection. Using the Stolper–Samuelson theorem and other economic theories, they have explored why certain domestic groups would prefer protection and why they would expend resources to lobby for it. Central to this debate is whether specific-factors models of trade perform better than Stolper–Samuelson type models, depending on factor endowments. A large empirical literature examining levels of protection across industries and the development of models of protection has followed. A great deal of this literature explains why protectionist policies should never change, which is anomalous given the dramatic changes in trade we have seen (e.g., Drazen, 1996; Fernandez and Rodrik, 1991). Ultimately, then, economists have been pushed into studying the politics of trade.

Recent research has focused on how protection can arise from international pressures. So called terms-of-trade (TOT) externalities can induce large trading states to adopt protectionist policies, and if all do so everyone is left worse off. Economists have thus explained the emergence of the GATT/WTO as one efficient way of solving this prisoners’ dilemma (Bagwell and Staiger, 1999, 2002, 2010). Governments can gain from negotiating a trade agreement, if otherwise each would try to shift costs onto the other and as a consequence adopt inefficient unilateral policies. A substantial amount of new research has thus analyzed the reasons for and operation of international trade agreements (Maggi, 1999; Ossa, 2009; Maggi and Rodriguez-Clare, 1998, 2007). Much of this literature seeks to show how the impact of international agreements on trade flows can affect the welfare consequences of trade.

In contrast, political scientists have rarely focused on explaining the composition or pattern of trade flows, and have been less concerned with the welfare consequences of trade. Only some recent work has explored the political roots of import and export flows among countries. But like economists they have been interested in the issue of protectionism. However, they have tended to see

protection as more of the norm and have puzzled more over why a country would ever liberalize its trade policy or adopt free trade. Politically, protectionism seems eminently reasonable. Explaining both protectionist and free trade policies and changes in them have occupied political scientists.

There are at least four sets of factors that political scientists refer to when trying to understand trade politics. In this chapter, I will survey how these four factors have been discussed in the literature. First, some focus on the *preferences* of domestic groups for protection or free trade. These scholars see trade policy as ultimately being shaped by the preferences of the strongest groups in domestic politics. Why do some groups favor protection, and some free trade? Do these preferences change over time, and if so, why? Which groups have a greater ability to have their preferences heard and translated into policy? A standard approach to the issue of trade policy preferences has developed in so-called Open Economy Politics (OEP) models (Lake, 2009). These often use economic models of trade to deduce such preferences.

Second, domestic political *institutions* may affect the formation of trade policy. Much as in the macroeconomic issue-area, where independent central banks are an important factor, political institutions may matter for trade. They may shape the ways in which the preferences of actors are translated into policy. They may affect which domestic groups have the most access and voice in policy making. Changes in institutions may provide a natural way to examine their impact. As with the recent wave of literature on institutionalism in economics and political science (Engerman and Sokoloff, 2008; Hall and Taylor, 1996), the literature on trade has increasingly examined the role of domestic political institutions. It also has joined the debate about the impact of regime type on foreign policy; whether democracy makes a difference for trade policy is now a topic of interest.

Third, some claim that factors at the international level shape trade policy choices.

The nature of relations among countries and the structure of the *international system* may affect domestic choices about trade. Hegemonic stability theory was an early structural theory of trade. In addition, recent research has paid much more attention to the role of international trade agreements, especially the multilateral trade system embodied in the GATT/WTO. International institutions in the trade area have garnered more attention.

Finally, some scholars have asked whether and how *international trade* itself affects states and the international political system. They use trade as an independent variable. The debate on globalization is especially relevant. Some claim that rising trade flows produce important changes in domestic preferences, institutions and policies. The rest of this chapter asks how political scientists have addressed these four central questions about trade politics.

TRADE FLOWS AND TRADE POLICY

Since the Second World War, the main instrument of trade policy, tariffs (which are taxes on imports), among advanced industrial countries have been reduced to insignificant levels. After the latest round of international trade negotiations sponsored by the GATT – the Uruguay Round, completed in 1994 – the average tariff for the developed countries was reduced from 6.3% to 3.8% (World Trade Organization, 1996: 31). Nontariff barriers (NTBs), which include quantitative restrictions, price controls, subsidies, voluntary export restraints (VERs), etc., on the other hand, have proliferated, in part countering the decline in tariffs. But again, the Uruguay Round slowed or reversed this, helping to reduce quotas, subsidies, and VERs across a wide range of industries and to convert these barriers into more transparent tariffs (World Trade Organization, 1996: 32). Nevertheless, while tariffs have declined for advanced industrial countries, NTBs still make up an important arsenal of barriers to trade. For these

countries, close to 20% of all categories of imports are subject to some form of NTBs (Laird and Yeats, 1990). Overall, recent estimates suggest that NTBs elevate trade barriers by some 30% (Kee et al., 2008).

For most of the postwar period, LDCs have used trade barriers extensively, many for the explicit purpose of import-substituting industrialization (ISI). But since the late 1970s, many developing countries began liberalizing trade and adopting an outward-looking export orientation (International Monetary Fund, 1988). The conclusion of the Uruguay Round promoted this by reducing trade barriers in many areas of key interest to the LDCs, such as textiles and agriculture; it also brought many new developing countries into the international trade organization, the WTO (World Trade Organization), inducing them to follow its rules. In addition, the transition from command or communist economies to market-based economies in many countries in the 1990s further accelerated the trend toward trade liberalization globally. All of these changes have resulted in one striking fact about the period since 1980: there has been a far-reaching liberalization of trade barriers across the globe (Rodrik, 1994; World Trade Organization, 1996; Milner and Kubota, 2005; Milner and Mukherjee, 2009). The developing country economies have joined the world economy and are increasingly important to its operation.

Concomitantly, and in part a product of this, the growth of world trade has surged. For most of the postwar period, the growth of trade has outpaced growth in world output. Also important are changes in the nature of global trade: there has been tremendous growth in intra-industry trade (IIT) and in intra-firm trade (IFT). IIT, which involves the exchange of goods from within the same industry, say Toyotas for BMWs, accounted for between 55 and 75% of trade in advanced industrial countries by 2000 (Greenaway and Milner, 1986: table 5–3; OECD, 2002: 71, table VI.1, p. 161); for the United States, this figure ranged between 70% and 83% in the 1990s (Bergsten and Noland, 1993: 66).

IFT, which involves transfers of goods within one company across national boundaries, has also grown; it accounted for over 40% of total US imports and 30% of US exports in the 1990s (Encarnation, 1992: 28; OECD, 2002: 71, table VI.2, p. 164). While there exist very few measures of intra-firm trade, we do know that multinational production and trade in general have been booming. By 2004, for instance, the total sales of foreign affiliates of multinational firms represented 51% of the world's GDP, almost doubling the share of world exports. Furthermore, since 1990, while exports increased by a factor of five, multinational firm trade has increased by a factor of seven (Ramondo, 2011: 2). These two types of trade are important because they tend to have different effects than standard, inter-industry trade. Generally, they are associated with fewer displacement effects and less conflict. As Lipson (1982: 453) argues, "intra-industry trade provides a powerful new source of multilateral interest in the liberal trade regime: diminished adjustment costs in some sectors, and higher net gains from trade as a result." On the other hand, some argue that intra-industry trade may enhance protectionist pressures because it transmits economic shocks faster and makes political action easier by reducing the number of firms lobbying for protection in any sector (Kono, 2009; OECD, 2002: 71, 169).

Finally, a significant regionalization of trade has occurred. Intraregional trade flows within the European Union, East Asia, North America, and Latin America have become more important as a share of total trade. This is partially a result of the regional integration agreements signed by these countries in the past two decades – for example, the single market in Europe, NAFTA, ASEAN, APEC, and MERCOSUR (WTO, 1996: 17–22). The number of regional agreements notified to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) from 1948 to 1994 has waxed and waned. Few Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) were established during the 1940s and 1950s; then a surge in preferential

agreements occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, and the incidence of PTA creation again tailed off in the 1980s (de Melo and Panagariya, 1993: 3). But there has been a significant rise in such agreements since the 1990s; the WTO counts about 250 active PTAs as of 2009 and more than 50% of all world commerce is currently conducted within regional trade arrangements (Serra et al., 1997: 8, WTO, 2010). Indeed, PTAs have become so pervasive that all but a few parties to the WTO now belong to at least one (World Trade Organization, 1996: 38). This regionalization of the trading system has been treated as evidence both of increasing protectionism and of increasing liberalization. The key issue is whether and how much these agreements, which lower barriers between participants, stimulate trade among members at the expense of nonmembers. If so, then they might foster greater trade liberalization globally; if not, then they may be a force for undermining the integrated world economy, creating exclusive trading blocs. Although the results are mixed, recent analysis tends to indicate that PTAs increase trade among members and do not affect trade outside the group very much (Baier and Bergstrand, 2007; Freund and Ornelas, 2010). Increasingly, international agreements play an important role in trade.

TRADE POLICY PREFERENCES AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

Some of the earliest models explaining trade policy have focused on “pressure group politics”. That is, they explain the trade policy choices by governments as a function of the demands made by domestic interest groups. Domestic groups seek protection of liberalization because such policies increase their incomes. The expected distributional consequences of trade policy thus become the explanation for its causes. Adam Smith ([1776] 1976) may have been one of the first

to recognize this, when he noted that the subversion of the national interest in free trade is the frequent outcome of collusion among businessmen. Schattschneider (1935) was another early proponent of the view that special economic interests were mainly responsible for the choice of protectionism; he showed how these pressure groups hijacked the American Congress in 1929–1930 and via a logroll produced one of the highest tariffs ever in American history, the Smoot–Hawley tariff.

Since then, development of the pressure group model has attempted to delineate more specifically the groups that should favor and oppose protection and the conditions under which they may be most influential. One motive for this has been the observation that the extent of protection and the demands for it vary both across industries and across countries. If all domestic groups always favored protection, then such variance should not exist. Explaining this variance has been a key feature of the literature. It has depended on theories about two factors: the sources of trade policy preferences and the nature of political influence of these interest groups. Much of the literature on preferences for trade policy has attempted to deduce groups’ interests from economic theories of trade. Instead of relying on ad hoc or even post hoc methods for assessing the trade policy preferences of domestic groups, much research in this field uses economic models of trade to identify the main agents and their policy preferences. It is assumed that these agents are trying to maximize their incomes, and the question is what trade policy helps them do this the best. Models of international trade that illuminate its distributional consequences are of particular interest in this effort to systematically deduce preferences (Lake, 2009).

Using economic models of trade, the main divide over the sources of trade policy preferences has been between so-called factoral versus sectoral (or firm-based) theories of preferences. In both cases, preferences are deduced from economic models that show how changes in income accrue to different

actors when policy changes from free trade to protection or vice versa. These types of theories focus on the distributional effects of trade; they associate preferences for protection with those who lose (income or assets) from greater trade flows and preferences for liberalization with those who gain. Factoral theories rely on the Stolper–Samuelson theorem, which shows that when factors of production, like labor and capital, can move freely among sectors, a change from free trade to protection will raise the income of factors in which a country is relatively scarce and lower it for factors that are relatively abundant. Thus, scarce factors will support protection, while abundant ones will oppose it. Rogowski (1989) has developed one of the most interesting political extensions of this, claiming that increasing (decreasing) exposure to trade sets off either increasing class conflict or urban–rural conflict according to the factor endowments of different countries.

In contrast, sectoral and firm-based theories of trade preferences follow from the Ricardo–Viner model of trade, also called the specific-factors model. This model claims that because at least one factor is immobile, all factors attached to import-competing sectors lose from trade liberalization while those in export-oriented sectors gain. Conflict over trade policy thus pits labor, capital, and landowners in sectors besieged by imports against those who export their production. How tied factors are to their sectors – that is, the degree of factor specificity – is the key difference between these two models (Alt et al., 1996).

A number of studies have tested these two models, sometimes singly and sometimes simultaneously. Frieden (1990), Irwin (1994, 1996), and Magee et al. (1989) have found evidence in support of the specific-factors model; in contrast, Balistreri (1997), Beaulieu (1996), Midford (1993), Rogowski (1989), and Scheve and Slaughter (2001) find support for the Stolper–Samuelson type factoral models. Hiscox (2002) advances significantly the debate on these two models. He measures capital and labor mobility and shows they vary over time. Furthermore, he

demonstrates that the cleavages in trade policy follow these changes in mobility. When internal mobility of capital or labor is high, Stolper–Samuelson type of effects are seen; when mobility is low, then sectors emerge as the main political groupings around trade. Debates over factor mobility and trade policy continue to be important (Ladewig, 2006). In addition, research has moved forward to look at legislative voting on trade and how the economic characteristics of legislators' districts might translate into their preferences about trade; support for the different economic models of trade policy preferences have been found here as well (Hiscox, 2002; Ladewig, 2006; Milner and Tingley, 2011). Despite these differences, substantial evidence suggests that economic models of trade can provide useful deductive tools for identifying the major cleavages surrounding trade policy, at least in the advanced industrial countries. Research including the developing world has suggested that these patterns of preferences, especially ones deduced from Stolper–Samuelson models, may provide explanatory power there as well (Mayda and Rodrik, 2005; Dutt and Mitra, 2006; Milner and Kubota, 2005).

In addition to these models of trade preferences, others have looked at how particular characteristics of industries affect patterns of protection. Anderson (1980), Baldwin (1986), Caves (1976), Marvel and Ray (1983), Pincus (1975), Ray (1981), and Trefler (1993) have shown how specific characteristics make an industry more likely not only to desire protection but also to be able to induce policy makers to provide it. These regression analyses tend to straddle the debate between sectoral and factoral models of trade politics. Their comparison across industries suggests a sectoral type of model, but many of their findings do not disagree with those resulting from a more factoral view of the world. For example, they tend to demonstrate that in advanced industrial countries low-skill, labor-intensive industries with high and rising import penetration are frequently associated with high protection. In addition,

many have shown that export-oriented industries and multinationals tend to favor freer trade and be associated with less protection (Milner, 1988; Gilligan, 1997). This attention to anti-protectionist groups is particularly interesting given the global move toward trade liberalization; one question is whether this movement originated due to the growth in importance of these types of groups domestically.

Developments in economic theories of international trade have also affected the research on trade policy preferences. They have suggested different units of analysis and different variables for differentiating preferences. In the 1980s, the new trade theory focused much on how imperfect competition could influence trade flows and the geography of industry and trade (Helpman and Krugman, 1985). This theory led to increasing attention to the role of scale economies in trade and to how increasing returns to scale might affect industries' preferences for trade. Generally, research indicated that such scale economies tended to make firms more interested in opening markets and in developing larger regional markets through trade agreements (Milner, 1997; Chase, 2005). The "new, new trade theory" which focuses on differences in firms, especially their productivity (Melitz, 2003; Helpman et al., 2004), should lead to more attention being paid to the role of firms in trade policy. While some have focused on the preferences of firms in trade policy making (Milner, 1988), the most recent literature has used factors or sectors of the economy as the main unit of analysis. The new, new trade theory suggests this may be misplaced. Firms within an industry, according to this view, differ greatly; only the largest and most productive ones export and only the very largest and most productive engage in multinational production and intra-firms trade. Preferences within an industry should thus vary along with firm size and productivity. Bombardini (2008) tests such a model of trade preferences and lobbying and shows that it performs better than standard models based on sectors. Future research on

the political economy of trade policy should take into account the rich trove of new theory on firms in international trade.

Can these deductive models of societal preferences explain trade policy? As noted above, many of these theories are fairly good at explaining variance across industries in any one country. But in terms of explaining overall directions in national trade policy and cross-national differences, these theories have a number of weaknesses. First, some recent research has challenged whether such deductive models focusing on the distributional consequences of trade account for preferences. Mansfield and Mutz (2009), for instance, find that individuals do not seem to develop trade policy preferences as a result of how trade affects their income; Guisinger (2009) claims that the general public has no knowledge of most trade policy or agreements; and Hainmueller and Hiscox (2006) argue that traditional measures of skill used in Stolper-Samuelson theories of preferences are not good proxies for such theories; rather, these measures show that ideas and information have more to do with trade policy preferences than income maximization. Some research then challenges the internal validity of the deductive models of trade preferences.

Challenges to the validity of deductive models of trade policy preferences have arisen in other ways as well. First, some argue that no theory of how preferences are aggregated at any level, let alone the national one, exists in these models. If firms in an industry are divided over trade policy, how does the sector choose a policy to advocate? If some industries are opposed to liberalization and some support it, how can we predict whether political leaders will agree to international negotiations to reduce trade barriers? The issue of which groups – the winners or losers from trade – are able to influence policy and which are not depends a lot on political factors, such as the clout of the industry or how institutions shape its access to policy makers (McGillivray, 2004). Second, might not these differences in preferences give policy makers much leeway to implement their own preferred policies,

thus weakening the influence of interest groups? Political leaders may simply pick and choose the groups that they wanted to “represent” and then build coalitions around their own preferences, rather than being driven by industry pressures. The literature on interest groups in trade policy making continues to wrestle with these issues.

The preferences of other domestic actors have also been the focus of some attention. Many assume that individual voters take their preferences from their role as consumers. Since consumers gain from free trade, they should favor it (e.g., Grossman and Helpman, 1994; Baker, 2008). Other models of individual preferences contradict this. Mayer (1984), for example, introduces an electoral component into the determination of trade policy. Trade policy is determined by the median voter’s preferences, which depend on that voter’s factor endowments. The more well endowed s/he is in the factor used intensively for production of import-competing goods, the more protectionist s/he will be. Scheve and Slaughter (2001) add a new component by asking how asset ownership is affected by trade policy. They show that the preferences of individual voters will depend on how trade affects their assets. Some surveys have also shown that voters respond positively toward protection out of sympathy for workers who lose their jobs because of import competition. Thus, whether individual voters favor protection or free trade is an area demanding further research, especially in democracies, where elections are often linked to trade policy decisions. Moreover, understanding changes in these preferences may help us account for the recent push to liberalize trade.

A number of scholars have argued that the preferences of interest groups and voters are less important in determining trade policy than are those of the policy makers themselves. Bauer et al. (1972) were among the first to make this point. From their surveys, they showed that constituents rarely had strong preferences about trade policy and even more rarely communicated these to their political representatives. Trade policy

depended greatly on the personal preferences and ideas of politicians. Baldwin (1986) and Goldstein (1988) have also argued that it is the ideas that policy makers have about trade policy that matter most. Rather than material factors determining preferences, ideational factors are paramount. Interestingly, Krueger (1997), an economist, claims that it is ideas that have mattered most in trade policy making in the lesser developed countries lately. She argues that it is “ideas with regard to trade policy and economic development [that] are among those [factors] that have changed most radically” from 1950 to the 1990s, helping to explain the recent rush to free trade. Many suggest that the failures of ISI policy and the glaring success of the export-oriented newly industrializing Asian countries in the 1980s forced policy makers to adopt new ideas about trade policy. A key example is Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who co-authored one of the most important books on dependency theory in the 1970s, arguing for the continuation of ISI policies to shelter LDCs from the capitalist world economy (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979). In the 1990s, of course, Cardoso was elected president of Brazil and initiated a major economic reform program, including extensive trade liberalization. Changes in the ideas that policy makers have about trade policy may then, as this example suggests, play a large role in affecting trade policy choices (Goldstein, 1993).

Economic conditions may also affect the preferences of actors and lead to changes in trade policies. The financial and economic crisis of 2007–2009 raised strong fears that protectionism would be resurgent (Eichengreen and O’Rourke, 2009). While Krueger and others, such as Bates and Krueger (1993), Haggard and Kaufman (1995), and Rodrik (1995), attribute leaders’ decisions to initiate trade policy reform to crises and economic downturns, another strand of literature reaches the opposite conclusion. For many scholars, bad economic times are a prelude to rising demands for protection and increasing levels of protection. Cassing et al. (1986), Gallarotti (1985),

Magee and Young (1987), Takacs (1981), and Wallerstein (1987) all find that declines in economic growth or capacity utilization and/or increases in unemployment and imports tend to increase the demand and supply of protection. This earlier literature sees policy makers responding to the rising demands for protection from domestic groups in bad economic times.

Some of the literature, however, implies that bad economic times allow policy makers more freedom to maneuver, so that they can overturn existing protectionist policies by blaming them for the bad times. For example, Rodrik (1992: 89) claims that “a time of crisis occasionally enables radical reforms that would have been unthinkable in calmer times.” He argues that prolonged economic crises of the 1980s were so bad that “the overall gain from restoring the economy’s health [in part via trade liberalization] became so large that it swamped distributional considerations [raised by such reforms]” (1994: 79). On the other hand, others, especially Haggard (1995), have argued that crises reduce the maneuvering room of political leaders. They suggest that in the 1980s these leaders were almost forced to liberalize trade (and make other reforms) because of the lack of options and international pressures. Noting the difference between the crises of the 1930s and 1980s, Haggard (1995: 16–19) points out that “In the 1930s, balance of payments and debt crises spurred substitution of imports ... and gave rise to a more autarchic and interventionist policy stance. In the 1980s, by contrast, an inward-looking policy seemed foreclosed ... The opportunities for continued import substitution were limited, and ties to the world economy had become more varied, complex and difficult to sever.” The effect of economic crises on a country’s decisions to liberalize trade thus seems contingent on a number of other factors, such as the prevailing ideas about trade, the extent of openness existing at the time, and the influence of international factors. The grave concerns about rising protectionism in the wake of the 2007–2009 global financial crisis suggest that

many believe that downturns are preludes to economic closure; however, the experience so far since the crisis implies that the impact can be managed and need not lead inevitably to protectionism.

A similar debate exists concerning the impact of the exchange rate on trade policy. Appreciation of the exchange rate may increase protectionist pressures because it increases imports and decreases exports, thus affecting the balance of trade preferences domestically (Mansfield and Busch, 1995). Others suggest that the effects of an exchange rate change may have little impact. For instance, Rodrik (1994: 73) shows that a devaluation, which is the opposite of an appreciation, increases the domestic prices of all tradables – both imports and exports – thereby allowing both import-competing and export-oriented sectors to benefit. But under certain conditions, for example, when foreign exchange is rationed, devaluations can work just like trade liberalization, prompting demands for new protection from import-competing sectors. Some studies reveal such an association between periods of currency devaluations and rising tariffs; Simmons (1994) points out that many of the same conditions – but not all – that drove states to devalue also pushed them to increase tariffs in the interwar period. Both policies were intended to increase demand for domestic output, thus counteracting the effects of the depression. Today, the linkage between exchange rates and trade is most evident in the complaints by many trading partners over China’s intervention in the renminbi’s exchange rate. Much debate continues over the macroeconomic conditions that produce increasing domestic pressures for protection and/or that induce policy makers to relent to or resist such pressures.

Can these preference-based theories explain trade policy? These theories seem best at explaining the domestic sources of opposition to and support for trade liberalization. Without a concomitant theory of which groups are able to organize and exert influence, theories about interest groups and

voters are best able to explain the demand for trade policy domestically. The preferences of policy makers may play a different role. They may be more likely to explain the supply-side of trade policy; that is, they may indicate the willingness of political leaders to supply protection or liberalization, as separate from demand for it. But our models of policy makers' preferences seem the most underspecified and *post hoc*. Why are some policy makers more favorable to protectionism than others? Why and when do their preferences change? Theories about the conditions under which policy makers will abandon ideas that produce "bad" results and what ideas they will adopt instead are largely unavailable. In sum, theories of trade preferences seem to provide an initial level of explanation for the supply and demand for trade policy. But they cannot as of yet provide a complete explanation of this process.

Domestic political institutions

Can theories that focus on political institutions do better at explaining trade policy making? A number of scholars have argued that political institutions, rather than preferences, play a major role in explaining trade policy. While preferences play a role in these arguments, the main claim is that institutions aggregate such preferences. Different institutions do so differently, thus leading to distinct policies. Understanding institutions is necessary to explain the actual supply of protection, rather than simply its demand (Nelson, 1988; McGillivray, 2004). On the domestic aide, different institutions empower different actors. Some institutions, for example, tend to give special interest groups greater access to policy makers, rendering their demands harder to resist. For example, many believe that the fact that the US Congress controlled trade policy exclusively before 1934 made it very susceptible to protectionist pressures (Baldwin, 1986; Destler, 1986; Goldstein, 1993; Haggard, 1988).

Other institutions insulate policy makers from these demands, allowing them more leeway in setting policy. Thus, some argue that giving the executive brand greater control over trade after the Reciprocal Trade Act of 1934 made trade policy less susceptible to these influences and more free trade oriented. In general, concentrating trade policy-making capabilities in the executive's hands seems to be associated with the adoption of trade liberalization in a wide variety of countries (e.g., Haggard and Kaufman, 1995: 199). As Haggard and Webb (1994: 13) have noted about trade liberalization in numerous LDCs, "In every successful reform effort, politicians delegated decision-making authority to units within the government that were insulated from routine bureaucratic processes, from legislative and interest group pressures, and even from executive pressure."

Other aspects of political regimes may make them more or less insulated from societal pressures. Rogowski (1987), for example, has argued that policy makers should be most insulated from domestic pressures for protection in countries having large electoral districts and proportional representation (PR) systems. Mansfield and Busch (1995), however, find that such institutional insulation does indeed matter, but often in exactly the opposite direction: greater insulation (that is, larger districts and a PR system) leads to more protection. Similarly, Rodrik (1998) shows that "political regimes with lower executive autonomy and more participatory institutions handle exogenous shocks better," and this may include their response to shocks via trade policy. Rogowski and Kayser (2002) also demonstrate that electoral systems can have an important impact on protectionism across countries, but their claim is that majoritarian systems, or ones with high seats-to-votes elasticities, are less protectionist because they empower voters as consumers more than as producer interest groups (see also Linzer and Rogowski, 2008). Thus, it is not clear that greater insulation of policy makers always produces

policies that promote trade liberalization; the preferences of those policy makers also matter.

The administrative capacity of the state is also seen as an important factor. It is well established that developed countries tend to have fewer trade barriers than do lesser developed countries (Conybeare, 1982, 1983; International Monetary Fund, 1988; Magee et al., 1989: 230–41; Rodrik, 1995: 1483). Part of the reason is that taxes on trade are fairly easy to collect, and thus in LDCs, where the apparatus of the state is less well developed, such taxes may account for a substantial portion of total state revenues (between a quarter and a half, according to Rodrik, 1994: 77). As countries develop, their institutional capacity may also grow, thus reducing their dependence on import taxes for revenue.⁴ Thus, the introduction of the personal income tax in 1913 in the United States made trade taxes much less important, thereby permitting their later reduction. Hence, political institutions and changes in them may help explain trade policy.

Large institutional differences in countries' political regime types also may be associated with different trade policy profiles. Some have argued that democratic countries are less likely to be able to pursue protectionist policies. Wintrobe (1998) claims that autocratic countries will be more rent seeking, and protection is one form of rent seeking. Mansfield et al. (1998, 2000, 2002) also show that democratic pairs of countries tend to be less protectionist and more likely to sign trade-liberalizing agreements than are autocratic ones. Many of the countries that have embraced trade liberalization have also democratized. Mexico is a prime case here. The growth of political competition and the decline of the hegemonic status of the governing party, the PRI, seem to have gone hand in hand with the liberalization of trade policy beginning in the 1980s. Milner and Kubota (2005) find evidence that democracy in general and democratization have contributed to the lowering of trade barriers in a number of LDCs

since the 1970s. This argument has been further corroborated by more recent studies (Eichengreen and Leblang, 2008; Milner and Mukherjee, 2009). Thus, it may be that the character of political regimes has a direct effect on trade policy choices.

On the other hand, some research points to more complex relationship between regime type and trade policy. Kono (2006) claims, for example, that democratic leaders may lower the most transparent forms of protection but optimally obfuscate by employing more opaque forms such as NTBs. Verdier (1998) argues that because of the political conflict engendered by trade, democracies may be less likely to pursue free trade and more likely to adopt protection against each other, except when intra-industry trade dominates their trade flows. Haggard and Kaufman (1995) are more circumspect, arguing that the presence of crises and the form of autocracy may have more to do with the ability to adopt economic reforms such as trade liberalization than does regime type alone. Debates over the impact of regime type on trade policy continue.

The structure of the government and the nature of the party system have also been seen as an important institutional factor shaping trade policy. Political parties often take specific stands on trade policy, and their movement in and out of government may explain trade policy changes, as many have contended about the United States (Epstein and O'Halloran, 1996). In general, partisanship as a source of trade policy had been less explored than other topics. But theory suggests that partisanship and the nature of the political party system may matter greatly. Using Stolper–Samuelson theories, Milner and Judkins (2004) show that in the advanced industrial countries, left-wing parties tend to be more sympathetic to protection than right-wing ones. Dutt and Mitra (2005) produce evidence showing that left-wing governments will adopt more protectionist trade policies in capital-rich countries, but adopt more pro-trade policies in labor-rich economies than right-wing ones. In addition, the

party system's dynamics may matter. Countries with highly polarized party systems, in which the main parties are separated by large ideological differences, may experience dramatic swings in policy and generally produce unsustainable trade reforms. On the other hand, countries with large numbers of parties may be governed by coalition governments frequently, which may be unable to change the status quo. Haggard and Kaufman (1995: 170) predict that countries with fragmented and/or polarized party systems will be unable to initiate economic policy reforms, including trade liberalization, let alone sustain them. In general, these perspectives suggest that fragmented political systems are similar to ones with many veto players, and like them are resistant to change (Tsebelis, 1995).

Party systems also interact with the structure of the government. For example, Lohmann and O'Halloran (1994) and O'Halloran (1994) have argued that when government in presidential systems, like the United States, is divided – that is, one party controls the legislature and the other controls the executive branch – protectionism is likely to be higher. Others argue that for developing countries “political systems with weak executives and fragmented party systems, divided government, and decentralized political structures” were unable to mobilize the support necessary for the initiation of economic reforms such as trade liberalization (Haggard and Kaufman, 1995: 378). Milner and Rosendorff (1996) also argue that divided government in any country is likely to make the lowering of trade barriers either domestically or internationally harder in most cases. Mansfield, Milner, and Pevehouse (2007; 2008) show that the number of veto players in a political system can also matter; the presence of more veto players makes international cooperation to lower barriers harder. Karol (2000) questions these claims and shows that it is the combination of preferences and party systems that seems to matter. In all of these cases, the trade policy preferences of the parties matter for the outcome.

Political institutions tend to affect whose preferences will become dominant in policy making.⁵

In a very interesting change of research strategy, Gawande et al. (2009) use the Grossman and Helpman model to then estimate the preferences of political leaders. If one assumes that leaders vary in their preferences according to how much weight they put on overall social welfare versus special interest groups, one can use their trade policies to understand the weighting scheme. Gawande et al. (2009: 528–9) go on to show that leaders do vary a lot, but that their political institutions constrain this variation: “Specific political, economic, and institutional variables [are] fundamental determinants of the variation in the behaviors of governments. Using a new database on political institutions we empirically test whether these variables influence the welfare-mindedness of governments as the theories predict ... Political institutions that have a larger number of checks and balances embedded in the decision-making process cause more welfare-minded governments. The more informed are voters, as measured by literacy and the degree of urbanization, the greater is the weight that governments put on the welfare of their polity when making trade policy decisions. Finally, the more ideologically attached are voters to parties and the greater the productivity of the media in influencing uninformed voters, the less weight governments put on social welfare when making trade policy.” This inductive method of determining leaders' preferences is a novel advance in the literature.

Many of these institutional arguments thus depend on prior claims about actors' preferences. For instance, many of the arguments about insulation assume that the policy makers (usually executives) who are insulated from societal demands are free traders. But as Mansfield and Busch (1995) show, they may actually be protectionist, in which case insulation allows greater protection than otherwise. The arguments about divided

government, party systems, and democracies also rest to some extent on assumptions about each actor's preferences that are questionable (Karol, 2000). Divided government matters most when preferences of the parties differ, and differences in the preferences of autocratic leaders and democratic ones may be important for the implications of different regime types. Thus, having theories that bring together both preferences and institutions seems most valuable. Very few studies, however, bring together theories of both preference formation and institutional influence; Gilligan (1997) and Milner (1997) are some examples. Moreover, the matter of which comes first, preferences or institutions, is far from settled. Those who focus on preferences tend to argue that institutions are often shaped by the preferences of those in power; in contrast, those who emphasize institutions argue that they may actually shape actors' preferences. The consensus is that both matter and are jointly determined, but parsimoniously modeling and testing this is a difficult task.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND INSTITUTIONS

Trade policy is not just affected by domestic forces. A number of features of the international system have been connected to a country's trade policy choices. A favored argument among realists has been that the distribution of capabilities in the international system has a fundamental effect on trade. The so-called theory of hegemonic stability (HST) posited that when the international system or economy was dominated by one country, a hegemon, then free trade would be most likely (Gilpin, 1987; Gowa, 1994; Krasner, 1976; Lake, 1988). Perhaps the most interesting point about this theory is that it has tried to explain change over time in the overall level of openness in the trading system; that is, it looks at the sum of countries' trade policy choices. The main claim of this theory

is that changes in the distribution of capabilities over time should provide clues to changes in the openness of the international trading system. In the 1980s, many argued that the decline of American hegemony from its zenith after the Second World War would lead to a rise in protectionism and perhaps the fragmentation of the international economy into rival blocs (e.g., Gilpin, 1987). This prediction, however, would not seem to explain well the rush to free trade witnessed since the mid-1980s.

A large number of critics have challenged this claim both theoretically and empirically (Lake, 1993; Keohane, 1997). Conybeare (1984) has shown that large countries should favor optimal tariffs, not free trade, even if others retaliate; Snidal (1985) and others have claimed that small numbers of powerful countries could maintain an open system, just as well as a single hegemon could. The theory has also faced empirical challenges that imply that a hegemon is neither necessary nor sufficient for an open trading system (e.g., Krasner, 1976; Mansfield, 1994). In light of these results, the theory has been less and less cited (Keohane, 1997).

Other scholars have felt that aspects of the international security environment best explain the pattern of trade. Gowa (1994) has argued that countries which are military allies trade more with each other, and that is especially the case for those within the same alliance in the bipolar system. That is, when countries are allies in a system featuring one other major opposing alliance group, as was the case during the Cold War, they will tend to trade the most freely among themselves. The security externalities of trade will drive their behavior, inducing them to help their allies while also punishing their enemies. Gowa and Mansfield (1993) and Mansfield and Bronson (1997) provide strong evidence for this effect. In terms of this argument, there should be a direct link between trade policy and the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Eastern bloc. Predictions from this model seem to be incomplete. The argument appears to suggest that protectionism should rise, not

decline, with the demise of bipolarity and the emergence of multipolarity. A description of the current structure of the international system might be one of either multipolarity, or unipolarity, in which case the theory seems to have no single prediction.

Another aspect of the international system that scholars have noted for its effect on trade policy is the presence and influence of international institutions. Although a long debate has occurred over whether international institutions matter, many scholars now conclude that the fact that countries have been willing to set up and participate in such institutions would seem to imply that states feel that they matter (e.g., Keohane, 1984; Ruggie, 1983). In the trade area, a number of institutions provide support for an open, multilateral trading system; these include the GATT and its successor the WTO, as well as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. While regional trade institutions may have a more ambiguous effect on the multilateral system (Mansfield and Milner, 1999), some of them, including the EU, NAFTA, and ASEAN, seem to have positively influenced the lowering of trade barriers and reinforcement of unilateral moves toward freer trade.

The research on international trade institutions has progressed greatly over the past decade. Earlier research suggested very generic roles for these institutions. Some suggest that their main role is to provide information about other countries' behavior and compliance with the rules of the game (e.g., Keohane, 1984). Others see these institutions as providing a forum for dispute resolution so that partners in trade can feel more secure and thus will be more likely to trade (e.g., Yarbrough and Yarbrough, 1992). Others view such international institutions as encapsulating the norms by which countries agree to play the trading game, which again provides a common framework for sustaining trade flows (e.g., Ruggie, 1983). Recent research has adopted a more specific view of the role of these institutions in the trade policy environment. Bagwell and Staiger

(1999, 2002, 2010) have developed an extensive economic theory explaining the GATT and WTO. They claim that terms-of-trade (TOT) externalities drive this institution. Countries that are large enough players in world trade can gain from protectionism, but if all countries adopt it then none gain and indeed all lose. Avoiding this prisoners' dilemma is the role of the GATT/WTO. Use of reciprocity, retaliation, and most favored nation (MFN) clauses allows countries to resist protection for TOT reasons and to adopt the most globally efficient trade policies.

Others have focused attention on how domestic political economy pressures may lead to trade agreements. Maggi and Rodriguez-Clare (1998, 2007) argue that domestic political economy reasons produce institutions like the WTO since they allow governments to resist protectionist pressures that otherwise they would give in to. Research on other trade agreements, so-called preferential ones (PTAs) that are not global, has turned more to domestic political rationales for such agreements since it is not clear that they avoid TOT externalities. PTAs may have electoral consequences, especially in democracies, which help leaders stay in office through the signals they send to voters (Mansfield et al., 2002; Mansfield and Milner, 2012). All of these arguments hypothesize that the presence of these institutions should be associated with a freer trade environment; moreover, they imply that the depth and breadth of these institutions should be positively related to trade liberalization and the expansion of trade.

The impact of these institutions, however, has been a topic of debate. Rose (2004a, b) shows evidence that the GATT/WTO has not increased trade among its members, a primary goal of the organization. Others find no evidence that the developing countries benefited from the GATT/WTO (Gowa and Kim, 2005; Subramanian and Wei, 2007; Özden and Reinhardt, 2005), but do find evidence that it increased trade for the developed countries. Goldstein, Rivers, and Tomz (2007a,b) demonstrate that if one codes

membership differently, Rose's results are overturned and the GATT/WTO does increase trade for its members. This debate over impact on trade flows also occurs in the PTA literature. Whether PTAs increase trade or merely lead to trade diversion is a subject of much empirical research (Rose, 2004a; Bhagwati, 2008; Baier and Bergstrand, 2004, 2007). So the overall impact of international trade institutions is not settled.

The design of international trade institutions has become a topic of recent inquiry. Bagwell and Staiger (2002) point out that the particular norms and rules adopted in the GATT help to explain why the institution was created; they allow it to deter TOT externalities and to arrive at the globally efficient trade policy optimum. Other research on the rational design of international institutions has shown how the various elements of the GATT/WTO operate to make the agreement more stable and powerful (Koremenos et al., 2004). Escape clause mechanisms can provide greater stability to the institution and allow for more trade liberalization (Rosendorff and Milner, 2001; Kucik and Reinhardt, 2008). Renegotiation rather than escape has been argued by others to promote greater stability (Koremenos, 2005). The WTO's dispute settlement mechanism (DSM) has been the topic of much study (Rosendorff, 2005; Busch, 2000; Reinhardt, 2001, 2002; Busch and Reinhardt, 2000, 2003, 2006; Busch and Pelc, 2010; Davis and Shirato, 2007; Davis and Bermeo, 2009). The questions surrounding it are many: does it make the WTO more stable and trade liberalization more likely? Who brings cases to it and why? Does it help developing countries or the developed more? Who wins the cases and why? The DSM has proved a rich subject since there are few dispute mechanisms operating in international politics. Other aspects of trade agreements, such as their depth and rules, have also elicited interest as these institutions appear to be powerful in their shaping of world trade (Mansfield et al., 2008).

The creation of the WTO out of the GATT Uruguay Round represents a step toward the

deeper institutionalization of an open trading system. The explosion of PTAs since 1990 is also a notable facet of the international system, but one with debatable implications for the trade system. The influence of these international institutions may depend either on the economic condition of debtors or on changing domestic preferences and ideas about trade. While there is little doubt that these institutions helped support trade liberalization globally, it seems likely that their influence varies over time and across countries (Haggard and Kaufman, 1995: 199). But these institutions are an important element of the trade policy-making environment.

EFFECT OF TRADE ON COUNTRIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

A final area of interest is the reciprocal effect of international trade on domestic and international politics. Once countries have liberalized or protected their economies, what might be the subsequent effects of such choices? Scholars have examined this question with attention to at least three aspects of the domestic political economy. First, some have argued that trade liberalization can in its wake change domestic trade preferences. As countries liberalize, the tradables sector of the economy should grow in size along with exposure to international economic pressures. Rogowski (1989) has argued that this should lead to heightened or new political cleavages and conflicts between scarce and abundant factors domestically (see also Chapter 16 by Zürn in this volume). These new cleavages in turn will alter domestic politics; for example, new parties arise to represent these groups or new coalitions form. Milner (1988) also argues that increasing openness to trade changes preferences domestically. Openness raises the potential number of supporters of free trade as exporters and multinational firms multiply; it may also reduce import-competing firms as they succumb to foreign competition.

Hathaway (1998) presents a dynamic model that shows that trade liberalization changes industry structure in ways such that future demands for protection are reduced. "Trade liberalization has a positive feedback effect on policy preferences and political strategies of domestic producer groups. As industries adjust to more competitive market conditions, their characteristics change in ways that reduce the likelihood that they will demand protection in the future" (1998: 606). James and Lake (1989) suggest an ingenious argument for how repeal of the protectionist Corn Laws in the United Kingdom facilitated the necessary conditions for the creation of a successful coalition for free trade in the United States. Each of these arguments suggests that increasing exposure to trade leads to increasing pressure against protection, thus creating a virtuous cycle of rising demand for freer trade. As an explanation for trade policy in the advanced industrial countries over the past few decades, this type of argument seems plausible. For the developing countries, their abrupt rejection of ISI and protectionism seems less explicable in these terms. But now that many have turned to freer trade, these dynamics may make a return to protection less likely.

A second aspect of domestic politics that may be affected by increased trade flows involves the character of national political institutions. Among the advanced industrial countries, Cameron (1978) long ago noted the relationship between those that were very open to international trade and those with large governments. He and Katzenstein (1985) attributed this to the need for governments with open economies to provide extensive domestic compensation to the losers from trade and to employ flexible adjustment strategies for their industries. Rodrik (1997) has found strong evidence of this relationship around the globe. He claims that greater exposure to external risk, which trade promotes, increases the volatility of the domestic economy and thus "societies that expose themselves to greater amounts of external risk demand (and receive) a larger government

role as shelter from the vicissitudes of global markets" (1997: 53). Support for the claim that those most exposed to globalization are often opposed to it is present (Mayda and Rodrik, 2005; Scheve and Slaughter, 2001, 2006). Increasing exposure to international trade may thus create demands for more government intervention and a larger welfare state, which in turn are necessary to sustain public support for an open economy.⁶ This compensation argument about the relationship between open markets and the welfare state is debated, however. Some argue for a negative relationship between globalization and social welfare. The "efficiency" argument claims that trade openness creates pressure for reducing government spending to reduce costs for producers, and this erodes the welfare state (Kaufman and Segura-Ubiergo, 2001; Rudra, 2002). Whether openness has negative, positive, or no effects on the size of the welfare state is still debated (Adsera and Boix, 2002; Wibbels, 2006).

Others have explored the relationship between globalization and the character of the political regime. Rogowski (1987: 212) has argued that as countries become more open to trade, they will find it increasingly advantageous to devise institutions that maximize "the state's insulation, autonomy and stability." For him, this implies parliamentary systems with strong parties, proportional representation (PR), and large districts. He finds a strong relationship especially between openness and PR systems. Hadenius (1992) also finds that trade may have effects on domestic institutions. He argues that exposure to international trade brings higher rates of economic growth, which through the development process may translate into better conditions for the emergence of democracy. Eichengreen and Leblang (2008) find a mutually supportive relationship between democracy and trade, with some evidence that increasing trade fosters the growth of democracy. Others, however, have found no compelling relationship between trade and democracy (Milner and Mukherjee, 2009). We would like to know if there is a virtuous

cycle: does trade liberalization foster democratization and democracy in turn promote more trade liberalization, and so on?

Besides its effects on preferences and institutions, trade may constrain the policy choices available to decision makers. The recent literature on globalization suggests this constraining influence. Rodrik (1997) provides some of the most direct evidence of how greater openness may force governments to relinquish the use of various policy instruments. In particular, he notes that openness often makes governments cut spending on social programs and reduce taxes on capital. In order to maintain competitiveness, governments are prevented from using many of the fiscal policy measures they once could.⁷ This is similar to the efficiency argument noted above, and often leads to claims about a “race to the bottom” in terms of social and regulatory policy. Whether such constraints are good or bad depends on the value one places on government intervention in the economy. For some, like Rodrik (1997), this constraint is worrisome since it reduces the government’s ability to shelter its citizens from external volatility and thus may erode the public’s support for openness. Here, the impact of trade liberalization may not be benign. It may produce a backlash, undermining societal support for openness and creating pressures for protection and closure (Burgoon, 2009).

In terms of international politics, trade liberalization may also have important effects. As countries become more open to the international economy, it may affect their political relations with other countries. In particular, scholars have asked whether increased trade promotes peace between countries or increases their chances of conflict. A number of scholars, such as Polachek (1980), Gasiorowski (1986), Russett et al. (1998), Gartzke (1998), Russett and Oneal (2001), and McDonald (2009) have found that increases in trade flows among countries (or between pairs of them) decrease the chances that those countries will be involved in political or military conflicts with

each other. Mansfield and Pevehouse (2000) also find that international trade agreements lower the probability that states who are members will come into conflict with one another. Others, such as Waltz (1979) and Barbieri (1996), argue that increased trade and the interdependence it creates either increase conflict or have little effect on it. One way that trade policy might affect the international political system then is by increasing or decreasing the level of political-military conflicts (Mansfield and Pollins, 2003). There are a variety of different feedback mechanisms. For instance, if trade promotes pacific relations among trading nations, then such a pacific environment is likely to stimulate further trade liberalization and flows; on the other hand, if increasing trade produces more conflict, then we might expect more protectionism as a result (see also Chapter 23 by Levy in this volume).

These more dynamic models of international trade and domestic politics are an important area of research. They may tell us a good deal about what affects trade policy choices. For example, will the global liberalization process bring increasing pressures for more openness and for democracy? Or will it undermine itself and breed demands for closure and a backlash against the governments and international institutions which support openness, as O’Rourke and Williamson (1999) have shown happened in the early twentieth century? Will openness produce a peaceful international system or one prone to increasing conflict? The answers to these questions will in turn tell us much about the future direction of trade policy globally.

CONCLUSION

I have examined preeminent theories of trade policy to see how they explain trade policy and changes in it. The point of this conclusion is mostly to suggest where future research might be useful.

What factors drive trade policy and changes in it? Existing theories suggest several answers. The first involves trade policy preferences among domestic actors. Economic theory suggests that domestic groups may have clear trade policy preferences. If groups are rational and prefer profit maximization, then policies that increase profits should be favored. Whether factor endowments or sectors or firms are the best unit of analysis, these models suggest that the demand for trade policy should follow clear patterns domestically. It is probable that these groups recognize their interests as well, since they are more likely to be organized and to receive large, concentrated benefits from policy. For voters, the question is more difficult. Voters are consumers, but they may also be workers and asset owners as well; hence, their preferences for trade may be pulled in different directions. Moreover, voters' capacity to organize is not well developed, as collective action theory suggests. Recent research has delved much more into the empirical identification of such interests. Surveys of public opinion and analysis of legislative voting have given us new evidence both for and against this set of propositions. More research should be done to understand the nature of societal preferences for trade policy.

Political leaders, on the other hand, may be able to take action, but it is harder to deductively derive their preferences for trade policy. Should we conceive of them as benign leaders intent on maximizing national social welfare, or as politically motivated leaders dependent on special interests for support and often maximizing their own personal interests, or as some combination of the two? The former might lead us to attribute to them preferences for free trade, while the latter view would incline us to see them as protectionists. Under what circumstances should we expect which type of behavior by governments (Gawande et al., 2009)? Analyses of legislative voting where one can examine both special interest contributions and constituency preferences have raised these

questions in recent research (Ladewig, 2006; Milner and Tingley, 2011).

This question leads to a discussion of political institutions and their role in shaping trade policy. Both the influence of domestic groups and the preferences of leaders may depend on the political institutions in place. Substantial evidence suggests that regime type makes a difference; democracy is associated with trade liberalization as leaders must listen to a broader audience. Political leaders may be forced to concern themselves more with the national interest than with just special interests. Recent research suggests that democracy fosters free trade, but that increased trade does not necessarily promote democracy. Other features of political institutions may also matter since governments vary substantially in the weight they place on social welfare versus private interests (Gawande et al., 2009). Whether institutions – democratic or not – insulate policy makers from special interest pressures may matter. After all, some nondemocratic countries in Asia, such as Singapore, have long had fairly liberal trade policies. Electoral rules, the nature of the party system, and other institutional features may also affect which interest groups can exert the most influence. Institutions that can internalize the costs of protection so that all members bear them can make protection much more difficult for political leaders to choose. The role of information also matters, and may be related to the institutional atmosphere. Systems in which there is more information available to the public and greater press freedom tend to be less protectionist (Gawande et al., 2009). The role of political institutions is underexplored.

As for international factors, they have received more attention, but the interaction of trade and security concerns warrants even more attention. The gains from trade do pose security externalities (Hirschman, 1980 [1945]; Gowa, 1994). How after the end of the Cold War and the wave of terrorist attacks of the early 2000s does the international system affect economic relations among states? Are the end of bipolarity and the

decline of American hegemony leading to the fragmentation of the world economy into rival trading blocs, centered on the United States, the EU, and China? Some claim that this is what the growing role of regional trade agreements is fostering. Others see such PTAs as promoting the extension of a multi-lateral trading system. How will the rise of China and India in the world economy affect trading relations? The impact of security concerns and the balance of capabilities and threats on trade policy is another area demanding empirical research.

The role of international institutions is of great importance. The development of the GATT/WTO, the EU, and a slew of regional organizations such as MERCOSUR make it plain that such institutions play an important role. But what exactly is this role? Can these institutions alter states' behavior or preferences? Do they just provide information and hence help prevent cheating? Or are they the instruments of the most powerful states in them? And how do such institutions react to changes in the balance of capabilities in the world economy? Will the rise of Asia necessitate a substantial reform of the WTO? If such institutions are rationally designed, what should we expect this reform to look like? Will the WTO's Doha Round fail and thus call into question the legitimacy of the institution itself? Is the proliferation of regional trade agreements a precursor to the demise of the WTO? If the rationale for the WTO is to alleviate terms-of-trade externalities, how will its revision or disappearance affect states? Research on the role of international institutions in trade is a burgeoning topic for both economists and political scientists, and much remains to be examined.

Our existing theories have developed and deepened over the past decade. There has been substantial progress on all four elements. We have much more evidence about domestic preferences on trade, especially as new evidence from surveys and legislative voting comes to light. Nevertheless, the "new, new trade theory" suggests that we may need to look even more closely at

individual firms and their preferences and political behavior. We know much more about the impact of domestic political institutions on trade and especially the role of regime type. But an even better understanding of how political leaders form their trade preferences and how these preferences are connected to societal ones is essential, especially for the developing countries. Our theories about the role of international institutions in trade have developed importantly as well. Nonetheless, more knowledge of the conditions under which international institutions are able to exert greater (or lesser) influence over trade policy is necessary. The field has a much better understanding of the design and impact of the WTO than it did a decade ago. Ongoing research into the spread of PTAs has been fruitful. The relationship between trade and the welfare state is a topic of much research and debate in relationship to globalization. And the interaction between conflict and trade is a focus of attention, especially in light of the rise of China.

Finally, thinking about the possible future direction of trade policy is important. We live in one of the most open and interdependent world economies in history. Will countries' policies toward freer trade around the globe be sustained or reversed in the future? The factors discussed above should give us some information on this issue. If leaders' or social groups' preferences for free trade are maintained or grow, then we might expect liberalization to remain in place. Factors such as economic crises or changes in the nature of trade flows, which cause actors to reevaluate these preferences, may limit their sustainability. The return of authoritarian governments might also be associated with the return to protectionism; the interaction of the welfare state and trade in our globalized world will also be important for sustaining openness. In addition, international institutions seem to be an important bulwark against protectionism, especially in the light of the recent global financial crisis and the deepening of capital

markets across the globe. The evolution of the world economy and the political relations among states may also bring important pressures to bear on our open global trading system. These and other factors will be important for understanding the sustainability of trade openness.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank David Baldwin, Jeffrey Frieden, Stephan Haggard, Robert Jervis, Dani Rodrik, and Beth Simmons for their very helpful comments on earlier versions of this chapter.

NOTES

1 Many of these trade liberalizations occurred within the context of larger economic reform packages. Here, I discuss only the trade liberalization component.

2 As he describes it (Rodrik, 1994: 62), "Since the early 1980s, developing countries have flocked to free trade as if it were the Holy Grail of economic development with the historic transformation and opening of the Eastern European economies, these developments represent a genuine revolution in policy-making. The puzzle is why is it occurring now and why in so many countries all at once?"

3 Trade policies refer to all policies that have a direct impact on the domestic prices of tradables, that is, goods and services which are traded across national boundaries as either imports and/or exports. Such policies include not just import tariffs, which are taxes on imports, but also export taxes, which under certain conditions have identical effects as import taxes. Likewise, import and export subsidies also count. Exchange rate policy also affects trade flows, but it is a subject I leave for others to discuss.

4 Political leaders may also favor trade liberalization because it increases government revenues. Liberalization may generate more revenues because of the increased economic activity and higher volumes of trade it produces, even at lower tariff rates.

5 For a wide-ranging review of the effects of different political institutions on the probability of large-scale economic reform, including trade liberalization, see Haggard (1988).

6 Research by Iversen and Cusack (2000), however, shows that changes in economic structure rather than trade account for the growth of the welfare state.

7 Many have noted that in the presence of high capital mobility – another condition of globalization – governments also lose control of their monetary policy, especially if they desire to fix their exchange rates (e.g., Garrett, 1998).

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International Migration

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INTRODUCTION

From the academic perspective of international relations (IR), migration is a rather novel area. The study of international migration has not been a well-established subfield in IR. As the Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Migration section of the International Studies Association (ENMISA) reflects, the subject has mostly been incorporated within the subfields of ethnicity and nationalism. Because migration has not represented a neatly defined “policy area,” debates have for the most part been characterized by interdisciplinarity and epistemic diversity. Linked to several different policy sectors (e.g., development, human rights, security, trade), the topic eludes a coherent theory, and “pure” international relations approaches. This is also because the conduct of migration policy has traditionally been regarded as a stronghold of domestic policy rather than international cooperation. As a consequence, the study of international migration lends itself to fragmented sets of theories and a multi-level perspective.

Despite its late appearance on the IR stage, foreign policy experts and policy makers have long been forced to grapple

with migration-related issues, either directly or indirectly. The movement of populations (voluntary or involuntary) across international frontiers inherently involved international politics well before migration formally emerged on the global agenda in the 1990s. While this movement is rooted in human prehistory, its political relevance is tied to the establishment of the modern state system, based on the principle of state sovereignty. Since international migration necessarily involves the jurisdiction of more than two states with political-territorial borders and ethnocultural communities (e.g., the nation-state), its salience on the international agenda was inevitable. It was, however, only in the post-Cold War era that the issue of international migration began to carve its way into the core areas of IR scholarship.

The formal debut to this “career” can be attributed to the inclusion of migration on the programme of the UN Conference on Population and Development in 1994 in Cairo. Whereas the nexus between development and international mobility has remained high on the agenda, attention soon shifted to potential risks associated with migration. The events of 9/11 and the implications of the involvement

of foreigners and foreign networks in terrorist activity reinforced the tendency (related earlier mainly to law and order in Europe) to link migration to security. In this context, migration has been notably transformed from a socioeconomic issue to a security issue. As evidenced by the proliferation of international meetings and groups on migration, in the language of IR, migration shifted from the predominantly technical domain of “low politics” (e.g., economic and social questions) to one of “high politics” (e.g., issues pertaining to political and national integrity and security).

The “securitization of migration” in a global era has exacerbated some political cross-pressures between security, markets, and human rights. That is, as security concerns have prompted states to upgrade their means of control, concomitantly, the post-1945 commitments to human rights norms and nondiscrimination on one side and the integration of markets on the other have called for a strengthening of migrants’ rights and the liberalization of labor flows. The preeminent focus on control coincides with a fading support for new multilateral norms relating to migrants’ human rights. In those cases where codification has taken place in the last two or three decades, this has either met resistance (such as the 1990 UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families, which no industrialized country has ratified so far) or it has merely taken the form of non-legally binding soft law recommendations (such as the Guidelines on Internally Displaced Persons). In contrast, states have shown more commitment to multilateralism in trade-related matters. With progressive economic globalization, the mobility of persons has become an integral part of the international trade agenda, especially in relation to trade in services. At the same time as states have struggled with the tightening of entry provisions for migrants at large, rules facilitating the cross-border mobility of particular categories of (highly skilled) workers have proliferated. Such deregulation has been endorsed by the General Agreement on Trade in Services of

the World Trade Organization (GATS), regional economic integration projects, and by an increasing number of bilateral or plurilateral free trade agreements.

The study of migration thus has become critical to scholars of international relations. Because the control that states exercise over the movement of people across their boundaries substantially affects their welfare, security, identity, and development, the subject offers an opportunity to examine critical issues of conflict and cooperation, as well as changing relationships between wealthy and less affluent countries of the global system. Despite the increased scholarly attention to the genuinely international dimension of the migration phenomenon and intensified efforts to work towards an international migration regime at the turn of the millennium, the structures of global governance have remained rather weak in this core area of state sovereignty. While a multiplicity of international norms do regulate aspects related to migration, especially human rights or trade-related areas, according to Alexander Aleinikoff, a renowned migration scholar and now Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, these norms amount to a “substance without architecture” (Aleinikoff, 2007).

To what degree have scholars of migration been able to apply theories and models of international relations in order to make sense of the driving forces, challenges, and constraints to the flow of peoples across national frontiers? What are the implications of migration for development and security? What are the international responses to the uprooting of populations due to wars and other factors; refugee resettlement; labor migration; family and social networks; and irregular migration? Who are the actors involved in migration regulation? What is the role of international and regional institutions such as the UN, EU, NAFTA, ECOWAS, or Mercosur in managing migration issues, and why are bilateral agreements so pervasive in this field? To what degree is migration sufficiently perceived as a universal phenomenon so as to

merit a universal response of global governance? And, finally, how are migration dynamics affecting the nature of state sovereignty in the international system? These types of queries have become inescapable to international relations scholars.

In responding to these questions, this chapter offers an overview of the main themes and approaches in the IR literature dealing with international migration. It focuses on the challenges for international cooperation and global governance that stem from the complexity of the migration issue. The first section provides some theoretical background to examine the policy issues associated with migration in international relations, by focusing on the critical debate on state sovereignty and its limits. The second section maps this labyrinthine playing field, and contextualizes migration research in IR along four main themes: the question of securitization, the human rights dimension, the migration–development nexus, and the new trade agenda. In all cases of international migration, the state (or authority) is invariably central to the analysis. The third part draws on this multifaceted characterization of the migration phenomenon and examines the cooperative structures that have emerged at the multilateral, regional, and bilateral levels that deal with the regulation of the movement of persons across borders. Against Alexander Aleinikoff’s thesis, we will argue that the substance of international migration norms *does* have architecture, albeit a fragmented, partial, and multilevel one (see also Kunz et al., 2011b). It contrasts in important ways from the liberal internationalist model of multilateral regime building that we know from the postwar period, and which is still the model for international cooperation in much of the IR literature.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF MIGRATION AND THE STATE

Given that the principle of sovereignty implies the right of states to control their

territorial borders, it logically follows that international migration inherently challenges state sovereignty. As a result, the movement of people across national frontiers is inextricably embedded in concerns and debates about the decline of national sovereignty. In this regard, the emergence of migration as a global phenomenon raises a major polemic: To what extent can states influence the causes and drivers of international migration? To what degree can governments and states effectively regulate and/or coordinate immigration flows in a global era? Is the capacity of states to implement rational and humane immigration and refugee policies severely constrained in an environment of increasing international economic interdependence or changing security threats?

Based on neo-realist theories (Waltz, 1979), scholars such as Myron Weiner (1985) and Aristide Zolberg (1981) were among the first political scientists to “bring the state back in” to the literature of migration in the 1980s. Positing that states pursue migration according to their “national interests,” these scholars intuitively reflected on the impact of migration and particularly refugee movements for foreign policy and international security. Later students of liberal institutionalism and international political economy (IPE) (Hollifield, 1992; Sassen, 1991, 1996) and sociology (Soysal, 1994; Jacobson, 1996) contended that the policy-making prerogatives of states had become increasingly circumscribed by economic markets and international human rights – both of which are embedded in the nature of liberal regimes (Hollifield, 1992). These schools of thought, sometimes labeled as belonging to the “liberal state” paradigm, underscore the subjective and structural problems inherent in executing a national, interest-driven immigration and immigrant policy. These tensions arise from the fact that since the end of World War II, the major immigrant-receiving states have been committed to increasingly opening international economic markets as well as liberal social and economic rights for all their permanent residents, regardless of their

formal citizenship status. According to this perspective, the ability of the immigration-receiving states to control immigration flows and to effect a self-serving immigrant policy are significantly constrained by domestic and international laws and institutions that are extremely difficult, although not entirely impossible, to revoke.

Another explanation for the so-called “liberal paradox” (Hollifield, 1992), which accounts for immigration policies more expansive than optimized by public opinion, focuses on the domestic politics of liberal democracies. Pluralist models, while not necessarily espousing the “loss of state control” theses, have focused on the role of organized interest groups (Freeman, 1995, 1998, 2002) to explain the regulatory constraints (even self-imposed) on states’ ability to limit intakes of immigrants. They suggest that a range of constitutional and/or other actors influence policy outcomes. Thus, as a result of both domestic and international constraints – the convergence of powerful economic factors (Freeman, 1995), the increasing importance of rights (Soysal, 1994; Jacobson, 1996), pervasive transnational immigrant networks (Massey et al., 1993; Portes and Bach, 1985) — scholars have questioned the assumptions of state sovereignty and government capacity to pursue a rational, self-interested immigration policy. This literature also argues, albeit for different reasons, that the sovereignty of the traditional state has substantially waned in recent decades as its power and authority have been severely circumscribed by transnational forces that exceed its reach and influence. As the transaction costs of international migration have been reduced, national borders have become more porous, and citizenship rights in the “post-national” era (Soysal, 1994) have been reconfigured so that they are routinely exercised by migrant workers and other noncitizens.

The explosion of technological and communication advances with globalization has facilitated the ability of third world migrants to move and to traverse national territories

(Bhagwati, 2003). The flow of information has not only exposed the benefits of migration to potential immigrants, but also facilitated extensive diaspora and migration networks. The emergence of “global cities” links new migratory streams from the hinterlands with manufacturing operations established abroad, concomitant with transnational patterns of foreign investment and the displacement of some manufacturing jobs (Sassen, 1991). According to globalization theorists, these trends have eroded the ability of immigration-receiving states to control their borders. As a result, unilateral attempts by governments to restrict immigration and dictate the terms of immigrant settlement and incorporation have become increasingly futile. According to transnational interpretations of globalization, such changes in the global economy challenge the boundedness of race, ethnicity, and nationalism which underpin nation-states (Glick-Schiller, Blanc-Szanton, Basch, 1992). Rooted in more anthropological or sociological approaches, these types of globalization scholars apply transnational conceptualizations of citizenship, identity, and political and cultural engagement to international migration (Levitt, 2001, 2002; Vertovec, 2003; Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002).

In refuting some of these viewpoints, a third school of thought altogether rejects the supposition that the immigration-receiving states have lost control of immigration. Although scholars working within this framework criticize the “loss of control” or “declining sovereignty” theses from very different intellectual starting points, they unanimously agree that the capacity of states to forge and implement control over immigration has *not* significantly eroded over time. Joppke vigorously argues, for example, that the extent to which state sovereignty has been compromised by immigration has been relatively minor and largely self-imposed (1998). Guiraudon and Lahav have likewise considered the strategic responses to reinvent control in a global era (2000, 2007). Theories of deputization (Torpey, 1998), delegation

(Guiraudon and Lahav, 2000), privatization (Lahav, 1998, 2002), externalization (Boswell, 2003; Lavenex, 1999, 2006a; Lavenex and Uçarer, 2002, 2004), and venue shopping (Guiraudon, 2000; Lavenex, 2001a, 2001b) have all offered perspectives on the ways that states have reinvented control and circumvented some liberal democratic norms in order to shift liabilities and externalities of migration control. By co-opting actors at the international, private and national level, states have been able to circumvent national or international constraints in regulating migration. This proliferation of control mechanisms does not necessarily mean that states have become more efficient in their overall response to migration. On the contrary, intensified regulation and limitation of access to residency and asylum dislocate the pressure for mobility and have unintended effects, such as perpetuating the phenomenon of irregular migration and compromising states' capacity to satisfy economic demands and to fulfill humanitarian obligations (Castles, 2004), as well as civil liberties norms (Lahav, 2003).

Whatever their perspective, the above discourse all center around the potency of the state in regulating migration. Whether they focus on the role of exogenous or endogenous state actors, the centrality of the state and its capacity to regulate migration is at question. To a large degree, answers to these questions largely inform and are embedded in the myriad of subdebates regarding migration examined in the following subsections.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AS A COMPLEX FIELD

In contrast to the segmentary organization of political community and citizenship, a predominantly functional approach has led scholars of international relations to think of international cooperation problems in terms of neatly defined and delimited issue-areas. The classic definition of an international

regime is an emblematic expression of this way of thinking as it refers to "principles, norms, rules, and procedures, around which actors expectations converge *within a given issue area*" (Krasner, 1983, 3, our emphasis). The phenomenon of international migration, however, defies this ordering principle since it is linked to a variety of distinct issue-areas which partly follow different logics and pose different priorities for its regulation. In this section, we provide an overview of the thematic breadth associated with international migration before we explore the regulatory patterns that have emerged to deal with this substantive complexity.

We classify the IR literature on the phenomenon of international migration along four major lines of debate. These center on the questions of securitization, human rights, development, and trade issues, respectively. Below, we briefly outline key policy developments along these academic trajectories.

Migration and security

Although the security ramifications of immigration have been evident for a long time, the broad security agenda that has emerged recently makes clear that there is still no theoretical consensus regarding the scope, definition, and impact of security as it relates to international migration today. From the constructivist theoretical standpoint of the Copenhagen School of International Relations, security lacks a fixed conceptual meaning, and thus can be measured by its discursive content rather than objective indicators (Waever et al., 1993; Buzan et al., 1998). The recent discourse on "securitization of migration," although lively and contentious, underscores the dynamic impact of diverse and changing security perceptions on democratic governance, international cooperation, and migration management.

The link between migration and security is not new. Security in its various forms has assumed different meanings across cultures and time. The traditional security agenda

has been embedded in the notion of protection from external aggression, or national interests in foreign policy, and has thus been linked to state sovereignty and identity. The term, however, has been broadly attached to societal, personal, national, or more basic human security, including economic, physical, health, environmental, cultural, and political dimensions (see the 1994 Human Development Report of the UNDP). The link between international migration and security was first established by a few scholars working from a realist perspective as early as the 1980s. While Myron Weiner (1985, 1992, 1993) was the first political scientist to address the relationship between immigration and security issues, several scholars indirectly captured this linkage in their work on the role of refugees in US foreign policy (Teitelbaum, 1984; Zolberg, 1995). Scholars of European politics have broadened their security-migration focus to include demographic (Koslowski, 2000, 2001; Weiner and Teitelbaum, 2001), societal, and cultural conflicts (Heisler and Layton-Henry, 1993). The role of foreigners and foreign networks in the terrorist attacks of September 11th, as well as those in London and Madrid, visibly exposed the multifaceted and variable nature of immigration threat (Lahav and Courtemanche, 2011).

Although the security ramifications of immigration were evident prior to the “critical juncture” of 9/11, the debate primarily involved economic and cultural fears aroused by mass immigrant settlement of ethnically and racially diverse minorities. It was not until the general public’s anxieties about “societal security” (Waever, 1998) and quality-of-life issues (see Alexseev, 2005: 66–67) intersected with its fears about immigration as a threat to physical safety during the 1990s (Huysmans, 2000: 752) that the “securitization of migration” discourse became firmly embedded within the domestic and foreign politics of advanced liberal democracies. This discourse, exacerbated in the aftermath of 9/11, reinforced linkages previously drawn between immigration, crime, law and order,

and security (Bigo, 2002). The securitization of migration epitomizes the changing political landscape, dominated by “new security” issues (e.g., ethnic conflict, terrorism, migration, identity politics; see Buzan et al., 1998) on the political agenda. In this context, the migration issue has been notably transformed from an economic or cultural threat to one of societal security and physical security of the post-Cold War period, coinciding with notable developments around protectionist norms (Lahav, 2003; Lahav and Courtemanche, 2011).

This changing representation of the migration issue in political and public discourse has notably been studied by constructivist scholars. The so-called Copenhagen School has conceptualized securitization on the basis of speech act theory in terms of discursive shifts in the way political actors depict the phenomenon of international migration (Waever et al., 1993; Waever, 1995). Others have emphasized the interplay between discourse and political practice (Boswell, 2011) and, in particular, the role of security actors in the social construction of migration as a security threat (Bigo, 1996). Jef Huysmans has analyzed the change of representation of migration in Europe in terms of “security as a technique of government” (Huysmans, 2006: 30ff). Linking institutional theory with social constructivism, Lavenex (2001a) has further shown how the exclusive organizational setup of Justice and Home Affairs cooperation in the European Union prioritized the perspective of law enforcement actors and went along with a securitarian framing of the immigration issue which facilitated restrictive reforms in the member states.

It is important to note that the securitization discourse has not remained unchallenged and has at times had to compete with alternative framings of the immigration question that stress the beneficial impact of immigration on Western societies. Such a pro-immigration view has, in particular, been put forward in demographic studies published around the turn of the millennium that forecast a dramatic need for so-called

“replacement migration” to Western societies in order to mitigate strains on social insurances and labor shortages resulting from aging populations (UN Population Division, 2001). A similar counter-discourse has emerged with regard to highly skilled migrants, who tend to be depicted as highly mobile temporary human capital and flexible cosmopolitans for which the otherwise feared problems of integration do not apply (see the subsection titled “Migration and Trade”).

Apart from the representation of migration as a threat to internal stability and societal peace, migration has also been increasingly “nexed” with matters of external security, mainly with regard to forced migration. While the issue of refugee protection has been a traditional component of the security and war agenda, the role of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has raised questions about humanitarian intervention and the “responsibility to protect norms” (Cohen, 2004; Weiss, 2004, 2007). The dramatic increase in the number of civil and ethnic conflicts, which have coincided with the end of the Cold War, has generated large-scale population displacements. These developments have not only affected “liberal peace” and international security (Doyle, 2005; Chandler, 2004; Phuong, 2005), but have also questioned the obligations of the international community in the form of humanitarian and military intervention, especially as they challenge sovereignty.

The growing tendency to view international migration-related questions through a national security lens has posed several political conflicts and implications for policy makers. First, it has mitigated the migration–development link and the human rights perspective (see the following section), as physical security has influenced more protectionist regimes to the detriment of the more open agendas focused on liberties, safety, sustainability, and well-being promoted by rights advocates and development agents.

Second, security concerns tend to generate national consensus; unlike development, a

topic rife with moral debate and socio-economic values, these concerns are less amenable to public debates and ideological polarizations. The consensual nature of national security tends to trump other concerns, and may promote ethnocentrism, intolerance, and a fortress mentality (see Lahav and Messina, 2005). Based on social behavioral research, it is not surprising that as immigration shifts from a development focus to a security concern, the issue generates attitudinal consensus – particularly around protectionist values (Lahav and Courtemanche, 2011). As immigration salience becomes more attached to physical security, it may become less politicized or ideologically polarized despite its salience (issue attachment). As aggregate behavioral research has suggested, national or physical security may displace traditional ideological alignments.

Third, this linkage with security has generated new patterns of contestation, as it has challenged and displaced the traditional socioeconomic cleavages and partisan alignments prevalent in the postwar liberal system (Bell, 1962, 1973). The tendency of immigration politics to straddle the ordinary liberal–conservative divide has exacerbated “strange bedfellows” coalitions on reforms (Tichenor, 2002; Zolberg, 2000).

Finally, at the institutional level, the securitization of migration coincides with the expansion of the migration “playing field” and regulatory practices, including the widespread proliferation of actors (e.g., private, local, international) involved in restrictive policy implementation (Lahav, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2008; Guiraudon and Lahav, 2000, 2007). These include non-(central)state local or private actors, or third states, such as the police, intelligence services, military professional, private security agencies, etc., which may be sanctioned by multilateral, regional, or bilateral agreements (see the fourth section ‘The Global Governance of International Migration’). As a result of these processes related to the securitization of migration, cooperative initiatives have become more

urgent, and the number of relevant actors or stakeholders in migration policy has increased significantly.

As the section below discusses, the policy trade-offs (e.g., for markets, human rights, development) have posed both opportunities and challenges for global governance. On the one hand, the increasing proclivity of national governments to view immigration-related questions through the prism of physical security has precipitated greater coordination to regulate the flow of persons, and especially asylum seekers and illegal migrants, across countries (Bigo, 2002; Huysmans, 2006). In Europe, the inability of states to stem unilaterally the flow of so-called “unwanted” immigration has facilitated the expansion of the policy-making competence of the EU supranational institutions (Lahav, 1997, 2004; Lavenex, 2001a; Uçarer, 2001) and has mobilized neighbors (e.g., Lavenex, 1999, 2006a; Lavenex and Uçarer, 2002, 2004) in the protection of Europe’s territorial borders. On the other hand, as immigration issues have transcended from “low politics” concerned with economic and social issues to “high issues” of security or defense, resistance to global governance has coincided with the surge of popular support and protectionist movements. The growing tendency to view international-migration-related questions through a national security rather than a development lens has thus had mixed blessings for global governance.

Migration and human rights

The protection of human rights, embodied in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, traces its roots historically to the 1789 French Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen, when natural rights were distinguished from legal ones. Although conflated over time, the protection of the natural rights of humans has been delegated to international human rights instruments, while the protection of the rights of citizens has been traditionally deferred to domestic or

constitutional law. These distinctions have inherently set up some institutional and normative tensions between international and national law regarding non-nationals or foreigners. Since human rights instruments legally guarantee protection for all individuals and groups against actions that interfere with individual fundamental freedoms and human dignity (regardless of citizenship), their universal application tend to stretch beyond state borders, where the sovereignty principle reigned supreme. Ensuring the protection of human rights implies that there are limits to sovereignty, for if there were no such limits, then there would be no grounds on which to justify humanitarian intervention except in cases in which it was requested. The impunity with which states pursue their security objectives can be observed in various circumstances, but most clearly when population flows relate to armed conflict (Guild, 2006).

In addition to institutional and normative constraints, there are also questions with regard to which types of migrants human rights instruments should apply. Should they ethnically apply to asylum seekers and refugees alone (Gibney, 2004), or do irregular migrants merit protection, as many advocates have posited? While the most revered international instruments (constituting 144 state signatories) protecting migrant rights are conferred to refugees through the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, international human rights law has become broadly concerned with protection of all migrants, particularly in regard to issues of discrimination. In promoting the “human rights of all individuals,” the international human rights framework thus provides an ideological or normative construct as well as clearly articulated and widely accepted legal notions for legislative and practical responses to a range of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights (Weiss, 2007; Weiss and Korn, 2006).

At the center of all human rights treaties is the prohibition of discrimination, which prescribes equal protection to nationals and

non-nationals alike. These fundamental rights principles were institutionalized early on in the evolution of international instruments, and they are contained in the UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948); International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1966), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979); and the Convention against Torture (1984). These instruments are limited, however, as the principles only indirectly apply to migrants, the covenants are nonbinding, and they are all circumscribed by the rights of states to control admission on their own territory. Moreover, the covenants only apply to conditions within their own territory, as they underscore the right of states to provide consent for entry (see GMG, 2008).

As human mobility has become entrenched in processes of globalization, there has been growing international pressure to adopt appropriate measures to address specifically the human dimension of migrants' rights and responsibilities. International organizations, human rights advocates, governments, and NGOs have thus focused more attention on human rights aspects of migration and, in particular, the rights of migrants other than refugees and asylum seekers. Among the most notable initiatives in this vein have been the 2003 entry into force of the 1990 International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (the CMW), the creation of a new post for a UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants (1999), the Protocols on Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (2000), and the proliferation of national and international conferences dedicated to human rights. Regional instruments such as the European Convention of Human Rights (1950) have also become increasingly

successful in creating binding standards for a growing number of member states (currently with 46 European countries having ratified the convention).

Despite these important developments, coupled with the increasing state consent to established international human rights treaties, most states are reluctant to go beyond lip service, and few are willing to categorically ratify these principles. The most salient example of this reluctance is the fact that no single Western immigration country has hitherto agreed to ratify the CMW. In addition to states' reluctance to agree on new international norms, a major impediment to global governance in the field of human rights for migrants has been the lack of coordination between the various actors on the ground. There is far less interest to increase human rights instruments than to streamline and coordinate the multiple initiatives on the ground between NGOs, civil society organizations (CSOs), and international organizations (e.g., IOM, Global Forum, Global Migration Group, the UN). The launch of the newly formed Global Forum on International Migration meeting in 2007, for example, was met with resistance by states on the grounds that it merely "reinvented the wheel." Notwithstanding, the emphasis on coordination is seen to be fundamental in convincing nation-states to ratify and implement the existing instruments (see GMG, 2008).

Migration and development

The emergence of migration on the international policy agenda has coincided with the renaissance of development perspectives. Notably, the salience of migration on the international agenda formally emerged on the forefront of international discussions in connection with development (Lahav, 2010; Sørensen et al., 2002). While cooperation concerning the movement of peoples has been invariably attempted throughout the post-WWII era as states sought to regulate the movement of foreign labor mainly

through bilateral negotiations, it was not until the 1990s that such regulation became firmly entrenched on the global political agenda. In 1994, the issue unexpectedly emerged as a controversial topic at the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo.

In Cairo, the UN went further than its previous meetings on Population and Development in Rio and Johannesburg toward institutionalizing migration within the socio-economic and demographic frameworks. Despite much political wrangling, these initiatives paved the way for the establishment of institutions such as the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in the UN General Assembly (September 2006), and a more permanent structure, the Global Forum of International Migration (see Thouez and Rosengartner, 2007).

The rediscovery of the migration–development nexus at the turn of the twenty-first century prompted a plethora of international policy initiatives, often marked by ideological and global debates. The coordination of issues such as remittances, brain drain, aid, investment, entrepreneurship, and income and social inequalities has highlighted the divide between developing and developed countries; between the South versus North; poor versus affluent; countries experiencing population growth versus those with shrinking populations; with the former seeking to secure better terms for out-migration, and the latter to better control such inflows (UN Population Division, 1998).

These platforms expose the complex nature of political contestation concerning migration and development. Vulnerable to ideological attacks, such policy issues are also challenged by contradictory scholarly findings, which make global governance particularly intractable. Studies have questioned the political agenda behind the current discourse on migration and development (Hammar, Brochmann, and Tamas, 1997; de Haas, 2010; Raghuram, 2009). While some scholars find

that remittances contribute to national economic development (Fraenkel, 2006), rising income distribution, and quality of life (Keely and Tran, 1989), more pessimistic studies have concluded that it would lead to more dependency and adverse effects in the source countries (Kunz, 2011; Penninx, 1982; Russell, 1992; Zachariah, Mathew, and Rajan, 2001). Moreover, some findings have shown that such flows would lead to increasing inequality within migrant-sending communities (because of selection bias) (Lipton, 1980; Zachariah et al., 2001). Similarly, there have been implicit but empirically inconclusive assumptions about the relationship between development and levels of out-migration. Some studies have argued that at least initially development coincides with rapid surges in migration rates but that there is a “migration hump” (Martin and Taylor, 1996). Assuming, as liberal neo-classical theorists do, that the process of factor price equalization (the Heckscher–Ohlin model) occurs, migration ceases once wage levels at the origin and destination converge (Massey et al., 1998). Empirical findings are clearly contradictory, reflecting differences in paradigmatic orientations, interpretations, political ideology, methodology, and a changing global context. These differences at one and the same time impede and compel global governance initiatives.

Migration and trade

If there is a tenuous link between out-migration from labor-sending countries and economic development (as measured by per capita incomes) noted in the studies above, there is an equally unclear relationship between policies aimed to accelerate development, such as free trade and investment, and the outflow of migrants (Papademetriou and Martin, 1991; Skeldon, 1997; Lucas, 2005). While most theorists agree that migration tends to be associated with an increase in bilateral trade between host and sending countries (Dunlevy and Hutchinson, 1999),

there is wide scholarly divergence on the *nature* of the relationship between the two. On one hand, to the degree that the logic of trade is one of openness and that of migration is based on closure, migration may be seen to have an inverse relationship with trade (Hollifield, 1998). On the other hand, empirical studies have also demonstrated a positive correlation, albeit with negative policy implications. That is, studies have shown that in the short run, trade may have an adverse affect on developing countries (e.g., exogenous strong competitive pressures may collapse agricultural sectors), and generate large emigration pressures, especially when disparities in wages and incomes are very high (e.g., the United States and Mexico) (Martin, 1995). Still, other scholars point to the positive impact migration may have on trade. Accordingly, social networks and migrant ties may develop trade markets (Head and Ries, 1998; Gould, 1994; Rauch, 1999), lower the costs of trade (Portes and Rey, 2005), and increase profits.

The dominant neoclassical economic theories of the interrelationship between four factors of production (trade, capital, service, and labor) offer two major assumptions regarding migration and trade. First, as Heckscher and Ohlin's model poses, trade should substitute for migration, through "factor price equalization." Second, as standard trade theory posits, countries will produce and export those goods for which they have a competitive advantage (e.g., developing countries in essence export labor). These models tend to assume that international migration of labor is similar in its causes and effects to international trade, based on differences in resources (Krugman and Obstfeld, 2000).

Nonetheless, noting the myriad of institutional impediments to trade and labor mobility that often exist, some political scientists (Rogowski, 1989; Kessler, 1997; Hollifield, 1998) deem the free flow of labor the exception rather than the rule. One substantial challenge is the absence of an international regulatory framework and regime necessary

to maintain a free-trading system, such as that which exists for goods, services, and capital (Kindleberger, 1973; Trachtmann, 2009, 2011). A second difficulty stems from the collective-action problem of finding a basis of cooperation in a dynamic international system (Hollifield, 1998). Arguably, the recent world economic crises have underscored that a neoliberal world regime based on market liberalization, privatization, and deregulation and underpinned by international organizations such as the IMF, World Bank, and WTO may be in just as much need of control valves as a neoconservative one.

A third challenge to regime building in this domain stems from the fact that labor/trade are asymmetric, and not necessarily interchangeable developmentally and spatially. As Stalker (2000) argues, developing nations may not always be able to benefit from comparative advantages. Labor-rich countries, for example, typically have few export industries and suffer from poor infrastructure, such as roads and telecommunications that hamper the speed with which they can respond to international markets – an impediment that reduces the productivity and competitiveness of the area.

Fourth, domestic interests, sectoral groups, shifting coalitions, and normative perceptions may also have an important impact on the type of labor-trade policies pursued. Expounding upon Rogowski's (1989) notion of trade coalition constraints, Kessler (1997) argues that states dominated by landowners (or capital holders) are more likely to pursue liberal immigration policies than states in which labor plays a significant role in the political process. Hainmueller and Hiscox (2010) have shown that industrialized capitalist countries favor highly skilled labor over low-skilled labor, a factor that has much more to do with welfare considerations of the host country than concerns over trade and taxation. Indeed, trade and other economic exchanges can be influenced by public perceptions and biases (Guiso et al., 2009; Bilal, 2003). Prospects for global governance may thus rely on more behavioral

economic explanations or psychological models of cooperation.

Finally, as many observers have noted, liberal trade assumptions, while often holding theoretical promise, tend to neglect the fact that in the real world, labor is not necessarily permitted to flow across national borders without restriction. States still tend to use subsidies and sanctions that distort the perfect free market mechanisms. Trade policies also generally operate within tight political constraints. That is, few politicians willingly confront their own farmers, workers, or industrialists, especially during economic recession. For these reasons, Castles and Delgado Wise (2008) pessimistically conclude that trade reforms favorable to the economies of the less developed countries will – if at all – come gradually.

Observers of the European Union have argued that the creation of free trade areas and regional political communities, in the form of regional integration, may serve to diminish unwanted migration by reducing trade barriers and spurring economic growth. Opponents have pointed out, however, that such successful regional integration has occurred after price parity, and usually takes place between states that share political and cultural values and relative economic development standing. They may look to NAFTA to explain the failure to incorporate labor as part of the trade equation.

While globalization has become a crucial context for understanding shifting migration and trade flows, there is no doubt that this increasingly interdependent world still relies on the same international rules of stability and equilibrium (Castles and Miller, 2009). On the one hand, the dominance of an increasingly integrated capital world market has facilitated the emergence of new giants such as India, Brazil, and China, creating new trading (of both production and migration) routes, with new winners and losers. On the other hand, globalization's correlates of rising inequality, conflict, and inability to create fairer trade rules for poorer countries have nonetheless coincided with attempts to

reassert nation-state power as well as those of social and economic actors. The increasing interconnectedness of the world of states due to technological and communications revolutions has coincided with a diversification of stakeholders (e.g., MNCs) and changing labor needs (e.g., highly skilled labor, IT sector). These developments have not only challenged the traditional Bretton Woods international political and economic order, but they have made the nexus of migration and trade fruitful for global governance.

THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

The survey of diverse political and academic perspectives on international migration underscores the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon. The complexity and heterogeneity of the problems and opportunities associated with international migration hamper the crafting of a uniform set of principles, norms, and rules regulating the issue. This challenge is exacerbated by the intricate link (discussed in the first section) between state sovereignty, control over territory, and the representation of national identity. As a result, migration policy has hitherto not been a stronghold of “global governance,” defined by A-M. Slaughter (2004: 371) as “formal and informal bundles of rules, roles and relationships that define and regulate the social practices of state and non-state actors in international affairs.” In contrast to the flow of goods and finance, where states have established strong international institutions to coordinate their (liberal) policies, no parallel development has taken place with regard to the international mobility of persons. Despite ample attempts, institutional arrangements for such cooperation have been elusive (Newland, 2010). With the exception of the international regimes for labor rights and refugees, which have their origins in the interwar period, states have been very reluctant to agree on

binding multilateral norms regarding international migration (Betts, 2011a).

Notwithstanding these obstacles to internationalization, states all over the world have increasingly recognized the pressure for cooperative approaches to the management of migration flows. At the turn of the new millennium, the UN Secretary General, a number of government representatives, as well as economists and lawyers (e.g., Bhagwati, 2003; Ghosh, 2000; Trachtmann, 2009) united their voices in the call for an international migration regime. As noted earlier, this intensification of multilateral consultations on the matter built upon the Programme of Action of the United Nations International Conference on Population & Development held in Cairo in 1994, which called for greater international cooperation on migration and development, better integration of documented migrants, the deterrence of irregular migration, and the protection of refugees. A decade later, upon the initiative of the then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) was established to investigate the opportunities for developing an international migration regime. The conclusions of these deliberations, however, raised little optimism.

The very nature of transnational migration demands international cooperation and shared responsibility. Yet the reality is that most states have been unwilling to commit fully to the principle of international cooperation in the area of international migration, because migration policy is still mainly formulated at the national level (GCIM, 2005: 67). This conclusion of the GCIM's final report was confirmed at the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development held in the UN General Assembly one year later. The High Level Dialogue was the first time that the issue of migration was officially discussed at the UN level. Yet, apart from the establishment of a noncommitting Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) meeting once a year to maintain multilateral

dialogue, this move has remained without tangible consequences.

This somewhat reluctant momentum toward global governance responded to diverse pressures. Countries of emigration have long called for a more positive attitude toward international migration in order to reap its potential benefits for development, while fighting the adverse effects of brain drain. Conversely, destination countries increasingly apprehend the limits of unilateral domestic migration policies for both attracting those migrants they need (e.g., the "best and the brightest") and for dissuading irregular immigration. Notwithstanding Western countries' opposition to the establishment of a comprehensive international migration regime following the liberal internationalist model of postwar multilateralism, a multitude of international norms and cooperation arrangements have proliferated over recent years that together form the "international migration regime complex" (Alter and Meunier, 2009; Betts, 2009, 2011a; Raustiala and Victor, 2004). This regime complex consists of a multilayered system of governance arrangements that combines fragmented multilateral elements with a growing web of (trans-)regional and bilateral cooperation frameworks, and includes both (exclusive) liberalization efforts and cooperation that is geared to rescuing states' control prerogatives through enhanced cooperation (Kunz et al., 2011a,b).

The following four subsections delineate and summarize the building blocks of this migration regime complex at the multilateral, (trans-)regional, bilateral, and non-(central) state level. We then offer some explanations regarding why global governance takes on different forms in different aspects of migration policy.

The multilateral level

The multilateral level of migration governance is marked by a clear emphasis on liberalism, with a strong focus on the rights

of migrants and refugees and on the facilitation of international movement. The interwar period as well as the years after World War II marked the heyday of multilateral institutionalization in the field of international migration. The two formal international regimes affecting migration stem from those periods: the international refugee regime and, although not specifically limited to migrants, the international labor regime. In subsequent years, migrant-sending countries have, in particular, fought for the stronger codification of migrant worker rights, an effort which has culminated in the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW) of the 1990s. No industrialized country has, however, ratified this convention yet. Western states, in contrast, have primarily concentrated on measures to enhance their means of control over immigration through unilateral and regional initiatives. An exception to this restrictive trend is the codification of provisions on the temporary mobility of migrant workers under a trade agreement, the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) (Lavenex, 2006b; Panizzon, 2010). Finally, a third area which has seen a certain development in international cooperation is the issue of internally displaced persons (IDPs), where a soft-law framework has been taking shape over the last decade (see Koser, 2011).

Given the relative novelty of migration themes in IR, only a few authors have tried to explain theoretically the success or failure of international regime building in these areas. Theory-guided analyses have tended to focus on the most clearly internationalized field of migration policy, refugee protection. The international refugee regime is based on the UN 1951 Geneva Convention to which 144 countries were party in 2008, and the activities of the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR). Notwithstanding many states' attempts to limit their obligations therein, the international refugee regime constitutes one of

the most strongly legalized areas of migration governance. Its centerpiece is the preemptory norm of *non-refoulement* that prohibits refugees from being returned to places where their lives or freedoms could be threatened (Loescher, 2001; Betts and Loescher, 2010; Loescher and Milner, 2011). Its establishment in the postwar period and further strengthening in the 1960s through the conclusion of the New York Protocol of 1967 has mainly been interpreted from a neorealist perspective in the context of the Cold War. Accordingly, the formulation of a right to seek protection on grounds of individual persecution played in the hands of the US hegemony in the ideological contest between East and West and was a useful instrument to welcome and perhaps even attract Soviet dissidents (Teitelbaum, 1984; Weiner, 1993; Zolberg et al., 1989).

After the end of the Cold War, these power-based explanations have been challenged by liberal institutionalist approaches that linked up with the economic notion of public goods and game theory in explaining international cooperation in refugee protection (Hollifield, 1998). In contrast to the wider phenomenon of international migration, where one can argue that a well-managed migration policy can function among a limited number of states, and can therefore exclude other parties from cooperation, the issue of refugee protection has been identified as a global public good (Suhrke, 1998; Betts, 2009; 2010; Thielemann, 2004). Accordingly, the reception of displaced persons contributes to international security and is an international public good from which all states benefit and none can be excluded. Suhrke explained the institutionalization of the international refugee regime on the basis of a collective action problem analogous to a prisoners' dilemma: although all states would benefit from a cooperative solution, in the absence of binding institutional mechanisms for responsibility allocation, states would "free ride" on the provisions of other states. In agreement with power-based regime theory, she argued that, as in many postwar

international institutions, the United States acted as benevolent hegemon in the creation of the international refugee regime. This role was sustained by the Cold War ideological contest and the US' wider liberal agenda (Suhrke, 1998). This interpretation was later revised by Alexander Betts, who, pointing to the profound power asymmetries between Northern and Southern countries, argued that rather than a prisoners' dilemma, international refugee protection takes on the characteristics of a suasion game. In order to find cooperative solutions despite profound asymmetries of interests and strongly disparate gains from cooperation between the migration-sending and the migration-receiving countries, it was necessary to link the goal of refugee protection to other issue-areas such as security, immigration, and trade. These linkages would engender reciprocity and ensure cooperation (Betts, 2009, 2010).

A second traditional area of international codification concerns labor rights. In contrast to refugee protection, it was originally not a specific concern of migration policy but has evolved in the context of the broader mandate of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The ILO, one of the oldest international organizations, has led the way in defining and enforcing workers' rights, historically through specific conventions and recommendations, and recently through the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work ("ILO Declaration"), which binds all ILO members, and protects all migrant workers regardless of status. Rights in employment, such as fair wages, safe and healthy working conditions, reasonable working hours, and trade union rights are protected by international human rights law as well as by international labor standards. A general feature of ILO norms and also of international social and economic human rights more broadly is their relatively low level of legal precision and obligation (see Abbot et al., 2000 and Hartlapp, 2007). Notwithstanding their weak institutionalization, ILO norms are generally undersubscribed by UN

member states, in particular migrant destination countries. The latter's disinterest in a stronger international codification of migrant rights became manifest in relation to the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers (CMW) of 1990. Drawing on ILO norms, the CMW brings together the rights which hitherto protect migrants (including irregular workers) with those already accepted by most states through the "core" human rights treaties. Since it came into force in 2003, the convention obtained less than 50 signatories, most of whom are generators of migration, and no major migrant destination country has ratified it. The fate of the CMW is a salient expression of the fundamental asymmetry of interests between "North" and "South" in migration issues, and the lack of reciprocity involved in codifying social and economic rights in a mainly one-directional migration world. Given the world's organization into mutually exclusive state jurisdictions, one can also say that as in the case of human rights more generally (Moravcsik, 2000), the rights of migrant workers inside the territory of another state are not directly an issue of international interdependence but subject to the host states' sovereignty. Indeed, many industrialized countries argue that the rights laid down in the convention are already well covered by existing national laws and that the CMW duplicates existing international instruments (Iredale and Piper, 2003). Put differently, in the absence of direct reciprocity, and without the support of powerful states, it seems that cooperation on international migration may be limited to the consolidation of existing norms, yet without creating new legal obligations.

A different constellation of interdependence exists when foreign workers are a scarce good for which countries compete. In this case, when labor supply is not abundant but needs to be politically promoted, a well-managed migration policy allows for direct reciprocity between the sending and the receiving countries of migrants. This scenario does currently apply to the case of highly skilled migrants in sectors such as

information technology but also to the health sector more broadly. The final adoption (after 2 years of negotiations) of the EU Council Directive Blue Card for high-skilled Third Country Nationals (TCN) during the financial crisis in 2009, for example, reflects the logic that highly skilled migrants may fill important labor shortages, enhance competitiveness and long-term investment, and serve as stimulus for ailing economies (Cerna, 2008; ILO, 2009). Competition for foreign workers is likely to intensify in coming decades due to demographic trends in Europe.

Although states at first started to liberalize unilaterally their admission policies for professionals due to labor shortages, economic pressure by employers associations has led Western countries, under the lead of their trade ministries, to negotiate multilateral rules on the admission of specific categories of workers in the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization. The GATS includes mobility provisions as one of four modes in which services can be traded across borders. The inclusion of natural persons in the GATS' liberalization agenda constitutes the exception to the reluctance toward new multilateral norms on migration generally, and are the first ever codified international norms regulating the admission of foreign workers. GATS rules are hitherto limited to the temporary admission of highly skilled professionals moving either under business visitor visas or in the form of intra-company transfers within multinational corporations (Lavenex, 2006b; Marchetti and Roy, 2009, Panizzon, 2010), a fact which is strongly criticized by developing countries for favoring one-sidedly the interests of the West. Beyond this shared interest of advanced economies in facilitating the movement of highly skilled professionals, developing countries' enduring demand for extending liberalization to other categories of workers have hitherto remained unmet (Mattoo and Carzaniga, 2003). Although demographic pressure on Western economies is likely to also turn less skilled labor migration into a

scarcer commodity, thus enhancing reciprocity in international migration cooperation, the scope for multilateral solutions has hitherto not been extended.

A different strategy to establish reciprocity in migration relations has thus been to link migration to other issue-areas, such as security and development. One example of an issue linkage between security and human rights aspects is the recent multilateral codification of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (IDP), which apply to people forced from their homes by conflict, communal violence, or egregious human rights violations and who remain uprooted and at risk within the borders of their own countries (Koser, 2011). Given that these persons do not leave their home country, they do not fall under the mandate of the 1951 Refugee Convention or the UNHCR. The issue came onto the agenda in the context of the increasing salience of civil wars and was successfully propagated by a community of legal experts and NGOs, in cooperation with the UN Commission on Human Rights (Cohen, 2004). The principles draw on existing international human rights law and international humanitarian law standards and, although constituting nonlegally binding "soft law" measures, were adopted by the assembled heads of state and government at the World Summit in New York in September 2005. It can be argued that in this case, international cooperation was framed in security terms as a global public good issue, similar to the international refugee regime before it. This framing was supported by the broader discourse on humanitarian intervention and the responsibility to protect. Despite many states' reluctance toward new multilateral norms in the area of migration, these changes offered a supportive context for codification, even if only as "soft law".

Beyond these limited cases of contemporary multilateral cooperation, it must be noted that "there is still no consensus on whether global governance is really required,

what type of global governance would be appropriate, and how it should develop” (Newland, 2010: 331). However, the pressure for international cooperation is real, and manifests itself in a plethora of new cooperation frameworks at the (trans-)regional level and in bilateral relations.

The (trans-)regional level

While the multilateral level of cooperation is inhibited by strong asymmetries of interest and the difficulty in establishing reciprocity in mutual relations, more dynamism exists at “lower” levels of international governance. At this level, we find both liberal regimes that promote internal mobility as part of regional economic integration and restrictive cooperation frameworks in which like-minded states join forces in the fight against unwanted migration. Relevant institutional venues are found in regional integration initiatives, plurilateral free trade agreements (FTAs), and regional consultation processes (RCPs) (see Thouez and Channac, 2006; Betts, 2011b; Köhler, 2011; Ward, 2011). Regional integration initiatives and FTAs increasingly include rules on free human mobility. In contrast, RCPs have developed to coordinate the regulatory aspects of migration management, in particular immigration control. The European Union is hitherto the only regional integration framework that combines internal liberalization with cooperation on immigration from third countries, otherwise known as Third-Country Nationals (TCNs). EU citizens enjoy free movement rights, with the right to live, study, and work in any member state of the Union. This internal liberalization, and in particular the abolition of internal border checks, has been coupled with cooperation on the strengthening of the external borders, against irregular immigration, and with issues of asylum. Much like in the case of the US–Mexican border (see Andreas, 2003, 2009), this has gone along with the deployment of a plethora of new surveillance tech-

nologies, which, together with the restrictive turn in admission policies, have motivated the metaphor of a “fortress Europe” (Bigo and Guild, 2005; Geddes, 2008; Geddes and Boswell, 2011; Huysmans, 2006; Lahav, 2004; Lavenex, 2001a).

A number of regional integration frameworks replicate the EU’s free movement regime with far-reaching liberalizations of economic migration among their member states, at least on paper. As early as 1979, the countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) adopted a Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and the Right of Residence and Establishment. Both the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) have envisaged similar protocols which are pending implementation. In Latin America, the countries of the Mercado Comun del Sur (Mercosur) as well as Chile and Bolivia concluded in 2002 the Free Movement and Residence agreement that grants member states’ citizens an automatic visa and the freedom to work and live in the signatory countries. In comparison to these regional integration frameworks, the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), comprising Canada, Mexico, and the United States, is much more restrictive for movement rights. NAFTA is limited to provisions with regard to the mobility of skilled workers. While it is certainly true that the ideology of regional integration as an avenue for peace building supports free movement projects, the latter complement the economic goal of integrated markets by allowing theoretically for the optimal allocation of labor. For states which participate in a market integration project, one can argue that the gains from liberalizing migration rules are reciprocal since the labor force can be deployed where it is best used, thereby producing net welfare gains that are again shared across the common market. These welfare-enhancing effects are supported by the stronger homogeneity of countries participating in a regional integration project.

Apart from these regional integration frameworks, relevant migration norms have also been codified in more specific FTAs, especially since the turn of the millennium. Again, the EU is a frontrunner in linking migration-related norms to economic agreements with third countries. These norms are of a diverse nature. On the one hand, FTAs have been used to negotiate mobility-enhancing norms that exceed commitments under the GATS. EU association agreements with neighboring countries have emulated and expanded GATS commitments regarding service providers. They thus allow for the temporary entry of natural persons providing a service or who are employed by a service provider as key personnel as well as nationals of the contracting parties who seek temporary entry for the purpose of negotiating for the sale of services. The recent Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), concluded with the 13 Caribbean countries that form the so-called Cariforum group, also include relevant provisions. In addition to the issues agreed under the GATS, the Cariforum EPA extends labor-related commitments to cover natural persons engaged in non-services sector activities and also to a number of new service sectors and a few other areas (see, Ward, 2011). Issue linkage between trade issues and mobility provisions expands the scope of negotiations and thereby enhances opportunities for reciprocity among the partners.

The linkage between migration and trade is, however, also used in order to exercise policy conditionality and create incentives for weaker states to cooperate with destination countries in the fight against unwanted immigration. In the case of the EU, such strategic issue linkage became most explicit in a decision of the EU heads of state and government in 2002, according to which “migration clauses” stipulating compulsory readmission in the event of irregular immigration should be included in any new cooperation, association, or equivalent agreement between the EU and third countries (Lavenex, 2002, 2006a). Whereas earlier

association agreements such as those concluded with the Southern Mediterranean countries also included cooperation on migrant workers’ rights, no new commitments have been adopted in this regard in the new generation agreements.

The third layer of (trans-)regional migration governance are the so-called regional consultation processes (RCPs; see Betts, 2011b; Köhler, 2011; Thouez and Channac, 2006). RCPs have proliferated since the mid-1990s. They are constituted as transgovernmental networks of migration officials within a certain region and are process-oriented tools to foster communication and exchange on migration issues among interdependent countries. Although formally following an open agenda, most RCPs deal primarily with migration control issues and have often been set up as complements to free trade arrangements facilitating mobility. Such networks first originated in Europe, but now also exist in the Americas, in Asia, and in Africa. The model for these RCPs is conventionally deemed to be the Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum (IGC) that were created in the 1980s among “like-minded” states in Europe, North America, and Australia to exchange information and best practices in dealing with undesired immigration. In contrast to this early model, however, most recent RCPs have emerged with source and transit countries of migrants upon the initiative of migrant-receiving states. This is true for the East European RCPs (the Budapest and the Söderköping Process) and 5+5 Dialogue between selected European and North African countries (Lavenex and Wichmann, 2009). To some degree, this is also true for the Puebla Process in the Americas (Kunz, 2011) and the African RCPs (Betts, 2011b), such as the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA), which is attached to the SADC, or the Migration Dialogue for Western Africa (MIDSA, attached to the ECOWAS). It is because of this external inducement through migrant-receiving countries outside the region of the

Consultation Processes that this level of interaction is also referred to as “trans-regional” governance rather than regional coordination (see Betts, 2011b).

According to a UN survey, “in the absence of an international regime for international migration, regional consultative processes of an informal nature have become a key component of migration management” (UN, 2004:155). As this quote illustrates, RCPs are informal; they consist of “soft” modes of interaction such as dialogue, capacity building, or information sharing and not on rule making as such. On the one hand, in the majority of RCPs, there is a deep asymmetry of problem structures and preferences between the external sponsors and the actual regional participants. This asymmetry plays against “hard” governance in the sense of setting up common regulatory frameworks. On the other hand, however, such transgovernmental networks may become instruments of policy transfer in which migrant-receiving countries try to promote their skills in observing, apprehending, and legally processing migrants to the regions of origin and transit (Betts, 2011b; Lavenex, 2008; Lavenex and Wichmann, 2009).

The bilateral level

The preceding section has argued that (trans-) regionalism has become an important layer of international migration governance. A second layer of cooperation that has experienced a certain revival in recent years is bilateral relations between migrant-receiving and migrant-sending countries. Whereas multilateral fora have been dominated by a liberal agenda, and regional cooperation tends to combine internal liberalization with external restrictionism, it is at this bilateral level that some attempts have been made to link the two agendas in the search for “win-win” solutions. In this context, the notion of migration or mobility “partnerships” has taken shape to devise the move toward a comprehensive approach

to migration. Addressing the links between migration, development, trade, and security, this approach aims to pave the way for “win-win-win” solutions, meeting the expectations of source and destination countries as well as of the migrants themselves (Kunz et al., 2011b). We include EU mobility partnerships in the discussion of the bilateral level because, although the EU side is internally multilevel and plurilateral, these informal agreements are concluded with third countries on an individual basis and not, for example, on a trans-regional basis.

As an institutional form of cooperation, bilateralism has certain advantages for such a comprehensive approach. This is, in particular, the case with regard to the amount of coordination required between different sections of the public administration in addressing the multiple facets of migration. Finding a common approach between ministries of Immigration, which are usually part of Home Affairs, and other relevant ministries such as Foreign Affairs and Trade and Development, is already a major challenge for national administrations, given the different perceptions these actors have on the issue of migration and the political priorities for which they stand. At the multilateral level, where international cooperation has followed neatly separated functional scopes and has materialized in distinct international organizations and regimes, such comprehensive coordination is an even more daunting task. A second advantage of bilateralism (at least from the perspective of the “North”) lies in the different power configuration that stems from the asymmetry of interdependence, which tends to benefit the receiving countries in Europe and North America in their relations with the majority of sending countries.

As the comparison between European states’ bilateral agreements with countries of origin (Panizzon, 2011), EU-level mobility partnerships (Lavenex and Stucky, 2011), and bilateral agreements between Canada, the United States, and other Central or South American countries (Kunz, 2011; Pellerin, 2011) shows, the conclusion of

such comprehensive deals tackling labor migration in a positive way is rather the exception. Although EU mobility partnerships officially would follow the goal of facilitating mobility, they have hitherto not significantly promoted new routes for economic migration into the EU (Carrera and Hernandez, 2011). This is also due to the internal division of competences in the EU and member states' sovereignty over immigration quotas (Lavenex and Stucky, 2011). Like the plurilateral RCMs, the concept of migration or mobility partnership follows the model of external network governance (Lavenex, 2008). It is thus based on informal memoranda of understanding and an open process orientation focused on the establishment of transgovernmental ties linking dialogue with more targeted policy-transfer activities, capacity-building and operational cooperation (e.g., on border controls).

The linkage of cooperation on migration control with trade and development issues enhances receiving countries' leverage on the source countries. Issue linkage widens the bargaining space and allows formulating material incentives for source countries' agreement to cooperate in migration control. Apart from establishing an implicit or explicit conditionality between trade, aid, and migration control, bilateral migration partnerships and plurilateral RCM promote norm diffusion and rule transfer by softer means. The institutionalization of transgovernmental relations goes along with the so-called exchange of best practices, ideas, and normative understandings. It often involves training and capacity transfers, and over time it may yield more profound socialization dynamics, and contribute to the diffusion of "Western" concepts of border management and population control to other parts of the world (Lavenex and Stucky, 2011; Lavenex and Wichmann, 2009). Depending on the relative power division between the "partners," and the constellation of interdependence, however, bilateral cooperation may also develop a stronger focus on the interests of the sending countries. While the EU has hitherto

limited its offers of "partnership" to "easy" targets such as Cape Verde, Georgia, and Moldova, two EU member states, France and Spain, have concluded cooperation arrangement with major African countries such as Senegal and Tunisia. In these cases, the conclusion of bilateral deals has included the opening up of (albeit limited) avenues for legal immigration (Panizzon, 2011).

The nonstate level (private and local actors)

The management of migration has increasingly assumed new and more intensive modes of cooperation, which have coincided with the proliferation of relevant actors or stakeholders in migration policy. The development of the relationship between states and nonstate actors in meeting national goals captures a global era marked by intense pressures for collaboration and cooperation. Whether through outsourcing or "contracting out" of implementation functions or the incorporation of nonstate actors through sanctions and the privatization of migration regulation (Lahav, 1998), the playing field of global governance has now extended well beyond states, and has included other relevant actors such as NGOs, corporations, civil society, etc. (Newland, 2010; Weiss, 2000).

This expanded migration regulatory framework includes not only redoubled state efforts at the local and international levels, but also a marked reliance on the incorporation of nonstate or private actors, who provide services, resources, technology, and nonpublic practices that are otherwise unavailable to central state officials (Gilboy, 1997, 1998; Lahav, 1998, 2000, 2003). Nonstate actors have the economic, social, and/or political resources to facilitate or curtail immigration and return; they provide states with different sites and tools (e.g., technology) to control migration at the source (Lahav, 1998). They also provide states a mechanism to circumvent any domestic constitutional or public constraints (Guiraudon and Lahav, 2000).

Enlisting nonstate actors, for example (e.g., airlines, travel companies, employers, universities, hospitals, etc.), national policy makers may rely on racial profiling and other selective immigration practices to circumvent judicial and constitutional constraints, public scrutiny and debates, democratic accountability and transparency, as well as some international human rights constraints (Lahav, 2003; Guiraudon and Lahav, 2000).

The security-migration framework has provided “public order” and emergency clauses grounds for a flurry of cooperative activity on police and security matters, among actors at the national, regional, and transatlantic levels. This expansive migration playing field includes a complex web of actors and institutions, such as the police, intelligence services, military professionals, private security agencies, firms, airline and travel agents, diplomats, consulars, bureaucrats, and policy makers at the local and international levels.

Since September 11, 2001, transatlantic cooperation between the United States and the European Union has also grown, bringing together agencies and institutions in the United States and Europe that had never worked together before – and in some cases, had not even existed. For example, in September 2002, Attorney General John Ashcroft became the first US Attorney General to meet formally with his EU counterparts, the ministers of Interior and Justice (the JHA Council). Today an extensive policy dialogue is in place dealing with migration control, visa, border security, exchange of personal data, and other issues of law enforcement and judicial cooperation which includes regular meetings at the level of ministers, senior officials, and experts. At the operational level, attachés from the US Department of Homeland Security and US Department of Justice have been posted at the US mission in Brussels, while corresponding European officials have been posted at the EU delegation in Washington D.C.

Underlying many of these developments is a fundamental tension between an increasing

demand for security technology and infrastructure on the one hand (which gets support from an increasingly influential security industry) and, on the other hand, the preservation of mobility and the protection of human rights. Nowhere is this better exemplified than by the US Department of Homeland Security’s newly adopted risk management approach in forging cooperative agreements to adopt new technologies to better identify and target high-risk flows of people and goods while at the same time facilitating low-risk flows for tourism or markets. The expansive and comprehensive security-based framework of cooperation focuses on all types of policy analysis, ranging from security technologies, bioterrorism, data mining, optimization, data security and privacy, to environmental, welfare, ethnic, religious, racial, and human rights threats.

Clearly, the expansion and diversity of a migratory regulatory playing field is substantial, as international migration now involves not only a community of states, but new actors and factors in migration regulation, who may participate in “global governance” or “migration management.” Such regulatory modes go well beyond central states or even international/regional actors such as the IOM, the EU, or Schengen for example, and include civil society, local, private, and nonstate actors (e.g., airlines, transportation companies, employers, detention centers, schools, hospitals, etc.). In many cases, actors may be democratically unaccountable (e.g., nonstate actors), and operate fairly unfettered; they may even be enlisted by liberal states through outsourcing or sanctions (Lahav, 2000, 2003; 2008), or guided by “exceptional” principles of conduct. In almost all cases, they are sanctioned by states and international instruments to promulgate extremely protectionist norms and practices (e.g., via data-mining, surveillance, and security systems, and more broadly speaking, the erection of new transnational fortresses). While these shifts offer new possibilities for global governance over migration, they have substantial implications for democratic governance (Lahav, 2007).

As the vociferous opposition of NGOs and civil rights groups has demonstrated, these policy strategies have challenged fundamental rights of migrants and asylum seekers, and have questioned the democratic norms of liberal regimes.

CONCLUSION: THE INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION REGIME COMPLEX

This chapter has taken stock of the literature on international migration, in order to place the subject more systematically within the theoretical lacuna of the international relations field. It also provides a standpoint from which to evaluate empirically the development and prospects for global governance related to migration. Recognizing the necessary but insufficient attention devoted to migration within international relations scholarship, this chapter reviewed the state of the art offered by diverse schools of thought within the field, including students of international security, political economy (IPE), human rights, and global governance. We examined some key issues and theoretical sub-debates raised by migration within the study of international relations, and considered literature by neo-realist, constructivist, international political economy as well as liberal institutionalist, political theory (democracy), and transnationalist scholars.

Tracing four specific issue linkages – security, human rights, development, and trade – we identified the constellations of interests and actors that sometimes compete with one another, and that challenge global governance in migration. The logics and politics behind each cooperative initiative may vary, depending on issue linkage. Thus, from the development perspective, the aims of global governance may be to respond to the strengthening of the “push-pull” factors of migration (e.g., a widening of the economic and technological gap between developing and industrialized countries). From the security perspective, global governance must

attend to the “new security” threats associated with migration, such as international terrorism, crime, human smuggling, child trafficking, or more generally irregular migration. Global governance arrangements also have to adjust for human rights challenges posed by policy responses that come in form of mass deportations, racial profiling, privacy violations, and lack of accountability or transparency. As the policy analysis in the last section has shown, the weakly defined (though not immaterial) architecture of a migration regime reflects the complexity of a migration playing field which involves multiple interests and stakeholders, and a variety of somewhat conflicting prerogatives, ranging from human rights to economic and security interests. Each of these debates must be contextualized within the cross-pressures between state sovereignty and globalization constraints, noted in the beginning of the chapter.

In addition to the complexity of the migration issue and its sensitivity for state sovereignty, another fundamental problem for international cooperation is the profound asymmetry of interests between the source countries and the destination countries of migrants. This asymmetry of interests rests in the fact that in contrast to the fields of trade or the environment, cooperation on migration can in most cases not draw on direct reciprocity (Trachtmann, 2009). States can be expected to establish regimes for migration, whether informal or formal, where they expect some benefit from the reciprocal commitments of other states, or when cooperation is sponsored by a hegemonic actor. Otherwise, states prefer to retain unilateral discretion. Given the current division of labor in the world economy and the abundance of especially less skilled labour in the developing world, it can be argued that developed countries can satisfy their needs for foreign workers unilaterally without necessarily engaging in an international regime. The incentives for collective action rise, however, if foreign labor becomes a limited good for which states compete, or

if cooperation on migration is linked to other fields where reciprocity is mutual or linked to other concerns, such as security, development, or the mobilization of migrant remittances.

The structures of global governance in the field of international migration mirror the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon and the complexity of patterns of interdependence between sending and receiving countries. The architecture of this cooperation departs from the liberal institutionalist model of multilateral regime building that we know from other fields of cooperation and deploys a particular degree of fragmentation. The traditional liberal vocation of multilateral cooperation, epitomized in interwar codification of the global labor and refugee regimes, has seen a certain dissociation from the protectionist agenda of the West, in particular since the 1970s. With the exception of some limited rules on the mobility of highly skilled service workers, included in the 1995 GATS treaty, hardly any new norms have been adopted at this level over the last decades. To the extent that a “regime” exists for international labor migration, it is lacking in a central norm, and is based on weak institutions and principal actors (the ILO and the IOM) who have limited regulatory and institutional capacities (Cerna and Hynes, 2010). Furthermore, the projected costs of participating in such a regime have been claimed to outweigh the benefits, thereby attracting short-term strategies of unilateral or bilateral regulation of migration over long-term multilateral approaches (Hollifield, 2008).

In contrast to the multilateral level, where coordination between the various aspects of migration policy is wanting, policy making tends to be slow and cumbersome and where deep differences of interests prevail, more dynamism has been deployed at lower levels of interaction in regional and bilateral relations. Regional cooperation frameworks ensure greater homogeneity and, coupled with economic cooperation, tend to face more balanced internal migration patterns.

Trans-regional and bilateral cooperation have opened up the scope for issue linkages in the effort to foster reciprocity in the cooperation between receiving and sending countries of migrants. A second tendency at the trans-regional and bilateral level goes beyond the search for issue linkages and involves the intensification of transgovernmental contacts. Such institutionalization of policy networks brings together migration officials from receiving countries with their counterparts from sending and transit countries. The idea is to promote dialogue and information exchange as well as operational cooperation. In this way, convergent mutual perceptions on migration “management” may be forged. Far from equalizing existing power asymmetries, it is these trans-regional and in particular bilateral levels of cooperation that have evolved most dynamically in the recent years in terms of international migration governance.

International cooperation in the field of international migration is thus a vivid example of what some observers may refer to as the “last monopoly” of the state (see Cerna and Hynes, 2010: 28). As political scientists and scholars of international relations have invariably conceded, global governance still needs to reckon with the relentless impulse and voracity of state sovereignty. In this vein, it is important to underscore the obvious: nation-states remain key actors in shaping policies on international migration, citizenship, welfare, and public order. They define their interests vis-à-vis issues such as development, security, trade, and human rights according to their position in the international order. Within these dynamics facing global governance, one should not neglect the predominant and more tangible *local* level of migration, where the causes and effects of migration are most pervasively felt. This factor substantially generates uneven policy interests and outcomes, even when global forces are at work. These trends are suggestive of the limits of global governance to find a “one size fits all” approach to migration regulation.

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Development and International Relations

Jana Hönke and Markus Lederer

INTRODUCTION

The study of development has long remained “one of the last bastions of modernism in the social sciences” (Rapley, 2007: 185), and many of the practices of development agencies, the World Bank, and others are still conducted within the theoretical framework set up after the end of the Second World War. Yet, empirical evidence of persisting global inequality and skepticism about the idea of modernity as growth – as it is, for example, represented in the world community’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – in light of environmental degradation and serious postcolonial criticism, have put these visions into question both in theory and in practice. In the following, our first aim is to show the strong diversity of development theorizing and to understand the traditions that have developed.

International Relations (IR) as a discipline did not take sufficient account of development for a long time and had little substantive to say about states at the political as well

as economic peripheries of the international system and even less about poverty and inequality within them (Neuman, 1998; Jones, 2005: 993). This trend reflected the tendency that “development has been consigned to the realm of low politics, except when the international order, as it has been constructed, is threatened” (Dickson, 1998: 367). IR has at times even denounced alternative approaches dealing with new issues, such as poverty, race, or the environment, as non-IR (Smith, 2007: 6). Such issues were taken up in other departments, such as development studies, area studies, or comparative politics, where they tended to be compartmentalized in particular issue-areas. Our second aim is to show that development practice and development thinking have, however, always been part of international politics, even though IR did not account for it. It is only recently that IR’s own diversity has reflected more and more the various critical, postcolonial, and poststructuralist tendencies of development. The discipline has changed over the last 15 years and has become less state-centric. Former “low politics” issues have become

more central in the study of international and transnational relations.

One of the reasons for this change is the rise of the BRICs economies (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) that is shifting geopolitical realities and the practice of development. In particular, after the financial crisis of 2008/2009, the original core countries of the West are perceived to be in decline. Indications for the rise of the emerging economies are (1) the end of the G-7/G-8 and the establishment of the G-20 as the major forum for geopolitical and geo-economic discussions; (2) the stalling of the Doha Round for World Trade, when in 2009 negotiations collapsed due to India's veto against US and EU agricultural policies combined with issues of a strong growth of South–South trade and an increase of South–South development aid; and (3) the realignment of quota shares in favor of emerging economies in the IMF and World Bank in 2010.

Our review is structured in two parts: The first part provides a genealogy of theorizing development. We start with a brief overview of the historical “forefathers” of development and then turn to three classic approaches: Modernization, Dependencia, and Neoclassics. This is followed by an overview of the various streams of the so-called “Post-Washington” consensus that more or less reflects the current mainstream. We then proceed by focusing on newer developments that no longer view growth or even development per se as a positive concept, including, inter alia, works by post-Marxist and postcolonial authors. The second part analyzes three cross-cutting themes that discuss critical trends in development in practice: Poverty and inequality, security and development, and the environment and development.

THEORIZING DEVELOPMENT

History of development thinking

The beginnings of development thinking are difficult to define. Yet one can distinguish between theories of development as an

immanent process and theories that conceptualize development as intentional policy program. In understanding development as an immanent process, pre-modern theories deal with human progress and processes of change and the destructions such processes entail. Based on a linear understanding of historical change, such theories try to explain progressive change perceived as inherent in human history. Taking the idea of development as intentional policy program, development has been perceived as an intentional process of improvement, an improvement that in most theories relates to economic growth (Cowen and Shenton, 1996).

The idea of development can be traced back to the Enlightenment, to evolutionary theories in biology and sociology of the nineteenth century, and to colonial economics and the history of the empire. These currents replaced the previously dominant conception of history as being a series of repetitive cycles with the idea of a linear historical development. John Locke's writings and especially Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) represent the emergence of a liberal doctrine, linking the idea of progress to economic growth in order to solve Hobbes's problem of order. Ideas about teleological progress also appeared in other disciplines: The founding father of modern sociology, Auguste Comte, believed that human knowledge progressed through three subsequent stages of thinking. Under Darwin's theory of evolution and social Darwinism, the idea of development as progress became what passed as common sense in mid-nineteenth century Britain and beyond. Karl Marx's early theory of economic development represents another case of thinking about human development progressing through subsequent stages of economic production. Colonial economics are, finally, another source of development thinking that precedes postwar development studies. However, the term only referred to developing the exploitation of natural resources to effectively supply raw materials to the colonizing center and was not about industrializing the colonies (Pieterse, 2009: 5–6). Until World War II, development

as a term did not appear in these discussions (Arndt, 1981). However, during the period of rapid industrialization in nineteenth-century Great Britain, development was used with a very different meaning by some authors. It referred to dealing with the problems and shortcomings of industrialization: poverty, revolts, uprooted peasants, and social tensions, and thus with the destructive effects of progress on the community and on social values (Cowen and Shenton, 1996: 7, 57).

Development as growth: the classics

The narrow use of the concept of development as economic growth – defined as an increase in real income per person – only came into use in the twentieth century, when the first systematic ideas about how decolonizing countries could repeat the path of the industrialized and economically rich West sprang up. Much of this debate – at least in the North – was influenced by the rapidly achieved results of rebuilding Japan and Germany after World War II (Leys, 1996: 8). Furthermore, the rise of the United States from a latecomer to the most industrialized country and the New Deal were taken as successful examples. Finally, the strong influence of Keynes on economic doctrine also inspired the focus of the early development theories on the role of demand and the possibilities states have to initiate it. In the South, however, the term development was closely linked with gaining political and economic independence.

The first development theories thought of the “Third World” as a more or less monolithic block with common features, problems, and opportunities. Such a holistic perspective not only led to a very general diagnosis, but also to undifferentiated policy recommendations. The question of why some areas/regions/states did better than others was for the most part not raised, partly due to the fact that it was not yet empirically obvious that divergence in developing countries themselves would arise (Kohli, 2004: 5). The following

three “classics” – Modernization, Dependencia, and Neoclassics – all share a teleological assumption about a linear progress of development (Leys, 1996). These theories also share a common understanding of science according to which researchers not only explain the reasons for underdevelopment, but also advise policy makers on how to advance development (Preston, 1996).

The Modernists

Modernization theory builds on the literature from the 1940s that analyzed how a “big push” could bring forward any backward region, be it in the North or the South (of particular importance is Rosenstein-Rodan, 1943). The theory identifies the reasons for development within the “traditional” structures of a society, and its main argument is that a modern form of social organization and a complete transformation of a society can be achieved if developing countries were to follow in the footsteps of the developed countries. The primary instrument to initiate such a transformation is capital accumulation, originating either from domestic or international savings. Rostow (1960), for example, famously identified five stages of societal development ranging from the traditional society to the age of high mass consumption, which he believed were universally applicable. Investments and an infusion of new ideas initiated by the country’s elites can lead traditional societies to “take off.” The approach is deeply connected to progressive readings of history as a constant move toward Enlightenment, and its followers stress the importance of rationalization, technology, and education. Modern ideas and values would be taken up by the elites in the developing world if they were properly transferred. The Modernists, therefore, relied on a positivist epistemology and hoped to formulate a scientific perspective of development as the “Mandarins of the Future” (Gilman, 2003).

Modernization theory is the first development theory that explicitly tries to explain why developing countries are economically underdeveloped (good overviews can be

found in Huntington, 1971; Gilman, 2003). The concept was part of the ideological battle of the Cold War over how Europe and Japan could be rebuilt after World War II and whether capitalism or socialism would bring about development and poverty reduction in the global South faster and better. The beginnings of the theory can be identified in the discussion about the role of the Bretton Woods institutions (Helleiner, 2010), in the Truman doctrine, and the 1951 initiated UN program for development (Slater, 1993). Modernization theory can therefore be understood as the “American response” to the problem of underdevelopment (Leys, 1996: 111). For good reasons, Rostow’s book’s title included the term “A Non-Communist Manifesto” (Rostow, 1960) and can be described as a manual on how to fight the Cold War in the global South. Besides Rostow, authors like Gabriel Almond, Myron Weiner, Karl Deutsch, Albert Otto Hirschman, Bert Hoselitz, and Daniel Lerner have contributed to the theoretical development, among others (Gilman, 2003: 2).

Modernization theory has been criticized on several counts: First, the stress on capital accumulation is seen as too narrow, as sometimes even accelerating growth rates can lead to instability (Olson, 1963). Second, the theory is highly teleological, as it has a strong evolutionist tendency and strong hopes for progress. Furthermore, the theory is criticized for being ahistorical: it perceives the development of all states to be alike, although this is certainly neither true for Western Europe (Tilly, 1975) nor for developing countries (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979). Third, not much attention was paid to social issues. Finally, conservative authors strongly warned that the policy advice of the Modernists – to provide massive foreign aid in order to push the take-off phase – was against the interests of the United States (Banfield, 1962; Morgenthau, 1962).

The impact of the Modernization school was initially much stronger on the academic discourse than on the practice of development institutions like US Aid or the World

Bank (Leys, 1996). It was only in the late 1960s and 1970s that Modernization theory triggered down to the policy level. Ever since, its evolutionary paradigm has been an important and sometimes still dominant approach in development agencies as well as in planning ministries all over the world. This is hardly a surprise, as it neither questions the North’s attempt to use foreign aid as a tool of development, nor does it rule out the fact that the South will eventually catch up (Rist, 2002: 109). Many of these aspects were taken up again in the neoclassical approaches at the end of the 1970s and in the 1980s (see below). Another revival occurred in the approaches to “modernize,” for example, the post-communist transition countries after the end of the Cold War (Fukuyama, 1992).

Dependencia

The core idea of Dependencia is that Western Imperialism did not bring about economic progress and industrialization but rather the “development of underdevelopment” (Baran, 1957). It is the rise of the metropolitan industrialized center which led to a structural lock-in of exploration and unequal exchange with the agrarian periphery (Dos Santos, 1970; Amin, 1976). Unequal exchange refers to the huge profits of capitalist consumers and workers, which are obtained at the expense of producers and consumers in developing countries due to the latter’s structural weakness within the international system (Emmanuel, 1972). This leads to a transfer of resources, wealth, ideas, and people from the developing to the developed world, reifying the dependency of the periphery. Particularly in international trade, the Singer–Prebisch thesis postulates deteriorating terms of trade for the South. The latter implies that developing countries depend on exporting primary, principally agricultural, products, whose prices are bound to decline in relation to the price of manufactured goods of the North. Therefore, over time the South will gain less and less for its exports (Prebisch, 1950; for a good analysis of the terms of trade over almost two centuries, see Ocampo

and Parra-Lancourt, 2010). Contrary to the Modernists, Dependencia authors perceive foreign investments in the periphery and the integration of developing countries into the international trading system as a means of exploitation and not one of initiating growth. Especially in Latin America, the incorporation of local societies into the international system led to the underdevelopment of the most productive sectors and has been a cause for the economic backwardness of the region from the sixteenth century until today (Frank, 1967). Contrary to Marx, Dependencia did not value capitalism as a necessary step of “progress,” but rather focused on the imperialist tendency of the capitalist core to look for new markets and exploit them (for a Marxist critique, see Warren, 1980).

Whereas the Modernist school stressed the endogenous factors of development, Dependencia stressed the external factors: the history of colonization and the dominance of the North as being structurally responsible for the underdevelopment of the South (a good overview is provided by Palma, 1978; Caporaso, 1980). Dependencia developed out of the embitterment that arose from the failure of most newly independent countries to experience anything like the “take-off” the Modernists had envisioned. Furthermore, with the rise of the Soviet Union as an economic power, the perceived decline of US hegemony after the end of the Bretton Woods fixed exchange rate system, and the first signs of stagflation in the industrialized world, a general skepticism grew toward the Western development path. The goal of development as growth was not questioned. However, the idea that the South could repeat the Northern trajectory was put into question. Many, although not all, of the major figures of Dependencia came from the Global South (Samir Amin, Fernando H. Cardoso, Teotonio Dos Santos, Enzo Faletto, Raúl Prebisch) or had settled down in the South (André Gunder Frank). The theory had, however, many followers in Marxist and neo-Marxist circles in the United States and in Europe, in particular, within the student movements (for the

United States, for example, see Baran and Sweezy, 1966).

Dependencia has been much more diverse than the Modernist school. Various authors have, for example, highlighted that internal factors must also be taken into account as an “internalization of imperialism” can be witnessed (Evans, 1979). This was also emphasized by Cardoso and Faletto, who argued that with stronger involvement of the United States in Latin America, multinational companies, the public sector, and some larger domestic entrepreneurs became part of a capitalist alliance (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979). There was, however, not much epistemological differentiation and similar to Modernization theory, a positivistic approach dominated.

The practical corollary of Dependencia’s theorizing was the advice to dissociate Southern countries from the international economic system and to search for South–South cooperation, at least until a similar level of economic development as in the North is achieved (Sunkel, 1969; Furtado, 1970; Cardoso, 1973; Senghaas, 1977). Dependencia, thus, took up the ideas of authors like Friedrich List or Alexander Hamilton, who argued for state-led industrialization and the protection of nascent industries. The practical corollary to the infant industry argument was the strategy of Import Substituting Industrialization (ISI). This became the theoretical cornerstone of the United Nations Economic Council for Latin America and the Caribbean (better known by its acronym, ECLAC, or CEPAL in Spanish). ISI led to the protection of local industries and markets as well as strong protectionist measures against exports. The strategy was supported by extensive government programs and became one of the main reasons for high budget deficits in most developing countries in the 1970s and 1980s (Brutton, 1998).

During the late 1970s and more so in the 1980s, a strong disillusionment arose with Dependencia (for a good overview, see Menzel, 1992). One of the main critiques is

that it overestimated the role of North–South trade and that the theory’s claim of exogenous reasons for underdevelopment did not hold up to empirical testing (Larrain, 1989). Furthermore, it was never specified which class would bring about progress if not the Bourgeoisie. Dependencia also failed to take account of the role of state classes which, through their rent-seeking behavior, posed important barriers to economic development (Elsenhans, 1981). The practical implications have also been criticized, as wherever attempts were made to dissociate from the international economic system, they led to very problematic results (for a discussion of Latin America, see Edwards, Esquivel et al., 2007). For most practitioners of development, the economic rise of the Asian Tigers finally proved Dependencia’s reliance on non-integration wrong (see statist approaches below). The general consensus that emerged was that the Asian Tigers also initially pursued state-led development, but shifted from ISI to export-led strategies at the right time (Rhys, 2008).

It would, however, be premature to argue that the argumentation of Dependencia is without further influence: First of all, the mainstream took notice, and the development institutions focused more on social issues as a response (e.g., the “basic needs approach” of the World Bank in the 1970s). Mainstream academia gave it attention until the beginning of the 1980s – a prominent example being a special issue of *International Organization*, which focused on Dependencia in 1978 (Caporaso, 1978). Second, various development approaches in developing countries themselves frame themselves still in a Dependencia discourse (see below). Third, World Systems Theory brought a more holistic and global perspective on development in the 1970s (Wallerstein, 1975). Wallerstein’s point of departure – partially going back to Frank – is that a global economic system began to emerge in the fifteenth century separating the world in three spheres: the periphery, the semi-periphery, and the core. In the countries of the core, capital

is accumulated, technological as well as sociological progress develops, and political power is situated. On the contrary, the periphery exports primary goods and raw materials at worsening terms of trade and people thus become more and more impoverished. Most mobility can be found in the semi-periphery, and countries in this cluster sometimes move up to the core or down to the periphery. His theory has a strong structural bias, yet provided inspiration for later post-Marxist theories of inequality in the international system.

Neoclassics and the Washington consensus

Following such prominent thinkers like Friedrich von Hayek or Milton Friedman, a neoclassical revolution in economics had profound effects on development thinking. At the end of the 1970s, neoclassical economics delegitimized positions that favored a strong role for the state, arguing that state failure is just as likely as market failure. According to these theories, political elites do not regulate markets for the “common” good but for personal gains, for example, to get reelected. Thus, the best way to initiate growth is not state intervention but to reduce the role of the government. Such reasoning found not only strong believers in the industrialized North (e.g., in the deregulation policies of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan) but also in the theory and practice of development, as authors like P.T. Bauer, Deepak Lal, Bela Balassa, Ian Little, and Anne Krueger argued for a deliberate retreat of the state in the global South (for a good overview, see Rapley, 2007: ch. 3).

Similar to Modernization theory, the Neoclassics located the reasons for underdevelopment within the developing world. They stressed that by focusing on macroeconomic stability and good governance, growth would become possible and end rent-seeking behavior (a prominent example being Krueger, 1974). In particular, inflation would have to be curtailed by reducing state controls and by liberalizing trade, investment, and other financial flows. Import substitution industrialization

(ISI) was strongly condemned, as it did not allow Southern countries to explore their comparative advantage (Little, Scitovsky et al., 1979). Developing countries should instead strengthen their exports to escape poverty. Monetary policies should try to reign in inflation, whereas the strong role of fiscal policy should be reduced.

Never before did a single approach dominate the practice of development so strongly. The theory fell on futile ground, as state responses to the oil crisis, massive problems with import substitution industrialization, and a deteriorating macroeconomic situation with extremely high rates of inflation were all too visible. This led to the initiation of the structural adjustment programs (SAPs) by the Bretton Woods institutions in the middle of the 1980s that were designed to reduce interventionist policies and fiscal imbalances of a country. Stabilizing the macroeconomic situation should initiate growth, lead to private sector development, and foster Southern countries' integration into the international trading system. At its high point, these recommendations were summed up as the "Washington Consensus" (Williamson, 1990). In some countries of the South, the neoliberal approach was pushed by the elites themselves, particularly in highly authoritarian regimes like Chile under Pinochet, who was advised by Milton Friedman and his "Chicago boys" (Fischer, 2009). But also Ghana, Mexico, and India adopted many of the recommended policies from the Bretton Woods institutions.

For critics, the neoclassical approach led to the debt crisis of the 1980s and the "lost decade of development" (Singh, 1992). They pointed out that the policy recommendations of the Washington Consensus were characterized by too much uniformity and did not do justice to the high variation found in the developing world (Toye, 1993). In particular, the SAPs were not adapted to the circumstances in most Sub-Saharan African countries and caused at least as much harm as good (Noorkabash and Paloni, 1999). The focus on more market and less government

neglected the fact that for some private flows, public investments in infrastructure, safety, and business development must come first (Rapley, 2001). Furthermore, the neoclassical doctrine failed to provide a theory for institutions except for the claim that they were set up for rent-seeking purposes by elites. The theory was thus much more normative than its followers acknowledged. With hindsight, one can argue that the underlying diagnosis of many neoliberal thinkers was right regarding the classical development theories' lack of understanding of the role of the state. For much of the developing world, state failure, or rather interest groups that capture government, was – and potentially still is – one of the strongest barriers against development (see, for example, Bates, 1981, for an analysis of how the urban sector in developing countries is squeezing out the rural one). However, the treatment that the Neoclassics recommended did not very often bring about growth, as there was a serious misjudgment about how markets depend on appropriate institutions (see below).

Current development thinking in various aspects is still embedded in the neoclassical, today often negatively connoted the "neoliberal," approach. In the academic debate, the rational choice and public choice literature are a case in point (for a good overview, see Leys, 1996: ch. 4) and is for many, in particular the IMF, the last bastion of the neoclassic (Stiglitz, 2002). The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), which are one of the cornerstones of current development practice, are also perceived as a continuation of the SAPs discussed above. Nevertheless, the mainstream has moved to a "Post-Washington Consensus," which lays much more emphasis on governance issues, pro-poor growth, and social safety nets.

Development and growth: the contemporary mainstream

Criticism of neoliberal development thinking and official development practices culminated

at the end of the 1980s and led to various “Post-Washington” approaches. These did not entail a complete rejection of neoclassical positions or the market per se, but rather attempted to modify development practices so that they would fit a more diverse set of problems. The 1990s and the early 2000s, thus, did not see the coming about of one single new paradigm within the mainstream, but a proliferation of theoretical developments. This reflects the highly differentiated reality of “developing countries,” which are split more and more between a bottom billion living in misery (Collier, 2007) and emerging economies, in particular Brazil, India, and China, that are not only characterized by high growth rates but also by strong geopolitical ambitions. A certain theoretical consensus, however, has emerged that in order to understand development one has to focus more on the state and institutions.

Statist approaches

A first line of criticism of the neoclassical approaches stresses that the state has been neglected in international politics in general (Skocpol, 1985) and, in explaining successful economic development, in late-late industrializing countries in particular. The role of bureaucracy has especially been explored by Johnson, whose ground-breaking study of the MITI, the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Johnson, 1982), has been highly influential. Many authors focused on East and South-East Asia, arguing that effective and to a large extent highly repressive states precede successful industrialized economies (Amsden, 1989; Haggard, 1990; Evans, 1995; Wade, 2004). The statist approaches have also led to a new focus on the importance of the “developmental state,” something that Rosenstein-Rodan had perceived in the 1940s and Gunnar Myrdal had already advocated in the 1960s (Myrdal, 1968). The economic crisis of 1997 only temporarily challenged the appeal of the developmental state with the criticism of “crony capitalism” (Kang, 2002), but overall the consensus is that the state can, and even

has to, foster economic development, for example, through promoting the rule of law, education, or health services (World Bank, 1997). Much more controversial today is whether the experiences of East Asia can be replicated, for example, in the African context (Rapley, 2007).

Neoinstitutionalist approaches

Neoinstitutionalist approaches analyze the role of non-market institutions on economic behavior. In contrast to “old institutionalism” (e.g., Gustav Schmoller in Germany and Emile Durkheim in France) and the statist perspectives described above, Neoinstitutionalism builds much stronger on rationalist assumptions, starts with individual logics to describe social outcomes, and focuses almost exclusively on transaction costs as the barrier to development. Prominent early representatives of the approach are Douglass C. North, Ronald Coase, and Oliver Williamson (for a good overview, regarding development theory, see the contributions in Harriss, Hunter et al., 1995; Shirley, 2008; Booth, 2011). In the 1990s, these authors were taken up by various historical, rational choice, and sociological approaches (Hall and Taylor, 1996).

In neoinstitutionalist approaches, the fundamental issues for initiating growth are the characteristics of institutions present in a country (Rodrik, Subramanian et al., 2004; Acemoglu and Robinson, 2008). The same can be said for the level of development assistance a country receives (Doucouliagos and Paldam, 2009). Neoinstitutionalism, therefore, transcends the debate of market failure versus state failure, focusing instead on institutional designs that reduces uncertainty (Toye, 1995). In particular, property rights and the rule of law are stressed as prerequisites that allow countries to foster technological progress and to accumulate more investments, which in turn lead to higher growth rates (Klasen, 2008; Tebaldi and Ramesh, 2010). Better institutions are also correlated with less inequality (Chong and Gradstein, 2007). Corruption, ineffective governments and political instability lead to increased

income inequality and more poverty (Tebaldi and Ramesh, 2010). More recently, the focus on formal institutions has been complemented by analyses of informal institutions and culture showing that growth also needs trust and reciprocity (Greif, 2006).

One important question that the neoinstitutionalist literature is debating is how far one has to go back in time to explain the stickiness and path-dependency of institutions. What role, for example, do early settlers play in the colonies as they organize wealth transfer in some areas (primarily Latin America and Africa) and much less so in others (North America and Australia), where checks and balances could be established resembling the mother country that allowed private enterprises to prosper (Acemoglu, Johnson et al., 2001; for a different perspective, see Mahoney, 2010).

Another particularly interesting spin-off of the neoinstitutionalist debate is whether democracy and democratization are good for development. Some argue that it is more than a correlation that industrialization took place when the United Kingdom became a democracy (North, 1990) and that the relationship between democracy and strong growth rates also holds true for modern societies (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006; Persson and Tabellini, 2007). Others have, however, stated that modern growth was initiated under an autocratic system, in particular at the very beginning (Clark, 2007). The latter goes back to Huntington, who in the 1960s argued that modern societies also need to undergo a period of authoritarian ruling in order to kick-start growth (Huntington, 1968). The developing consensus suggests that democratic liberalization is not correlated with economic growth, whereas democratic consolidation is (Przeworski and Limongi, 1993).

The focus on institutions clearly dominates current mainstream thinking about development (World Bank, 2002). It is evident that there is no single best practice of which institutional design is optimal for development (Rodrik, 2007). A consensus is, however, developing that countries need to find their own institutional path, and no

single best practice can be prescribed from above as this would result in “kicking away the ladder” of development (Chang, 2002).

Human development

Contemporary conceptualizations state that development is more than growth as the diverse noneconomic needs and interests of people also have to be included. Development is thus about people-centered politics and the capacities that enable this (UNDP, 1990; Haq, 1995). The approach goes back to the theoretical work of Amartya Sen, Nobel laureate in economics in 1998, who might be characterized as the most important contemporary development theorist. What initiated Sen’s fame as a development intellectual was his finding that there has never been a famine in a democratic country and that, thus, hunger is not due to food scarcity per se but due to poor food distribution (Sen, 1982). He stressed the importance of developing individual capabilities in order to achieve “substantive human freedoms” like being able to avoid starvation or premature mortality; but also the achievement of being literate and enjoying political participation constitute development (Sen, 1999).

The practical importance of Sen’s work cannot be overrated. He played, for example, a crucial role in devising the Human Development Index of the UNDP and in further developing it as an authoritative measure for development that includes not only income or growth patterns, but also life expectancy and literacy rates, and since 2010, new measures of inequality.

Development and (global) governance

The notion of governance has been prominently used in development theory and practice since the 1990s. Having many different meanings, however, one needs to distinguish a normatively loaded, state-centric notion of “good governance” from the more analytical uses of the term on which we focus below. In this latter sense, governance has been defined in IR as a system of rules performing the functions usually associated with government, but no longer necessarily through

hierarchical steering by government, but through nonhierarchical modes of governance by non-state actors with and without government (Rosenau and Czempiel, 1992). Others emphasize that beyond rule setting, governance refers to the intentional provision of collective goods (Risse and Lehmkuhl, 2010). The concept has provided an analytical framework for studying actor constellations and modes of managing collective issues by state *and* non-state actors.

Where does this interest in governance in development studies come from? Since the 1980s, development practitioners have turned to the private sector and to social organizations for implementing development programs. In the academic world, methodological nationalism – taking the unit of the state for granted and as a starting point for the analysis of political processes – has evoked criticism from different quarters since the 1990s (Agnew, 1994; Brenner, 1999). In this context, governance was introduced to integrate “new” actors so far overlooked into the analysis of governing, such as companies, NGOs, private and public-private mechanisms of transnational regulation, as well as non-state actors at the local level, such as traditional authorities or social groups. In IR, this translated into research on global governance and new spheres of authority at the transnational level (Rosenau and Czempiel, 1992; Held and McGrew, 2002) and debates about global public goods provision in the absence of a (world) state (Reinicke, 1998; Kaul, 2003). In various subfields, public–private partnerships and new forms of transnational regulation are explored and the effectiveness and legitimacy of such privatized forms of governance discussed (e.g., Haufler, 2001; Avant, Finnemore et al., 2010).

There are a number of limitations to this new turn in development research. It tends to focus on potentially positive contributions to governance, that is, to collective goods provision, while neglecting the negative effects and dynamics of these new forms of governance. Top-down approaches to governance often do not pay attention to local norms and

bottom-up dynamics within local contexts in Africa, Latin America, and Asia (e.g. Hönke, forthcoming; Börzel and Hönke, 2011). Governance for development has, in addition, largely remained a technocratic perspective neglecting (structural) power effects and inequality (Barnett and Duvall, 2006). Finally, its heuristic value for understanding politics remains limited, because scholars use a notion of governance that rests on assumptions rooted in the Western-liberal conception of the state, namely, the assumption of distinct public and private spheres, and thus state and non-state actors, as well as of separate political and the economic spheres.

Some literature can be identified that has started to overcome these limitations. Governance has been used as a lens through which to study transnational *and* local, formal *and* informal configurations of systems of rule and collective goods provision in Africa, Latin America, and Asia (Draude, 2007; Blundo and Le Meur, 2009). Abandoning the bias toward “positive,” liberal-democratic norms (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001) and collective goods provision, others use the notion of governance for reintegrating indirect and coercive modes of governance, including violence, and focus on issues of inequality, exclusion, and conflict within and between different local, and between local and transnational governance arrangements (Menkhaus, 2007; Hönke, forthcoming). Research is also slowly starting to pay attention to the ineffectiveness and unintended effects of the (global) governance of development in local contexts (e.g., Mosse and Lewis, 2005; Daase and Friesendorf, 2010; Hönke, with Thomas, 2012). Finally, some focus quite practically on “good enough governance,” stressing that the ideals of good governance and best practice cannot be achieved in a short-term perspective (Grindle, 2007).

Beyond development: the critiques

Since the 1970s, doubts about the possibility of development have increasingly been

pronounced from different political and theoretical camps. Confronted with the neoliberal orthodoxy and its failures observed since the 1980s, many identified an “impasse” of development (Schuurman, 1993). The end of the Cold War profoundly changed the international relations between “North” and “South” (Clapham, 1996) and in the course of political liberalization, critical voices emerged from these countries themselves. In particular, the creation of the World Social Forum signifies a new quality of the transnationalization of social protest, giving voice to the disempowered in global politics. Furthermore, the critiques have been strongly influenced theoretically by the linguistic and cultural turn that has reached the social sciences since the 1970s. New ontological, epistemological, and methodological approaches have opened the field for new research questions and critical perspectives.

Critical stances toward development have proliferated, taken by authors drawing on neo-Marxist and post-Marxist theories, post-colonial positions largely based on poststructuralist theories and critical ethnography, by a more activist and theoretically eclectic group of anti-development authors, and by feminist theories. Questioning the objectivity of scientific measurements and criticizing the distorted presumptions of comparative analysis of “developing countries”, they provide a critique of development understood as a hegemonic discourse that materializes in the particular institutions and forms of knowledge dominating the international relations of the non-OECD world. These approaches address a number of common issues discussed below: the nexus of power and knowledge in developmental discourse, the problematic construction of identities, and the potentials for resistance and agency.

Critical international political economy (IPE)

In contrast to realist and liberal theories of IR and development, neo-Marxist and post-Marxist approaches in IPE radically question the conceptualization of the nation state as

autonomous and central actor in IR, as well as the focus on domestic factors in development. Instead of focusing on actors, the economic, social, and ideological structures are central for understanding underdevelopment. These theories emphasize the hierarchical and uneven nature of economic globalization, concentrating economic power in a few core states (for overviews see Overbeek, 2000), and also contest the idea of state and civil society being separate spheres that is so central to liberal state theory and governance approaches.

First, in the light of neo-Gramscian theories – theories that emphasize the role of ideas and social forces within historical materialism – the discourse of development is an expression of the hegemony of a particular transnational class formation that has been able to universalize and globalize development as capitalist economic growth (Cox, 1987). Hegemony therefore depends not only on economic and military strength, but also on the support of civil society; discursive strategies and intellectual knowledge production are necessary enabling conditions for turning such strength into hegemony. Studies demonstrate how the particularistic interests of US politicians and business linked up with their counterparts in Europe and the “Third World” after World War II (van der Pijl, 1998). Second, theories of empire link the new, transnational modes of governance toward the South to the globalized nature of capitalist production, not only making new, far-reaching regulatory mechanisms necessary, but also giving rise to new forms of subversion and resistance (Hardt and Negri, 2000). Finally, authors drawing on Nicos Poulantzas emphasize the internationalization of the state and the relative autonomy and importance of this state, because of and despite transnational social forces. The state is not understood as an autonomous and neutral steering mechanism acting in the interest of development for all, but to the contrary, is conceptualized as the “material condensation of social forces” that has been internationalized since the 1970s (Poulantzas, 1980; for

an application to Latin America, see Müller, 2012). Understanding the interpenetration of “civil” and “political” society from this perspective seems particularly fruitful for a critical analysis of the current increase in public–private co-governance.

These theories have attracted two main critiques: Orthodox neo-Marxists claim they do not take adequate account of the structural determination of politics by the capitalist system of production. By contrast, post-positivist authors in the Marxist tradition argue that these approaches do not go far enough in leaving economic and statist determinism behind. According to Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, for instance, class and class interests cannot be taken as a given and instead need to be understood as being produced through practices of articulation (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). Post-Marxist authors, in fact, share this interest in the construction of hegemonic knowledge and its effects with postmodern and poststructuralist critiques.

The postcolonial critique and the unintended effects of development

Postcolonial theories emerged in literature and cultural studies in the 1980s and have since made their way into various fields of the social sciences. Authors in IR have, however, only just begun to explore their potential. Scholars draw on them to question dominant knowledge production about “the South” and to look at the new forms of exclusion and resistance by the disempowered in international and transnational governance and development. Chapters on this literature have recently been incorporated into introductory books to IR (Abrahamsen, 2002; Grovogui, 2007).

Shifting research questions away from how development can be achieved, or why it fails, the lens of postcolonial theory focuses on questioning its dominant cultural representations and practices, and on the power and effects of such biased practices (see, e.g., Loomba, 1998; Kapoor, 2008). The term “postcolonial” refers to a historical and a

theoretical juncture: historically, it refers to the legacy of colonial rule, notably in maintaining hierarchical and biased forms of knowledge about the postcolony. Theoretically, postcolonial theories deconstruct the objectivity claims of Western expert knowledge and analyze indirect forms of power inherent in modern development discourse. Historians have produced alternative representations of non-Western historical narratives that both decolonize the concepts used for analysis and shift the focus from the role of Western interveners and elites to local narratives and the history of the disempowered (Scott, 1998; Conrad and Randeria, 2002). Others emphasize the mutual constitution and entanglement of “Western” and “non-Western” histories (Stoler and Cooper, 1997) and describe multiple “subaltern modernities” (Coronil, 1997). Reconstructing the establishment of the West/the Rest divide, Edward Said’s study of “Orientalism” (1978) is one of the founding books of postcolonial studies, providing a fundamental critique of Western constructions of non-Western societies. Others demonstrate how a positive Western identity has been constructed against the negative images of Africa and Latin America (Mignolo, 1995).

A second topic postcolonial studies raises for development and IR is to make visible and discuss potentials for subaltern agency. The concept of the subaltern was introduced by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and the Subaltern Studies Group. It is a term that refers to people who are not part of any hegemonic class and who are politically unorganized (Guha and Spivak, 1988). The group studied the history and the repertoires of action of such marginalized people in South Asia; other scholars have adapted the approach to Latin America. The concept of “epistemic violence” has been path-breaking in this regard: the subaltern speech act and political practice are not being heard or seen because of the power of the hegemonic liberal discourse to define what is being recognized as political (Spivak, 1988). James Scott (1985) in turn opened analytical space for

seeing “the weapons of the weak” that often remain unnoticed in IR and political studies.

Understanding postcolonial as a transhistorical term, these theories raise important questions for a variety of situations of political domination by external actors during *and after* colonial rule, such as in the contemporary field of development (Hall, 1996; see also Edkins, 2002). Postcolonial writers have been mainly criticized for their focus on culture and textuality. Some argue that their postmodern language stands contrary to political aspiration to create space for the agency of the disempowered. Others claim they generalized too much about development, and, furthermore, were not engaged enough in problem solving (Corbridge, 2007). And for (critical) political economists, they tend to neglect the role of political and economic structures (Ahmad, 1992). However, postcolonial theories provide an important critique of Western-centric knowledge production in IR and Development Studies. And they have been used to foster an empirical research agenda in various fields in IR, such as in the field of development.

In this regard, the anthropology of development contributes in-depth empirical case studies of the encounter of international development policies with local contexts. The strength of this work lies in pointing to at least three problematic, unintended effects of development aid: de-politicization, the power effects of participatory development, and the strengthening of unaccountable, autocratic political structures at the local level. Concerning de-politicization, James Ferguson in *The Anti-Politics Machine* (1990) describes the power, ambiguous effects, and limits of development projects. Framed in a technocratic, apolitical way, development interventions remove the debate about what development should be and how to get there from the political realm of debate into the sphere of expert knowledge and technocratic management (see also Murray Li, 2007). Moreover, this literature critically analyzes the concepts of ownership and participatory development in international development.

Privileging social cooperation and harmony, they silence complaints about the growing inequality in the distribution of the means of power, production, and distribution of goods (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). Finally, development projects reproduce local hierarchies and power relations. Projects often strengthen local elites who appropriate aid in various ways and foster exploitation of those at the bottom of the local hierarchy (Mosse, 2005).

Overall, these studies draw attention to the fact that while many development projects are ineffective in attaining their self-defined goals, they have systematic effects on local social, political, and economic structures. Capable of “switching codes” (Rottenburg, 2009) between different discourses, agents at different levels are able to actively appropriate and recreate development programs. In order to take the plurality of powerful discourses and social fields seriously within arenas of intervention, research in IR should account for heterogeneous practices and unintended effects of development interventions (e.g., Hönke, 2012, forthcoming).

Anti-development

The term anti-development refers to a group of theoretically eclectic authors who are sometimes grouped together with the above authors under the label of post-development, who each share some distinct characteristics. They share a critique of development as being unsustainable, undemocratic, and repressive, and they all concentrate on suggestions for alternative ways of living beyond development (for an overview, see Ziai, 2007). Arturo Escobar (1995) begins his famous critique of the current development model by showing how Africa, Latin America, and Asia became defined as “underdeveloped” and thus in need of development in the post-Second World War era. He proposes strategies against and beyond development, drawing on anti-colonial activists such as writers Amílcar Cabral and Aimé Césaire, and Mahatma Gandhi. He also returns to the idea of “delinking” from the *Dependencia* School.

Economically, delinking from global capitalist production suggests localized modes of production and exchange. Exploring what an alternative mode of living could look like, authors argue for small-scale, subsistence-oriented modes of living and count on grassroots movements (e.g., Esteva and Prakash, 1999). Examples range from small farmers' associations in India to the alternative structures being established by the Zapatistas movement in Chiapas. Many attach an intrinsic value to local communities and local knowledge: Direct democracy, local and culturally embedded knowledge, and solidarity would characterize nontechnocratic, nonindustrialized politics and economies after development. The slogan "small is beautiful" captures well what is key to much anti-development thinking (Schumacher, 1973). The romanticized and essentialized view of the local community as "noble savage" (Kiely, 1999) in some of these writings has been strongly criticized, as the revalorization of "indigenous cultures" and community can foster a neo-romantic, conservative turn (e.g., Rahnama and Bawtree, 1997). Authors fail to discuss the hardship of such livelihoods and the emancipatory and positive aspects modernity may bring about (Corbridge, 1998), and overlook the power relations within local communities, which effectively limit the chances of open, grassroots democracy. However, distinguishing between reactionary tendencies and emancipatory approaches, the latter valuably shifted attention to local voices, arguing for grassroots democracy, communal norms, and forms of justice (see Ziai, 2007).

Critical feminist theories and development

Various feminist theorists have also challenged mainstream development (see the Chapter 7 by Sjoberg and Tickner in this volume). The liberal agenda of "Women in Development" focuses on integrating women into the official (labor) market. The major critique of this liberal approach came first from neo-Marxist and feminist gender

theories (for an overview, see Saunders, 2002). Marxist authors provided a materialist theory of patriarchy; the women and gender agenda of the 1980s then shifted focus away from women as a natural reference point to the construction of gender roles. By the late 1980s, theories emerged that based their claims upon the particular experiences of Third World women, challenging the universalistic ambitions of liberal feminism and development. The particular life and work experience of poor Third World women, they argued, made their needs and standpoints different from other (Western, white, feminist) women (Sen and Grown, 1988). Social constructivist and poststructuralist positions have been instrumental in criticizing essentialist tendencies in such positions on women in development. Pointing to the production of different sexualities and gender roles, these theories have also opened new spaces for agency: If the subject position of women were produced – by hegemonic traditional as well as liberal feminist discourses and practice – they could be challenged. However, they also emphasize the significance of gender discourse, class, race, and ethnicity in structuring individual subject positions and capabilities to change them (see Marchand and Parpart, 1995).

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

There are a number of contemporary trends and problematic issues in development, and North–South relations more generally, that would merit being discussed here. However, we see three issues as being particularly central for contemporary development debates: First, the "classic" debate regarding poverty and inequality; second, the securitization of development thinking and practice; and, finally, the attempt to reconcile nature with human development. Whereas we deal with these themes separately, it is being increasingly recognized that inequality and (non) development, and climate change and security, are interwoven and are a key

challenge to international politics (Messner, 2009).

The economics of development: poverty and inequality

One of the major questions of development thinking has always been how poverty and inequality can be reduced and what role economic growth can play in this endeavor. Poverty reduction is the most important objective of all official development policies, as, for example, the MDGs first stated goal is to reduce poverty by half by 2015. Poverty, however, has to be perceived in a multidimensional way defined as a lack of resources. These include income and consumption, but also nutrition, drinking water, access to schooling, health services, and possibilities of political participation (World Bank, 2000). Furthermore, one has to differentiate between relative poverty, which is measured using a poverty line that rises in the mean, and absolute poverty, which is measured using a poverty line with a constant value. In general, the measurement of relative poverty is of more interest to middle-income and high-income countries, whereas absolute poverty is of more interest to low-income countries and is thus, more the focus of development economics. Absolute poverty is considered to exist when a person lives on less than US\$ 1.25 a day at 2005 PPP (Purchasing Power Parity) for household consumption (Ravallion, Chen et al., 2009: 3). Absolute poverty has reduced quite dramatically in the past thirty years. Whereas in 1981 52% of the population of the developing world was living below the absolute poverty line, this dropped to 42% in 1990, and in 2005 the number was down to 25% (Chen and Ravallion, 2008). Nevertheless, in 2010 more than 1.4 billion people still had to live on less than US\$ 1.25 a day, and more than 1.75 billion people lived in poverty, according to the multidimensional poverty index (including education, living standards, and health) indicators (UNDP, 2010). Two-thirds of these currently live in rural areas (Chen and Ravallion, 2007).

What is no longer disputed is that economic growth is a necessary prerequisite for poverty reduction to happen and that the majority of states have experienced unprecedented growth rates over the last couple of decades. However, there are strong regional inequalities within the developing world due to strong growth rates in some countries. For example, China – and to some extent India – has achieved the highest rate of poverty reduction in absolute and relative terms, whereas progress in other regions, especially Sub-Saharan Africa, has been marginal. There is also a consensus that inequalities within countries – in particular, inequalities in access and ownership of land – strongly correlate with low growth rates (Deininger and Squire, 1998). Similarly, there is broad agreement on the importance of gender disparities. On the one hand, they reflect global inequality patterns (Dollar and Gatti, 1999) and, on the other hand, gender inequality in education and employment clearly contributes to low growth rates (Klasen, 1999).

There are also some important controversies about poverty. A first issue is the origin of poverty, reflecting the debate between Modernists and Dependencia discussed above. For some authors, the existing poverty traps (e.g., geographical factors, like being landlocked) hinder the development of poor countries. These cannot simply be overcome by market-based approaches that primarily stress macroeconomic factors (see, for example, the conclusions of the Commission for Africa, 2005). Instead, a “big push” from the outside – most likely in the form of development aid – is necessary for an “end of poverty” (Sachs, 2005). Such reasoning resembles the argumentation of the Modernization school and greatly influences pro-poor growth strategies as they are expressed, for example, in the MDGs. This approach has been strongly criticized in the literature as the existence of poverty traps has been empirically questioned (Kraay and Raddatz, 2005; Easterly, 2006).

A second controversy is whether economic growth leads to more or less inequality

within and across countries and is, therefore systematically biased against the poor (for an overview of the debate, see Bourguignon, Ferreira et al., 2009). The liberal mainstream argues that growth is positively correlated with the rise in income of poor people too (Dollar and Kraay, 2002). This is supported by population-weighted studies that show that, within the last 30 years, global income inequality has fallen due to the growth of India and China (Sala-i-Martin, 2006). Critics of this perspective claim that the potential benefits of high growth rates do not materialize for the poor and lead to more inequality, at least at the cross-country level (good representatives of this perspective are Wade, 2001; Pogge, 2005). For example, although most of the global growth in percentage terms has occurred in lower-income and poor countries, on a cross-country level the absolute difference to the OECD world has not narrowed for most countries due to the gap that already exists. Thus, the “world’s largest inequalities are not defined by race, class, or gender, but by national borders” (Goesling and Baker, 2008: 184). In the majority of developing countries – excluding India and China – the relative income gap between the rich and the poor is also rising. Furthermore, one also has to consider the different access and distribution of (social) security as well as the political representation at the global level (Hurrell and Woods, 1999). Similarly, inequality has also been rising in the health sector since the early 1990s, most likely due to the HIV epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa and the declining longevity in Eastern Europe and Russia (Goesling and Baker, 2008). In contrast, educational inequality has fallen sharply with the introduction of formal schooling in some of the poorest countries (*ibid.*). Inequality, thus, has to be analyzed in various dimensions, and spatial aspects (in particular, the worsening situation of Sub-Saharan Africa) have to be taken into account.

Overall, one can conclude that the current debate about poverty and inequality is far more nuanced than it was twenty years ago, and some of the more ideological

controversies are no longer dominant. The interesting questions for the practice of development are what kind of growth, which sequence of reforms is necessary to achieve it, and what kind of institutional context is helpful in jump-starting growth, poverty reduction, and more equality at the same time (for a good overview of the debate, see Rodrik, 2007).

Development and security

Since the early 1990s, a merging of development with security agendas has taken place in the foreign policies of Western states. This security–development nexus has been promoted in various forms, but has also been fiercely criticized. The attempts at integrating conflict prevention into development – dominant in the 1990s – need to be distinguished from the various uses of development for security policies, in particular since September 11 (9/11), 2001.

The “widening and deepening” of security (Buzan and Hansen, 2009) began with the promotion of the concepts of human security and of conflict prevention in the post–Cold War context. New kinds of threats, such as environmental degradation, underdevelopment, and human rights abuses, were integrated into the definition of security. The focus shifted from the security of states to securing individuals (for an overview, see Owen, 2010). Development was first understood as being important for the prevention of conflict. In a moderate turn toward prioritizing security, it was then argued that security needs to be established before development can happen (Fukuyama, 2004). As a consequence, governments have promoted holistic policies combining diplomacy, defense, and development in addressing weak state capacities and instability in otherwise marginalized regions. Tools of development were adjusted to address matters of security sector reform and civil–military cooperation in the realm of (state-building) interventions (Klingebiel and Roehder, 2004).

A more securitized justification of the development–security nexus emerged after 9/11, when the “developmentalization of security” of the conflict prevention agenda increasingly turned into a “securitization of development” (Kühn, 2008). Seeing “fragile states” as a new security threat, new cartographies of the periphery have since emerged, which represent deficient statehood as dangerous, not only to their citizens, but most of all to Western states. This called for an integrated, global approach to address these new risks emanating supposedly from the fragile states in the South (Duffield, 2001). These tendencies are, in particular, evident in the military interventions in Iraq and in Afghanistan, and in the combination of state-building and counterinsurgency objectives. At its worst, development has become a mere annex to security policies in the field of anti-terror interventions (Bachmann, 2010). This trend is not only visible in the “winning hearts and minds” campaigns in the War on Terror, but seems to be operating in many states perceived to be fragile but strategically important (Bachmann and Hönke, 2010).

However, despite these changes in policy, it is little understood if and how development and security are actually related, or whether empirical evidence supports the assumption that aid has a positive effect on reducing conflict, and vice versa. It has been argued that there is no such relationship between poverty (nondevelopment) and conflict (insecurity) (Collier, 2003). Others point to the limits and unintended effects of the development–security agenda in practice. One critique refers to the lack of actual implementation and spending on related policies (Carment and Schnabel, 2003; Chandler, 2006). Linking security policies to the goal of human development may have often been a labeling strategy in order to increase the political salience and legitimacy of a particular issue (Suhrke, 1999). However, the new holistic approaches combining security, development, and diplomacy have been institutionalized and are now increasingly structuring Western policies towards areas of

limited statehood (e.g., Patrick and Brown, 2007). Empirical studies on concrete cases of state-building interventions emphasize that there are powerful blueprints for development and state-building interventions, but these are based on flawed assumptions. One of these points to a paradox within liberal state building: on the one hand, it stresses ideas of self-determination and democracy; on the other hand, it focuses on state building and stability, giving rise to policies at odds with the principle of self-determination (Jahn, 2007). In the name of development (and security) technocratic development, interventions not only depoliticize, they also actively reproduce inequalities within target societies as well as asymmetric power relations in international relations (for an overview, see Paris and Sisk, 2008; Chandler, 2009).

Another strand of research focuses on how issues of development get constructed as security-relevant issues in the first place, and on how new perceptions of risks and security techniques affect local populations. Understanding security as a discourse, authors use securitization theory (Buzan, Waever et al., 1998; Balzacq, 2010) and the Foucauldian governmentality analysis (Duffield, 2001; Duffield, 2007) for this purpose. Securitization theory focuses on how particular issues become security issues in the political arena through speech acts, images, and other inter-related practices. The analytics of government in the Foucauldian tradition analyze the political rationality behind security governance and show the (often indirect) power of modern knowledge and techniques informing security actors’ practices, and how these affect populations. These theories have emphasized that, while everybody talks about the development–security nexus, different actors use this discourse for implementing different practices. Post-security and discourse-theoretical studies demonstrate in detailed empirical studies the disturbing effects of some of these uses, showing how the policies enacted in its name have harmful effects, such as increasing insecurity and (re) producing inequality (see Stern and Öjendal,

2010: 18–20). In managing risks perceived as emanating from weak states in order to protect Western societies, stability is valued higher than achieving equality and self-determination (Duffield, 2007).

Development and the environment

Regarding the issue of development and the environment, three positions can be identified: First, the pessimists argue that current lifestyles and the still dominant growth paradigm cannot be sustained and will eventually lead to catastrophe (Lovelock, 2009). Such a perspective reframes the Malthusian argument that there is an eventual incompatibility between exponential growth and finite resources leading to “Limits to Growth” (Meadows, Meadows et al., 1972). Current work on the different sizes of the ecological footprint of diverse societies adds a North-South dimension to this general argumentation, particularly as the carrying capacity of the Earth is said to be overused. One practical corollary of this perspective is a complete delinking from the classical development paradigm (see above on anti-development). The other is a plea for environmental authoritarianism (for an overview of the debate, see Beeson, 2010).

Second, the optimists do not deny that environmental problems exist, but their argument is that societies can outgrow them (World Bank, 1992). The argument rests on the notion of the environmental Kuznets curve, which is an inverted U-curve showing that whereas initial growth patterns lead to high environmental degradation, high-income countries have lower pollution rates (Grossman and Krueger, 1995) and lower rates of deforestation (Bhattarai and Hammig, 2001). Although it is true that some local pollution and deforestation rates are being reduced in richer countries, there is some leakage and overall CO₂ emissions are directly proportional to income and are thus much higher in the North than in the South (Arrow, Bolin et al., 1995; Dasgupta, Laplante et al., 2002). Nevertheless, the

practical implication of the Kuznets curve argument – that economic development is at least partially not related to environmental destruction – is becoming part of the mainstream of “liberal environmentalism” (Bernstein, 2002).

Authors who argue for green growth take up the middle ground. They believe that eventually sustainable development “that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” is possible (WCED (World Commission on Environment and Development), 1987: 43). Many scholars, therefore, differentiate themselves from ecological doomsday scenarios and argue for pragmatic problem solving (Nordhaus and Shellenberger, 2007) and a “Green New Deal” (Barbier, 2010). Although it is still open how low-carbon-growth strategies – based on renewable energies and measured in green accounting schemes – will look in detail, the first conceptual as well practical steps have been taken (Weizsäcker, Hargroves et al., 2009; Stiglitz, Sen et al., 2010).

Finally, a consensus is developing that the North also has to follow different development paths, for example, by breaking its current consumption patterns (Dauvergne, 2008) or by reinventing and ultimately overcoming capitalism (Speth, 2008). For the South, the practice of development will also have to take into account adaptation strategies, as the first effects of climate change are already materializing in many developing countries (IPCC, 2007). Water shortages, changed precipitation patterns, and decreasing crop yields will most likely lead to an increase in climate refugees, which in turn could lead to weaker governance structures in already very weak states and thus to new conflict patterns.

CONCLUSION

Development is a highly contested field. Zygmund Baumann (1992) has described (post)modern intellectuals as turning from legislators to either administrators or

interpreters. In development studies, this is reflected in the somewhat bifurcated structure of the field, which is divided between a practice-oriented mainstream and a critical, mostly interpretive stream (Corbridge, 2007; Pieterse, 2009). Development studies, as well as IR, are still primarily Western/Northern disciplines – Dependencia has been the exception to the rule. Both disciplines have, nevertheless, opened up to a certain extent to the fact that modernity has multiple forms, and for the “voices from below.” The new heterogeneity of the field reflects the opening up of the social sciences to new voices and different ontologies. It also reflects the skepticism toward large modernist schemes and the negative experiences that have been made with development policies. To conclude, two – partly contradictory – trends shall be stressed.

First, various authors from the mainstream of IR, as well as from development studies, are showing a new interest in the theory and practice of the state as important institution. With the financial crisis and the strong involvement of governments in solving it, the pendulum seems to be swinging back even more from markets to states (Pieterse, 2009; Wade, 2009). One can, however, argue that this renaissance of statehood is contradicted by the undisrupted transnationalization of economic, social, and political relations. It is, furthermore, characterized by a lack of social coherence within states and although states may provide stability, some show high degrees of repressiveness. Therefore, interest has grown in institutions beyond the state as well as in making government representatives more accountable.

Second, there is a new interest in the “local” and its interaction with the transnational and international. Studies that take local practices as their starting point show that development programs facilitate a hybrid range of practices. Instead of only focusing on global programs, IR and development theorizing engage with theories that explain the powerful negative effects of transnational discourses and organizational cultures. Another important point is that the

distribution of development, poverty, and inequality is mediated through ethnicity, class, and gender, producing and reproducing inequalities. These categories cut across different geographical levels and demonstrate that studying such global issues in IR needs to develop perspectives that overcome methodological nationalism and that integrate insights from other disciplines. Furthermore, the emerging economies of the South (BRICS) can no longer be perceived as pure rule-takers for they have become independent rule-makers. Whether this will open up political space for the people of the South remains to be seen.

In particular, this latter trend might bring mainstream development theories and their critics, as well as critical approaches to development and IR closer together and potentially lead to dialogue. What nobody should expect, however, is that the dialogue will be coherent. If successful, it will have to amply reflect the strong diversity in both fields as well as the contestedness of their histories and central assumptions (see, e.g., Grovogui, 2009).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank Jan Bachmann, Harald Fuhr, Markus-Michael Müller, Andreas Obser, and the editors of the handbook for their very helpful comments on earlier drafts. A special thanks also goes to Pearl Wallace for language editing.

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International Environmental Politics

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INTRODUCTION

Why do we face so many international environmental problems? Why do some garner international attention promptly while others do not? Why do governments cooperate internationally to address some problems, while nongovernmental actors take up others, and yet others remain unaddressed? Which types of institutions make the most progress in addressing environmental problems? How do structural forces and conscious actions by individuals influence the dynamics and processes of international environmental policy and politics? This chapter reviews the growing scholarship addressing these questions.

International environmental politics and policy (IEP) can be viewed as involving four different policy stages: problem creation, issue emergence, institutional formation, and institutional effects. The forces and actors that influence each stage reflect traditional international relations distinctions between explanations that rely on power and interests, on institutions, and on cognitive and normative factors (Baldwin, 1993; Hasenclever,

Mayer and Rittberger, 1997; Zürn and Checkel, 2005). Most IEP scholars build on these theoretical perspectives and blend them with differing normative and methodological perspectives in “mid-range theorizing” that favor empirical accuracy over theoretical parsimony in their efforts to understand global environmental politics and policy. This chapter begins by reviewing of history of the subfield. It then summarizes the three theoretical perspectives that scholars draw from to explain IEP and describes what we know about the four policy stages of IEP. Before concluding, the chapter reviews IEP scholarship that goes beyond intergovernmental approaches to international environmental problems and briefly describes efforts to explore the interactions between environmental issues and development, trade, and security.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SUBFIELD

Research on IEP began in the 1970s and 1980s, in anticipation of and in response to

the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) (Falk, 1971; Sprout and Sprout, 1971; Kay and Jacobson, 1983; Caldwell, 1984). The subfield languished, however, until the political and intellectual salience of environmental issues increased in response to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the end of the Cold War. Oran Young and Arild Underdal became early intellectual leaders, publishing extensively and designing research projects that trained a new generation of scholars (Young, 1981, 1989; Underdal, 1980, 1998). In the 1990s, a second wave of scholars published in mainstream journals, edited volumes, and two new journals, *International Environmental Affairs* and the *Journal of Environment and Development* (Haas, 1990; Haas, Keohane, and Levy, 1993; Lipschutz and Conca, 1993; Litfin, 1994; Mitchell, 1994; Sprinz and Vaahtoranta, 1994; Bernauer, 1995; Keohane and Levy, 1996; Wapner, 1996; Dauvergne, 1997; Young, 1998). These scholars and their scholarship nourished the explosion of interest since 2000, with more scholars adopting increasingly diverse theoretical and methodological approaches to an increasing number of international environmental issues. Several university presses and new journals, led by The MIT Press and *Global Environmental Politics*, began focusing on IEP scholarship (O'Neill, 2000; Garcia-Johnson, 2000; DeSombre, 2000; Gutner, 2002; Andonova, 2004; Walsh, 2004; Webster, 2009). The earlier focus on international institutions and regimes expanded to include far more work on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), substate actors, and domestic politics; large-scale phenomena such as globalization and consumption; constructivist as well as rationalist perspectives; the role of science and scale; and, of course, climate change (see, e.g., Underdal and Hanf, 2000; Andresen et al., 2000; Social Learning Group, 2001a, b; Bulkeley and Betsill, 2003; Stokke, Hovi, and Ulfstein, 2005; Mitchell et al., 2006; Betsill and Corell, 2008; Epstein, 2008). In addition, more attention began being paid to

methodological issues, including the creation and analysis of large-N databases (Miles et al., 2002; Hovi, Sprinz, and Underdal, 2003; Young, 2003; Underdal and Young, 2004; Breitmeier, Young, and Zürn, 2006; Mitchell, 2010).

EXPLAINING INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS: THREE PERSPECTIVES

Political factors play a role in explaining both the causes of international environmental degradation and how and when such problems emerge on the agenda and are addressed by states or nonstate actors, and whether such solutions as are adopted lead to behavioral change and environmental improvement. IEP scholars draw on traditional international relations perspectives to explain their outcomes and dynamics: realists who rely on power, capacities, and interests; institutionalists who highlight the role of institutions and other actors; and constructivists who foreground knowledge, norms, and framing (Hasenclever, Mayer, and Rittberger, 1997). For heuristic purposes, I structure the discussion as if environmental problems follow a linear, functional progression through the four stages described here. Yet, sociological institutionalism reminds us that policy processes often are not linear, reflecting alternative dynamics: large human environmental impacts may receive far less attention than much smaller ones, acceptance of an impact as a problem may not prompt new policies, and the fit between solutions and problems as often reflects a “garbage can model” of social choice as the “rational design” of institutions (Cohen, March, and Olsen, 1972; Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal, 2001).

Power, capacities, and interests

Realists view most outcomes in international relations as best explained by reference to the

material interests and capacities of the powerful states in the system. The importance that states place on security and the notion that “the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must” provide useful initial insights into many aspects of IEP as they do into other realms of international relations (Thucydides, 1982: 274). Whether environmental impacts become “problems,” whether calls for international action attract support, whether international negotiations succeed and what rules they contain, and whether significant behavioral changes occur depend in important ways on what powerful states consider to be in their interests. Environmental problems that harm powerful states’ interests are addressed more fully and promptly than similar problems that affect less powerful states. Consistent with realist theory, states treat environmental problems as low politics, addressing them more during periods of détente or when their security implications become salient and less when security or economic concerns loom large, as was evident in the wake of the 2001 terrorist attacks and the 2008 global economic recession. Russia extracted important concessions in the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) by delaying ratification, and the refusal of the United States to ratify the protocol prompted creation of a wholly separate set of negotiations to that agreement. Powerful states’ interests and technical capacities not only determine whether they cooperate internationally but also whether they implement the agreements they negotiate, and whether they encourage less powerful states to do likewise, using sanctions, incentives, or capacity enhancements.

Institutions and other actors

An institutionalist view, broadly construed, contends that the self-conscious efforts of states to form cooperative institutions or of domestic and transnational actors to address international problems can, under certain

circumstances, generate outcomes that diverge significantly from what material power and interests would dictate. These scholars accept the realist claim that anarchy characterizes the international system, but reject the conclusion that, therefore, states worry exclusively about security and adopt relative gains perspectives in all their interactions. The creation of intergovernmental institutions and regimes “above” the state and of efforts by transnational actors “below” the state provide mechanisms that can mitigate, if not eliminate, the negative environmental externalities that arise from independent state decision making. This view contends that self-conscious efforts by states and nonstate actors can be designed to have an independent influence on state behavior. States sometimes do legalize international commitments in “rationally designed” institutions that alter state behavior, making research into both the determinants and effects of institutional formation and design worthy enterprises (Goldstein et al., 2000; Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal, 2004). Likewise, nongovernmental actors and the transnational networks they often form, as well as multinational corporations, are capable of both motivating states to address global environmental problems they would not otherwise address and of taking direct action on such problems without using states or international institutions as intermediaries.

Knowledge, norms, and framing

Scientific knowledge and uncertainty as well as normative contestation play particularly prominent roles in international environmental politics. Uncertainty about behaviors, preferences, and the state of the world plague the security, trade, and human rights realms (Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal, 2001). But international environmental problems (such as public health) present policy makers with additional, *scientific* uncertainty about how nature is responding and will respond to human behaviors. The strategic games among two or more actors that typify other realms of

international relations are complicated in environmental affairs by a “game against nature” that determines final outcomes and payoffs. Uncertainty about how nature will respond to human actions and international interactions exacerbate collective action problems and complicate their resolution. Nature constitutes another “player” whose behavior can be even more difficult to predict than that of people and institutions. Whereas physics, chemistry, and biology play bit parts in security, trade, and human rights problems, they are central to explanations of IEP. Not surprisingly, many scholars have studied science, scientific uncertainty, and the science–policy interface in IEP (Andresen and Østreg, 1989; Haas, 1989, 1990; Jasanoff, 1990, 2004; Mitchell et al., 2006; Dimitrov, 2006; Campbell Keller, 2009).

International environmental problems also exhibit more and different types of normative contestation than other realms. The rights of governments to provide for their own security and economic growth are largely uncontested internationally. Environmental protection almost always entails economic costs, with contestation frequently emerging between states that value environmental protection highly and those that do not. If states fear that the “low politics” of international environmental protection will impinge on the pursuit of “high politics,” they can make arguments in which the prioritizing of security or economic goals over environmental protection is usually accepted as normatively legitimate. States simply have deeper fundamental agreement about the need to prioritize global security and global economic growth than about the need to prioritize global environmental protection. Environmental problems as often present “conflicts about values” in which states disagree about whether to pursue environmental protection as they do “conflicts about means” in which states disagree only about how to pursue a shared goal (Rittberger and Zürn, 1990: 31–32).

Uncertainty and normative contestation create a space in which facts may not be

known and states’ interests and values may be unclear. Such a context raises the importance of discourse and framing since actors’ perceptions and interests may be open to influence, processes that have prompted an extensive new literature in IEP (Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2006; Epstein, 2008; Blok, 2008; Gehring and Ruffing, 2008; Stevenson, 2010). This context also creates conditions that reflect the sociological processes mentioned above, in which international environmental problems are not recognized, addressed, and resolved in the ways predicted by a linear functional logic.

THE CAUSES OF INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

IEP scholarship has grown, at least in part, in response to the growing number and magnitude of environment problems as well as human awareness of them. In 1798, Malthus recognized that sustainability requires that human demands not exceed nature’s carrying capacity (Malthus, 1999). Conflicts between human demands and nature’s supply of environmental services have been exacerbated by the ways in which capitalist, socialist, and communist economies actively create incentives to disregard the environment and passively fail to remedy environmental externalities (Burger et al., 2001; Dolšák and Ostrom, 2003).

In the early 1970s, Ehrlich and Holdren identified human environmental impacts as driven by three fundamental forces: population, affluence, and technology (Ehrlich and Holdren, 1971; Ehrlich and Holdren, 1972; see also, Waggoner and Ausubel, 2002). The “IPAT identity” – $\text{Impact (I)} = \text{Population} \times \text{Affluence} \times \text{Technology}$ – provides a useful analytic starting point. It highlights environmental equifinality (i.e., that different combinations of forces can produce similar environmental impacts) and environmental multifinality (i.e., that a population with a given level of affluence and technologies will

generate diverse environmental impacts) and identifies growth in population and affluence without offsetting technological improvements as simple explanations of the growing number and type of global environmental problems (Sherbinin et al., 2007; Dietz, Rosa, and York, 2007).

Yet, the IPAT identity obscures the role of consumption by implicitly incorporating it in the technology term. Countries with similar population, affluence, and technology levels have larger, smaller, or different environmental impacts because of differences in their citizens' consumption patterns along a high-impact to no-impact spectrum (Inglehart, 1990; Waggoner and Ausubel, 2002; Ehrlich and Ehrlich, 2004; Dietz, Rosa, and York, 2007). The IPAT identity also obscures how social organization, customs, and institutions influence consumption patterns and, hence, the types and levels of environmental damage they cause (Princen, Maniates, and Conca, 2002; Dauvergne, 2008). A political economy view highlights that free trade, transportation systems, urbanization, coastal living, pricing environmental services, and managing environmental impacts are all forms of social organization which, when organized differently, produce societies with different environmental impacts (Greenberg, 2006; Barkin, 2008). Notably, these forms of social organization were developed by and reflect the preferences of the most powerful states in the international system.

The literature on IEP has gone far beyond this simple explanatory rubric and now falls into six perspectives on the causes of environmental problems and their solutions (see Mitchell, 2010: ch. 3). Ecophilosophical perspectives – for example, deep ecology and ecofeminism – see the low priority given to environmental protection as reflective of extant norms and value systems that shape people's goals, behaviors, and, hence, impacts (Naess, 1973; Devall and Sessions, 1985; Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Merchant, 1996). Scientific perspectives and capacity perspectives attribute environmental harms to ignorance and technological incapacity,

respectively (Mitchell et al., 2006; Sagar and VanDeveer, 2005). A legal perspective considers aggregate behaviors and impacts as driven by legal structures that define rights and obligations in ways that fail to take nature into account (Brown Weiss, 1989; D'Amato and Chopra, 1991; Bruneo, Bodansky, and Hey, 2007). Economic perspectives highlight how incentives, that is, the costs and benefits of available alternatives, lead people to adopt certain behaviors and reject others (Cornes and Sandler, 1986; Sandler, 1992; Barrett, 2003a). Political and political economy perspectives show how extant legal and economic structures – that is, governance institutions and markets – develop from and reflect interactions in which those with power rarely value the environment and those that value the environment rarely have power (Downs, Rocke, and Barsboom, 1996; Lipschutz and Rowe, 2005). Environmental problems are so diverse and arise under such varied conditions that they seem unlikely always to result from the same forces. Not surprisingly, most IEP scholars draw on several of these perspectives.

If the foregoing explains why environmental problems arise, we also must explain why environmental problems are so common internationally. First, international use of an environmental resource – whether through direct foreign access or international trade – increases the quantity and diversity of demands on the resource (Barkin and Shambaugh, 1999). Second, it is particularly hard to regulate an international commons. National boundaries present important, though often unrecognized, barriers to excessive demand. Thus, the high seas and shared lakes and rivers lack even the mechanism of national citizenship to limit access. In addition, anarchy, relative gains concerns, interstate rivalry, and nationalism reduce incentives for self-restraint in the international sphere, as evident in the Spanish-Canadian Turbot War and the Anglo-Icelandic Cod War (Barkin and DeSombre, 2002; Hart, 1976). Third, interdependencies among a country's citizens and norms against

harming the interests of fellow citizens generate restraints that mitigate domestic environmental externalities but are absent at the international level.

AGENDA SETTING AND ISSUE EMERGENCE

Why do only some of the many impacts humans have on the global environment capture international political and policy attention? Why do some that receive policy attention later “vanish without a trace” while others are actively addressed? And what determines how issues are discussed and framed, whether in economic, moral, or other terms?

For an environmental problem to emerge on the international agenda, there must be sufficient knowledge of an environmental impact and its causes and sufficient concern and urgency among powerful actors. Explaining issue emergence as the result of a confluence of sufficient knowledge, concern, and urgency is tautological and unsatisfying, however, since we can only recognize “sufficiency” by observing the issue emerge on the agenda. These concepts can be useful, however, if seen as intervening variables, allowing us to identify the variables, conditions, and processes that cause increases in the knowledge, concern, or urgency that relevant powerful actors have about some environmental impact.

Issue emergence progresses through three relatively sequential processes: identification and recognition of the problem and its causes, diffusion of that knowledge and mobilization of concern, and prioritization of the issue on the international agenda. The progress of environmental harms through these stages depends on structural forces, institutional opportunities, and the self-conscious efforts of various actors to develop and frame knowledge and perceptions about the problem.

Issue emergence is hindered by three forms of ignorance: total ignorance, causal

ignorance, and effect ignorance. Most environmental problems start as “unknown unknowns” or with “total ignorance:” some behavior has real environmental impacts, but those impacts have not been identified and the behavior is not suspected of having any impacts. Thus, the chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) now known to cause stratospheric ozone loss were initially embraced as noncarcinogenic, nontoxic, and environmentally benign (Parson, 2003). “Causal ignorance” exists when environmental damages are observed, but their human causes, if any, have not been determined. In such “whodunit” cases, problems emerge as certainty grows that human activities are causing the environmental decline. “Effect ignorance” exists for activities with unknown or uncertain environmental impacts. Thus, uncertainty – and excessive optimism – about whether catch levels exceed a fish stock’s carrying capacity have delayed international regulation of many fisheries (Walsh, 2004; Webster, 2009).

Not surprisingly, much research has sought to identify when and how science influences international environmental policy making (Young, 2008). A central finding has been that reducing uncertainty about environmental problems and their causes is a necessary but not sufficient condition for governments to attend to an issue. Rather than impartial and disengaged scientists speaking truth to power, evidence increasingly demonstrates that science influences policy when it is salient and legitimate as well as credible (Mitchell et al., 2006; Campbell Keller, 2009). Policy makers are most receptive to the insights of scientists when they have engaged jointly in long-term dialogue or “co-production” of knowledge that builds mutual trust and understanding, for policy makers of the science and for scientists of the constraints, timelines, and options under which policy makers operate (Jasanoff, 2004). And, precisely because environmental issues such as climate change are normatively contested, efforts to have science influence policy prompt countervailing efforts and competing knowledge producers

that may seek to “manufacture doubt” to avert costly regulation (Gulbrandsen, 2008; Oreskes and Conway, 2010).

Environmental problems are more likely to get on the international agenda if they have transboundary impacts, pose large and dramatic risks or direct and immediate threats to humans, and exhibit well-understood trends, sources, and solutions. Upstream/downstream problems may take longer to get on the agenda than Tragedy of the Commons problems because, in the former, those with incentives to remedy the problem may lack information of its existence or causes. The availability of viable solutions and their costs influence how receptive actors are to discussing a problem (Stone, 1989: 281). Governments also place environmental issues on the agenda when they threaten important military or economic goals, as evident in both the response to the Chernobyl nuclear accident and in the attention paid by many countries’ militaries to problems of “environmental security” (Homer-Dixon, 1999).

Problems are also more likely to be taken up internationally and to transition from discussion to negotiation in response to “catalytic” events – like the Chernobyl nuclear accident or oil spills like the *Exxon Valdez* – that prompt “abrupt shifts in national and international policies, priorities, and actions” (Leiserowitz, Kates, and Parris, 2006: 437; Young, 1998: 72). Science also can increase perceived urgency, whether through dramatic breakthroughs – such as the discovery of significant ozone loss due to CFCs – or a slower progression in which new research improves knowledge about the problem’s severity, its human causes, or the costs of future impacts. Such catalysts, whether involving events or science, “are not driving forces like material conditions, interests, or ideas” but move things forward only when deeper forces and conditions align (Young, 1998: 77).

As in other realms, the environmental concerns of powerful states are more likely to gain international attention. Spills off the American and European coasts have prompted

international action on oil pollution, while much larger spills off Africa, Asia, and Latin America have not. Even problems with large costs and readily available solutions may remain unaddressed if they impact only developing countries. Fresh water supply, indoor air pollution, and pollution-related illness kill millions of people annually in the developing world but remain unaddressed, while international policy focuses on ozone depletion, acid rain, and other issues that pose smaller and more distant risks to the bulk of the world’s population that do not live in highly developed countries. In addition, international science is dominated by scientists trained in industrialized countries and often focuses on the environmental impacts of concern to those states, while the more mundane but devastating impacts that influence developing states remain unaddressed (Kammen and Dove, 1997; Biermann, 2006). When domestic pressures for environmental regulation in powerful states, particularly the United States, make regulation seem imminent, corporations may support international discussion of a problem to avert a “patchwork quilt” of national regulations (DeSombre, 2000). But powerful states, and influential domestic or international actors, will oppose efforts to even discuss environmental problems when they believe action would harm their interests. But such interests may be less clear with respect to emerging environmental problems, creating situations in which “entrepreneurial institutions may provide focal points around which the uncertain preferences of the member governments can converge” (Pollack, 1997: 130).

Larger-scale phenomena also influence how receptive states are to environmental concerns. The end of the Cold War created space for environmental issues, while the “global war on terror” diverted attention from them. Trade liberalization has created pressures to harmonize environmental standards. The rise of “post-material values” have expanded the number, type, and geographic scope of environmental problems being addressed (Inglehart, 1990; Meyer

et al., 1997). Development of a “precautionary” discourse has made it easier than did traditional discourses to move environmental problems toward policy action (Litfin, 1994: 10; Trouwborst, 2002). The normative climate also influences issue emergence – or at least how issues must be framed to emerge: environmental problems are addressed more today than 50 years ago simply because the view that “humans should dominate nature” has been replaced by one favoring “a more equal relationship” (Leiserowitz, Kates, and Parris, 2006: 421).

If power and other structural factors influence issue emergence, both individual and institutional action also matter. Individuals, NGOs, states, and international organizations consciously and strategically attempt “to persuade others to recognize [certain] issues as priority agenda items” (Young, 1998: 7). Scientists and epistemic communities often initially identify which behaviors produce environmental impacts; their type, magnitude, and scope; the sectors or countries responsible; and potential solutions (Haas, 1989). International organizations, governments, and philanthropists can conduct environmental assessments or fund research that influence knowledge and concern (Social Learning Group, 2001a; Social Learning Group, 2001b; Mitchell et al., 2006). Pressure from NGOs helped make biodiversity an international issue and pushed the World Bank to include environmental criteria in project approval (McCormick, 1999: 65; Raustiala, 1997a; Betsill and Corell, 2008). Nonscientists and interest groups sometimes are the first to identify environmental impacts that “disinterested” scientists might otherwise overlook (Tesh and Williams, 1996). The United Nations and many NGOs monitor “emerging environmental issues” to uncover similar problems and seek to address “causal ignorance” when environmental impacts are found and “effect ignorance” when new science makes certain activities environmentally suspect (United Nations System-Wide Earthwatch, 2007). Leaders or “champions” – whether individuals, groups, or states – usually play

crucial roles in drawing awareness to an issue (Young, 1998; Carpenter, 2007). Mostafa Tolba, as executive director of UN Environment Program (UNEP), stimulated action on the ozone layer, climate change, and regional seas protection by bringing “scientists and policy-makers together in dialogue and exploration of the issues and options” (Hempel, 1996: 130). Success depends on being “taken seriously, as an expert or a leader” as well as on “the opening of a policy window” that, in turn, depends on the state of scientific knowledge or the constellation of political forces (Kingdon, 1995: 126).

International institutions also can be quite proactive on environmental issues. Many environmental treaties establish scientific bodies or links to external scientific advisory bodies – like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – to improve “the understanding of the participants regarding the issues at stake” (Young, 1998: 68). Concerned actors can discuss discoveries of new greenhouse gases or newly endangered species at the next meeting of the FCCC or the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species but have no corresponding forum to address discoveries of agricultural nitrogen fixing or transboundary air pollution in Africa. International institutions also have bureaucratic incentives to expand the range of topics they engage and provide venues in which “policies are advanced by technical experts acting on their sense of the public interest, not by interest groups or elected officials acting on behalf of public demands for improved policy” (Birkland, 1998: 67). In such “policies without publics,” institutions may be able to focus government attention on an issue without focusing events or strong political pressure for action (May, 1990). Efforts by scientists may foster action, but agenda-setting success generally requires NGOs and networks of NGOs to engage in more explicitly political mobilization of concern, particularly in politically significant countries, to create both domestic and international political climates in which policy makers find discussing an issue less

costly than ignoring it (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

Institutional dynamics also create a natural progression and inherent logic that make indefinite continuation of research and discussion untenable. Agreement to discuss an environmental problem promotes rhetorical entrapment with a strong presumption that, if the problem is shown to exist, it should be addressed (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Issues remain on the agenda until they gain sufficient momentum to be resolved (Wood and Peake, 1998; Young, 1998). The efforts at persuasion that discussion entails often prompt convergence of views about the problem, its causes, and the need for action. Issues in one arena also may gain urgency from negotiation successes in related arenas: the “demonstration effect” of efforts to protect the Baltic Sea prompted efforts by circumpolar countries to protect the Arctic (Young, 1998: 78). But international organizations are agents of states and may be captured by the industries they regulate and, at times, may be more reluctant than pro-change actors to take up controversial agenda items.

Precisely because the question of how to define and address a problem “is up for grabs” during agenda formation, framing plays a central role in what issues get on the agenda (Young, 1998). Material factors constrain how a problem can be defined and delimit possible solutions but leave room for scientists, NGOs, and governments to frame issues in ways that make them more salient to those not otherwise interested or provide alternatives to conventional understandings and perceptions (Litfin, 1994: 9). NGOs have successfully influenced the framing of whaling, acid rain, biodiversity, large dams, marine pollution, and ozone depletion (Epstein, 2008; Haas, Keohane, and Levy, 1993; Parson, 2003; Khagram, 2004). The World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission) reframed economic development and environmental protection as inherently interconnected, thereby linking developing states’ economic interests with developed states’ environmental ones, a perspective evident in

titling the UN’s watershed 1992 meeting as a “Conference on Environment and Development” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). More tactical links also can work, as evident in the financial transfers common to recent treaties and the participation of Soviet bloc states in acid rain negotiations in the 1970s to promote détente (Levy, 1993). Whether trying to link climate change to international security, to refocus defense ministries on environmental degradation, to raise environmental suits before WTO dispute panels, or to green the World Bank, activists have sought to frame environmental protection as empirically and normatively linked to other, higher-priority, concerns of governments “as a way of gaining attention from high-level decision makers and mobilizing resources” (Detraz and Betsill, 2009: 303; Deudney, 1991). Our understanding of why issues receive international attention and why they are debated and discussed in the terms they are remains in its infancy. Moving forward in this arena will require developing more specific, contingent, and testable propositions about why certain environmental problems remain unaddressed and prescriptions about how that might change.

POLICY FORMULATION

Consensus about a problem’s existence, causes, and importance need not create consensus regarding whether or what action is warranted. The efforts of the states and non-state actors most concerned about an issue do not always lead to international action. I focus here on efforts to form international environmental institutions, but also discuss the many efforts by states, NGOs, and multinational corporations (MNCs) to address international environmental problems outside of intergovernmental forums.

IEP scholars have made significant progress at explaining the conditions under which we should expect international environmental institutions to form. Realists have largely ignored international environmental

cooperation, taking one of three positions: (a) states' relative gains concerns hinder international cooperation on environmental issues as much as on other issues, (b) the "low politics" of environmental issues have so little impact on state survival that states can afford to pursue absolute gains, or (c) the "low politics" of environmental issues fall outside the scope of realist claims (see Waltz, 1979: 195ff; Rowlands, 2001; Lacy, 2005). Most IEP scholars, however, accept the institutionalist view that interstate cooperation is difficult but possible and have investigated how interests influence institutional formation and design.

Scholars have proposed various typologies of interest configurations and types of conflict to explain the likelihood of institutional formation. Initial typologies categorizing problems as ranging from benign to malign have led to more refined typologies (Wettestad, 1999; Young, 1999a; Miles et al., 2002; Breitmeier, Young, and Zürn, 2006). Agreements addressing collaboration games will tend to involve more specific rules and more tightly negotiated compliance and enforcement mechanisms, while those addressing coordination games will tend to incorporate focal points (Zürn, 1998: 629). States tend to incorporate common obligations and reciprocity mechanisms in institutions addressing symmetric Tragedies of the Commons but differentiated obligations and positive incentives in institutions addressing asymmetric problems (in which perpetrators are not also victims) (Mitchell and Keilbach, 2001). The implications of other such distinctions continue to need development. Categorizing real-world environmental problems as involving a Tragedy of the Commons, an asymmetry of interests, a conflict over a relatively assessed good, or a suasion game requires carefully evaluating state preferences and avoiding superficial and aggregate analogizing (Martin, 1992; Hasenclever, Mayer, and Rittberger, 1997; Miles et al., 2002). Many environmental problems involve intertwined strategic problems, as exemplified by stratospheric

ozone loss, which may best be characterized as a Tragedy of the Commons among concerned developed states and an asymmetric externality between these states and less concerned, "upstream," developing states (Parson, 2003).

State preferences – and their pattern across states – create challenges to institutional formation and influence the design of those institutions that do form. Indeed, international environmental protection prompts considerable policy conflict: as the climate change debate in particular has clarified, it evokes opposition by those states and sectors more concerned with economic costs and economic growth, and it raises significant redistributive concerns both among and within states. Intergovernmental solutions that entail high abatement costs with few environmental benefits for most states will face significant opposition from these "laggards" and progress will be unlikely; those that entail low abatement costs but large environmental benefits will have multiple "leaders" pushing for action, with international negotiations far more likely to succeed (Sprinz and Vahtoranta, 1994). Power serves to "weight" these preferences, with powerful laggards able to forestall international action and powerful leaders able to prompt action more readily. Thus, the United States' support for a whaling moratorium has been central to maintaining the strength of, and membership in, the International Whaling Commission, but its opposition has delayed international progress on climate change. Preferences for environmental protection also reflect policy styles, party politics, bureaucratic structures, industrial interests, the state of civil society, and transnational linkages (Schreurs and Economy, 1997; DeSombre, 2000; O'Neill, 2000).

The strength of state preferences influences the ambitiousness of institutional terms which, in turn, influence state support and participation. States reach agreement more readily if institutional terms are made less ambitious. What institutional form such agreement takes varies, however. Low levels

of concern, the inability to resolve conflict between concerned and unconcerned states, or high levels of concern with disagreement about how to address a problem obstruct cooperation or lead to cooperative research programs, nonbinding accords, and other institutions that are less formal, less legalized, and less ambitious (Lipson, 1991; Brown Weiss, 1997; Goldstein et al., 2000). Even when there is significant concern, the fact that negotiations often work on a decision rule of unanimity in the shadow of a “no-agreement” reversion point privileges the preferences of the “least ambitious” states (Underdal, 1980; Hovi and Sprinz, 2006). Institutions that seek deep cooperation, provide little flexibility, and include stringent enforcement mechanisms will tend to be resisted unless states expect large benefits (Downs, Rocke, and Barsoom, 1996). And even ecologically unambitious goals may face stiff opposition if they impose high costs on powerful states or economic sectors, as evident in opposition to international climate change efforts.

International institutions reflect power as much as self-conscious, voluntary cooperation. Institutions addressing industrialized states’ concerns are more likely to be negotiated quickly and implemented fully than those addressing developing states’ concerns (Young, 1989). Indeed, the “lack of participation by economically ‘disadvantaged’ nations in environmental treaties” appears to reflect the historical legacy of colonialism and a “fragile, authoritarian and often corrupt economic structure built on the production and export of a very narrow range of product” (Roberts, Parks, and Vásquez, 2004: 44). In environmental affairs, however, structural power often proves less important than issue-specific power. The states primarily responsible for an environmental problem often have considerable influence over the design of relevant institutions. Brazil can effectively prevent progress on protecting the rainforest just as Botswana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe can on protecting elephants. China and India refused to ratify the ozone regime until

industrialized states formally added financial transfers (Parson, 2003).

Although power and interests impose constraints, actors can influence institutional formation. In many environmental problems, knowledge is uncertain and material interests are “weakly or ambiguously affected” (Stokke, 1997: 132–133). Under such conditions, preferences can be both unclear and unstable, creating a context in which interests are as much a result of, as inputs to, negotiations (Zürn, 1998; Young, 1998). Although different scholars focus on states, epistemic communities, NGOs, domestic political constituencies, and individual leaders, they have theorized the activities by which these groups influence negotiations under these conditions in relatively similar ways (Haas, 1992b; Raustiala, 1997b; Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Scientists and other nonstate actors who understand environmental trends and their causes can motivate negotiators by leading them to revise their estimates of the costs of reaching and of failing to reach agreement. Scientific identification of an environmental problem, its causes, and potential solutions is a necessary condition for institutional formation. Scientific knowledge influences negotiations, both because scientists’ methods and discursive rules serve as an alternative to interest-based bargaining and because of the societal authority granted to science. Under conditions of uncertainty, policy makers often defer to epistemic communities of scientists in ways that can avert otherwise-debilitating conflicts of interests (Haas, 1992b; Raustiala, 1997b). Yet, a scientific consensus is neither necessary nor sufficient for international agreement – in the case of ozone negotiations, evidence suggests that “the real decisions” were made before states concluded negotiations (Haas, 1992a: 224; Parson, 2003). Scientists may present biased facts, science itself contains embedded values and power, and policy makers often use or ignore science selectively to rationalize or reinforce preexisting positions that prevent agreement (Haas,

1992a; Jasanoff, 1990; Litfin, 1994; Social Learning Group, 2001a; Social Learning Group, 2001b). That said, NGOs often recognize the legitimacy and influence that policy-makers grant to scientists and seek out resources and expertise to supplement traditional advocacy with more impartial information.

Each state's commitment to negotiating, signing, and ratifying an agreement is not independent of the differential pressures they feel to accept an agreement with certain terms rather than others. Framework-protocol approaches work because states are willing to accept collective decision making that they know will lead to substantive agreement before they are willing to reach substantive agreement itself. Adding financial transfers to an agreement may make potential donors more resistant but will attract potential recipients. Indeed, the redistributive effects of different compliance schemes regularly lead states to continue negotiating rather than accepting the agreement on the table. When states view transparency as crucial, the challenges of devising mutually acceptable inspection procedures can slow, and even prevent, agreement. Decision-making rules, proscriptions and prescriptions, implementation provisions, and withdrawal and renegotiation clauses can all become deal-breakers.

The environmental context creates openings for influence. At a broad level, discursive practices can alter perceived interests and, hence, whether and what type of institutions form. Words persuade as well as communicate interests, threats, and promises (Risse, 2000; Gehring and Ruffing, 2008). Framing a problem as "global" may foster collective action, but also gives "every participant in the negotiation process real bargaining leverage" and veto power (Young, 1998). Framing a problem as regional may foster incremental progress, as evident in UNEP's regional seas agreements and in other regions' imitation of the European regime for enforcement of marine pollution conventions (DeSombre, 2006; Kasoulides,

1993). At a more specific level, those who can design proposals that balance enough competing interests can promote agreement. "Deft diplomacy" is crucial to "add and subtract issues to facilitate the bargaining process, craft the terms of negotiating texts, and broker the deals needed to achieve consensus" (Young, 1998: 23; Sebenius, 1983). High-ranking IGO officials, diplomats, bureaucrats, or NGO and corporate representatives often facilitate agreement through "good ideas" rather than through material resources (Young, 1998). States generate policy proposals but nonstate actors also introduce proposals directly to intergovernmental negotiating bodies or through sympathetic governments (Haas, 1992b; McCormick, 1999: 67; Princen and Finger, 1994; Raustiala, 1997a). NGOs and industry trade groups lobby, get media coverage, and stage protests but also push information on the negotiations out to constituencies, prompting pressure on negotiators to support certain agreements and oppose others (Lipschutz and Conca, 1993; Lipschutz and Mayer, 1996; Wapner, 1996). As with agenda-setting, individuals representing states or nonstate actors can become "determined champions" who promote certain proposals and stage catalytic events to prompt action (Haas, 1992a; Young, 1998). Scientists, corporate representatives, and environmental activists also "infiltrate" domestic and international levels of governance, joining national delegations and working with intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) (Haas, 1992b; Raustiala, 1997b). States have granted NGOs (particularly, the Earth Negotiations Bulletin) access to negotiations because they want detailed and impartial daily reporting and will accept, in exchange, its public dissemination (Raustiala, 1997b). International institutions can foster agreement when exogenous forces make reaching agreement difficult by providing a forum for discussion, by making viable policy proposals, and by maintaining "political momentum" (Keohane, 1996; Young, 1998; Parson, 2003).

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTIVENESS

Ultimately, the value of environmental policies at the intergovernmental, national, or nonstate levels lies in the degree to which they alter human behaviors in ways that improve the environment. A major vein in IEP research has involved research into the effects of international environmental agreements (IEAs). Throughout the 1990s, scholars examined the influence of numerous IEAs and produced a remarkably coherent research program (Haas, Keohane, and Levy, 1993; Andresen, and Wettestad, 1995; Cameron, Werksman, and Roderick, 1996; Keohane and Levy, 1996; Brown Weiss, and Jacobson, 1998; Underdal, 1998; Victor, Raustiala, and Skolnikoff, 1998; Young, 1999a). During the 2000s, other scholars built on this foundation, using more comparative and quantitative approaches (Miles et al., 2002; Wettestad, 2002; Hovi, Sprinz, and Underdal, 2003; Young, 2002; Underdal, and Young, 2004; Stokke, Hovi, and Ulfstein, 2005; Breitmeier, Young, and Zürn, 2006). This research began by asking “how do international environmental institutions influence the behaviors of states?” A shift to asking “what explains variation in the environmental behavior of states?” has focused attention on economic, technological, political, and other influences on behavior that improves the accuracy of claims of IEA influence by refuting alternative explanations and clarifies how IEA influence depends on – and is “large” or “small” relative to – these other influences.

IEA influence depends on features of institutional design but also on characteristics of the environmental problem, of the countries involved, and of the international context (Brown Weiss and Jacobson, 1998). Various aspects of an environmental problem’s structure shape the willingness and ability of targeted actors to alter their behavior. Institutions wield influence by altering the values, incentives, or abilities of those actors inclined to oppose institutional goals – and those values,

incentives, and abilities vary across problems (Victor, Raustiala, and Skolnikoff, 1998; Young, 1999a; Miles et al., 2002). States that are ecologically vulnerable or that face lower adjustment costs tend to outperform those who are not, but their numbers differ across problems (Sprinz and Vahtoranta, 1994). The incentives to free-ride in a Tragedy of the Commons, however strong, are weaker than the incentives of “upstream” states to continue environmentally harmful behaviors in upstream/downstream contexts (Mitchell and Keilbach, 2001). Institutions that must induce new behaviors face both incentive and capacity problems, whereas those that must induce restraint face only incentive problems. IEAs more readily change behaviors that are less embedded in social structures, as evident in the greater challenges of regulating greenhouse gases compared to regulating CFCs. Market structures can reinforce or undercut regulatory efforts: marine pollution agreements benefit from the incentives that shipbuilders and ship insurers have to monitor and enforce them, while endangered species agreements create shortages and price increases that encourage smuggling (Mitchell, 1994; Jacobson and Brown Weiss, 1998: 521). Power also plays a role in institutional effectiveness, with powerful states sometimes having incentives to provide public goods by sanctioning violations or providing environmental aid (Axelrod and Keohane, 1986; Keohane and Levy, 1996).

The state of knowledge and norms can exacerbate or mitigate the challenges to institutional influence posed by material factors. Greater certainty about a problem’s magnitude, impacts, and causes and greater availability of less harmful technologies foster action. Greater contestation between environmental protection and national security or economic growth tends to inhibit IEA effectiveness. Thus, states have used cultural preservation as a normative foundation for resisting calls to regulate whaling and have used economic development to resist calls for action on climate change and deforestation. Institutional effectiveness also reflects

how many actors must be engaged to address the problem, the inherent transparency of relevant behaviors, the role and position of multinational corporations, and the concentration of the activity being regulated (Jacobson and Brown Weiss, 1998; DeSombre, 2000, 2006).

Economic, political, cultural, and demographic variation help explain cross-national differences in environmental degradation and responsiveness to IEAs. States vary in levels of domestic environmental concern, government responsiveness to those concerns, and political and administrative capacity to implement international commitments (Breitmeier, Young, and Zürn, 2006). Past behavioral trajectories and histories, geographic and demographic characteristics, domestic economic and political structures, and scientific infrastructures all influence how receptive countries are to institutional pressures (Brown Weiss and Jacobson, 1998; Miles et al., 2002; Breitmeier, Young, and Zürn, 2006). And the support of domestic corporate and civil society actors for international institutions in general and environmental institutions in particular can play an important role in how quickly and fully a country alters its behavior patterns (Raustiala, 1997a; Young, 1998; Underdal and Hanf, 2000). Some states have well-developed environmental ministries, robust regulatory infrastructures, and supportive civil society structures, while others lack such facilitative domestic institutions. IEAs are more influential when they “fit,” taking the characteristics of member states into account: addressing financial and technological incapacity issues among developing state members, engaging NGOs in monitoring when members have active civil society sectors, and the like (Young, 2002; Galaz et al., 2008).

The international context also shapes IEA effectiveness. Large-scale shifts – globalization, democratization, economic cycles, and the end of the Cold War – alter how, how many, and how much countries respond to IEA commitments. Such factors shape global environmental concern and the long-term

incentives of individuals, corporations, and countries to address environmental issues. The secular increase in environmental concern as well as specific increases due to events like the UN’s major 1972, 1992, and 2002 conferences can make countries more responsive to the pressures of IEAs. IEA influence also is changing as international environmental institutions seek to coordinate the interplay and interference of their activities and as those institutions increasingly seek to work more effectively with and through international economic institutions like the European Union, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) (Oberthür and Gehring, 2006). Whether called interplay, interaction, or regime complexes, scholars are paying more attention to how international institutions consciously coordinate their policies to avoid redundancy while taking advantage of synergies and to the many ways behavior change is the “net” influence of multiple institutions (Stokke, 2001; Young, 2002; Raustiala and Victor, 2004; Oberthür and Gehring, 2006; Jinnah, 2010). Indeed, concerns that the hundreds of extant multilateral IEAs are having less impact than they might has prompted a lively debate about whether creating an environmental parallel to the WTO would foster more environmental progress (Biermann and Bauer, 2005).

Yet institutional design also matters. Were realist theory always correct, then characteristics of the problem, the relevant countries, and the international context would determine behavioral outcomes. Institutionalists have shown, however, how international environmental institutions influence behavior through both a logic of consequences and a logic of appropriateness (March and Olsen, 1998). Within a rationalist logic of consequences, environmental negotiations and cooperative scientific research can lead states to broaden their views of self-interest to include long-term, unclear, or indirect environmental impacts that they might otherwise ignore. Joint scientific research can inform states of previously unknown consequences

of their behavior that lead them to change their policies and behaviors. International institutions may also induce more interdependent decision making. States may consider environmental problems as arenas in which they can ignore the relative gains concerns that dominate security and economic affairs (Snidal, 1991; Powell, 1991). For those “contingent” states willing to reduce pollution or protect a species if “enough” other states do, international institutions may provide enough reassurance to foster action. Habit, institutional inertia, and domestic internalization can sustain institutional effects. Once agreement-consistent behavior begins, bureaucratic and corporate supporters tend to gain power and resources while opponents lose them. A pollution treaty may foster the growth of pollution control companies while fostering the atrophy of the material capabilities of polluting companies, making violation more difficult, as evident in the moth-balling of whaling or fur-sealing ships and the retooling of factories that produced chlorofluorocarbons.

Within a logic of appropriateness, international institutions strengthen existing norms or generate new ones. The discourse of whether to join an agreement and whether to meet institutional commitments takes place within a changing normative context. Initially, government officials can legitimately ask, “are these commitments in our country’s interest?” As norms strengthen, however, states are expected to explain policies and behaviors that run counter to institutional obligations and to do so in norm-based rather than interest-based terms (Chayes and Chayes, 1995). Norms operate differentially, with democratic states that value their identities as following the “rule of law” and “green” states that seek to be environmental leaders more likely to meet institutional commitments (Neumayer, 2002a). Accounting for actions in normative terms becomes self-reinforcing: by framing its behavioral choices in normative terms, a country strengthens the expectation of other countries and of its own

citizens that it will not later reverse those behaviors based on changes in interests.

Scholars have found considerable evidence that institutional specifics matter. Institutions whose decision-making rules are consensus-based and are considered equitable induce greater behavior change than those whose are not (Andresen, 1998: 468–471; Breitmeier, Young, and Zürn, 2006: 187ff). And institutions differ in their fundamental form: *regulatory* regimes proscribe or prescribe behavior, *procedural* regimes facilitate recurring collective choice, *programmatic* regimes pool resources toward collective goals, and *generative* regimes foster development of new norms and social practices (Young, 1999b: 24ff). These different institutional forms can be expected to generate different “effectiveness profiles” in terms of the who, when, how, and how much of behavioral change and environmental improvement, but these implications have only received significant scholarly attention with respect to regulatory institutions.

Regulatory institutions induce behavior change through their primary rule system, their information system, and their response system (Mitchell, 1998). Effective institutional design “fits” these systems to the environmental and behavioral structure of the problem being addressed (Young, 2002). Choices among alternative primary rules certainly influence which actors with what interests and capacities must change their behavior, the cost and difficulty of such changes, and whether other forces reinforce or undercut incentives to alter behavior. Institutional goals need to be ambitious enough to motivate additional effort without becoming “unrealistic” or “unachievable” (Hovi and Sprinz, 2006). More specific and precise obligations tend to enhance institutional influence, though this is not always the case (Jacobson and Brown Weiss, 1998: 524; Fischhendler, 2008). And although IEAs vary considerably with respect to whether they impose common or differentiated obligations, that distinction proves less important than whether member states view

the obligations as equitable (Jacobson and Brown Weiss, 1998: 523).

Various researchers have shown the importance of information systems to institutional influence. Whether called monitoring, inspection, verification, sunshine provisions, or systems of implementation review, the willingness of countries to alter their own behaviors depends on whether they know what others are doing (Jacobson and Brown Weiss, 1998; Victor, Raustiala, and Skolnikoff, 1998). Most IEAs forego intrusive inspection systems and rely on self-reporting. Incidents of mis-, non-, and under-reporting are common, and self-reporting is frequently dismissed on theoretical grounds. Yet, despite these weaknesses, systems that supply incentives to report, build reporting capacities, and use reporting to identify ways that interested actors can “intervene to encourage compliance” (rather than sanction noncompliance) appear capable of effecting considerable behavior change (Jacobson and Brown Weiss, 1998: 526; Mitchell, 1998).

An institution’s response system also contributes to its influence. The direct tit-for-tat or “retaliatory noncompliance” used by states in economic and arms control agreements is uncommon in international environmental affairs, since environmental “leader” states are unlikely to revert to harming the environment to foster cooperation and, if they did, that tactic would be unlikely to alter the behavior of environmentally unconcerned “laggards” (Mitchell and Keilbach, 2001: 898). Economic or other sanctions can promote behavior change, but empirical evidence has shown them to be uncommon and less essential than scholars of the “enforcement” school have argued (Downs, Rocke, and Barsoom, 1996). The “managerial” school’s contention that institutional influence depends on alternatives to sanctions – whether positive material incentives or normative strategies of shaming and “jawboning” – have been confirmed by considerable cross-case empirical research (Chayes and Chayes, 1995; Brown Weiss and Jacobson, 1998; Miles et al., 2002;

Breitmeier, Young, and Zürn, 2006: 189–190). Indeed, rewards are essential for “downstream” states that seek to engage and influence unconcerned “upstream” actors but have also been used in Tragedy of the Commons settings, such as protection of fur seals (Mitchell and Keilbach, 2001; Barrett, 2003b). Most IEAs rely less on sanctions and incentives than on “facilitative” strategies involving financial aid or technology transfers that address incapacities among potentially supportive recipient states (Keohane and Levy, 1996; Sagar and VanDeveer, 2005). Institutions sometimes attempt to alter perceptions as a means of altering behavior (Mitchell, 2010: 170–172). Thus, prior informed consent provisions provide information with the goal of correcting countries’ misperceptions of what behaviors are most in line with their interests. And institutions also serve as forums in which arguments and persuasion, over time, alter perceptions of appropriate and inappropriate action with respect to the environment (Risse, 2000). International environmental institutions deploy various strategies to alter behavior within the constraints imposed by the willingness of member states to address the problem. And international institutions and organizations do so not merely as agents of state principals but as actors with interests and capabilities that sometimes diverge from those of the states that constitute them (Bauer, 2006; Siebenhüner, 2008; Ivanova, 2010).

BEYOND INTERGOVERNMENTALISM

The preceding focus on intergovernmentalism should not obscure the increasing attention IEP scholars have paid to non-intergovernmental efforts to address international environmental problems and to several other important areas of IEP scholarship (Bulkeley and Moser, 2007; Okereke, Bulkeley, and Schroeder, 2009). For at least two decades, scholars have investigated how

NGOs, transnational issue networks, and “world civic politics” influence the values and behaviors of individuals and corporations without the state as intermediary (Lipschutz and Mayer, 1996; Wapner, 1996). Although NGOs wield influence on intergovernmental negotiations, their influence does not stop there (Betsill and Corell, 2008). NGOs often rely on rhetoric and other resources, rather than on co-opting the coercive power of the state, to target places where state control is weak, outcomes are less predetermined, and behavior is more “amenable to alternative practices” (Wapner, 1996: 156–160). They acquire and protect ecosystems directly and through debt-for-nature swaps (Sheikh, 2007). They initiate consumer boycotts and “buy green” campaigns that directly shape corporate incentives (Wapner, 1996). They harness the marketplace as a mechanism of environmental governance (Cashore, Auld, and Newsom, 2004). On their own and in partnership with corporate actors, NGOs have developed ecolabeling, certification programs, and other alternatives to “fill the gaps” left by intergovernmental efforts (Bernstein and Cashore, 2004; Gulbrandsen, 2004).

Multinationals also have become increasingly active in global environmental governance. “Corporate social responsibility” and the “triple bottom line” are now common elements in corporate strategic plans (Clapp, 2005; Savitz and Weber, 2006; Auld, Bernstein, and Cashore, 2008). Although they have been around for decades, efforts at private environmental governance – whether the certification programs just mentioned or voluntary standards such as those adopted by the International Organization for Standardization and trade organizations – have become increasingly common empirically and as objects of academic study (Roht-Arriaza, 1997; Clapp, 2004; Cashore, Auld, and Newsom, 2004; Prakash and Potoski, 2006; Murphy, 2009). Public, private, and nonprofit actors are increasingly partnering in hybrid forms of governance (Andonova, 2010). NGO pressures, an increasingly “green” marketplace, and the personal values of

employees have all led many corporations (whether multinational or otherwise) to include environmental concerns in their production calculus (Garcia-Johnson, 2000; Levy and Newell, 2005).

Even national governments sometimes act outside international institutions to protect the global environment, despite the predictions of collective action theory (Hardin, 1968; Ostrom et al., 1999; Ostrom, 2001). At times, the United States has taken it upon itself to sanction violations of international environmental laws (DeSombre, 2000). European states regularly provide bilateral assistance for environmental projects that yield few material benefits (Keohane and Levy, 1996). Such unilateralism does not imply that states act against their material interests, only that domestic environmental interests can align with economic interests in ways that foster international environmental protection on what may be best seen as a unilateral basis. Developing our knowledge of the conditions under which such strategies are initiated, developed, and succeed will identify a fuller and better-informed menu of strategies for addressing the wide range of global environmental problems the world faces.

Interest also has grown in various issues of environmental governance not yet addressed in this chapter. Many scholars now explore issues related to the legitimacy of environmental governance, particularly investigating the implications of the centralized decision making common to international institutions for democracy and environmental protection. Scholars have both learned from and contributed to the literatures on deliberative and participatory democracy and democratic decentralization (Dryzek, 1990; Baber and Bartlett, 2005; Ribot and Larson, 2005; Dryzek and Stevenson, forthcoming). Researchers are also examining efforts to address environmental problems at the lowest effective level of governance – environmental subsidiarity – and the cross-scale dynamics that arise in the interaction among policies adopted at various governance levels from

the local to the international (Jordan, 2000; Cash et al., 2006). And, as with national unilateralism, scholars increasingly want to understand the phenomenon of municipal and provincial governments using strong local concern about an international environmental problem such as climate change to support local policy action long before such action would be supported nationally or internationally (Bulkeley and Betsill, 2003; Aall, Groven, and Lindseth, 2007; Urpelainen, 2009).

Related to questions of democracy and international governance, many IEP scholars have joined the debate over transparency and accountability in international relations (Grant and Keohane, 2005). In contrast to command-and-control regulation, the combination of transparency and accountability seems to promise improvements in environmental behaviors without regulation, merely requiring disclosure by those engaged in environmentally harmful activities so that the public can hold them to account (Fung, Graham, and Weil, 2007; Gupta, 2008; Gupta, 2010b). Although transparency and accountability policies, whether within or outside international institutions, are sometimes more politically palatable than direct regulation, they still represent “contested political terrain” (Gupta, 2010a). Power plays an important role in whether they are adopted and whether, once adopted, they promote environmental improvement or the interests of governmental and corporate interests that seek to avert or water down more serious efforts (Mason, 2008; Mol, 2010).

Finally, IEP scholars have continued to investigate the many ways in which international environmental problems influence, and are influenced by, other realms of international affairs, including development, trade, and security. The World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission) promoted the notion of “sustainable development” to highlight the connections between environmental protection and development, poverty, the plight of indigenous peoples, and urbanization

(World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987; United Nations, 1993). Studies of efforts to “green” the World Bank highlighted the public relations character of many early initiatives and that the delegation of environmental authority to development-oriented institutions could lead to environmental protection being ignored (Fox and Brown, 1998; Gutner, 2002). The relationship of international trade to environmental protection has also been a central concern (Gallagher, 2009). A vigorous debate has emerged about whether freer trade fosters “pollution havens” and/or a regulatory race to the bottom, top, or middle (Antweiler, Copeland, and Taylor, 2001; Neumayer, 2002b; Copeland, and Taylor, 2003; Cole, 2004; DeSombre, 2008). But the theoretical simplicity sought by many – that trade does or does not improve environmental quality – has been frustrated by a complicated economic and political world in which most theorized influences of trade on the environment exist but in which their net effects depend on particularities regarding the countries involved, the environmental indicators of concern, their measurement, and the background context. Finally, research into environmental security, which had its heyday in the 1990s, has also continued with particular attention paid to conflicts related to water and climate change (Homer-Dixon and Blitt, 1998; Conca and Dabelko, 2003; United Nations Environment Programme, 2004; Wolf, 2007; Dabelko, 2009).

CONCLUSION

Scholars have generated both theories and evidence regarding why global environmental problems are common; how they get placed on the international agenda; why states form institutions to address some but not others; what factors facilitate institutional influence; as well as a range of concerns beyond the intergovernmental realm. This scholarship has answered many questions, left some

unanswered, and generated many new ones. Addressing such questions will require new and concerted efforts. Those efforts would benefit from theoretical frameworks that allow more systematic empirical identification of which factors and processes are influential under a wide range of circumstances, which are influential under only limited circumstances, and which are not influential. Progress will be fostered by the increasing use of quantitative methods and large-N databases to complement, though not replace, the dominance of the field by case studies (Miles et al., 2002; Sprinz and Wolinsky-Nahmias, 2004; Breitmeier, Young, and Zürn, 2006; Mitchell, 2010). For scholars of IEP to contribute to the practice of global environmental governance, they must build on the solid theoretical and empirical foundations that currently exist and develop more contingent knowledge that identifies how the choices actors make promote environmental protection, the structural constraints on their ability to do so, and the conditions under which the former can help us overcome the latter.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Earlier versions of this chapter benefited from the criticism and suggestions of Walter Carlsnaes, Peter Haas, David Patel, M.J. Peterson, Kal Raustiala, Thomas Risse, Beth Simmons, Detlef Sprinz, Paul Steinberg, Paul Wapner, and Oran Young. Many parts of the argument in this chapter are developed more fully in Ronald B. Mitchell, *International Politics and the Environment* (New York: Sage, 2010).

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International Human Rights

Hans Peter Schmitz and Kathryn Sikkink

Human rights are principled ideas about the treatment to which every individual is entitled by virtue of being human. These ideas have gained widespread acceptance as international norms and law defining primarily the relationship between the state and its citizens, but are also increasingly invoked as rules governing the behavior of corporate and other nonstate entities. Human rights are examples of social constructions: invented social categories that derive their influence from the extent of a shared understanding within and across communities. The idea of rights has developed a grip on human imaginations that has exerted an increasingly powerful impact on world politics.¹

The idea that a government should respect the human rights of its citizens is an old one, dating back to the struggles for religious freedom and most prominently reflected in the US Bill of Rights and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. With the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, these rights began to be claimed *internationally*, and thus emerged as a challenge to state sovereignty and as a framework for activists demanding fundamental social and political change. This growing salience of

human rights in international politics has created a broad research program focused on the causes of human rights violations, the institutional evolution of the international human rights system, and the relevance of these norms in shaping domestic change.

Initial work by Donnelly (1989) and Forsythe (1991) introduced human rights as a legitimate topic for international relations scholarship. Donnelly argued that the concept of a right arose in the West, primarily in response to the need to protect individuals from the increasingly invasive powers of the bureaucratic state and the capitalist market system. While the intellectual groundwork for human rights was mainly developed in Europe and the United States, their establishment on the international level as well as their justification reflects more culturally diverse sources. Lauren (1998), Morsink (1999), and Glendon (2001) elaborate on the global sources of human rights thinking and activism, for example, the crucial role of non-Western participants in the drafting of the UDHR. The values enshrined in the UDHR reflect a secularized “agreement across cultures” (Glendon, 1998: 1156), which intentionally left questions of deeper justification and priorities among rights

unresolved. The subsequent expansion and further codification of human rights at the global and regional levels has embedded rights in the foreign policies of many states, the mandates of intergovernmental organizations, and the imagination of global publics.

We begin with a review of the literature on the causes of human rights violations and then turn to explanations concerning the institutional evolution of human rights at the global and regional levels. Subsequently, we evaluate accounts about why states commit to human rights norms and how such commitments can affect their domestic behavior. Because the literature on human rights in international relations has become so extensive, we mainly focus on the literature as it relates to civil and political rights, but in the final section, we identify new directions in human rights research, in particular the emphasis on social and economic rights, the significance of nonstate actors such as multinational corporations, and debates about transitional justice.

WHY DO HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OCCUR?

Political science did not develop a substantive literature on “causes of repression” to parallel the “causes of war” literature until well into the 1980s, although in the twentieth century far more people were killed or tortured by their own governments than during wars and other violent conflicts.² Understanding why and how governments use violence against their own population is a prerequisite to developing effective protections against human rights violations. While we cannot expect to arrive at a single, unified theory explaining any type of repression, research has identified some important factors associated with systematic human rights abuses. We include the literature on causes of genocide because there is significant overlap in the causal factors stressed, but for more specific treatments of the genocide literature,

see Fein (1993), Straus (2007), and Waller (2007).

Research on repression explores why political authorities use coercion at the domestic level (Davenport, 2007). This literature focuses largely on violations of personal integrity rights, especially political imprisonment, torture, extrajudicial killings, and disappearances. Many statistical studies of international human rights rely on two prominent measures of states’ human rights performance, the PTS (Political Terror Scale), which aggregates repression along a five-point scale (Gibney et al., 2010), and the CIRI human rights database, which allows researchers to disaggregate different components of repression (Cingranelli and Richards, 2010). PTS and CIRI cover most countries of the world and offer data that scholars can use to test causal hypotheses about human rights in a cross-national setting and over time.

As a result of the increasing availability of human rights data, there has been a significant increase in quantitative research on human rights. Over the last ten years, more than 90 articles have been published in the top political science and human rights journals using the PTS and/or CIRI databases to measure either independent or dependent variables.³ Some of the most frequent research topics include the following: the effect of (the various dimensions of) globalization on respect for human rights, the link between the level of respect for human rights and the probability of internal conflict, the relationship between a government’s human rights record and foreign aid allocation, the relationship between democracy and respect for human rights, the effect of transitional justice mechanisms and the respect for human rights, the impact of regime type on the use of torture, and the relationship between treaty commitment and respect for human rights. A number of these articles make important causal and theoretical claims, some of which are summarized in this essay. Before turning to these claims, however, it is important to discuss how the choice of data

and the changing information environment has implications for our ability to reach a consensus on causal factors related to human rights change over time.

Most of the quantitative research on human rights relies on scales coded from the texts of two series of annual reports, the *Amnesty International Annual Report*, and the US State Department's annual *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*. These two sources, in turn, rely on increasing numbers of human rights reports by governments and domestic and international human rights NGOs. As a result of better coverage of human rights violations, current Amnesty International and State Department annual reports typically contain much more and better information than earlier ones. More recent reports also tend to document a wider range of human rights violations. Social scientists today have more data than ever before on human rights, permitting a broader range of analytic techniques to be applied to help us better understand patterns of human rights violations. The increase in the quality and quantity of information about human rights violations in the world and greater attention to the full range of human rights is good news for scholars and practitioners in this area, but for researchers it carries potential problems for the general validity of human rights measures.⁴

In particular, the increasing availability of information may lead to "information effects," which make it appear that the human rights situation is worse or has not improved from previous years, when we may now simply know much more about human rights violations (Clark and Sikkink, 2011). The main activity of the human rights movement has been the production and dissemination of human rights information. As the movement has grown, the amount of available information on human rights violations has also grown. Paradoxically, then, the success of the human rights movement may have contributed to social science findings that the human rights situation in the world is worsening. Researchers using both quantitative and

qualitative data face such problems, but for quantitative human rights research the issue is particularly serious because such research relies so heavily on so few sources. In a review essay in *World Politics*, Emilie Hafner-Burton and James Ron (2009) contrast qualitative and quantitative studies of human rights. Although they mention some of the problems with the quantitative data, the overall tone of the article suggests that quantitative approaches are more objective and reliable sources of causal knowledge about human rights. But the possibility of information effects suggests that both quantitative and qualitative researchers need to think carefully about characteristics of the source materials and how they are used. Qualitative research and case studies helped immensely in early theory building on the politics of human rights, and still should be used separately and in tandem with summary data to further advance causal understanding. The most impressive of the new generation of human rights research is that which combines thoughtful use of diverse quantitative measures with careful qualitative studies that explore the causal mechanisms through which human rights change occurs (e.g., Simmons, 2009; Cardenas, 2007).

Political explanations

Two core findings have found repeated and consistent confirmation across studies of repression. First, real or imagined threats to a regime consistently motivate leaders to choose repression (Poe, 2004). Second, an absence of restrictions on the power of authorities, often understood in the context of the weakness or strength of democratic institutions, is also consistently identified as enabling repression.

Threats to a regime can originate internally or externally, although most of the literature explaining repression focuses on domestic dissent. Statistical analyses confirm that countries engaged in civil and international wars are also more likely to use repression (Poe and Tate, 1994; Poe et al., 1999).

Other types of threats to the survival of a government, including the existence of separatist movements and insurgent or terrorist groups, are also positively correlated with repression (Davenport, 2000; Poe and Tate, 1994; Poe et al., 1999). This result also holds for formally democratic regimes (see discussion below) experiencing civil war or internal conflict.⁵ Governments across the world have been “restricting some physical integrity rights” as a response to real and perceived threats from transnational terror networks, but there is no consistent evidence for restrictions of “human rights across the board” (Piazza and Walsh, 2009: 144). These results are in line with the need to more systematically disaggregate what we mean by repression and linking specific instances to a diverse set of possible causes.

Although many scholars agree that states repress in response to real or perceived threats, more research is required to understand better when and why authorities use repression rather than other means of pacification, what kinds of threats to a regime produce such responses, how such a process of repression unfolds, and if repression is actually effective in reaching its purported goals of maintaining control (Davenport, 2007). The first issue about choosing repression from a broader set of policy options focuses attention on decision making at the elite levels. Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) argue that elites choose to repress dissent when the economic costs of doing so are lower than the costs of institutionalizing liberal democracy. But we still need a better understanding of when and how leaders make such cost-benefit analyses prior to unleashing repressive policies.

In answering some of the process questions left out by statistical analysis, qualitative studies of genocides and other large-scale atrocities offer additional insights into why and how such events unfold and add distinct international perspectives to the explanation of repression. The literature on the Rwandan genocide generally confirms the role of deliberate choices made by elites facing threats to

their power both on the battlefield and the negotiation table (Des Forges, 1999; Straus, 2007). In discounting the role of ethnic hatred and other supposedly deep-seated issues of discrimination driving violence and repression, this literature emphasizes rational decision making by leaders with control over means of violence (Valentino, 2004; Poe, 2004) and greater possibilities to influence such decisions internally and externally. Decisions to choose repression among other policy options are influenced both by variables that affect the alternatives taken seriously by elites as well as variables that affect the choice among those alternatives. In the case of Rwanda and elsewhere, research has stressed the failure of international actors to raise the perceived costs of violence (Des Forges, 1999; Straus, 2006; Valentino, 2004).

Multiple studies have also confirmed that democratic regimes are less likely to engage in the repression of personal liberties than nondemocratic regimes (Poe and Tate, 1994; Poe et al., 1999). This finding has at times been labeled the “domestic democratic peace.” Elections offer opportunities for those repressed to remove authorities from office, thus raising the costs of repression. Democratic institutions also provide established, nonviolent mechanisms to address grievances and reinforce values of deliberation and peaceful contestation. While most agree that democratic political institutions generally reduce repressive behavior, there is no linear relationship, and any positive effects depend on specific properties of a democratic system. There is “more murder in the middle” (Fein, 1995); that is, repression levels are particularly high in transitioning regimes (Snyder, 2000). This means that democratic institutions only contribute to decreased repression after a certain threshold is reached (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2005), and some institutions or configurations of a democratic regime have greater effects on repression levels than others (Davenport, 2004; Cingranelli and Filippov, 2010). A similar correlation between certain properties of democracy and economic well-being has

also been confirmed by quantitative studies looking at economic and social rights (Sen, 1994; Milner, 2002), including the argument that a free press and democratic political institutions draw attention to food shortages, thus preventing famines (Sen, 1994; also Park, 1987).

The qualifications of the “domestic democratic peace” (Davenport, 2007b) confirm the need for disaggregating democracy and its effects on repression in future analyses. For example, executive constraints have been identified as having the greatest effect on repression levels (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2005) with regard to personal integrity rights, but other features of democracies have yet to be subjected to similar scrutiny.

Economic explanations

A more contested debate links the domestic and international economy to levels of repression. There are two distinct debates relating economic conditions and related activities to human rights violations. The first asserts that poor countries are more likely to be repressive than richer countries (Mitchell and McCormick, 1988; Poe and Tate, 1994; Poe et al., 1999). Two possible explanations are proffered. First, some argue that poorer nations experience more competition for fewer resources, thus privileging repression as one of few options for a government intent on staying in power. Second, others claim that a lack of resources makes repression less efficient and forces governments to engage in more of it (Fearon and Laitin, 2003). Similar to the statistical work on political explanations, the choice of indicators and measurements has a significant impact on the reliability of results. For example, looking primarily at aggregate data of GNP of other components of economic development ignores possible effects of domestic distribution of wealth (Henderson, 1991; Landman and Larizza, 2009) and leaves questions open that seek to identify the exact mechanisms linking economic development to human rights.

The second debate examines the role of international economic factors in affecting domestic human rights conditions. Here, two opposing arguments about free trade and foreign direct investment seek to establish direct links between economic globalization and domestic human rights. Defenders of economic globalization claim that expanding free trade and capitalist investment will lead to improvements in human rights conditions (Meyer, 1999; Apodaca, 2001; Richards et al., 2001), while others either arrive at the opposite result (London and Williams, 1988; Evans, 1999) or find no positive correlation between high levels of direct foreign investment and political and civil rights (Smith et al., 1999). In overcoming some of the methodological limitations of previous works, Hafner-Burton (2005) finds no proof that trade leads to repression; instead, she finds a consistent positive effect of FDI flows on reducing the coercive behavior of leaders. But this type of statistical analysis still leaves open the crucial question about the mechanisms and processes linking economic ties to levels of repression. Are these economic factors primarily empowering domestic middle classes, and do they create direct political constraints on leaders as the domestic democratic peace theory would suggest? Or do factors such as FDI flows have a more direct impact on leaders by providing them a broader set of (nonrepressive) policy options when faced with domestic dissent? Abouharb and Cingranelli (2007) look more specifically at the effects of neoliberal policies not just on a narrow set of civil and political rights and explore in some detail the processes by which externally imposed policies can negatively impact basic human rights. While the research on the impact of global processes of market integration has made significant progress in recent years, it continues to lag behind the more advanced research focusing on the internal and external political causes of repression.

This research has made very important contributions to our understanding of the factors associated with human rights violations.

What the statistical research cannot do is to provide a sense of how dramatically the world has changed in the area of human rights, much less explain this change. Just three decades ago most policy makers thought human rights was an inappropriate topic for foreign policy, while today both policy makers and scholars are products of a thriving rights culture. They take the concept for granted. This culture is the result of institutional changes and emergent global political forces that have been well documented. It is to these topics that we now turn.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE SINCE 1945

A comprehensive system of international human rights emerged in the 1940s, following the end of World War II. Some of its precursors included the laws of armed conflict (Finnemore, 1999), the campaigns for the abolition of the slave trade and slavery (Appiah, 2010), the campaign for women's suffrage, the work within the League of Nations for the protection of minority rights, and the International Labor Organization's efforts on workers' rights. But each of these efforts was limited to a specific group or set of circumstances. Following the creation of the UDHR, human rights underwent a process of progressive "international legalization" either with regard to the extent of *obligation*, their *precision*, or the use of *delegation* as a means to improve rights-related practices (Abbott et al., 2000). At the same time, human rights norms traveled with different speed from "soft" to "hard" law along these three dimensions. Parallel to this evolution of the human rights system based on broadly worded and weakly enforced treaties, global efforts to strengthen individual criminal responsibility through the use of domestic, foreign, and international courts gained growing support (Wippman and Evangelista, 2005; Roht-Arriaza, 2005) and emerged during the 1990s as a new norm (Sikkink, 2011).

With the expansion of the human rights regimes within the last 60 years, state actors face growing formal and informal limits to their domestic policy choices. In 1975, only 33 countries had ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, equaling 23% of the UN membership at that time (144). By March 2010, as many as 165 states had ratified the treaty (equaling 86% of member states) and 113 the Optional Protocol accepting supervisory powers of the Human Rights Committee. In addition, 173 states have ratified the Convention against Racial Discrimination, 160 the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 186 the Women's Rights convention, and 146 the Convention against Torture (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2010). The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) achieved almost universal membership within six years of its creation, and to date no other human rights treaty has garnered such rapid acceptance within such a short time period (LeBlanc, 1995: ix).

Since human rights norms challenge state sovereignty (Krasner, 1999) without creating significant interdependence among states, widespread acceptance of such agreements is puzzling for traditional international relations theories based on rationalist notions of state interests. The emergence of human rights as a significant issue area in global affairs played an important role in the "constructivist turn" (Checkel, 1998) in international relations by reintroducing a concern for norms as significant factors in shaping state interests and behavior (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). Constructivists contest claims that human rights agreements can be reduced to interest-driven projections of powerful hegemony (realism) or democracies (liberalism) and insist that such norms are not simply epiphenomenal to state interests. Instead, they are standards of an emerging global community which motivate or constrain behavior, shape interest formation processes in the first place, and create new agency in the form of transnational advocacy networks advancing those norms.

This research program then raises important questions about the evolution of global and regional human rights systems as well as variation in ratification patterns, and contestation around such norms. Insights derived from research into each of these questions plays an important role in further investigations into the conditions under which such international treaties actually shape domestic rights behavior by governments and other actors.

Norm creation and ratification patterns: global and regional dimensions

State commitment to human rights norms is expressed through signing and ratifying treaties. Two related empirical developments with regard to the human rights area have generated particular interest among scholars. First, the number of human rights agreements has significantly expanded since the adoption of the UDHR, and state support expressed in ratification patterns has consistently increased, although rates significantly vary across individual treaties. Second, even states with weak human rights records sign and ratify human rights agreements at rates similar to their counterparts with better domestic protections of rights. Why?

The first issue raises questions about why the catalogue of human rights treaties is expanding and why states feel the need to show their support for them. In answering the question of norm creation, scholarship has focused much attention on the role of transnational advocacy networks as core agents for framing issues (Price, 1998), setting the agenda of state negotiations (Clark, 2001), and altering the positions of states. The UDHR and the Genocide convention, adopted within two days in December 1948, were a result of extensive agenda setting and lobbying efforts by nongovernmental groups and activists, primarily based in the United States, pushing to include human rights in the United Nations Charter (Korey, 1998;

Glendon, 2001; Mitoma, 2008). Amnesty International almost single-handedly pushed for the convention against torture created in 1984 and in force since 1987 after making torture the organization's first broader campaign issue in 1971 (Baehr, 1989; Burgers and Danelius, 1988; Clark, 2001). Without NGO activism, important human rights treaties would not exist today, including the 1990 Convention on the Rights of the Child (Price Cohen, 1990), the 1997 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Glasius, 2006; Struett, 2008), the 2000 Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and the 2002 Kimberley Agreement on Conflict Diamonds (Haufler, 2009), and a whole set of women's rights that were added across the UN system (Joachim, 2007). Much of the research in this area is based on single case studies of particular campaigns or comparisons within a particular campaign, thus limiting the generalizability of explanations of NGO success and failure in norm creation. Some of these initial hypotheses deserve further study, including claims that campaigns have to be broad-based coalitions to be successful, that a focused topic such as anti-personnel landmines or child soldiers is more likely to succeed, that variation in access to international institutions matters, or that campaigns have to mobilize sympathetic state leaders and other allies first in order to build a viable coalition and reach a tipping point.

Once transnational activists frame the issue and set the agenda, states play a much larger role in the process of negotiating and adopting such agreements. Once these treaties are adopted, NGO campaigns will usually continue their activities, but now focus on lobbying states to sign, ratify, and implement domestically in order to further strengthen the newly established or rhetorically strengthened norm. In the human rights area, scholars have focused much attention on why states commit to restrictions to their domestic conduct and, particularly, why even states with dismal human rights records are just as likely to ratify as their counterparts

with better records. A macro-level account of the evolution of human rights standards conceptualizes the process as a “norms cascade” divided into three distinct steps of emergence, tipping point/cascade, and internalization (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). Beyond the tipping point, adopting states have not necessarily internalized the norm, but succumb in search of legitimacy to peer pressure and bandwagoning effects (Kelley, 2008: 230), while early adopters are more likely to be “true believers.”

This general model, however, does not satisfactorily explain why states ratify human rights treaties. Research shows that many governments ratify simply because they support the content of the treaties, expressing an overlap of domestic and international norms (Simmons, 2009: 108). But what about governments that either refuse to ratify or do ratify despite having either dismal human rights records or divergent domestic norms? Scholars initially argued that human rights agreements are weakly enforced and thus provide low-cost opportunities to repressive regimes to gain international standing (Hathaway, 2002). This argument fails to account for the significant number of states that remain on the sidelines, which shows that ratification either comes with little benefits or is not really costless. As Simmons (2009) shows, divergent domestic norms as well as the nature of legal systems are a significant inhibitor to universal acceptance of some human rights norms, including women’s rights. This is particularly true for states that support the norms in their domestic practices but do not sign international agreements.

More recent research on the pattern of states with poor human rights records ratifying human rights agreements shows more complex motives than initially assumed. Many state leaders undoubtedly ratify opportunistically, thinking that it will not threaten their power position domestically, but the benefits have been overstated in earlier works. In addition, such insincere ratification decisions are driven in large part by what

governments in the region do and how close a regime is to handing over power. This renewed focus on regional human rights systems (also: Greenhill, 2010) puts emphasis on how important strong ties with respected regional partners are in strengthening commitment to universal norms. While there are significant differences in the institutionalization of human rights across regions, all of them have experienced a strengthening of these institutions over time. Within Europe, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1953) is now enforced through a redesigned European Court of Human Rights, with record numbers of cases and relatively high levels of compliance. The Inter-American human rights system evolved from a largely declarative regime in the 1960s and early 1970s, to an institutionalized system, where an innovative Inter-American Commission and Inter-American Court oversee the implementation of the American Convention on Human Rights (1978) (Hawkins and Jacoby, 2010). The much weaker African human rights system has also changed significantly during the past two decades, primarily by adding a supranational African Court of Human and People’s Rights (2004) as a supervisory body to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights. While the European (and the UN) human rights systems were established in direct response to the Holocaust, the struggle against colonialism in large parts of the Arab world, Africa, and Asia framed human rights primarily as a collective demand for national sovereignty during the 1950s and 1960s and led to a much weaker development of individual rights protections.

A somewhat different pattern of normative evolution emerged since 1945 around the issue of individual criminal responsibility for mass atrocities. While the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials first established this principle in international law, there was barely any progress during the Cold War; the norms cascade unfolded largely during the 1990s and under the impression of the genocides

committed in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. The establishment of the ad hoc International Tribunals in 1993 and 1995 led to concerted efforts in establishing a permanent court, which was negotiated in 1997 and came into existence in July 2002. What is distinct about this norms cascade is not just the focus on war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity, but the rapid diffusion of relatively strong enforcement efforts supported by domestic courts working on their own or in tandem with international tribunals challenging impunity for these crimes (Roht-Arriaza and Mariezcurrena, 2006).

The creation and evolution of human rights agreements has gained increasing attention among international relations scholars, focusing on a strengthening role of transnational activists in framing issues and setting the agenda of state negotiations. Once these agreements are in place, a combination of rationalist and sociological accounts have generated new insights into how norms strengthen over time and why individual states sign on and ratify. With the exception of the prosecution of mass atrocities, human rights continue to be weakly enforced at the international level, but their growing recognition by state actors (and more recently also nonstate actors such as corporations) increasingly limits the ability of governments to commit human rights violations with little fear of being exposed for gaps between their rhetorical affirmation of those norms and their violation in domestic practices.

Norm contestation

Contestation about the validity and meaning of human rights standards is a central concern for scholarship interested in understanding the independent effects of norms. Contestation takes place at international, domestic, and local levels and takes different rhetorical forms. Denial of factual claims about violations remains a common form of contestation, but its effectiveness has been severely diminished by the information poli-

tics of transnational advocacy networks (Murdie and Davis, 2012; Franklin, 2008). Instead, norm contestation today is more likely to take three other forms: (1) claiming an exception based on imminent threat, (2) challenging the validity of human rights with a different set of norms, (3) or redefining behavior to fall outside the scope of a norm.

To claim a temporary exception to the validity of human rights claims is itself a well-established norm in international relations. The international law of armed conflict narrows the extent of rights protections, while threats to national security, real or imagined, are frequently used by governments to justify repression. If we accept that domestic constituencies are crucial for the implementation of international human rights norms (Simmons, 2009), then we also have to accept that governments can mobilize “pro-violation constituencies” (Cardenas, 2004: 221) whose interests are better served by ignoring international norms and repressing a possible uprising with violence.

Beyond the case of national security and personal integrity rights, governments and local groups frequently go a step further and mount a more permanent challenge against human rights norms. Examples are not limited to the non-Western world and include the broad reservations registered by states signing the Women’s and Children’s Rights Conventions (Linton, 2008; Simmons, 2009: 208) and the claim to “exceptionalism” often advanced by US-based groups resisting ratification of human rights agreements. Based on a defense of the sovereignty norm and noninterference in civil conflict, China has consistently rejected (through abstentions in the Security Council) an expanded right of the international community to intervene militarily to end atrocities (Contessi, 2010). The most sophisticated form of contestation simply embraces the norm and pledges it continued universality while at the same time narrowing its meaning to exclude any behavior under question. The Bush administration’s insistence that it did not

torture was based on a unilateral exclusion of its own interrogation techniques and an attempt at narrowing the definition to severe pain and permanent harm, a modification that is clearly at variance with inter-national law.

FROM COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING RIGHTS PRACTICES

Studying the origins and diffusion of norms is of limited value if they cannot be shown to have an effect on those with the power to violate or protect rights. Compliance with human rights norms can be conceptualized as a continuum involving in sequential steps (1) the ratification of a human rights treaty, (2) the fulfillment of reporting requests by supervisory bodies, (3) the implementation of norms in domestic law, (4) and rule-consistent behavior on the domestic level (Kent, 1999: 236; Risse et al., 1999). While scholars agree that the rhetorical commitment to international human rights norms has consistently increased, there is still much debate about how to account for gaps between rhetorical commitment and actual compliance understood as rule-consistent behavior. Some scholars have argued that noncompliance and “decoupling” between norms and behavior is the rule (Krasner, 1999; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005), while others maintain that international institutions and transnational advocacy networks are effective in socializing state actors into changing behavior (Risse, 2000; Hawkins, 2004). But even scholars of human rights socialization recognize that the most difficult step is for states and nonstate actors to move from commitment to genuine behavioral compliance with human rights norms (Risse et al., forthcoming).

The gap between commitment and rights behavior has given rise to a new research agenda dedicated to better understanding the conditions and processes under which formal acceptance of international norms leads to improvements in actual rights practices

(Simmons, 2009). While earlier works accounted for this gap between rhetoric and practice by pointing to a lack of enforcement and costless reputational gains (Hathaway, 2002; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005), more recent scholarship neither confirms that commitment to human rights treaties has an adverse effect on actual rights practices (Vreeland, 2008) nor that there are no costs associated with making such commitments (Simmons, 2009). Much in line with the qualitative literature on this topic (Risse, et al., 1999), these more recent studies shift attention squarely to the domestic level and argue that improved human rights behavior depends on specific local conditions (Powell and Staton, 2009), in particular the ability of citizens to leverage such treaty commitments. Simmons shows that this impact is primarily driven by three domestic mechanisms, including “altering the national agenda, leveraging litigation, and empowering political mobilization” (Simmons, 2009: 148).

The most important new literature on compliance has moved beyond looking at simple correlations between treaty ratification and human rights behavior to more nuanced analyses of the conditions under which different kinds of states (and nonstate actors) comply with different types of rights and treaty commitments. Regime type is seen as an increasingly important factor influencing differences in human rights compliance, including compliance with the laws of war (Simmons, 2009; Morrow, 2007). Treaty ratification does have a positive impact on rights practices, although this effect is least pronounced in stable democracies and autocratic regimes and shows its greatest impact in transitional regimes where citizens “have both the motive and the means to succeed in demanding their rights” (Simmons, 2009: 155). State capacity also affects state compliance. Previous research focused on authoritarian states that were unwilling to comply, but current research is now pointing to “areas of limited statehood” where states may be willing but unable to comply with human rights norms (Risse et al., forthcoming).

Human rights compliance of nonstate actors, such as the compliance of insurgent groups with the laws of war, also varies with the characteristics of those actors. More centralized insurgent groups that aim to form a state are more likely to comply than are less centralized groups less concerned with their reputation (Jo and Bryant, forthcoming). The type of the right also influences the degree to which states comply with obligations. For example, it is easier for states to comply if the compliance decision is centralized, such as the use of the death penalty, than with more decentralized practices such as torture, which could take place in police stations throughout the country (Simmons, 1999; Risse et al., forthcoming).

Human rights in foreign policy

Thirty years ago, human rights played a peripheral role in foreign policy. Today, many countries have incorporated human rights into their foreign policy agendas. This raises questions about the degree to which human rights concerns actually influence foreign policy decisions as well as what kind of positive or negative impact such human rights policies actually have.

Do human rights considerations affect foreign policy decisions? A number of quantitative and qualitative studies explore how consistently donor nations take human rights into account when allocating military and economic aid. Such studies indicate that human rights have gained increasing salience in foreign policy and aid bureaucracies in many countries of the Northern Hemisphere. In the United States, the activism of NGOs in the early 1970s created a climate of public opinion which encouraged members of Congress to use the human rights agenda in their challenge of a presidency weakened by Watergate and Vietnam (Livezey, 1988; Sikkink, 2005). The creation of a lasting human rights bureaucracy was the result of these pressures and began long before the Carter administration took office (Weissbrodt, 1981).

A series of quantitative studies primarily completed in the mid to late 1980s have focused on the impact of US human rights legislation on changing patterns of military and economic aid (Apodaca and Stohl, 1999; McCormick and Mitchell, 1989; Poe and Sirirangsi, 1993; Stohl et al., 1984). By comparing levels of aid with human rights practices in aid recipient nations, this research explores to what degree US human rights legislation has actually led to a changing pattern of military and economic aid. While scholarly interest in this question has waned since the 1990s, the results of the earlier studies indicate some effect of human rights concerns on aid distribution, but also confirm the importance of geopolitical and economic interests (Apodaca, 2005). But aid levels provide only a limited perspective on the importance of human rights in foreign policy because such a focus privileges punitive measures as effective strategies. When shifting attention away from personal integrity rights towards social and economic rights, cutting aid is unlikely to be viewed as a feasible approach to strengthening respect for those rights.

In the past two decades, the doctrine of humanitarian intervention and its successor norm of a “responsibility to protect” (Stahn, 2007) have emerged as a second major human rights-related concern for foreign policy considerations of states. Parallel to the evolution of institutions focused on individual criminal responsibility, the international community has developed a separate track on which it advances ideas about when and how external actors should intervene in situations where mass atrocities are likely to take place.

Can foreign policy instruments improve human rights conditions abroad? States and multilateral institutions can use “sticks” (sanctions) or “carrots” (financial incentives) to promote human rights abroad. Research on the use of sanctions has not generated a consistent argument about their effectiveness, but has mainly progressed in identifying some of the relatively narrow conditions under which sanctions can make a difference. First, the main problem of sanctions is that

they are often implemented in response to domestic pressures, rather than with the explicit aim (and a plan) of having a positive impact in the target (Wood, 2008; Eland, 1995: 29). In such cases of mixed or diffuse motives, it is unlikely that policy makers actually choose appropriate and effective sanctions instruments. Second, it is difficult with sanctions to target the elites responsible for violations; instead, the general population may suffer significant adverse effects. In the target state, domestic elites are least likely to be affected by economic sanctions, and leaders can strengthen their positions by capitalizing on a “rally-around-the-flag” effect.

Qualitative studies of the effectiveness of US human rights policy reconfirm that the success of outside interventions depends on the concomitant links built between sender and target country. The chances for success increase when Congress and the executive branch unite in adopting a forceful human rights policy at a time when groups in the target country can use such outside pressures internally (Sikkink, 2005). Poe also argued that it is necessary to study the strategic interaction between donor and recipient regimes over time in order to better understand the linkage between aid and repression (Poe, 2004). Particularly important are the communication processes involved in aid cutoffs, because such measures might weaken the material basis of a regime, but they are also an opportunity for targeted leaders to reinvent themselves as “victims” of outside intervention (Schmitz, 2006).

Examples of the success of sanctions, such as the cases of Rhodesia and South Africa, point toward extensive coordination and long-term buildup of international will. What is still lacking in many cases is (1) a clear definition of goals, (2) a conscious selection of appropriate means, (3) the consistent application of the measures, including communications with the target government, and (4) a long-term follow-up. Sanctions or incentives implemented by states are most likely to have an effect if they are part of a larger effort that recognizes and includes the

role of nonmaterial vulnerabilities in the target country as well as the work of transnational advocacy networks and multilateral institutions.

Transnational advocacy networks

Well ahead of foreign policies of states, transnational advocacy networks promoting human rights are viewed in the literature as the main instruments for the diffusion of norms from the global to the domestic level. While these networks command much less material power than states, their main strength is the principled nature of their activism and ability to quickly move information throughout their networks. While the early scholarship focused primarily on ways in which domestic groups networked with external actors to challenge human rights violations (Keck and Sikkink, 1998), more recent studies have shifted attention to the domestic level and have reduced the emphasis on transnational activists (Hertel, 2006; Schmitz, 2006; Simmons, 2009; Tarrow, 2005). Transnational advocacy networks emerged during the 1960s and 1970s as a reaction to the failure of the United Nations to respond adequately to systematic human rights violations around the world (Korey, 1998: 139–180). Led by Amnesty International (founded in 1961), a new type of activist group emerged with new methodologies designed to mobilize international organizations, liberal states, and the international public against human rights violators (Lake and Wong, 2009; Rodio and Schmitz, 2010).

Why and how transnational advocacy networks matter

Transnational campaigns for human rights have taken advantage of two separate developments after 1945: (1) the spread of communication technologies and (2) the presence of an expanding institutional structure legitimating human rights at the global and regional levels. Transnational advocacy networks simultaneously take advantage of the

loss of government control with regard to information moving across borders and the opportunities offered by “shifting venues to bring in new allies and activate friendly audiences” (Tarrow, 2005: 145). These transnational advocacy networks matter because they establish regular communication about human rights issues, particularly aimed at exposing gaps between states’ rhetoric and their domestic human rights behavior. In Keck and Sikkink’s initial conceptualization (1998), these networks become active once a government is unresponsive to domestic demands. Domestic groups engage in a “boomerang” to seek out and join international allies in order to bring pressure to bear on the repressive government. Such networks are not limited to human rights organizations, but may include individual members in state bureaucracies, multilateral agencies, the media, and other entities. Their power depends on specific properties of the issues advanced (bodily harm and equal opportunity) as well as characteristics of the network (density, strong ties) and the target (degree of vulnerability).

A number of studies have refined our understanding of how transnational advocacy groups can change the domestic practices of governments (Hawkins, 2002; Cardenas, 2007; Okafor, 2007). Those studies provide more empirical detail on the transnational/domestic interactions sketched in the “boomerang model” and push for greater attention to the domestic politics, including conditions which may weaken the effectiveness of transnational human rights activism. As activists develop different types of strategies and no longer rely on “shaming” alone, the transnational–domestic interactions are likely to become more complex, for example, when activists are involved in long-term processes of moving a nation from conflict to peace (Bell and Keenan, 2004).

Greater attention to the ties across borders has also brought in additional insights from the social movement literature, which cautions that “forming transnational movements is not easy” (Tarrow, 2005: 7). In the human

rights area, dense interpersonal networks are often seen as a condition for successful collective action (Loveman, 1998) and may be more difficult to build and maintain at the transnational level (Roht-Arriaza, 2005). If building and maintaining such networks is not necessarily as easy as portrayed in the initial works on transnational advocacy networks, then the specific processes and mechanisms of sustaining such mobilization deserve greater attention. This shift of scholarly attention is in line with broader trends in international relations theory which emphasize mid-range explorations of actual processes linking causes and effects.

The increased focus on processes and mechanisms (Checkel, forthcoming; Risse et al., forthcoming) offers opportunities to investigate more closely how exactly activists bridge the domestic/international divide. For example, are transnational activists driving the mobilization and do they primarily engage “rule-oriented” or pragmatic domestic elites (Burgerman, 2001: 15; Hawkins, 2002: 41–4)? Or is this a more contentious process driven by domestic actors using processes such as global issue framing or other forms of activism (Tarrow, 2005: 33)? Or do we find that activism begins with the formation of networks and coalitions whose common grounds may go beyond shared universal principles and also include professional standards, such as those shared across legal communities? Case studies of transnational campaigns on human rights show not only that domestic and international groups rely on each other (Okafor, 2007; White, 2004), but such transnational contacts are more sustainable across specific types of communities where shared professional interests supplement the more diffuse normative commitments. In the case of legal networks, this additional “glue” is augmented by increased legitimacy based on the combination of being “advocate and expert” (Roht-Arriaza, 2005: 214). This insight also finds confirmation in the fact that transnational networks around the issue of individual criminal responsibility have made significantly

more progress in the past decades than many other human rights issue networks.

The challenges of transnational mobilizing

Many scholars have responded to the transnational advocacy literature by pointing to the difficulties of maintaining such networks and questioning the effectiveness of advancing human rights from the outside. Their arguments range from arguing that international support plays a relatively limited role compared to the autonomous efforts of domestic activists (Simmons, 2009) to claiming negative consequences of such transnational interventions. Many of these challengers argue that transnational advocacy networks are not primarily held together by shared principles, but driven by self-interest and strategic concerns for organizational growth and survival.

A first skeptical view focuses on how transnational human rights groups select targets and domestic allies. Assuming that demand for international attention always exceeds supply of such support, Bob (2005) claims that domestic activists are forced to compete for attention by adapting their goals and message to the needs of transnational activists and Western audiences. Other critics also focus on target selection by transnational activists, claiming a mismatch between the severity of human rights violations and the reporting practices among major human rights watchdogs such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (Ron et al., 2005). These studies conclude that powerful NGOs do not necessarily select the most deserving causes, but those promising enhanced media exposure and likely donor support, possibly contributing to the “marginalization of abuses in smaller, poorer or weaker countries” (576). Furthermore, some argue that the “donor/NGO nexus,” formed by foreign policy decisions over funding of rights-based organizational actors, has become the site of an emergent political economy that simultaneously weakens and reinforces state power (Berkovitch and Gordon, 2008).

The argument that transnational NGOs are not principled enough and too much driven by a consequentialist logic largely misses the reality of how those organizations work. To be effective champions of human rights requires not only maintaining the financial health of the organizations but also making choices about where to invest limited resources. NGOs are simultaneously principled and strategic actors, concerned both with promotion of their beliefs and with institutional survival and effectiveness (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). For example, sometimes they may decide that it would be ill-advised to write another report on a situation that has shown little improvement over time. Instead, a much better investment is a case that might be less severe but shows real promise of improvement. Major human rights groups such as Amnesty International have elected to focus on the death penalty which shifts more campaign resources into targeting China and the United States. This investment has paid off and AI can take today credit for bringing the death penalty to the brink of global abolition (Hood and Hoyle, 2009). In other cases, major powers are targeted not necessarily for their domestic record, but because of their involvement in armed conflicts and gross human rights violations elsewhere (Rodio and Schmitz, 2010). Framing the issue in terms of principles versus interests is a less promising avenue than looking more closely at how advocacy organizations and networks actually function internally and make decisions about their resources and mission (Hopgood, 2006).

A more constructivist exploration of the limits of transnational activism focuses on the topic of “issue emergence.” While an interest-based explanation may claim that activists willingly ignore a well-recognized and urgent situation, Charli Carpenter’s work focuses on why certain conditions do not become issues in the first place and fail to motivate transnational campaigns (Carpenter, 2007). This research shows that factors explaining how transnational NGOs “succeed or fail in pitching issues to states” (116) may not carry over

well to explaining why some causes are taken up by NGOs in the first place (“issue definition”). While Keck and Sikkink (1998) emphasized particularly issue characteristics (bodily harm, short causal chain, equal opportunity) to account for variation in success, these works point towards tensions within the activist networks as a source of weakness and have inspired more rigorous applications of formal methods derived from social network analysis (Land, 2010) as well as a more systematic analysis of the role of norm entrepreneurship and gatekeeping activities (Bhabha, 2002; Kingston, 2010). Much can go wrong well before a norms cascade is set in motion, and scholars have set out to identify some initial hypotheses that focus greater attention on specific properties of the entrepreneurs and networks involved in the delicate process of norm emergence.

Beyond issue definition and adoption, scholars have also taken a closer look at the effectiveness of transnational campaigning and its power to effect positive human rights change. Challenging the more optimistic early literature, these studies focus on explanations for failed campaigns or deteriorating human rights conditions as well as on cases where transnational mobilizing has unintended negative consequences. Since the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, a significant part of the literature focuses on how perceived threats to national security have become a powerful argument for authoritarian governments around the world to limit the effectiveness of transnational human rights mobilization (Cardenas, 2007; Hawkins, 2002; Wiest, 2007). These policies gained additional legitimacy as the United States and other democratic governments began to systematically violate the basic human rights of individuals arrested for alleged terrorist activities. While 9/11 has certainly not advanced the cause of human rights, the subsequent human rights mobilization has prevented the executive branch from sliding even further backwards and adopting broader human-rights-violating policies. Research still needs to be carried

out in assessing the impact of this kind of “preventive” activism, which would also have to take into account the possibility that other causes may have received less attention during this time period.

A final claim raised under the label of challenges to transnational activism focuses on the unintended negative consequences of mobilization from the outside. In contrast to the more optimistic assumptions of an identity of interests between domestic and international activists, a number of studies have claimed that domestic civil society can be adversely affected by well-intentioned, outside efforts to strengthen it (Mendelson and Glenn, 2002; Schmitz, 2006). Vertical networks linking domestic activists to outside supporters can alienate domestic constituencies and distract local activists from building strong horizontal coalitions at home (Schmitz, 2006). Local activists and politicians may not necessarily share the values of their external supporters and simply use universal norms to advance narrow political interests.

In contrast to the “boomerang model,” many of these more critical studies show that the initial impetus for mobilization does not originate on the local level and is not driven by domestic activists. In such cases, local activists may openly disagree with their transnational supporters and either block interventions or successfully modify the goals of transnational campaigns (Hertel, 2006). Since the end of the Cold War, human rights activism has undergone fundamental change, and “shaming strategies” and moral persuasion have increasingly been supplemented by efforts to empower and build the capacity of local communities (Rodio and Schmitz, 2010). Research in this area pays equal attention to local and international activism and focuses on how intermediaries “merge local structures such as councils with imported ideas such as women’s rights” (Merry, 2006: 48). As human rights groups increasingly seek to address human rights violations whose root causes are tied to the social and cultural fabric of local societies,

scholars have begun to analyze those new strategies of rights promotion.

NEW HUMAN RIGHTS AGENDA

What is understood as new human rights issues (Bob, 2008) varies, but usually connotes topics or targets that have previously been neglected by traditional Northern-based human rights groups, including economic and social rights, cultural dimensions, or nonstate actors as perpetrators of violations. The focus here is on three significant trends in a broadening global human rights agenda, including the direct application of human rights norms to nonstate entities such as rebel groups and corporations, the increasing framing of development and poverty issues in a language of rights, and the debates about the sometimes difficult relationship between advancing objectives of justice and peace simultaneously in situations after the end of mass atrocities and violent conflict.

Shifting targets: nonstate actors as human rights violators

One of the main innovations in the practice of human rights mobilization during the 1990s has been the deliberate shift of attention away from states to nonstate actors. For example, Amnesty International insisted for decades that only governments were accountable for human rights violations committed on their territory. With the end of the Cold War and the disappearing context of superpower competition, AI and many other human rights groups underwent significant changes regarding the interpretation of their core mission and the strategies used. New types of transnational NGOs targeting root causes of atrocities, including ethnic divisions and competition for resources (e.g., diamonds, timber, oil) were founded, including the International Crisis Group (1995) and Global Witness (1998). For organizations such as AI, these new

challengers led to the realization that letter-writing campaigns and the exclusive focus on personal integrity rights were increasingly a liability to the future of the organization (Hopgood, 2006). As the role of advocacy networks and NGOs is now an established research area in international relations, more research is likely to focus on the internal dynamics within those organizations.

One of the significant changes to the practice of transnational human rights activism was the decision to explicitly target violent and nonviolent nonstate actors implicated in gross violations (Andreopoulos et al., 2006, Jo and Bryant, forthcoming). In 1991, AI adopted its new policy of targeting nonstate actors primarily within the context of failed states, ethnic violence, and atrocities committed by warlords. The human rights violations were familiar to its traditional mandate (extrajudicial killings, torture, disappearances) but required different strategic and tactical responses. In addition, multinational corporations have also found themselves targeted by human rights groups either because of their explicit or implicit support of state repression or in their capacity as potential allies in struggles to positively affect human rights conditions abroad (Ruggie, 2008; Mantilla, 2009). By shifting the target of mobilization away from states, human rights groups not only sought to affect those with the power to end violations, but also moved into new issue areas, including conflict resolution and development.

Expanding the rights discourse: the rights-based approach to development

One of the most visible new trends in the scholarship and practice of transnational human rights activism is the growing cooperation between advocacy and service-oriented NGOs, primarily across the environmental, humanitarian, development, and human rights sectors. During the Cold War, there was little collaboration across these

sectors, and their goals were seen as separate or even antagonistic. Since the end of the Cold War, the human rights fame has diffused across all the major transnational sectors, creating new coalitions and movements under the labels of economic justice or rights-based development (Nelson and Dorsey, 2007; Goodhart et al., 2011). While this development has not been without conflict, it also serves as further evidence for the continued vitality and success of the human rights idea as a comprehensive framework shaping governance practices at the local and global levels.

In the development sector, recent efforts to integrate an explicit rights-based framework reflected a movement away from charity towards the adoption of a more political and often more contentious framing of anti-poverty efforts. As aid groups such as Oxfam or ActionAid developed more explicit advocacy strategies, traditional human rights groups became also increasingly interested in social and economic rights (Khan, 2009), an area for a long time neglected by Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch. While rights-based approaches to development have diffused widely, early studies of their effectiveness have identified significant challenges, including the legacies of aid-driven dependency and the lack of experience with effective advocacy among development NGOs (Kindornay and Ron, forthcoming; Bruno-van Vijfeijken et al., 2010; Hickey and Mitlin, 2009). A similar diffusion of human rights ideas into the humanitarian sector has also caused significant conflict and debate. After the Rwandan genocide, humanitarian groups following norms of neutrality and nondiscrimination faced charges of having “strengthened the power of the very people who had caused the tragedy” (Terry, 2002: 2). More recently, humanitarian and human rights NGOs disagreed about the merits of indicting Sudanese President al-Bashir for human rights violations. Here, and in other cases, humanitarian groups and observers have grown concerned about the adverse effects of justice mechanisms and

human rights norms on their relief work and access to victims of violence (Leebaw, 2007: 227). Since humanitarian groups have developed their own set of distinct principles based on a neutral approach to conflict, debates about the best way of protecting human dignity have followed the increasing overlap between development, humanitarian, and human rights work (O’Brien, 2004; de Torrente, 2004).

Transitional justice and human rights

Questions of transitional justice have also become a significant growth area in human rights research. Since the 1980s, states have initiated multiple transitional justice mechanisms for addressing past human rights violations. These include national, foreign, and international human rights prosecutions, truth commissions, reparations, lustration, museums and other “memory sites,” archives, and oral history projects (Jelin, 2003). The increasing use of these practices attests to a broader norm cascade of accountability for past human rights violations (Lutz and Sikkink, 2001; Sriram, 2005). For human rights scholars, one key set of questions about transitional justice concerns the choices governments make in periods of profound institutional flux. Why and under what conditions do some countries seek transitional justice while others do not (Zalaquett, 1991; Nino, 1996; Elster 2004)? And of the countries that do embed accountability measures in broader transitional strategies, how do elites choose between particular mechanisms, or in what ways do they sequence combinations of measures (Huysse, 1995; Fletcher et al., 2009)?

In the political science and international law literature, a second set of puzzles exists around the consequences, or impact, of these mechanisms (van der Merwe et al., 2009). A lively debate has formed around the desirability and impact of different forms of transitional justice, though most arguments

have centered on trials and truth commissions (Mani, 2002; Dancy, 2011). Many scholars and practitioners claim that trials and tribunals are not only legally and ethically the “right thing to do,” but also prevent future human rights violations (Akhavan, 2001; Roht-Arriaza, 2005; Sikkink and Walling, 2007). Other observers are far more skeptical about the impact of such trials and claim that they are associated with increasing repression, further entrenchment of ethno-national cleavages, and extended humanitarian crises (Stover et al., 2004; McMahon and Forsythe, 2008; Subotić, 2009). From a realist viewpoint, Snyder and Vinjamuri (2003/4) make a utilitarian claim that ending violence requires offering amnesty to powerful dictators or warlords and that a threat of prosecution will only worsen the situation on the ground. But quantitative studies have, so far, found little evidence for worsening human rights practices as a consequence of threats of prosecution, even during civil wars. On the contrary, in general the use of prosecutions is associated with improvements in human rights (Kim and Sikkink, 2010; Olsen et al., 2010).

Similar points of contention have surrounded the use of truth commissions, especially since the internationally acclaimed proceedings of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the mid-1990s. Proponents have argued that truth commissions, by privileging restorative over retributive justice, promote forgiveness, social healing, moral order, or the peaceful resolution of political conflict (Amstutz, 2005). While the literature is full of claims about the supposed positive effects of truth commissions, there is little systematic evidence to support many of those arguments (Mendeloff, 2004; Rodio, 2010). Though one statistical study has found minimal evidence that truth commissions can increase the duration of peace following conflict (Lie et al., 2007), others have discovered either no relationship (Brahm, 2007) or a slightly negative relationship between truth commissions and the protection of human rights (Wiebelhaus-Brahm,

2010; Olsen et al., 2010). Truth commission detractors have gone beyond these “null” statements to argue that, in fact, these bodies have serious negative social repercussions, trading away justice for political goals (Mamdani, 2002), producing a faulty sense of legitimacy for newly democratic regimes based on a neoliberal foundation myth (Wilson, 2001; Grandin, 2005). Rodio (2010) moves beyond these – positive or negative – general assessments and shows that the South African TRC had some positive effects at the elite and civil society levels, but showed little impact in shaping individuals’ perspectives on democracy. This research highlights that the effects of truth commissions varies across societal levels, and those effects are intimately linked to the presence or absence of specific associated policies, such as amnesties, transparency measures, or reparations. Cross-national comparisons demonstrate that transitional justice measures such as trials and truth commissions pose no unique threats to political stability and tend to have a slightly positive statistical effect on subsequent human rights practices (Dancy, 2011; Kim and Sikkink, 2010).

CONCLUSIONS

Human rights have become a dominant frame in contemporary struggles for social and political change within and across borders. This trend has given rise to a burgeoning literature in international relations and other disciplines dedicated to understanding when and how international norms attract commitment and improved rights practices among states and other actors. Much of the recent scholarly output focused on two related issues: (1) do international human rights treaties lead to improved human rights records? and (2) what is the role of transnational non-state actors and advocacy networks in advancing human rights?

Following the initial constructivist claim that international norms have measureable

effects on domestic behavior, a number of quantitative studies have challenged this claim and asserted that states get away with “empty promises.” This debate has led scholars to pay closer attention to *why* states commit to human rights treaties as well as to *how* those treaties affect the relations between a government and its people. This research confirms earlier scholarship which posited that states with strong democratic practices at home are also most likely to make such commitments internationally. For the more interesting cases of explaining why repressive regimes ratified human rights agreements in the past, it becomes increasingly clear that such commitments may frequently have been the result of a desire to reap the short-term benefits of such a gesture without necessarily understanding the long-term ramifications, including constraints on government behavior and strengthened domestic voices for rights protection. If it is indeed the case that many governments underestimated the costs of rhetorical human rights commitments, then we should see in the future greater reluctance among nondemocratic regimes to join human rights treaties as well as more efforts to undermine such agreements.

With regard to the effects of an initial formal commitment to human rights, the scholarship has shifted from a distinctly optimistic (and sometimes exclusive) concern for the role of transnational activism towards a greater appreciation of domestic institutions and activists. While the scholarship of the 1990s emphasized shaming strategies and the role of external pressure, more recent studies show not only how contested and fragile this kind of change can be, but also how important the domestic politics of human rights activism are. In this way, the literature has matured by taking both international and domestic institutions seriously and arguing that advancements in the protection of rights vary with the relative stability of domestic political institutions. What remains unresolved is a tension between the emphasis on the power of transnational advocacy networks to challenge even the most stable authoritarian regimes

and the more skeptical (and comparative) perspective emphasizing the limited power of external actors in affecting the domestic realm.

The key actors in the transmission of international norms to domestic practices remain NGOs and their broader advocacy networks. The literature focused on these agents of human rights change has evolved from understanding NGOs as mere enactors of principles to more detailed analyses of relationships within advocacy networks as well as efforts to understand better in what ways motives other than principles influence the behavior of transnational activists. This has opened the study of nonstate actors in IR to neighboring disciplines where social movements or not-for-profits have been studied for decades. Understanding NGOs and their networks as more or less complex organizations offers new insights into why certain human rights issues become prominent and others do not, why collaboration and partnerships are often difficult to sustain, and why tensions between NGOs and across different sectors of activism are quite common.

Studying the actors behind transnational also reveals some of the key future trends of transnational activism. Since the end of the Cold War, human rights groups have expanded their focus beyond the state and have begun to target other nonstate actors, including multinational corporations and violent nonstate actors. During the same time period, the human rights frame has become widely adopted among many NGOs, working on development, environmental, and humanitarian relief issues. While these sectors were for decades seen as separate from human rights, terms such as “environmental justice” and “rights-based development” and “human security” have now taken hold and established the idea of human dignity as a central starting point for a vast majority of organizations engaged in transnational activities. These new frontiers for human rights have created new research agendas on “corporate social responsibility,” the impact of development programs on the rights of beneficiaries,

or the tensions between advancing justice, peace, and reconciliation in postconflict situations. While a rights discourse comes with its own inherent limitations in addressing conflict, its success is reflected in the continued expansion of the literature covering human rights as an interdisciplinary subject.

NOTES

1 We wish to thank Geoff Dancy and Brooke Coe for their invaluable research assistance for this article.

2 Rudolf Rummel estimates that government mass murder has left four times more people dead in the 20th century than civil and international wars combined (Rummel, 1994).

3 We arrived at this list by consulting Google scholar to locate articles in the 30 top-ranked political science journals since 1999 that make use of the CIRI and/or PTS human rights indices. Journal rankings are based on Table 2, Column 1 (ISI Impact) in Giles and Garland, "Ranking Political Science Journals: Reputational and Citational Approaches," *PS*, October 2007. Additionally, the list includes articles published in the following human rights journals: *Journal of Human Rights*, *Human Rights Review*, *Human Rights Quarterly*, and *International Journal of Human Rights*.

4 The discussion in these paragraphs relies on joint work with Ann Marie Clark (Clark and Sikkink, 2011), and we thank her for her permission to draw on that work in this essay.

5 These countries are among the few democracies to receive the worst repression scores on the PTS measure or the CIRI physical integrity measure.

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Introductory Note

References such as “138–9” indicate (not necessarily continuous) discussion of a topic across a range of pages. Wherever possible in the case of topics with many references (but not in the case of cited authors), these have either been divided into sub-topics or only the most significant discussions of the topic are listed. Because the entire volume is about “international relations”, the use of this term (and certain others occurring throughout the work) as an entry point has been restricted. Information will be found under the corresponding detailed topics.

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