CHAPTER

2 Realism: The State, Power, and the Balance of Power

MAJOR ACTORS AND ASSUMPTIONS: A SUMMARY

In the previous chapter, we stated that realism is an image of international relations that is based on four assumptions. Scholars or policymakers who identify themselves as realists, however, do not all perfectly match the realism ideal type. We find, however, that the four assumptions identified with this perspective are useful as a general statement of the main lines of realist thought and the basis on which hypotheses and theories are developed.

To recapitulate, for the realist, *states are the principal actors,* and the study of international relations focuses on these units. Nonstate actors, such as multinational corporations and other **transnational** organizations are decidedly less important. International organizations, such as the United Nations or NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization), do not have independent standing because they are composed of sovereign, independent, or autonomous states that determine what these international organizations will do. In short, for the realist, the focus is on states and interstate (or international) relations.

What, then, is the nature of this actor that is at the core of international relations? For purposes of analysis, the realist views the state as both *unitary* and *rational.* The state is said to be unitary because any differences of view among political leaders or bureaucracies within the state are ultimately resolved so that the state speaks with one voice. If there are exceptions in practice (as when one agency of government adopts a foreign policy line different from that of another agency of the same government), these cases either deal with trivial issues or are corrected in due course by the leadership. In any event, exceptions are precisely that—exceptions or marginal cases that in effect demonstrate the general rule that unitary states are the principal actors in world politics.

Realists also assume that states are rational actors. Given particular goals, states consider feasible alternatives to achieve these goals in light of their existing capabilities. Realists recognize problems of lack of information, uncertainty, bias, and misperception, but it is assumed by realists that decisionmakers strive to achieve the best possible decision even with these constraints.

One may well ask if this characterization of the formulation of foreign policy is accurate. Could one not just as easily argue that history is better characterized as a "march of folly"?[1] Was it wise, for example, for Germany to invade Poland in 1939? Was it in Japan's interest to attack Pearl Harbor in 1941? Was the American conduct of the Vietnam war an example of rationality at work?

From the standpoint of **methodology,** the image of a unified, rational state is a realist *assumption,* not a description of the actual world. Assumptions, it is sometimes argued, should be viewed not in terms of descriptive accuracy but, rather, in terms of how fruitful they are in generating insights and valid generalizations about international politics. From this point of view, assumptions are neither true nor false; they are more or less useful in helping the theorist derive testable propositions or hypotheses about international relations. Once hypotheses are developed, they are tested against the real world. The image of the unified, rational state is, therefore, the starting point for realist analysis, not a concluding statement. Hans J. Morgenthau has explained the utility of the rational, unitary actor assumption as follows:

> We put ourselves in the position of a statesman who must meet a certain problem of foreign policy under certain circumstances, and we ask ourselves what the rational alternatives are from which a statesman may choose . . . and which of these rational alternatives this particular statesman, acting under these circumstances, is likely to choose. It is the testing of this rational hypothesis against the actual facts and their consequences that gives meaning to the facts of international politics and makes a theory of politics possible.[2]

Game theory involves the use of such simplifying assumptions as an aid to developing hypotheses and theories about the causes of various international political phenomena, including war, arms races, the formation and maintenance of international organizations, and so on. Many works on **deterrence** also use the rational, unitary actor assumptions.[3] Rationalist explanations of international conflict are widespread. The dominant theoretical approach in contemporary international relations theorizing, **neorealism,** depends on rationalist assumptions. The same is true of the **expected utility model** of international politics, whose starting point is that war may occur when two states each estimate that the expected benefits of using force outweigh the expected costs. In other words, war can be rational if both sides have positive expected utilities for fighting—the expected utility of war (expected benefits minus costs) is greater than the expected utility of remaining at peace.

Finally, realists typically assume that among the array of world issues, *national security* tops the list for states. Military and political issues dominate the agenda and are referred to as high politics. States act to maximize what is often called the **national interest,** which at times may require the use of **force.** Put another way, states try to maximize the likelihood that they will achieve whatever objectives they have set. These objectives include high-political concerns of assuring state survival—security matters—as well as the more mundane or low-political objectives in such fields as trade, finance, monetary exchange, and health. States use the power they have to serve their interests or achieve their objectives. To most realists, the struggle for (or use of) power among states is at the core of international relations. In the words of Morgenthau: "Interna-

tional politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power. Whatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim."[4]

As an image of politics, therefore, realism is concerned with power and power politics among states. Differences exist, of course, among realists. Neorealists such as Kenneth Waltz, John Mearsheimer, and Christopher Layne emphasize the overall distribution of power among states and are highly skeptical of the extent to which international norms and international institutions can ameliorate competition among states.[5] Traditional realists such as Morgenthau, E. H. Carr, and Arnold Wolfers and their present-day followers, however, have had a more inclusive approach. While recognizing the importance of balance of power, they also have argued for the serious consideration of how norms and institutions influence international relations and whether the state is revisionist or status quo oriented. Hence, as with other images discussed in this book, an adherence to basic realist assumptions can still result in different interpretations and readings based on these assumptions.

Where did these assumptions of contemporary realist thought come from? They obviously did not appear out of thin air following World War II. Rather, they represent the culmination of thinking about international relations over the centuries. We now turn to some of the more notable intellectual precursors who have had a significant impact on the writings of contemporary realists.

INTELLECTUAL PRECURSORS AND INFLUENCES

Thucydides

Thucydides (471–400 B.C.) is usually credited with being the first writer in the realist tradition as well as the founding father of the international relations discipline.[6] Anyone who has taken a class in political philosophy would probably agree that the profound insights of many ancient Greek writers are not easily grasped on first reading. One might initially find this less a problem with Thucydides' *The Peloponnesian War* because this famous work chronicles twenty-one of the twenty-eight years of war between Athens and Sparta (and their respective allies) in the fifth century B.C. Taken simply as history, it is a masterful account of this era, filled with tales of heroism and brutality, victory and defeat, brilliance and stupidity, honor and deceit. These human traits are certainly exhibited not only in one particular war but in all wars throughout the ages. This is what makes *The Peloponnesian War* such a classic.

The task Thucydides set for himself, however, was much more ambitious than simply describing what was occurring. Particular events were dealt with in great and vivid detail, but his goal was to say something significant not only about the events of his own time, but also about the nature of war and why it continually recurs. For Thucydides, the past was the guide for the future. He was less interested in the immediate causes of the Peloponnesian War than he was in the underlying forces at work. Leaders might point to a particular event to justify a policy, but for Thucydides, this simply obscured more profound factors that operate throughout history. At heart, *The Peloponnesian War* is a study of the struggle for military and political power.

Thucydides was younger than Socrates and Sophocles and older than Aristophanes. In 424 B.C., during the eighth year of the Peloponnesian War, he was elected an Athenian general. While stationed in Thrace, he failed to prevent the Spartan capture of a city and was punished with twenty years of exile. Athens might have lost a general, but the world gained a historian.

As a member of one of the more notable Athenian families, Thucydides spent the rest of the war observing events, traveling, and interviewing participants. As an exile, he was detached from, yet obsessed with politics. Although concerned with accuracy, he gave precedence to understanding the motives and policies of the leaders on all sides of the conflict and used the technique of liberally reconstructing speeches and episodes. His purpose was to draw historical lessons for future statesmen who might read his work.[7] By analyzing the particular, he hoped to illuminate the general.

Why did war break out between Athens and Sparta? Thucydides states:

> I propose first to give an account of the causes of complaint which they had against each other and of the specific instances where their interests clashed [i.e., the immediate causes of the war]: this is in order that there should be no doubt in anyone's mind about what led to this great war falling upon the Hellenes. But the real reason for the war is, in my opinion, most likely to be disguised by such argument. What made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta [i.e., this was the underlying cause of the war].[8]

Thus, according to Thucydides, the real or underlying cause of the war was *fear* associated with a shift in the balance of power. Sparta was afraid of losing its preeminent role in the Hellenic world and therefore took countermeasures to build up its military strength and enlist the support of allies. Athens responded in kind. In the ensuing analysis, the situations, events, and policies Thucydides described lend themselves to comparison with such familiar notions as arms races, deterrence, balance of power, alliances, diplomacy, strategy, concern for honor, and perceptions of strengths and weaknesses.

Thucydides' emphasis on fear as a cause of the Peloponnesian War, fear that resulted from the increase in Athenian power relative to that of Sparta, is echoed throughout history. As statesmen perceive the balance of power to be shifting in their disfavor, they make efforts to rectify the situation that in turn causes fear, suspicion, and distrust on the part of their rivals. One could quite easily substitute for Athens and Sparta other historical examples such as France and Britain in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Napoleonic France and the rest of Europe in the early nineteenth century, Germany and Britain after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, and the Soviet Union and the United States in the four decades following World War II. In all such historical examples, a good case can be made that fear is a dominant characteristic and a motivating factor for arms races and war itself.

One reason Thucydides is deemed a scholar of international relations, however, is that the cause of fear he identifies is not so much innate or basic human nature as it is the nature of interstate politics. In a world in which no superordinate or central authority exists to impose order on all states—whether ancient city-states or modern

states often encompassing large expanses of territory—"the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept."[9] Although fear may lead to war, power and capabilities relative to that of others determine the outcome.

Thucydides is sometimes unfairly criticized as an advocate of harsh and brutal wartime policies, one who rationalized such events as he described in the famous Melian dialogue. Thucydides, however, favored the democracy of the Golden Age of Pericles. In fact, the second half of *The Peloponnesian War* is a description of the degeneration of Athenian democracy and the resulting fanaticism that turned the war from a defensive effort to a war of conquest. The Melian dialogue reflects the latter phase of the war and should not be viewed as a personal preference on the part of Thucydides.

Machiavelli

By his own admission, the Italian political philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) drew heavily from his study of ancient, especially Roman writings. In some respects, the situation in sixteenth-century Italy, divided as the peninsula was into separate city-states, was similar to the Hellenic world of Thucydides. Machiavelli worked as a civil servant and diplomat until the Republic of Florence fell in 1512. During his enforced idleness, he put his time to good use by reflecting on the chaos and political instability of Italy.

Like Thucydides, Machiavelli wrote of power, balance of power, formation of alliances and counteralliances, and the causes of conflict between different city-states. His primary focus, however, was on what present-day writers refer to as national security. For Machiavelli, survival of the state (identified with the ruling prince) was paramount. The prince could lose his state by not coping effectively with both internal and external threats to his rule. The German term **Realpolitik,** so central to realist thought, refers to power and power politics among states. Machiavelli's most famous work, *The Prince,* is a practical manual on how to gain, maintain, and expand power.[10] It is dedicated to the ruler of Florence at that time, Lorenzo di Medici.

One of the more controversial parts of Machiavelli's thesis is the notion that the security of the state is so important that it may justify certain acts by the prince that would be forbidden to other individuals not burdened by the princely responsibility of assuring that security. The end—security of the state—is understood to justify any means necessary to achieve that end. **Machiavellianism** (or **Machiavellism**) has been condemned by many who consider such a view to be immoral. Others have argued, however, that the actions of statesmen do (and should) follow a code of conduct different from that of the average citizen. Thus, it has been observed that there are two separate and distinct ethics: first, conventional religious morality concerned with such matters as individual salvation (the ethics of ultimate ends) and, second, by contrast, the moral obligations of rulers who must take actions to provide for national security (the ethics of responsibility).[11] Following this interpretation, one can understand Machiavelli's view that rulers should be good if they can (good in the conventional sense) but be willing to practice evil *if necessary* (consistent with their obligations as rulers).

Another point of view is that Machiavelli wrote of the world as it *is,* not the world as it *should* or *ought* to be. Ethics and politics are divorced from each other. His advice

to the prince, following this interpretation, was based on an analysis of history, and of what actually occurs in the political realm, not on abstract ethical principles:

> Many have imagined republics and principalities which have never been seen or known to exist in reality; for how we live is so far removed from how we ought to live, that he who abandons what is done for what ought to be done, will rather learn to bring about his own ruin than his preservation. A man who wishes to make a profession of goodness in everything must necessarily come to grief among so many who are not good.[12]

This is not so much an endorsement of human behavior in politics as it is a statement of what he understands it actually to be. The realism in Machiavelli is a focus on what *is* rather than on what *ought to be.* For Machiavelli, in an amoral (if not immoral) world, what meaning, after all, does the preaching of conventional morality have? Indeed, an extreme statement of realist thinking is that considerations of power and power politics are the *only* relevant factors.

In the modern world, a convenient way to discredit an opponent is to accuse him or her of being Machiavellian. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that Machiavelli did not encourage rulers to use violence for its own sake. In numerous passages, he advises the prince not to be needlessly cruel because this may eventually undermine his rule.[13] The yardstick one should use is how a particular policy contributes to the security and stability of the state.

Hobbes

The political philosophy of the Englishman Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) was developed during the first fifty, turbulent years of the seventeenth century. After attending university in Oxford, Hobbes became a tutor to the son of a nobleman, and throughout his life, he remained associated with the family. A Royalist, Hobbes left for France in 1641 at a time when Parliament was asserting its power against the monarchy. For three years, he tutored the son of Charles I, the latter eventually being executed in 1649 during the English civil war. Hobbes returned to England in 1652, pledging loyalty to the republican regime.

Hobbes's famous work *Leviathan,* which was the first general theory of politics in English, was published that same year.[14] Like Machiavelli, Hobbes had a pessimistic view of human nature. His primary focus was domestic politics, and his goal was to make the strongest case possible for the necessity of a powerful, centralized political authority. To illustrate his philosophical points, Hobbes posited that prior to the creation of society, human beings lived in a "state of nature"—a condition of war of "every one against every one." There was "a continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."[15]

Hobbes did not argue that such a state of nature had ever really existed. To him, the state of nature was the result of a thought experiment—imagining what the world would be like without governmental authority or any other social structure. Accordingly, he was interested in showing how people could escape from this hypothetical situation by agreeing to place all power in the hands of a sovereign or Leviathan (a state

authority, or supreme ruler) that would maintain order and end the anarchy of the state of nature. If governmental authority did not already exist, it would have to be created. In his words: "There must be some coercive power to compel men equally to the performance of their covenants, by the terror of some punishment, greater than the benefit they expect by the breach of their covenant."[16] Without order, he argued, civilization and all its benefits are impossible—no economic development, art, knowledge, or anything else of value.

Hobbes's impact on the realist view of international relations stems from this image of individuals in a mythical state of nature. His description is equally applicable to relations among states because in the state of nature as well as in international politics, there is no Leviathan or superordinate power to impose order. It is a condition of **anarchy**—the absence of central or superordinate authority over states that claim individually to be **sovereign** with a *right* to be independent or autonomous with respect to one another. In Hobbes's words:

> In all times, kings, and persons of sovereign authority, because of their independency, are in continual jealousies, and in the state and posture of gladiators; having their weapons pointing, and their eyes fixed on one another; that is, their forts, garrisons, and guns upon the frontiers of their kingdoms; and continual spies upon their neighbours; which is a posture of war.[17]

As anarchy prevails in the state of nature, so too is anarchy a dominant characteristic of international politics. Without a Leviathan (or, in the language of contemporary international relations literature, a **hegemonic** power or world state), suspicion, distrust, conflict, and war are seemingly inevitable. In the absence of any **social contract** among (or authority over) them, there are no moral obligations to govern the relations of states.

Grotius

Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), a Dutch contemporary of Thomas Hobbes, offered a different view of international relations from that associated with Hobbes and Machiavelli. Grotius dealt with the essential anarchy of international relations by calling for the establishment (or acknowledging the existence) of laws or rules accepted by states as binding. That the relations of states *ought* to conform to such rules is a central tenet of the Grotian tradition in international relations. To Grotians, values or norms, particularly when recognized as international law, are important in maintaining order among states.

Grotius dealt with the problems of international relations (including commercial transactions) from a very practical point of view. Given the importance of trade to his native Holland as a seafaring nation, he addressed this subject in his *Law of Prize and Booty* (1604–1605) and questions of freedom of navigation and territorial seas in his *Freedom of the Seas* (1609). Probably his most important work was his *Law of War and Peace* (1625), three volumes that dealt with war and questions of national security—central themes in much realist writing then and now.

What are the sources of international law? Grotius looked to the use of reason and the "natural law" for general principles. He also looked to customary practice and to rules agreed on by governments that would be binding on states. Such treaties or formal covenants would be binding (in Latin, *pacta sunt servanda*) in the sense that states are obligated to follow them even in the absence of central authority to enforce their adherence. Changing circumstances might lead to the alteration of rules, but the important point is that to Grotians, order in international relations and matters of war and peace involve both power *and* values. In this regard, some contemporary realists owe as much to Grotius and the Grotian tradition as they do to Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes.[18] Similarly, the Grotian emphasis on norms and laws leads pluralists to claim him as one of their own as does the *English school* of theory.

Clausewitz

Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831), a Prussian officer who rose to the rank of general and who served in the Napoleonic wars, thought the military element of a state's power to be extremely important but subordinate always to the political. Consistent with the writings of Machiavelli on war, Clausewitz argued in an oft-quoted phrase that war is "a continuation of political activity by other means."[19]

Much of Clausewitz's writing took place in the interwar period between the defeat of Napoleon in 1815 and Clausewitz's recall to duty in 1830 for service in East Prussia. Clausewitz died in 1831, never having completed his magnum opus, *On War*. His legacy, nevertheless, remains a central contribution to the realist school. Clausewitz identified the uncertainty that attends decisionmaking in battlefield conditions—the "fog of war." He was also well aware that rationally made plans often run into obstacles or "friction" when actually implemented. These are the kinds of observations one readily finds in present-day strategic literature in the realist genre that owes much to Clausewitz. As significant as his view that the military is properly a political means was his exposition of societal (including social and economic) dimensions of national capabilities. At the same time, his focus on national security problems places him in the mainstream of realist thought.

Carr

Many students of international relations consider Edward Hallett Carr's *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939* already a classic. Although Carr can be viewed as an intellectual precursor for realists and a forerunner of the present-day **English school,** his work transcends narrow classification in that he has also been influential, as has Grotius, on the thinking of certain authors whom we would label pluralist.

The writings of Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Grotius, and Clausewitz illustrate how great works are often written during the most difficult times. *The Twenty Years' Crisis* is no exception in that it was completed in the summer of 1939 with the shadow of war looming over Europe. As with other authors we have discussed, Carr was less interested in apportioning blame to particular leaders for the imminent onset of World War II than he was in attempting "to analyse the underlying and significant,

rather than the immediate and personal, causes of the disaster."[20] Unless this were done, he argued, we would fail to understand how war could break out twenty short years after the signing of the Versailles Treaty in 1919. He dedicated his book "to the makers of the coming peace."

In attempting to understand "the more profound causes of the contemporary international crisis," echoes of Thucydides can be discerned. Carr, for example, placed a great deal of emphasis on the role of fear in explaining World War I.[21] Similarly, he also argued (and quoted Machiavelli and Hobbes to this effect) that "the exercise of power always appears to beget the appetite for more power. . . . Wars, begun for motives of security, quickly become wars of aggression and self-seeking."[22] Just as Thucydides saw Athens at the outset of the Peloponnesian War claim "self-defense" and then turn into a more ambitious, aggressive power, so too Carr noted that during the course of World War I

> nearly every country participating . . . regarded it initially as a war of self-defense; and this belief was particularly strong on the Allied side. Yet during the course of the war, every Allied government in Europe announced war aims which included the acquisition of territory from the enemy powers. In modern conditions, wars of limited objective have become almost as impossible as wars of limited liability.[23]

Throughout *The Twenty Years' Crisis,* Carr refers to the impact of Machiavelli and Hobbes on realist thinking. Although his work is best known as a critique of **utopian** or **idealist** thought, Carr also evaluates the more extreme versions of realism that posit the divorce of morality from politics in international relations. He argues that

> any sound political thought must be based on elements of both utopia [i.e., values] and reality [i.e., power]. Where utopianism has become a hollow and intolerable sham, which serves merely as a disguise for the interests of the privileged, the realist performs an indispensable service in unmasking it. But pure realism can offer nothing but a naked struggle for power which makes any kind of international society impossible.[24]

Hence, for Carr, politics is made up of two elements, inextricably intertwined: utopia and reality, values and power.

More than a third of the book is devoted to such Grotian topics as the role of morality in international relations, the foundations of law, the sanctity of treaties, the judicial settlement of international disputes, peaceful change, and the prospects for a new international order. Because Carr critically estimated the strengths and weaknesses of utopianism as well as realism, he can be viewed as an important influence on many contemporary international relations theorists, both realists and nonrealists.

Others in the **English school,** which relies on more traditional insights drawn from history, philosophy, and law, include such luminaries as the late Martin Wight and his follower, Hedley Bull. International relations occur in an anarchical *society* of sovereign states. Order in this anarchical society doesn't just occur on its own. Statesmen create balances of power, establish rules of customary behavior out of enlightened self-interest, or subscribe to universal norms based on common moral understand-

ings. Concerning power and balance of power, one turns to Machiavelli or Hobbes; for the regulation offered by international law or other rules as in international regimes, one sees the philosophical and historical influence of Grotius and Grotian thought; and in the quest for universals as normative bases of state behavior in global society, one invokes the aspirations of Kant and other moral philosophers. That ideas and values or norms play a part in international relations alongside interest and power considerations constitutes a blend, but also a tension between *realist* and *idealist* understandings.

This brief overview of the intellectual precursors of realism illustrates a distinct realist preoccupation with war. A concern with the causes and consequences of conflict helps to explain why the realist perspective is held by statesmen throughout the world; over the centuries leaders have engaged in the very battles and struggles described by authors from Thucydides to Carr. Realism, from the statesman's point of view, is indeed realistic because it tends to correspond to personal experiences.

Among realists, there are two basic concepts that traditionally have been the foci of analysis at the state and international levels: **power** and **system.** In the following pages, we discuss how realists have attempted to define these terms. We then give examples of how theorists have used these concepts in generating insights and explanations of the causes of war. This is followed by a discussion of how realists deal with the concepts of **interdependence** and *change.* We conclude with a critique of the realist image of international relations.

POWER

Definitions

In discussing several of the more important intellectual precursors of realism, the concept of power was mentioned time and again. Any attempt to give the reader a more complete understanding of the realist image of international relations starts with a discussion of this crucial term. Power is the core concept for realists.

Having said this, it is rather ironic that even among realists, there is no clear consensus on how to define the term *power.* Some realists understand power to be the sum of military, economic, technological, diplomatic, and other *capabilities* at the disposal of the state. Others see power not as some absolute value determined for each state as if it were in a vacuum but, rather, as capabilities *relative* to the capabilities of other states. Thus, the power of the United States is evaluated in terms of its capabilities relative to the capabilities of other states.

Both of these definitions—whether treating capabilities of a state in isolation or relative to the capabilities of other states—assume a *static* view of power. Power is an attribute of the state that is the sum of its capabilities whether considered alone or relative to other states. An alternative, *dynamic* definition of power focuses on the interactions of states. A state's influence (or capacity to influence or coerce) is not only determined by its capabilities (or relative capabilities) but also by (1) its willingness (and perceptions by other states of its willingness) to use these capabilities and (2) its

control or influence over other states. Power can thus be inferred by observing the behavior of states as they interact. The relative power of states is most clearly revealed by the *outcomes* of their interactions.

Examples of diverse views of power are the following definitions drawn from the literature: power as the capacity of an individual, group, or nation "to influence the behavior of others in accordance with one's own ends," power as "man's control over the minds and actions of other men," and power as "the ability to prevail in conflict and overcome obstacles."[25]

Measurement

Given these definitional and conceptual disputes, it follows that attempts to measure power will also be divergent. If one understands power as being equivalent to capabilities, one looks for some way to measure military, economic, and other component elements. If one views power as actual control or influence, some measurement of capabilities may still be a useful "first cut" if one is engaged in predicting the outcome of interactions between or among states.

Even if one assumes that it is possible to measure these capabilities adequately through such indicators as defense expenditures or gross national product, the further problems of weighting and aggregating or adding up such diverse capabilities into a common measure of power remains. How should one weight different component capabilities? Which, for example, is the more important—military or economic capabilities—and how much more important? How does one measure geographic, technological, or diplomatic factors with any degree of precision? What about the unity and strength of a society, which one scholar claims is the "forgotten dimension of strategy"?[26] And, if capabilities are difficult to measure, are not *relative* capabilities between and among states even more difficult to specify?

Scholars who focus on power in the international system are well aware of these difficulties. Nevertheless, in order to use power as an analytical concept, certain measurements have been suggested. A. F. K. Organski, for example, has argued that gross national product, or national income, is perhaps the best yardstick of national capability. J. David Singer and his associates emphasize military, industrial, and demographic capacities as the critical variables required to indicate overall national capabilities.[27]

We must remember that the purpose in devising such formulas is not trivial. Measuring the power or capabilities of states is a critical step in attempts to explain the behavior of states and the functioning of the international system with regard to matters of war and peace. Such concerns are evident in the Correlates of War project headed by Singer, in which state power is a key variable. Similarly, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita uses Singer's national capabilities scores as key elements of his expected utility theory, which seeks to explain the causes and outcomes of wars. The theory logically assumes that decisionmakers attempt to calculate the power capabilities of a rival before initiating armed conflict. The probability of success is a function of each state's relative power adjusted for such factors as alliance commitments. Bueno de Mesquita found, for example, that between 1816 and 1974, states with a positive expected utility score who initiated a war won 83 percent of the conflicts.[28]

Some would say that the view of power as a unitary concept calculated by aggregating component capabilities or relative capabilities misses the key point, which is that the power of a state is dependent on the *issue* involved. Consider, for example, the argument that some states, such as Japan, have substantial economic power but are militarily weak. Hence, in a particular area, the Japanese are powerful. Opponents of this disaggregation of power into its component capabilities note that persuasive as it may be on the surface, it is misleading because it overlooks the relations among the various power components. Thus, the *economic* capabilities of Japan as a global trader are said to be related to its *military* ties with the United States that assure Japan's freedom to engage in commerce. From this perspective, whether addressing the power of Japan, Europe, or Third World countries, one cannot understand economic, military, political, or other component capabilities of power as if they were factors independent of one another. Much as military ties and divisions among states may define the framework within which economic relations take place, so military capabilities of states are bolstered (or weakened) by the strength or relative strength of their economies.

SYSTEM

In the preceding section, we discussed the concept of power and attempts to measure state power. Using that discussion as a basis, we now move on to a discussion of the concept of system.

When applied to international relations, the term *system* has currency within each of the three images we have identified—realism, pluralism, and globalism. As one might expect, however, there is considerable diversity among theorists on both the *definition* of the term and the *uses* to which it should be put in the construction of international relations theory.

Thus, for neorealists, the defining characteristic of a system is the various distributions of power or capabilities among states—unipolar, bipolar, multipolar. The polarity of the system is measured by the number of Great Powers, and polarity is a significant explanatory variable for neorealists. Others speak of international economic and social systems. Still others understand system to be the set of interactions among states and other nonstate actors, a behavioral definition.

However system may be defined, the uses to which the concept is put vary considerably. Some theorists are content to use systems as mere **taxonomies,** frameworks for organizing knowledge about international relations. Others are more ambitious. Beyond **heuristic** purposes—that is, contributing to common understanding of the subject—they may see utility in actually using the system concept to explain and predict outcomes of international relations.[29]

Some scholars view the concept of system as an abstraction. Systems are mental images that may help to describe, explain, or predict international phenomena. They are, in effect, superimposed on the real world by a scholar in order to make the real world more intelligible and easier to understand. Other theorists go beyond this and ascribe such properties to systems as **equilibrium,** or balance, of their component parts (such as among states). Critics, however, find little use in such notions as "equilibrat-

ing tendencies." Treating a system as if it were a concrete or tangible entity and ascribing properties to it is of questionable validity from this point of view. To do so, according to critics, is to be guilty of the methodological error of **reification**—treating abstractions as if they were real and had a life of their own.[30]

A response by some system theorists to this line of criticism is that dealing in abstractions is useful in the generation of propositions or **hypotheses** about international relations. These, in turn, can be tested **empirically** to determine whether or not they have factual support. To the extent, then, that use of the systems concept enables the theorist to describe, explain, or predict international phenomena, the use of the concept is justified.

The reader may or may not wish to visualize international relations or world politics as a system that is defined in terms of patterns of interactions, polarity, equilibrating tendencies, or some other characteristics. We do note, however, that the systems concept as an approximation to the nature of world politics is present within the mainstream of contemporary realist thought, even if some realists avoid its use.

Speaking of abstractions, this discussion has been rather abstract. To lend substance to the concept of system, we next examine two ways in which the concept of system has been used by realists: *system* as patterns of interactions, and *system* as anarchy plus the distribution of capabilities. In each case, the intention of scholars has been to explain some aspect of international relations concerning such matters as instability, conflict, and war. In each case, the state and state power have been a key focus of analysis and investigation.

System as Interactions

Traditional realists emphasize the relative distribution of capabilities between specific states or alliances and how shifts in these capabilities influence state behavior, interactions, and, hence, the probability of war. Scholars who have a behavioralist orientation emphasize system as interactions.

Two examples of viewing the international system as sets or patterns of interactions are to be found in the works of Rudolph J. Rummel and Charles A. McClelland, published in the 1960s and 1970s during the heyday of the behavioralist ascendance in international relations theorizing. In his Dimensionality of Nations (DON) Project, Rummel attempted to explain and predict the behavior of states. In doing so, he identified recurrent patterns of behavior by using **factor analysis,** a statistical tool designed to identify patterns of variation in the data being analyzed. In one study, ninety-four **variables** falling into such categories as military, international conflict, international collaboration, colonialism, communication, and international organization were selected for factor analysis. The analysis involved eighty-two countries. According to Rummel, tentative findings included first, that conflict is not a necessary consequence of a nation's increased involvement in foreign affairs (which would seem to be counterintuitive, or contrary to what one might expect); and second, that the genesis of foreign conflict behavior lies outside the state, not internal to it (one answer to the questions raised in the discussion of the problem of levels of analysis). Such conflict behavior "is a *relational* phenomenon depending on the degree of economic, social, and

political similarity between nations, the geographic distance between them, and their power parity." This latter point—that conflict is primarily relational—is the basis for Rummel's extensive work in what is termed *field theory*.[31]

Charles McClelland focused on international transactions and interactions between states in his World Event/Interaction Survey (WEIS) project. The data base consisted of the actions and responses of states over a number of years as reported in the press. Events were coded and placed in specific categories. Quantitative analyses of the data were meant to reveal patterns of behavior between and among states, the basis for prediction. Although the major focus was on conflict behavior and periods of high tension (particularly international crises), the data were not limited to this type of state action. The underlying assumption was that the past behavior of a state is a source for the prediction of its current and future behavior. The major results of the WEIS project were reported in a number of articles.[32]

System as Anarchy and the Distribution of Capabilities

Many realist writers have emphasized anarchy and the distribution of capabilities, or power, among states as critical components of the international system. These so-called system-level, or **structural,** attributes are viewed as crucial because they act as constraints on decisionmakers. As we will see, the condition of international anarchy is seen by realists as contributing to the amount of distrust and conflict among states. Realists have also been concerned whether particular distributions of capabilities involving various balances of power make war between states more or less likely. We will first take up the concept of anarchy and related terms.

Anarchy. The word *anarchy* brings forth images of violence, destruction, and chaos. For realists, however, anarchy simply refers to the absence of any authority above states. States are **sovereign.** They claim a right to be independent or autonomous from other states, and they claim a right to exercise complete authority over their own territories. Although states differ in terms of the power they possess or are able to exercise, none may claim the *right* to dominate another sovereign state.[33]

We wish to be clear on the term *anarchy* and the difference between **authority** and **power.** When we use the term *anarchy,* we are referring to the absence of any hierarchy of authority. There *is* hierarchy of power in international politics, but there is not a hierarchy of authority. Some states are clearly more powerful than others, but there is no recognized authority higher than that of any state.

Anarchy, so understood, is the defining characteristic of the environment within which sovereign states interact. Violence and war may be evident but so too are periods of relative peace and stability. This absence of any superordinate or central authority over states (such as a world government with authority to enforce rules and to maintain order) is fundamentally different from domestic societies, where an authority exists to maintain order and to act as an arbiter of disputes except in cases of total government collapse or in civil wars when legitimate authority may be unclear.[34]

Realists argue that the absence of a central and overriding authority helps to explain why states come to rely on power, seeking to maintain or increase their power positions relative to other states. For one thing, the condition of anarchy is usually accompanied by a lack of trust among states in this environment. Each state faces a **self-help** situation in which it is dangerous to place the security of one's own country in the hands of another. What guarantee is there against betrayal, however solemn another state's promises may be to an ally? Consistent with the world described by Hobbes, there is really nothing to keep a supposed ally from reneging on a security agreement or any other international pact. There is no world governmental authority to enforce covenants or agreements among states. In such a world, it is logical, rational, and prudent to look out for number one. Indeed, this was the same counsel reported by Thucydides when he noted Athenian advice to the Melians not to place their hope for survival in the hands of the Spartans and their allies.

Given international anarchy and the lack of trust in such a situation, states find themselves in what has been called a **security dilemma.**[35] The more one state arms to protect itself from other states, the more threatened these states become and the more prone they are to resort to arming themselves to protect their own national security interests. The dilemma is that even if a state is sincerely arming only for defensive purposes, it is rational in a self-help system to assume the worst in an adversary's intentions and keep pace in any arms buildup. How can one know for certain that a rival is arming strictly for defensive purposes? This is the stuff of arms races. Isn't it best to hedge one's bets by devoting more resources to match a potential adversary's arms buildup? Because a state may not have sufficient resources to be completely self-reliant, it may join an alliance in an attempt to deter aggression by any would-be adversaries.

Given an understanding of the anarchic condition of international politics, one can more easily grasp certain dynamics of arms races. All sides involved may sincerely desire peace, but the anarchical nature of international politics leads states to be suspicious of one another and engage in worst-case analyses of one another's intentions. This realist insight, it is argued, is just as applicable to understanding the ancient competition between Sparta and Athens as it is to understanding contemporary international relations. It is a system-level explanation in that the emphasis is placed on the anarchic structure of international politics as a whole, not on the *internal* nature of a particular state. An example of an explanation that relies on internal factors is the claim that a given country keeps building more and more weapons because of demands from its own military-industrial complex or because of the nature of a national mentality that reflects its regional or global ambitions. *External* factors such as the anarchic structure of the system or the actions and reactions of other states are ignored.

Even realists, however, disagree on how much weight to accord anarchy as a contributing factor to international conflict. So-called *defensive realists,* for example, while recognizing the importance of anarchy, caution that analysts should not overstate its importance. They argue that security is readily available, particularly if states adopt defensive strategies. The assumption is made that the international system provides incentives for cautious and restrained behavior on the part of states and that reckless, expansionist behavior is the result of domestic factors, not of systemic conditions such as anarchy.[36]

Finally, an anarchical, self-help system obviously makes cooperation among states difficult to achieve. How are states to act in such a world? Is it inevitable that they will be self-seeking, attempting to maximize their short-term individual or self-interests? Or is it possible that states can upgrade their common (perhaps enlightened) self-interests over both the short and long term? What is the rational thing to do? The informing image for some realists is provided by the allegory of the stag hunt, taken from the writings of the Geneva-born, eighteenth-century philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau.[37]

Each of five individuals in the state of nature—a world without government or any other form of social structure—has to decide (1) whether to collaborate in the hunting of a stag necessary to meet the hunger needs of all five or (2) to defect from the group to capture a hare. To choose the latter course of action would be to serve one's own self-interest at the expense of the group (see Figure 2.1).

If the individual prefers to serve the common interest (go after the stag), can he or she trust the others to do so? And if one can't trust the others, is it not rational to go for the hare and defect from the group before any of the others do? Or is it possible to develop the basis for collaboration on a continuing basis by all five?[38] Scholars who deal with **game theory** attempt to answer such questions. Game theory is an approach to determining rational choice or optimum strategy under conditions of uncertainty. As such, game theory has direct relevance to the study of foreign policy choice and to much scholarly work on deterrence as a means of avoiding war.

How one understands Rousseau's stag hunt fable has a great deal to do with how one sees states interacting in world politics. Some tend to see the state as serving only narrow self-interest. Pessimists point to the number, duration, and intensity of wars. Those of a more optimistic bent note that in many cases states live in peace and harmony for years, and there is, indeed, great potential for collaboration among states.

For international relations theorists, however, it is not simply a matter of a pessimistic or optimistic nature. Aside from the assumptions that states are unitary and rational actors, neorealists also tend to make the analytical assumption that states are largely concerned with *relative* rather than just *absolute gains*. What is the difference? If

	Individual interests: pursue the hare	**Group/collective interests: pursue the stag**
Short run	Serve immediate self-interest	May provide basis for possible future collaboration
Long run	No apparent basis for colloborative behavior	Serve long-term common interest

FIGURE 2.1 The Stag Hunt Fable: A Dilemma of Rational Choice

a state is concerned with individual, absolute gains, it is indifferent to the gains of others—"As long as I'm doing better, I don't care if others are also increasing their wealth or military power." If, however, a state is concerned with relative gains, it is not satisfied with simply increasing its power or wealth but is concerned with how much those capabilities have kept pace with, or increased, relative to other states. Differing assumptions about a state's preferences lead to different expectations about the prospects for international conflict and cooperation. For neorealists, the relative gains assumption makes international cooperation in an anarchic world difficult to attain. More optimistic about the prospects for international cooperation, **neoliberal institutionalists** assume that states may well be satisfied with absolute gains.[39]

The Distribution of Capabilities: Balance of Power. Unless one state or some sort of superordinate international authority comes to dominate the world, anarchy will continue to be a defining characteristic of the international system. Within this anarchical environment, however, various distributions of capabilities or power among states are possible. Anarchy plus the distribution of capabilities among states define for many realists the international system at any one time.

As we have seen, many realists begin with the security dilemma in an anarchic world. Where does order come from under such conditions? What keeps states from continually attacking one another? One answer—associated with the thought of Hugo Grotius and the English school of international relations—is the development of international norms as codified in international law. Another answer offered by realists is that states find it expedient to band together and pool their capabilities whenever one state or group of states appears to be gathering a disproportionate amount of power, thus threatening to dominate the world, or even a portion of it.

This reasoning—the need to maintain a **balance of power** to avoid the triumph of a dominant power—is a realist concern dating back to the works of Thucydides. It is also found in a report of the British Foreign Office written before World War I:

> History shows that the danger threatening the independence of this or that nation has generally arisen, at least in part, out of the momentary predominance of a neighboring State at once militarily powerful, economically efficient, and ambitious to extend its frontiers or spread its influence. . . . The only check on the abuse of political predominance derived from such a position has always consisted in the opposition of an equally formidable rival, or a combination of several countries forming leagues of defense. The equilibrium established by such a grouping of forces is technically known as the balance of power, and it has become almost an historical truism to identify England's secular policy with the maintenance of this balance by throwing her weight now in this scale and now in that, but ever on the side opposed to the political dictatorship of the strongest single State or group at a given time.[40]

A **bipolar** balance of power (two states with relatively equal power) or a **multipolar** balance of power (three or more states engaging in checks and balances) are two realist categorizations of particular distributions of capabilities. Such power configurations have occurred in the aftermath of major European wars—the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 following the Thirty Years' War, the Congress of Vienna in 1815 following the

defeat of Napoleon, and the settlements following both twentieth-century world wars. Although the post-World War I arrangements bought only twenty years of peace, the Congress of Vienna was more successful in establishing a basis for maintaining a balance of power without general or major war for almost a century. Assessing the efforts of the diplomats at Vienna and subsequent meetings, Henry Kissinger concluded: "Their goal was stability, not perfection, and the balance of power is the classic expression of the lesson of history that no order is safe without physical safeguards against aggression." In short, according to Kissinger, a "new international order came to be created with a sufficient awareness of the connection between power and morality; between security and legitimacy."[41]

Two questions are subject to debate among realist scholars: (1) Do balances of power automatically occur, or are they created by statesmen? and (2) Which balance of power—bipolar or multipolar—is more likely to maintain international stability?

As to the first question, Kissinger's view emphasizes **voluntarism**—the balance of power is a foreign policy creation or construction of statesmen; it doesn't just occur automatically. Makers of foreign policy do not act as automatons, prisoners of the balance of power and severely constrained by it. Rather, they are its creators and those charged with maintaining it. They are free to exercise their judgment and their will as agents for their states in the conduct of foreign policy with the expectation that they can have some constructive effect on outcomes.

In contrast to this voluntarist conception is that of Kenneth Waltz, who sees the balance of power as an attribute of the system of states that will occur whether it is willed or not.[42] Given the assumptions that the state is a rational and a unitary actor that will use its capabilities to accomplish its objectives, states inevitably interact and conflict in the competitive environment of international politics. The outcome of state actions and interactions is a tendency toward equilibrium, or balance of power. Balance of power from this point of view, then, is a systemic tendency that occurs whether or not states seek to establish such a balance. Indeed, states may be motivated to improve their own positions so as to dominate others, but such attempts will likely be countered by other states similarly motivated. Thus, a balance of power more often than not occurs as states tend to balance against a rising power as opposed to joining its bandwagon. Balance-of-power theory so viewed can be used to account for arms races, alliances and counteralliances, coalitions and countercoalitions, and other forms of competitive behavior among states.

This image of the balance of power, therefore, refers to a recurrent phenomenon characteristic of international relations. It seems to matter little whether the states are democratic or authoritarian; the systemic tendency toward balance, or equilibrium, is always the same. It is as if states were billiard balls colliding with one another.[43] The faster and larger balls (the major powers) knock the smaller balls (the lesser powers) out of the way, although their own paths may also be deflected slightly by these collisions. These interactions, it is argued, tend toward international equilibrium or stability just as billiard balls eventually come to rest, at least until the balance is upset once again. But then the same tendency toward equilibrium repeats itself, only to be upset again. And so forth. The actors involved in this timeless drama remain the same: states. Actor combinations involving two or more states can be observed as the mechanical workings of the balance of power: multipolar prior to World War II, bipolar (the United States

and the Soviet Union) in the years following the war. Post-Cold War descriptions of polarity vary among realists with some focusing on American unipolarity. Others depict a multipolarity (or an emerging multipolarity), albeit one skewed asymmetrically or unevenly for the time being at least in favor of the United States.

Kenneth Waltz observes that in international relations, "the freedom of choice of any one state is limited by the actions of all the others." Moreover, he argues that "the balance of power is not so much imposed by statesmen on events as it is imposed by events on statesmen."[44] For Waltz, the statesman has much less freedom to maneuver, much less capability to affect the workings of international politics, than Kissinger would allow. In a sense, then, Kissinger and Waltz represent alternative ends of a spectrum of contemporary realists conversant with balance-of-power thinking. Realists such as Waltz who emphasize balance of power as a system tendency have been labelled as "structural realists" or "neorealists" because they have allegedly departed from a realist tradition that granted the statesman or policymaker greater freedom from constraint and thus greater ability to affect international events.[45]

Some critics of balance of power as a system tendency reject this mode of thinking precisely because of its mechanistic quality. One such critic, Ernst B. Haas, who finds little if any use in realist notions of balance of power, rejects "this formulation" because of its "system-dominant automaticity."[46] In other words, this mode of balance-of-power theory is too **deterministic;** individual policymakers can do little to affect events, much less have constructive impact on the system as a whole. Haas is even more explicit in later writings, criticizing determinists who

> see the components [of systems, i.e., states] as relatively unchangeable and arrange them in an eternal preprogrammed dance; the rules of the dance may be unknown to the actors and are specified by the theorist. The recurrent patterns discovered by him constitute a superlogic which predicts the future state of the system.[47]

The voluntarism-determinism debate is comparable in some ways to theological dispute over determinism and free will. As we use the term, *voluntarism* does not refer to freedom of choice only but to the ability of human beings to influence the course of events. How free are individuals to determine their own fates? How much effective choice do they have? How much are events *determined* by factors independent of human will exercised by statesmen? In the context of international relations, the question is whether states or their decisionmakers can affect their environment or whether their actions are severely constrained by other states interacting in a system of states. How much is free? How much is determined? Put another way, how much is the behavior of states and other units driven by the international system or its structure and how much is socially constructed by human volition—statesmen and diplomats, institutions and groups, and other human actors?

Kissinger's position is closer to the voluntarist pole, but he definitely would not argue that foreign policymakers are totally free of external constraints. Indeed, their ability to maneuver within these constraints is at least partly a function of their diplomatic skills. Similarly, Waltz would reject the idea that he is in any way a determinist. Nevertheless, his views are far removed from the purely voluntarist pole. The implication of his view of the balance of power is that individual decisionmakers and their

states have much less freedom or capability to affect the course of events than others such as Kissinger would assert.

In some respects, the writings of Hans J. Morgenthau are an attempt to combine the two perspectives, thus inviting wrath by proponents of both. Morgenthau acknowledged the balance of power as a tendency within international politics while, at the same time, prescribing what statesmen should do to maintain the balance. He argued that "the balance of power and policies aiming at its preservation are not only inevitable but are an essential stabilizing factor in a society of sovereign nations."[48] Quite apart from the apparent determinism in this statement, Morgenthau assigned to diplomats not just the task of maintaining the balance of power; he also charged them to "create the conditions under which it will not be impossible from the outset to establish a world state."[49]

In short, for Morgenthau, escape from the balance of power and the voluntarist creation of a new world order remained possibilities worthy of pursuit. At the same time, his detractors have noted that, on the one hand, to argue that the balance of power is an inevitable system tendency and, on the other hand, to prescribe what should be done to maintain a balance or transform the system itself is to argue in contradictory terms. Be that as it may, Morgenthau's thinking represents a middle ground between realists who tend toward voluntarist or determinist poles. The present theoretical debate between structuralists and **social constructivists** is a more recent manifestation of this continuing controversy.

Balance of Power and System Stability

We conclude this discussion of the realist's use of the system concept with reference to a long-standing realist debate: Is a bipolar or a multipolar balance of power more conducive to the stability of the international system? Stated another way, is war more likely to occur in a bipolar or a multipolar world?

The best-known statements on this matter are by Kenneth Waltz on the one hand and J. David Singer and Karl Deutsch on the other.[50] All three have agreed that the amount of uncertainty about the consequences of a particular action taken by a decisionmaker increases as the number of international actors increases. The logic of this assumption is that as the number increases, a decisionmaker has to deal with a greater quantity of information; more international actors mean more information is generated that has to be taken into account in the formulation of foreign policy. Therefore, all three authors have agreed that as an international system moves from being bipolar to being multipolar, the amount of overall uncertainty in the system increases. So far, so good.

Where they part company is on the matter of whether an increase in the number of actors (and hence uncertainty) makes war more or less likely. Waltz argues that greater uncertainty makes it *more* likely that a decisionmaker will misjudge the intentions and actions of a potential foe. Hence, a multipolar system, given its association with higher levels of uncertainty, is less desirable than a bipolar system because multipolarity makes uncertainty and thus the probability of war greater. Singer and Deutsch, however, make the opposite argument. They believe a multipolar system is more conducive to stability because uncertainty breeds caution on the part of decisionmakers. Caution means following tried and true policies of the past, avoiding deviations. Fur-

thermore, they argue that "the increase in number of independent actors diminishes the share [of attention] that any nation can allocate to any other single actor."[51] This, it is argued, also reduces the probability of war because a state's attention is allocated to a larger number of actors.

Both arguments seem logical. But if *both* cannot be correct, it is still possible that *neither* one is correct. This is a proposition put forth by Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. For example, he challenges the assumption that uncertainty is greater in a multipolar world, arguing that "if the system's structure—be it bipolar or multipolar—does not change, there will be little uncertainty" because "learned patterns from prior behavior will aid decision makers to anticipate the likely consequences of similar behaviors under similar circumstances." Hence, "the level of systemic uncertainty, by itself, neither increases nor decreases the likelihood of war. Consequently, neither the number of blocs, nor the magnitude of change in the number of blocs in the system is expected to be associated with the likelihood of war."[52] Bueno de Mesquita goes on to discuss a number of other propositions dealing with such matters as the relation between the increase in overlapping interests of states (détente) and war, and the relation between the tightening and loosening of alliances and the probability of war. He found, for example, that since the early nineteenth century, the amount of war tended to rise as commitments within a bloc became more tight-knit. This was particularly true for the twentieth century. Bueno de Mesquita's work is an example of explicitly stating commonly held and sometimes conflicting assumptions and hypotheses about the causes of war and then subjecting them to formal empirical tests. Others have continued this quantitative work on the causes of war and on the phenomenon of militarized disputes.[53]

Leaving aside the question of uncertainty, other arguments have been advanced concerning the relative stability of bipolar and multipolar worlds. This is of more than passing interest, given the fact that with the demise of the Soviet Union and the economic rise of Japan and Germany, there is a consensus that the world will become increasingly multipolar. Waltz now concurs with those who see a shift taking place in the distribution of capabilities among states. Since the 1960s, Waltz had argued that the international system was still bipolar—counter to what was a commonplace view that the world already had become (or was becoming) multipolar. While agreeing that the relative power position of the United States had changed from the late 1940s and early 1950s, when European states and Japan were still suffering the devastation wrought by World War II, Waltz pointed to both economic and military indicators that put the United States and the Soviet Union as superpowers so far above Germany, Japan, or any other state as to make the world still very much bipolar. Responding to changes he has observed in the 1980s and 1990s, Waltz now sees the structure of the international system as becoming multipolar, perhaps in the first decade of the new millennium. Although the decline and breakup of the Soviet Union leaves the United States for the short term as the single most powerful global actor, Waltz contends that the principal poles in the new multipolar world that is emerging likely will be the United States, Germany (or "Europe" if it unites), Japan, and Russia (which likely will reassume its historical position as a defensive great power).[54]

For Waltz, this change in systemic structure is not without significant behavioral consequences. Relations in a bipolar system between superpowers were relatively simple and predictable, resulting in a relatively stable world order in which direct conflicts

between superpowers usually were avoided, thus reducing the likelihood of general war. By contrast, Waltz still contends that the uncertainties attendant to calculations in a more complex, multipolar world make relations somewhat less predictable. From Waltz's view, we may come to regret the passing of what was a stable, bipolar world. Based upon Waltz's logic, one scholar has deduced a sobering scenario for Europe.[55] Other realist work, however, goes beyond neorealism's concept of polarity and addresses two other dimensions at the systemic level of analysis—disparities in capabilities among poles, and whether the relative capability growth rates of states are static or dynamic regionally or across the system as a whole.[56]

Other works examine different factors at the state-societal level of analysis, such as the economy and concern for domestic political stability that may influence foreign policy choices. Such a focus is a welcome corrective to traditional work on alliances that tends to assume that the distribution of capabilities virtually alone determines a state's international alignment.[57] Similarly, Stephen Walt has recast balance of power theory (states align against the most powerful states), arguing that a balance of threat theory offers more historically correct explanations. Hence, intentions need to be taken into account (states balance against states that are not only powerful but also threatening). More recently, he has used this theoretical adjustment to realism to analyze how revolutionary domestic changes can increase the risk of international war by intensifying international security competition.[58]

Ambitious attempts also have been made to integrate societal and system-level variables (such as polarity, technology, and geography) in the hope of gaining insight on how to explain and predict alliance strategies.[59]

INTERDEPENDENCE

To this point, we have discussed some of the intellectual precursors of realism and have then examined two concepts important to the realist analysis of world politics: power and system. In the next two sections, we discuss the realist view on two ongoing concerns within the international relations discipline: interdependence and accounting for system change. As will become apparent in Chapter 3, the concept of interdependence is an important one to many scholars whom we would classify as pluralists. It is useful, therefore, to present the realist view of this concept, a view that is derived from the realist emphasis on power in the international system.

Interdependence and Vulnerability

To realists, interdependence is not necessarily such a good thing. Rather than being a symmetric relation between coequal parties—which is how many people view the term—interdependence is, realists argue, usually dominance–dependence, with the dependent party particularly vulnerable to the choices of the dominant party. Interdependence does not mean equality. Interdependence connotes some degree of vulnerability by one party to another. Indeed, interdependence as vulnerability is a source of power of one state over another. To reduce this vulnerability, realists have argued that

it is better for the state to be independent or, at least, to minimize its dependency. For example, the state needing to import oil is vulnerable to an embargo or price rise engineered by the state or states exporting the commodity. To reduce this vulnerability would require reducing oil imports—by finding an alternative source, for example.

To realists, interdependence does not affect all states equally. Although the economies of most oil-importing countries were affected by the quadrupling of oil prices in 1973–1974, they were not all equally vulnerable. Vulnerability is in part a question of what alternatives are available. For example, as a matter of policy, the United States has tried to increase domestic production, create a strategic oil reserve to be drawn from only in emergencies, find other foreign sources of oil, and substitute alternative forms of energy whenever feasible. Given these measures, the United States has attempted to reduce somewhat its vulnerability to a new oil embargo; however, as a practical matter, the United States remains heavily dependent on imported oil. Not all oil-importing countries have been able to develop even this degree of protection against the oil embargo risk. In short, in any given issue area, not all states are equally vulnerable. Therefore, the realist is suspicious of such blanket statements as "the entire world is interdependent" to the extent that such claims are supposedly *equally* applicable to all states.

Realists thus tend to see interdependence as being between or among states. Therefore, the balance of power is a kind of interdependence. To be sure, some realists of a more eclectic sort acknowledge interdependence involving nonstate actors such as multinational corporations and try to take them into account. But at the core of realist thought is the image of states interacting like billiard balls. This captures the essential meaning of interdependence for the realist, which is a fundamentally different view of interdependence from that held by either pluralists or globalists.

Interdependence and Economics

Economic factors, as we noted earlier, are important to realists to the extent that they reflect or affect national power or capabilities. Industrial countries that effectively combine technology with capital, skilled labor, and raw materials not only enjoy a higher standard of living but also tend to have more leverage in their relations with other states. In addition to trade, financial, and monetary influence that flows from a strong economy, military capabilities are usually greatest in states with advanced industrial economies. This is particularly true in modern military establishments that rely so heavily on technology and on a relatively large pool of skilled labor.

As is clear from reading Machiavelli, the relation between socioeconomic and military capabilities was also acknowledged in earlier, preindustrial times. But the realist has tended to see the economy as subordinate to political choice. If grand strategy, alliance theory, and national and international security are the stuff of high politics, then trade, finance, monetary exchange, fishing rights, and other socioeconomic and humanitarian issues have traditionally been viewed by the realist as somewhat less important—low politics.

On the other hand, realists do understand that maintenance of access to oil and other natural resources is essential to national security. Some economic issues, for

example, have been elevated to the status of high politics, as was true following the 1973 oil embargo and the subsequent rise in the real price of petroleum. Maintaining access to oil supplies was a core objective of the multistate coalition that forced Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait in 1991. In the broadest sense, the continued viability of national economies and global markets in which commercial, investment, and other financial transactions take place is also a concern of realists who understand the power and relative power of states as closely tied to these factors.

Conceiving of world politics in terms of separate issue areas or, in the words of one realist, alternative "chessboards," is one example of awareness among realists of the importance to the state of socioeconomic and other nonmilitary issues.[60] If a state wants to be more powerful, however, it avoids or minimizes economic dependency on other states just as it avoids political or military dependency on other states if this amounts to a reduction of its relative power position. Dependency on others is to be minimized, whereas dependency of others on one's own state may be desirable to the extent that it increases one's leverage over those other states.

Interdependence, Peace, and Hegemony

Interdependence, according to realists, may or may not enhance prospects for peace. Conflict, not cooperation, could just as easily result. Just as in households or community conflicts, one way to establish peace is to eliminate or minimize contact among opponents or potential adversaries. Separation from other units, if that were possible, would mean less contact and thus less conflict.[61]

Some realists, however, do have something to say about the conditions under which international cooperation in nonmilitary issues may be enhanced. In the 1970s, several scholars argued that leadership exercised by one state or another is conducive to stability even if this "leadership" becomes hegemonic. According to the theory of **hegemonic stability,** the hegemon, or dominant power, assumes leadership, perhaps for the entire globe, in dealing with a particular issue. Thus, Britain was seen as offering leadership in international monetary matters in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The gold standard associated with the international exchange of money was managed from London by the Bank of England. After World War II, the leadership role was finally assumed by the United States.[62]

The absence of hegemony, or leadership, may result in chaos and instability, as happened in the 1930s when the United States was unwilling to assume leadership of the world economy and Britain, given its weakened position, was unable to do so.[63] Competitive depreciation of currencies, erection of trade barriers, and a drastic reduction in the volume of trade were the outcome.

Although not all realists would subscribe to the view, stability is therefore seen by some as enhanced by a concentration of power in international politics; there is virtue in inequality among states. The hegemonic state or states benefit, but so too do other, less powerful states. By contrast, the decline of hegemony and the consequent fragmentation of power in international politics is said to produce disorder—a breakdown or unraveling of previously constructed international agreements. Leadership provided by hegemonic states is understood as facilitating achievement of collaboration among states.

Theoretical and empirical controversy in the 1980s and 1990s over whether the United States was a hegemon in decline was sparked primarily by the work of the historian Paul Kennedy, who examined the rise and fall of great powers over some five hundred years.[64] The debate influenced (and was influenced by) discussion already under way mainly among neorealists on the stabilizing role performed by global hegemons, a view originally set forth by the economic historian Charles Kindleberger and developed by others. Thus, Joseph Lepgold examined American adaptation to hegemonic decline.[65] Other writers challenged the whole notion of U.S. decline in any absolute sense.[66] After all, U.S. "decline" was *relative* only to the rise of other actors such as Germany and Japan. Notwithstanding all of America's economic problems at the time, this gradual "leveling" of relative standings still left the United States effectively in first position. Moreover, the breakup of the Soviet Union resulted in the United States, at least for a short term, being the only global superpower—a "unipolar" structure to some theorists, however multipolar the world might eventually become.

Perhaps because of its intuitive plausibility—not to mention the issue of the relative "decline" of American power and the problem of international cooperation "after hegemony"[67]—the theory of hegemonic stability has been applied to a wide range of issue areas during various historical periods. The hegemon influences states to cohere and establish the rules by which international relations are to be conducted in various issue areas such as the exchange of money, trade, finance, health, environment, communications, air transportation, and fishing and navigation on the high seas. Using the concept of hegemonic stability is one approach among several dealing with the emergence and functioning of **international regimes** governing these issue areas, regimes having become a major empirical and theoretical focus in recent years. Regimes have been defined as "implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations."[68] Hence, an international regime can be viewed as a **dependent variable**—something to be explained—and an **independent variable**—a possible influence on the behavior of states. Those realists who apply the theory of hegemonic stability to the question of regime development begin with the assumption that the structure of the international system—particularly the distribution of capabilities—defines the possibilities of cooperation. Other realists, using game theory and its attendant assumptions of unified, rational state actors, try to explain how cooperation in an anarchic international system can be achieved.[69]

In sum, the realist view of interdependence challenges many conventional ideas of the concept: (1) Interdependence is not necessarily a good thing for any one particular state if interdependence is defined in terms of vulnerability; (2) increasing interdependence may produce conflict as opposed to peace; and (3) in an interdependent world, there are certain virtues in having a hegemonic power capable of enforcing stability in a number of different issue areas.

CHANGE

Realists stress the continuity of international relations. Many of the insights of Thucydides are deemed to be as relevant today as they were 2,500 years ago. Balance of power

involving states, whether viewed as a policy or a recurrent outcome, has existed at least since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Although continuity is the watchword for realists, this does not mean that they are uninterested in change. For many theorists of international relations, understanding the evolution of the international system and predicting its future should be the preeminent research goals. The methods for discovering global patterns may vary. Some scholars have applied quantitative measures to historical data, as in the Correlates of War project.[70] Others have approached the issue of international political change by attempting to discern cycles of national power and their relation to the outbreak of war.

Lewis Richardson's now-classic *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels* stands as one of the earliest systematic and quantitative studies of interactions resulting in either avoidance or the actual use of force. Among other things, he found that, contrary to what might have been expected, "world population increases seem not to have been accompanied by a proportionate increase in the frequency or severity of war." He also found empirically that such factors as "similarity of language" and "common religion" had little bearing on the incidence of war or the maintenance of peace. Incidence of war was empirically more associated with territorial contiguity of states than other factors.[71] Later work in this genre—using statistical methods in the Correlates of War project under J. David Singer and his associates—found "that big powers have participated in more wars, that major powers undergoing rapid growth in capabilities are more likely to fight with other major powers, and that international disputes between larger countries tend to escalate to war if there has been an arms race between them."[72]

To illustrate how realists have dealt with the issue of change, we will also briefly discuss the works of Robert Gilpin, Lewis Richardson, J. David Singer, and George Modelski. As the title of his book suggests, Gilpin is interested in developing a framework for thinking about *War and Change in World Politics.* He believes "it is possible to identify recurrent patterns, common elements, and general tendencies in the major turning points in international history." International political change is the result of efforts of political actors "to change the international system in order to advance their own interests," however these interests may be defined (security, economic gain, ideological goals, etc.).[73] Gilpin lists five assumptions concerning the behavior of states that will guide his analysis. For example, the realist emphasis on the unified, rational actor state is revealed in the second assumption: "A state will attempt to change the international system if the expected benefits exceed the expected costs (i.e., if there is an expected net gain)."[74]

Various periods of history are marked by equilibrium (such as after the Congress of Vienna in 1815) or disequilibrium. As long as the system can adjust to the demands of its constituent states, stability is maintained. What accounts for change and the undermining of the status quo? The key factor, originally identified by Thucydides, "is the tendency in an international system for the powers of member states to change at different rates because of political, economic, and technological developments. In time, the differential growth in power of the various states in the system causes a fundamental redistribution of power in the system."[75] A state with ever-increasing power may determine that the costs involved in attempting to change the nature of the system are outweighed by the benefits if such an endeavor is successful. What has been the princi-

pal mechanism of change throughout history? War, because wars determine which states will govern the system. The peace settlement after the war codifies the new status quo. This equilibrium reflects the new distribution of power in the international system until eventually the differential growth in the power of states leads to another attempt to change the system.

Like balance of power theory, therefore, power transition theory is a systems-level theory. Realist adherents to both theories claim that the distribution of power among states is the key to understanding international relations. Power transition theorists, however, see the international system as hierarchically ordered, with the most powerful state dominating the rest, which are classified as satisfied or dissatisfied with the ordering of the system. But while balance of power theorists argue that the equality of power leads to peace, power transition theorists such as Gilpin claim that war may be more likely when states are relatively equal, particularly when the differential growth in two states' economies brings a challenger close to the reigning hegemon's power.

George Modelski has argued that the global political system goes through distinct and identifiable historical cycles or recurrent patterns of behavior.[76] The global political system dates from about A.D. 1500, and over the years, various world powers have helped to shape and maintain the system. According to Modelski, since A.D. 1500, four states have played dominant roles, each one corresponding to a "long cycle": Portugal (1500 to the end of the sixteenth century), the Netherlands (the seventeenth century), Great Britain (early eighteenth century to the Napoleonic Wars, and a second cycle from 1815 to 1945), and the United States (1945 to the present). As in the case of Gilpin's analysis, war tends to mark the end of one cycle and the beginning of another.

What produces these cycles? Two conditions are critical: (1) the urge of a power to create a global order, and (2) particular properties and weaknesses of the global system. Modelski notes that, as with long-term business cycles, world order is also subject to decay. The dominant power is inevitably faced with the growth of rival power centers, and attempts to maintain territorial control around the globe prove to be a costly task that drains the vitality and energy of the home country. Each cycle, therefore, exhibits a particular nation-state in an ascending and then a descending phase. As Modelski notes, following a major war, one world power

> emerges from that conflict in an advantageous position and organizes the world even as the struggle still goes on and then formalizes its position in the global layer in the peace settlement. For the space of another generation that new power maintains basic order and is the mainspring of world institutions, often taking transnational forms. But the time comes when the energy that built this order begins to run down. . . . The prominent role of world power attracts competitors (other great powers) . . . ; the system moves into multipolarity. Rivalries among the major powers grow fiercer and assume the characteristics of oligopolistic competition. Gradually, as order dissolves, the system moves toward its original point of departure, that of minimal order and a Babel of conflicting and mutually unintelligible voices.[77]

Modelski and Gilpin, therefore, both present a dynamic view of the international system. Patterns of behavior are evident throughout history. Periods of rapid change alternate with periods of relative stability. Given the emphasis on the importance of war

in changing the structure of the system, are we currently experiencing a lull before some sort of global cataclysm? Both Gilpin and Modelski would undoubtedly find such a question too pessimistic. As Modelski notes, it is possible that the international system may be "propelled in a new direction. We have no means of predicting what that new direction might be except that it could be moved away from the present system that relies too heavily on the steady, if long-spaced-out, progression of global wars."[78] Work continues by Modelski and his associates on the "rhythm of global politics." To those using this mode of analysis, long cycles "organize international relations in the past and they clarify the future."[79]

There is a growing body of literature emphasizing how changes in the power positions of states—some of which are in an ascending phase and some in a descending trend relative to other states—contribute to the outbreak of war.[80] This "power transition" work on war has been criticized on historical, empirical, and conceptual grounds.[81] Nevertheless, given the ongoing shifts in the distribution of world power and the increase in the number of democracies, it can be expected that scholars will devote even more attention to specifying the links between the international and domestic levels of analysis in order to understand better the dynamics of peace and stability.[82]

REALISTS AND THEIR CRITICS: AN OVERVIEW

Realism: The Term Itself

What is perhaps most impressive about the realist image of international politics is its longevity. Although modifications, clarifications, additions, and methodological innovations have been made down through the years, the core elements have remained basically intact.

If realism represents a "realistic" image of international politics, what does that say about competing images? Are they by definition "unrealistic"? In debate and discourse, labels are important. A good example of this involves the interwar years, during which realists were challenged by advocates of the League of Nations, world federalism, or peace through international law. Many of these individuals came to be known as "idealists" or "utopians."

The very labels attached to these competing images of world order obviously put the so-called idealists at a disadvantage. Realists could claim that they were dealing with the world as it actually functioned. The idealists, on the other hand, were supposedly more concerned with what *ought* to be. "Yes," a realist might say, "I too wish the world were a more harmonious place, but that unfortunately is not the case." Those persons who were placed in the idealist camp certainly did not choose this particular label for themselves. Who did? The realists. By so doing, the opposition was stripped of a certain amount of legitimacy. Idealism conjured up images of wooly-headed professors, unsophisticated peace advocates, and impractical, utopian schemes.

Realists would respond that *realism* should be taken at face value; it is an appropriate term precisely because its basic tenets in fact closely approximate the world as it is. This is nothing of which to be ashamed. The longevity of the realist tradition is not

simply a function of the expropriation of a particular label but a result of realism's inherent descriptive, explanatory, and predictive strengths.

Another reason for the longevity of realism is that this particular image of the world most closely approximates the image held by practitioners of statecraft. Realism has always had strong policy-prescriptive components, as we have already noted. Machiavelli's *The Prince*, for example, was expressly presented as a guide for the ruler. Nor is it mere coincidence that two of the best known American academics who held high positions in the U.S. foreign policy establishment in the 1970s, Henry A. Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski, are both self-professed realists. Their successors in the 1980s and 1990s have largely sustained the same tradition. Indeed, the realist as academic speaks much the same language as the realist as statesman: power, force, national interest, and diplomacy.

It has been argued, however, that some realist writers help to perpetuate the very world they analyze. By describing the world in terms of violence, duplicity, and war, and then providing advice to statesmen as to how statesmen should act, such realists are justifying one particular conception of international relations. Realism becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Even efforts to place realism on a stronger theoretical foundation (referred to as "structural realism" or "neorealism") that favor explanation over policy prescription have the same effect. Critics contend that such realists suffer from a lack of imagination and an inability to consider seriously alternative conceptions of world politics and how these might be achieved.

The realist response is that there is nothing inherently wrong with being policy relevant and helping leaders navigate through dangerous waters. Advice based on wishful thinking and questionable assessments of international forces and trends could lead to disastrous policies, particularly if one is the lone "idealist" leader in a world of realists. Moreover, most criticism is understood to be based on a selective reading of realists, ignoring their genuine concern not only with the causes of war but also with how peace can be achieved or maintained. Finally, not all realists would claim to be particularly interested in providing advice to statesmen. They would rather use realist assumptions and insights to develop better theories of international politics. Being policy relevant or ingratiating oneself with political leaders is not the goal for these realists who merely entertain the scholarly goal of explaining how the world functions.

The System and Determinism

As we have seen, the concept of system is critical to many realist writers. Whether the rather simple notion of anarchy or the more elaborate formulations devised by contemporary realist authors, the system is deemed important for its impact on international actors. It is charged, however, that recent realist writers portray the system as having a life of its own. The system is seemingly independent of the wishes and actions of states, even though it is the result of the preferences and powers of the constituent states. Statesmen are granted too little autonomy and too little room to maneuver, and the decision-making process is seemingly devoid of human volition. Human agents are pawns of a bloodless system that looms over them, a structure whose functioning they do not understand and the mechanics of which they only dimly perceive. Statesmen are faced with an endless array of constraints and few opportunities. It is as if they are

engaged in a global game, a game called power politics, and they are unable to change the rules even if they so desire. In sum, critics claim there is a fatalistic, deterministic, and pessimistic undercurrent to much of the realist work. As a result, some of these critics have turned to the sociology discipline in search of more dynamic conceptions of structure that emphasize the reciprocal influence of structure and human agents.[83]

Realists differ among themselves as to how much explanatory emphasis is to be given the international system. There is disagreement as to what extent the system functions as an independent variable in influencing state behavior. For neorealists, the system is more than the aggregation of state interactions. Rather, it represents a material structure that does indeed influence the behavior of states that are part of the system. It is these scholars who have drawn the most criticism, but they reject the charge that they are structural determinists who ignore actors operating at the unit, or state, level of analysis. One realist who argues that a systemic theory of international politics is composed of "the structure of the system and its interacting units," notes that

> if structure influences without determining, then one must ask how and to what extent the structure of a realm accounts for outcomes and how and to what extent the units [i.e., states] account for outcomes. Structure has to be studied in its own right as do units.[84]

Another realist categorically states that "no neorealist that I have read argues that political structure determines all behavior."[85] Consistent with Wolfers, Morgenthau, Kissinger, and others, traditional realists have often made the distinction between imperialist, revolutionary, or revisionist states on the one hand, and status-quo powers interested in maintaining their own position in a relatively constant regional or global order on the other. More recently, so-called *modified structural realists,* while appreciating the insights of neorealism, have attempted to incorporate international institutions and explanatory factors at the state-society level of analysis.[86] Similarly, still other realists have examined relations among states (or the interactions level of analysis) that analytically fall between the level of system structure and the level of state and society—high versus low security dilemmas, arms racing and arms control, alliance behavior (balancing, bandwagoning). Such factors, it is argued, will affect the stability of either bipolar or multipolar systems and, consequently, the possibility of moving toward a more peaceful world.[87]

Realists therefore differ on the extent to which statesmen impose themselves on events, or vice versa. No realist is completely determinist or voluntarist. It is not a matter of either-or but varying assessments as to how strong are the constraints placed on statesmen and how much room leaders have to maneuver.[88]

Realists and the State

The state is the centerpiece of realist work. Few persons would disagree as to the importance of the state in international affairs. The criticism, however, is that realists are so obsessed with the state that they ignore other actors and other issues not directly related to the maintenance of state security. Other nonstate actors—multinational corporations, banks, terrorists, and international organizations—are either excluded, down-

played, or trivialized in the realist perspective. Furthermore, given the national security prism through which realists view the world, other concerns such as the socioeconomic gap between rich and poor societies or international pollution rarely make the realist agenda. At best, such issues are dealt with in a derivative manner. A preoccupation with national security and the state by definition relegates other issues to secondary importance or bans them entirely from the realist agenda.

Realists counter that simply because nonstate actors are not dealt with in depth does not mean that they are considered irrelevant. Political scientists, one realist notes, should avoid slipping "into thinking that what an author fails to concentrate his attention upon, he takes to be inconsequential."[89] Similarly, another realist has stated that to argue "that the state . . . is the principal actor in international relations does not deny the existence of other individual and collective actors."[90]

Second, realists contend that theories are constructed to answer certain questions and to explain certain types of international behavior and outcomes. As a result, they purposely limit the type of actors analyzed. A theory concerned with explaining state behavior naturally focuses on states, not multinational corporations or terrorist groups. Similarly, a concern with national security issues by definition makes it unlikely that global welfare and humanitarian issues will receive the same degree of attention.

Finally, it can be argued that focusing on the state is justified on normative grounds. Many scholars, for example, are concerned with how unbridled arms races and military spending contribute to international tension, devastating regional wars, and socioeconomic deprivation. Because it is almost exclusively states that spend this money to buy or produce military hardware, it makes sense to focus on them as the unit of analysis. Hence, far from being enamored of states, many realists are critical of these political entities that are deemed too important to be ignored.

Realists and the Balance of Power

Given the emphasis on the state and the concern with national security issues, we have seen how the concept of balance of power has played a dominant role in realist thought and theory. Although balance of power has been a constant theme in realist writings down through the centuries, it has also come in for a great deal of abuse. Balance of power has been criticized for creating definitional confusion. Hans Morgenthau, a realist himself, discerned at least four definitions: (1) a policy aimed at a certain state of affairs; (2) an objective or actual state of affairs; (3) an approximately equal distribution of power, as when a balance of power exists between the United States and the Soviet Union; and (4) any distribution of power including a preponderance of power, as when the balance of power shifts in favor of either superpower. One critic has found eight meanings of the term.[91] If the balance of power means so many different things, does it mean anything?

Balance of power has also been criticized for leading to war as opposed to preventing it, serving as a poor guide for statesmen, and functioning as a propaganda tool to justify defense spending and foreign adventures. Despite these constant attacks and continual reformulations of the meaning of the term, balance of power remains a crucial concept in the realist vocabulary.

At times, it has appeared that the harshest critics of balance of power as a concept have been the realists themselves. All of these criticisms have been acknowledged and some deemed valid. Attempts have been made, however to clear up misconceptions and misinterpretations of balance of power, placing it on a more solid conceptual footing. One such effort has been made by Kenneth Waltz.[92] Even his formulation, however, is not without its critics. In fact, the debate between Waltz and his critics has been ongoing since the late 1970s.

Realism and Change

Given the realist view of the international system, the role of the state, and balance of power politics, critics suggest that very little possibility for the fundamental and peaceful transformation of international politics is left. Realists, claim the critics, at best offer analysis aimed at understanding how international stability is achieved but nothing approaching true peace. Realist stability reflects a world bristling with weapons, forever on the verge of violent conflict and war. Alternative world futures—scenarios representing a real alternative to the dismal Hobbesian world—are rarely discussed or taken seriously. The timeless quality of international politics, its repetitious nature and cycles of war, and a world in which the strong do as they will and the weak do as they must, dominate the realist image. We are given little information, let alone any hope, say the critics, as to how meaningful and peaceful change can occur and help us escape from the security dilemma.

Realists, it is argued, simply assume state interests, but tell us little about how states come to define their interests, or the processes by which those interests are redefined. Interests are not simply "out there" waiting to be discovered, but are constructed through social interaction.[93]

The issue of change, of course, is intimately connected to that of determinism and to what was referred to in Chapter 1 as the *agent-structure* problem. Although power politics and the state are central to all realist analyses, this does not mean that fundamental change is impossible or that change is limited to war and the cyclical rise and fall of states. Robert Gilpin argues that

> the state is the principal actor in that the nature of the state and the patterns of relations among states are the most important determinants of the character of international relations at any given moment. This argument does not presume that states need always be the principal actors, nor does it presume that the nature of the state need always be the same and that the contemporary nation-state is the ultimate form of political organization.[94]

Another realist has held out the possibility of diplomacy leading to a world state.[95] What separates realists from some other writers on the question of system change, however, is a belief that "if the nation-state is to disappear . . . it will do so through age-old political processes and not as idealists would wish through a transcendence of politics itself."[96] Hence, realists claim that fundamental change *is* possible and is taken into consideration in their work. Once again, however, the strength of this view varies depending on the author under consideration.

Realism: The Entire Enterprise

Critics of realism have always felt that they have been faced with a difficult task because the image comes close to approaching an impregnable edifice seemingly unscathed by years of criticism. Indeed, scholars who at one time in their careers struggled to devise alternative approaches based on alternative images of international politics have in some instances given up the quest, become converts, or resigned themselves to modifying existing realist explanatory frameworks.

Critics are faced with several problems. First, as noted earlier, given realism's affinity to the real world of policy making, this particular image of the world is automatically imbued with a certain degree of attractiveness and legitimacy. It represents the world out there, not some ivory tower perspective on human events. Not only is the realist perspective the accepted wisdom of the Western foreign policy establishments, but even in the Third World, leaders more often than not speak the language of realism as a result of concern over the survival of their regimes and states. Within the halls of academe, realism also has great attractiveness; "peace studies" programs sometimes find it advantageous to change the title to "security and conflict studies" in order to generate student interest. Realism can be as seductive to the academic professional as it can be to the student.

Second, realism is also seductive in that it has been given an increasingly scientific face. Earlier criticisms of the realist literature were very often based on the contention that such concepts as balance of power had less to do with theory building and more to do with ideology and self-justification of one particular approach to conducting international relations. Much of the realist work was, therefore, considered "unscientific." But at least some realists have cast their hunches and insights in the form of hypotheses, testable either quantitatively or with nonquantitative indicators.[97] The work is better grounded scientifically and placed within the context of the **positivist** view of how we comprehend reality. The positivist approach to knowledge still reigns in the natural and social sciences. As a result, any image of international politics that can be presented in the cloak of positivism is immediately granted a certain stature.

Realism has a lot going for it: It has a venerable tradition, is often policy relevant, addresses the big issues of war and peace, is intuitively plausible, and has more recently aspired to truly scientific status.

More recent formulations of realism, however, have actually been criticized for violating the realist tradition, particularly by ignoring the value sensitivity of the realist legacy as represented by E. H. Carr and Hans J. Morgenthau. In a sweeping attack on those he calls *neorealists*, Richard Ashley argues that their work presents a "self-enclosed, self-affirming" view of the world biased toward the existing state-centric order, subordinates all issues to a concern for control and survival of this state system, presents a historically homogeneous view of world history, trivializes alternative conceptions of world order, and dismisses the possibilities of fundamental change and peaceful transformation of the international system.[98] Neorealism, it is claimed, represents the new orthodoxy of the international relations discipline, and hence "students must prepare themselves to retell and carry forward yet another lore."[99] Neorealists reject these charges.

In conclusion, a comment is in order on criticism in general. One may wish to be wary of sweeping criticisms concerning an entire image, whether it be realist, pluralist, or globalist. It is not particularly difficult to find fault with the work of individual theorists, compile a list of their shortcomings, and then present the results as criticisms of the image as a whole. Such selectivity can be misleading. As this chapter illustrates, although realists may find common ground in terms of basic assumptions and key international actors, they also differ in a number of important respects, such as methods they use, levels of analysis they choose, and what they assume about the ability of decisionmakers to influence international outcomes. That is why it is imperative for the serious student of the international relations literature to go to the original sources, evaluate the validity of such criticisms, and assess the value of each image as the basis for a mode of thinking about international relations.

NOTES

1. See Barbara W. Tuchman, *The March of Folly* (New York: Knopf, 1984).
2. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 4th ed. (New York: Knopf, 1966), p. 5.
3. Some works assume *procedural* rationality or omniscience on the part of actors. Other works simply assume *instrumental* rationality or choice, meaning given two or more alternatives, the actor will choose the one likely to yield the preferred outcome. Logically consistent preference orders can exist despite incomplete and erroneous information. See Frank C. Zagare, "Rationality and Deterrence," *World Politics* 42, no. 2 (January 1990): 238–60.
4. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 25.
5. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979); John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994/95): 5–49; Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security* 17, no. 4 (Spring 1993): 5–51.
6. For a discussion of what type of realist Thucydides may have been, see Michael W. Doyle, "Thucydides: A Realist?" in *Hegemonic Rivalry: From Thucydides to the Nuclear Age*, eds. Richard Ned Lebow and Barry S. Strauss (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 169–88. On Thucydides' importance to current theory, see Mark V. Kauppi, "Contemporary International Relations Theory and the Peloponnesian War," in Lebow and Strauss, pp. 101–24. See also George Modelski, "Kautilya: Foreign Policy and International System in the Ancient Hindu World," *American Political Science Review* 58 (September 1964): 549–60.
7. See John H. Finley's introduction to *The Complete Writings of Thucydides* (New York: Modern Library, 1951), pp. ix–x.
8. See Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Rex Warner (Harmondsworth, England, and New York: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 49. Cf. Finley, *Complete Writings*, p. 15.
9. See "The Melian Dialogue" in Thucydides, *History*, p. 402. The idea that "it has always been a rule that the weak should be subject to the strong" is discussed earlier in the same work in "The Debate at Sparta and Declaration of War," pp. 80–81.
10. In his lengthier work, *The Discourses*, Machiavelli's republican preferences are apparent. Given the audience for which he wrote *The Prince* (the Medicis), Machiavelli does not emphasize there this republican orientation as he does in *The Discourses*. For a discussion of Machiavelli's thought, see the introduction by Max Lerner in Nicolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* and *The Discourses* (New York: Modern Library, 1950), pp. xxv–xxvi.
11. The distinction between the ethics of "responsibility" and "ultimate ends" is drawn by Max Weber, "Politics As a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, eds. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946, 1978), p. 120.

12. See Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapter XV, p. 56.
13. For example, Machiavelli argues in Chapter XVIII that the prince "should not deviate from what is good, if possible, but be able to do evil if constrained." Indeed, "it is well" for the prince "to seem merciful, faithful, humane, sincere, religious, and also to be so." *The Prince*, p. 65.
14. See William Ebenstein, *Great Political Thinkers: Plato to the Present*, 4th ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), p. 364.
15. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, edited by Michael Oakeshott (New York and London: Collier Macmillan, 1974). These classic citations are drawn from Book 1, Chapter 13.
16. Ibid., Book 1, Chapter 15, p. 113.
17. Ibid., Book 1, Chapter 13, p. 101.
18. One such realist is Hedley Bull. See his *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).
19. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 87. See also Peter Paret, "The Genesis of *On War*," Michael Howard, "The Influence of Clausewitz," and Bernard Brodie, "The Continuing Relevance of *On War*" and "A Guide to the Reading of *On War*," all in *On War*, pp. 3–58 and 641–711. For an extension of Clausewitzian ideas on the importance of societal factors, see Michael Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 57, no. 5 (Summer 1979): 975–86.
20. Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1962), p. ix.
21. Ibid., pp. 111–12.
22. Ibid., p. 112.
23. Ibid., p. 112–13.
24. Ibid., p. 93.
25. A. F. K. Organski, *World Politics*, 2d ed. (New York: Knopf, 1968), p. 104; Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 26; Karl Deutsch, *The Analysis of International Relations* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1967), p. 22.
26. Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy."
27. Organski, *World Politics*, p. 358; and J. David Singer, Stuart Bremer, and John Stuckey, "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820–1965," in *Peace, War, and Numbers*, ed. Bruce Russett (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1972), pp. 21–27. See also Klaus Knorr, *Military Power and Potential* (Cambridge, MA: D. C. Heath, 1970).
28. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *The War Trap* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 153. J. David Singer and associates, *Explaining War: Selected Papers from the Correlates of War Project* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1979).
29. See the discussion in Ernst B. Haas, "On Systems and International Regimes," *World Politics* 27, no. 2 (January 1975), especially pp. 149–155. For examples of the use of the concept of system, see Morton Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics* (New York: Wiley, 1957) and Richard Rosecrance, *Action and Reaction in World Politics* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1962).
30. For a discussion of a number of supposed fallacies, including reification, see Marion J. Levy, Jr., "'Does it Matter If He's Naked?' Bawled the Child," in *Contending Approaches to International Politics*, ed. Klaus Knorr and James N. Rosenau (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 87–106.
31. Rudolph J. Rummel, "Some Dimensions in the Foreign Behavior of States," in James N. Rosenau (ed.), *International Politics and Foreign Policy* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 612. A pioneering work on field theory is Quincy Wright, *The Study of International Relations* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1955).
32. Charles A. McClelland and Gary D. Hoggard, "Conflict Patterns in the Interactions Among Nations," in *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, ed. James N. Rosenau, pp. 711–24. Also Charles A. McClelland, "Warnings in the International Events Flow: EFI and Roz as Threat Indicators," *International Interactions* 5, nos. 2 and 3 (1978): 135–204; "The Acute International Crisis," in *The International System: Theoretical Essays*, ed. Klaus Knorr and Sidney Verba (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 77–92; "The Anticipation of International Crises: Prospects for Theory and Research," *International Studies Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (March 1977): 15–30. For another example of system as interaction, see K. J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1983), p. 27.

33. See. J. L. Brierly, *The Law of Nations: An Introduction to the International Law of Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 47.
34. For an excellent critique of the concept of anarchy and the argument that the dichotomy between domestic and international politics is overdrawn by neorealists, see Helen Milner, "The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory: A Critique," *Review of International Studies* 17, no. 1 (January 1991): 67–85.
35. See John H. Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 5, no. 2 (January 1950): 157–80.
36. See Charles Glaser, "Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994/95): 50–90; Jack Snyder, *Myth of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991). For an argument that states seek influence-maximization rather than mere survival, see Fareed Zakaria, "Realism and Domestic Politics: A Review Essay," in *The Perils of Anarchy: Contemporary Realism and International Security*, eds. Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995).
37. Kenneth N. Waltz develops the stag hunt allegory in his *Man, the State and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), pp. 165–71. For a critique of Waltz's interpretation of Rousseau, see Stanley Hoffmann, "Rousseau on War and Peace," *American Political Science Review* 57, no. 2 (June 1963): 317–33. Cf. J. J. Rousseau, "A Discussion on the Origins of Inequality," in *The Social Contract and Discourses*, trans. G. D. H. Cole (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1950), pp. 235–38.
38. A nonrealist, Ernst B. Haas, argues that such collaboration is indeed possible. Although collaboration is not an inevitable outcome, even "if the cooperative hunting of the stag is demonstrated to be impossible," a likely possibility would be for the hunters to "make informal rules regulating the separate or cooperative hunting of hares." See Haas, *Beyond the Nation-State* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1964), pp. 69–71. An important work that has influenced the use of game theory in international relations is John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern, *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1944, 1953). See also Martin Shubik, *Games for Society, Business, and War: Towards a Theory of Gaming* (New York: Elsevier, 1975); Barry R. Schlenker and Thomas V. Bonoma, "Fun and Games: The Validity of Games for the Study of Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 22, no. 1 (March 1978): 1–28; Anatol Rapoport and A. M. Ghammah, *Prisoner's Dilemma* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965). On bargaining, see Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960). For a discussion of games such as stag hunt, prisoner's dilemma, deadlock, and chicken, see Robert Axelrod and Robert O. Keohane, "Achieving Cooperation Under Anarchy," *World Politics* 38, no. 1 (October 1985): 226–54.
39. See Robert Powell, "Absolute and Relative Gains in International Relations Theory," *American Political Science Review* 85 (1991): 1303–1320; Joseph Grieco, Robert Powell, and Duncan Snidal, "The Relative Gains Problem for International Cooperation," *American Political Science Review* 87 (1993): 729–743.
40. See "Memorandum by Sir Eyre Crowe on the Present State of British Relations with France and Germany, January 1, 1907" in G. P. Gooch and H. Temperly, eds., *British Documents on the Origin of the War, 1898–1914* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1928), 5, no. 3, pp. 402–7 and 414–20. Reprinted in Fred A. Sondermann, David S. McClellan, and William C. Olson, eds., *The Theory and Practice of International Relations*, 5th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1979), p. 120.
41. See Henry A. Kissinger, *A World Restored: The Politics of Conservatism in a Revolutionary Age* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964), pp. 317–18.
42. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. The use of the term *voluntarism* differs somewhat from the technical use of the term by many philosophers. See Paul Edwards, ed., *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* 5, nos. 7 and 8 (New York: Free Press, 1972), pp. 270–72.
43. The billiard ball metaphor for the balance of power is generally attributed to Arnold Wolfers, "The Actors in International Politics," in *Theoretical Aspects of International Relations*, ed. William T. R. Fox (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1959), pp. 83–106.

44. See Waltz, *Man, the State and War*, pp. 204, 209.
45. Richard K. Ashley, "The Poverty of Neorealism," *International Organization* 38, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 225–86.
46. See pluralist Ernst B. Haas, *Beyond the Nation–State*, p. 70.
47. See Ernst B. Haas, "On Systems and International Regimes," *World Politics* 27, no. 2 (January 1975), p. 151.
48. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 161.
49. Ibid., p. 519.
50. Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Stability of a Bipolar World," *Daedalus* 93 (Summer 1964): 881–909; Karl W. Deutsch and J. David Singer, "Multipolar Power Systems and International Stability," *World Politics* 16, no. 3 (April 1964): 390–406.
51. Deutsch and Singer, "Multipolar Power Systems," p. 400.
52. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "Systemic Polarization and the Occurrence and Duration of War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 22, no. 2 (June 1978): 245, 246. See also Michael D. Wallace, *War and Rank Among Nations* (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1973).
53. See, for example, Melvin Small and J. David Singer, eds., *International War: An Anthology and Study Guide* (Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press, 1985); John A. Vasquez, *The War Puzzle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Manus I. Midlarsky, ed., *Handbook of War Studies* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Midlarsky, *The Onset of War* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988); and Jack S. Levy, "Theories of General War," *World Politics*, 37, no. 3 (April 1985): 344–74.
54. Kenneth N. Waltz, "The New World Order," *Millennium* 22, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 187–95.
55. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 165–70; John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," *International Security* 15, no. 1 (Summer 1990): 5–56. See also Glenn Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics* 36, no. 4 (July 1984): 461–95.
56. See, for example, Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Edward Mansfield, *Power, Trade, and War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Nazli Choucri and Robert C. North, *Nations in Conflict: National Growth and International Violence* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1975); Dale C. Copeland, "Neorealism and the Myth of Bipolar: Stability Toward a New Dynamic Realist Theory of Major War," *Security Studies* 5, no. 3 (Spring 1996): 29–89. Discussion and references to power transition and power cycle theories are later in this chapter.
57. See, for example, Michael N. Barnett and Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt, 1962–73," *International Organization* 45, no. 3 (Summer 1991): 369–95; Steven R. David, "Explaining Third World Alignment," *World Politics* 43, no. 2 (January 1991): 233–55.
58. Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987) and *Revolutions and War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).
59. See, for example, Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," *International Organization* 44, no. 2 (Spring 1990): 137–68.
60. Stanley Hoffmann, "Weighing the Balance of Power," *Foreign Affairs* 50, no. 4 (July 1972): 618–43.
61. Steven L. Spiegel and Kenneth N. Waltz, eds., *Conflict in World Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Winthrop, 1971), pp. 454–74.
62. Robert O. Keohane, "The Theory of Hegemonic Stability and Changes in International Economic Regimes, 1967–1977," in Ole R. Holsti, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alexander L. George, eds., *Change in the International System* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980), pp. 131–62. For a critique and citations of the literature, see Arthur A. Stein, "The Hegemon's Dilemma: Great Britain, the United States, and the International Economic Order," *International Organization* 38, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 355–86; Susan Strange, "The Persistent Myth of Lost Hegemony," *International Organization* 41, no. 4 (Autumn 1987): 551–74; Isabelle Grunberg, "Exploring the 'Myth' of Hegemonic Stability," *International Organization* 44, no. 4 (Autumn 1990): 431–77.

63. Charles P. Kindleberger, *The World in Depression, 1929–1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); Robert Gilpin, *U.S. Power and the Multinational Corporation* (New York: Basic Books, 1975); and Stephen Krasner, "State Power and the Structure of International Trade," *World Politics* 28, no. 3 (April 1976): 317–47.
64. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York: Random House, 1987). Cf. the earlier work of the economist Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).
65. Kindleberger, *The World in Depression;* Joseph Lepgold, *The Declining Hegemon: The United States and European Defense, 1960–1990* (New York: Praeger, 1990).
66. For example, see Henry R. Nau, *The Myth of America's Decline* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990); and Samuel P. Huntington, "The U.S.—Decline or Renewal?" *Foreign Affairs* 67, 2 (Winter 1988/89): 76–96.
67. Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).
68. Stephen Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables," in Krasner, ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 1–21.
69. See the special issue of *World Politics* 38, no. 1 (October 1985), edited by Kenneth Oye; R. Harrison Wagner, "The Theory of Games and the Problem of International Cooperation," *American Political Science Review* 70, no. 2 (June 1983): 330–46; Robert Jervis, "Realism, Game Theory, and Cooperation," *World Politics* 40, no. 3 (April 1988): 317–49; Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (New York: Basic Books, 1984); Michael Taylor, *Anarchy and Cooperation* (New York: Wiley, 1976). For an overview of the various approaches to regimes, see Stephen Haggard and Beth A. Simmons, "Theories of International Regimes," *International Organization* 41, no. 3 (Summer 1987): 491–517.
70. For works associated with the Correlates of War project, see "Suggested Readings" for this chapter under Singer's name. For an overview, see Vasquez, *The War Puzzle.*
71. This summary is drawn from Karen A. Feste, "Behavioral Theories" in *Women, Gender, and World Politics,* eds. Peter R. Beckman and Francine D'Amico (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1994), p. 48. Cf. Lewis F. Richardson, *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1960) and David Wilkinson, *Deadly Quarrels: Lewis F. Richardson and the Statistical Study of War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
72. *Ibid.,* p. 45.
73. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 3, 10.
74. Ibid., p. 10.
75. Ibid., p. 13. The implications of the uneven growth of power were also addressed in Lenin's concept of "uneven development."
76. George Modelski, "The Long Cycle of Global Politics and the Nation-State," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20, no. 2 (April 1978): 214–35. Notice that Modelski does not describe the international system as being anarchic. Although a central authority is lacking, order and authority do exist. See his comments in "Long Cycles and the Strategy of the U.S. International Economic Policy," in *America in a Changing World Political Economy,* eds. William P. Avery and David P. Rapkin (White Plains, NY: Longman, 1982), p. 99.
77. Modelski, "The Long Cycle of Global Politics," p. 217. It is Modelski's emphasis on the primacy of political factors that places him within the context of the realist as opposed to globalist image.
78. Ibid., p. 235.
79. George Modelski, ed., *Exploring Long Cycles* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987), p. ix. See also George Modelski and William R. Thompson, *Seapower in Global Politics, 1494–1993* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988). Cf. Nathaniel Beck, "The Illusion of Cycles in International Relations," and Joshua S. Goldstein, "The Possibility of Cycles in International Relations," *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (December 1991): 455–80.
80. Aside from Robert Gilpin and George Modelski, other authors who deal with power cycles include Charles F. Doran, *The Politics of Assimilation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971);

Charles F. Doran and Wes Parsons, "War and the Cycle of Relative Power," *American Political Science Review* 74, no. 4 (December 1980): 947–65; Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982); A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Jacek Kugler and Douglas Lemki, *Parity and War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996). William C. Wohlforth, "Realism and the End of the Cold War," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994/95): 91–129.

81. See, for example, Jack S. Levy, "Theories of General War," *World Politics* 37, no. 3 (April 1985): 344–74.
82. For example, see Randall L. Schweller, "Domestic Structure and Preventive War: Are Democracies More Pacific?" *World Politics* 44, no. 2 (January 1992): 235–69.
83. Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration has been particularly influential. See, among other works, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981); Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).
84. See Kenneth N. Waltz, "Letter to the Editor," *International Organization* 36, no. 3 (Summer 1982): 680, which cites his *Theory of International Politics*, p. 78.
85. Robert G. Gilpin, "The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism," *International Organization* 38, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 302.
86. See Randall L. Schweller and David Priess, "A Tale of Two Realisms: Expanding the Institutions Debate," *Mershon International Studies Review* 41, supplement 1 (May 1997): 1–33.
87. Glenn H. Snyder, "Process Variables in Neorealist Theory," in *Realism: Restatements and Renewal*, ed. Benjamin Frankel, special issue of *Security Studies* 5, no. 3 (Spring 1996): 167–192; Barry Buzan discusses what he terms "interaction capacity," systemic but nonstructural factors that "not only affect the ability and willingness of units to interact, but also determine what types and levels of interaction are possible and desired." See Barry Buzan, Charles Jones, and Richard Little, *The Logic of Anarchy: Neorealism to Structural Realism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 69–80. See also Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Behavior in Multipolarity," *International Organization* 44, no. 2 (Spring 1990): 137–168.
88. In a review of Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*, Richard Rosecrance suggests Waltz's work is heavily determinist. Rosecrance, "International Relations Theory Revisited," *International Organization* 35, no. 4 (Autumn 1981): 691–713. Waltz rejects this charge in his "Letter to the Editor," p. 680.
89. Waltz, "Letter to the Editor," p. 680.
90. Gilpin, "Richness of Political Realism," p. 300.
91. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 161; and Ernst B. Haas, "The Balance of Power: Prescription, Concept or Propaganda?" *World Politics* 5, no. 2 (July 1953): 442–77.
92. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.
93. See Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).
94. Gilpin, "Richness of Political Realism," p. 300.
95. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 548.
96. Gilpin, "Richness of Political Realism," p. 299; Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 9.
97. See, for example, P. Terrence Hopmann, Dina A. Zinnes, and J. David Singer, *Cumulation in International Relations Research* (Denver, CO: University of Denver, Graduate School of International Studies, 1981).
98. Richard K. Ashley is criticizing such authors as Kenneth Waltz, Robert Gilpin, Stephen Krasner, George Modelski, Robert Tucker, and Charles Kindleberger. See Ashley's "The Poverty of Neorealism," *International Organization* 38, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 225–86, p. 228. Also see Ashley, "Political Realism and Human Interests," *International Studies Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (June 1984): 204–35; Ashley, "Three Modes of Economism," *International Studies Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (December 1983): 463–96.
99. Ashley, "Poverty of Neorealism," p. 230. See also Robert Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).