

SECTION II: POLITICAL AND THEORETICAL QUESTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Connections between Foreign and Domestic Politics in Theories of International Relations

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INTRODUCTION

To set the target this disquisition is intending to deal with, let us define a theory of international relations - International relations theory is a theory of international actors, let them be the state, international organisations, or informal groups or individuals, and their interaction, or the lack of it, with each other. This definition enables one to employ a wide range of theories, most notably realism and liberalism (along with their main sub-theories) in order to gain insight into how the most influential schools of thought have approached the question of domestic and foreign politics and the links between them. This focus was triggered by the inability of system level theories to explain international relations in practice.

There are three levels of analysis in the theories (at least that much is generally agreed upon) and from each it is possible to perceive its own politics. The connections between them are vague and up for contesting based on different paradigms. The target of this article is the line between the levels, which enables us to cast some light on the problem of foreign and domestic politics' nature, singularity/duality, interaction with each other, and different interpretation from colliding theoretical perspectives.

In order to avoid over-complicating the picture, the individual level is left out of this article, as the decision making of bureaucratic systems is a complex enough concept and the former would add little to the matter at hand. The psychology of politicians could be of interest to historians, but they contribute little to a general international relations theory, as the characteristics of individuals are too inconstant to be integrated to it.

The article turns to realism and its sub-theories as no discussion about international relations cannot be conducted without taking the traditional approach of international relations into account. It is possible to argue against the influence of realist or neorealist theories in the modern liberal world, but history and the rhetoric of non-liberal states today validate the realist school as inevitable for this disquisition. While the systemic approach has never allowed concentrated attention on the domestic influences, it is possible to draw connections even in these concepts.

In addition, the other traditional school of thought of liberals and neoliberals receives proper attention in order to provide an impartial overview of the realist-liberal spectrum. In fact, liberalism, as a non-system level theory, presents several associations between the two levels that cannot be left unattended.

A number of established connections and multi-level theories are also attended to. While these are usually overlooked by most analysts (perhaps because of their complexity), they offer great insight into the question at hand. However, even these are not comprehensive and have a number of flaws. These theories could offer a great deal to everyday decision makers and their advisers but are difficult to introduce into most international relations researches.

BACKGROUND

International relations has a number of contending theories, and no single one has been dominant over all others. There are theories that deal with realistic targets and ideas, normative values and calculative reality, and the different range of possible actors on the international stage. In this situation, it is no wonder that the understanding of international relations theories is so fragmented.

As if that were not enough, the political world that is the target of the theories is not a stagnant object but an ever-changing entity, that is close to (if not altogether) impossible to objectify as the theories find their way to practical politics and thus start generating subjectivity.

Most explanations of international relations are usually categorized according to their “level of analysis”. The level of analysis establishes

where to look for the causes of state (or system) behaviour. The most common layout, which is also employed here, is Kenneth Waltz's distinction of three analysis levels:

1. Individual level – explores the personal or psychological concerns of individual statesmen;
2. Domestic level – concentrates on the society, culture, and political institutions of individual states;
3. International level – explains the states' position in the international system (aka. System level) (Waltz, 1959).

International relations theorists often recommend that analysts should keep to a single level of analysis. Some argue that different levels are mutually exclusive, asserting that one could not add two types of statements together. Others are convinced that even though domestic factors matter, they tend to be empirically intractable (Achen & Snidal, 1989, 166).

International level

Realism as the most venerable theory of international relations stresses the role of power in international affairs. The neorealists, who are the modern heirs of this theory, concentrate on either threats or power, but maintain the same international level. Even though some of the neorealist authors linger on the border of domestic and international level, they have done little to cast light over the line.

The same applies to the neoliberals, who claim that the developments of the 20th century and complex interdependence have rendered war obsolete (at least among liberal-democratic nations). While the values, actors, presumptions, and answers are different, the targeted level remains the same. States are characterized with the same traits and attributes, decision-making procedures, and ability to manage societies' resources.

Domestic level

Domestic level theories locate the determinants of international relations and foreign affairs from within the state. The international system is constituted by the states, not the other way around. Depending on the situation, states' responses may vary greatly. These principles can be seen in the idealistic school of Immanuel Kant, in John Stuart Mill and in the practice of

Woodrow Wilson, who stressed that in democratic polities, foreign policies, like internal policies, are subject to domestic debate and deliberation (Moravcsik, 2003).

The current domestic theories can be divided into three subcategories, according to the sources of domestic policy being targeted (Moravcsik, 1993) (Moravcsik's classification has been used as the basis of the categorization):

1. Society-centred theories stress pressure from domestic social groups through legislatures, interest groups, elections, and public opinion;
2. State-centred domestic theories locate the sources of foreign policy behaviour within the administrative and decision-making apparatus of the executive branch of the state;
3. State-Society relations theories emphasize the institutions of representation, education, and administration that link state and society. The liberal democratic peace theory is one of these theories.

Even some realist theorists, like Stephen Walt, Jack Snyder, and Stephan van Evera have employed the domestic variable priority in determining state interests and linked these with system level theories in order to explain aggressive behaviour in the international stage. Domestic theories have also enjoyed priority in a number of works by theorists dealing with international political economy and variants of interdependency.

REALISM AND FOREIGN-DOMESTIC CONNECTIONS

Classical realism

Realism provides a good starting point as its tautological structure and its pessimistic assumptions about individual and state behaviour serve as barriers against wishful thinking (Keohane, 1984, 245).

In the interest of comparability, the connection is not addressed from a viewpoint of any single and specific theory, but rather a generalisation of this school of thought and most established theories will be used in order to generate a wider understanding of the positions. It is a common approach to see realist theories as a site of a great many contested claims and meta-physical disputes instead of a coherent theoretical position (Walker, 1987, 67).

The classic realism theorist Hans Morgenthau sets the bar by defining politics in general to be a question of power and a struggle for it (Morgenthau, 1973, 27). However, he does draw a strong line between foreign and domestic politics and sets a normative goal of how these two should be treated – the essential foreign policy goals should be pursued with disregard for the domestic results, while merely desirable foreign policy aspirations can be sacrificed if need be (ibid, 147). Unfortunately, the distinction of essential and desirable foreign policy aspects is often blurred and depends on the interpretation of the decision maker. This subjectivity leads states to take irrational actions even when they should be rational actors.

It is clear that most classical realists regard foreign policy and domestic politics as separate in terms of practice. The two hold the same principal outline in terms of theory and how they are regarded by realists, but that is where most draw the line of the singularity.

What draws special attention in this case is the nature of the relations between the two politics. While realists usually claim that states hold normative values at little regard, then in this case the ideological goals are set for the agents of foreign politics. This represents the ideal of realist international relations, but practice is seldom as perfect as its theoretical objective.

The first notable realist historian Thucydides revealed how domestic public opinion was taken into consideration when dealing with foreign affairs in ancient Greece. “The Peloponnesian War” does not directly address the connection of internal and external politics, but the long foreign political debates among the city-states' leaders imply that the politicians of Athens did indeed pay attention to the impression made on other Athenian Empire (Lending) cities. In this Thucydides reflects the psychological struggles of the decision makers of ancient Greece and confirms that public opinion was also a factor for consideration (Thucydides, 49). By the understandings of Hans Morgenthau, this was little more than poor statesmanship that leads only to weakening of the state. Still, it would be too bold to claim that this was the sole factor in the historic Spartan supremacy in Greece and the downfall of the “Athenian Empire”.

Centuries later, in the modern era, the two great foreign policy practitioners Cardinal de Richelieu and Chancellor Otto von Bismarck established *raison d'état* and *realpolitik* as the norm in their states and throughout Europe. Both of them set foreign policy before domestic needs and thus, in Morgenthau's perception, employed exceptional statesmanship and realised the foreign policy power potential to the maximum.

What can be noted in *raison d'état* in this paper's context is that the state interest driven politics could also be employed domestically. In the interest of foreign politics, extra taxes could be levied and laws imposed. So this can be treated as a case of foreign politics influencing domestic politics. Yet it is still possible to distinguish one from the other.

Bismarck did use the French domestic politics and public opinion in his favour by deceiving Napoleon III into a war that was swiftly won by the prepared and overwhelming German coalition (Kissinger, 2000, 147). This event clearly elaborates one of the most obvious and cunning uses of domestic politics in international relations. So in this case, the domestic politics of France became the object of Prussian foreign politics, but also in a strange twist of events a domestic issue of Germany, as the successful war resulted in the establishing of the German state.

While both of them employed foreign policy arguments and motivations on domestic fronts, there is a difference in how this conduct can be perceived. Richelieu strictly distinguished one politics from the other; Bismarck often treated domestic politics in the manner of foreign policy, so the difference was not as clear for him (Feuchtwanger, 2002, 254). In both cases the international factors were clearly influencing domestic politics.

Neorealism

In modern theories, classical realism has been forced to give way to modified versions, including (most notably) neorealism, which attempts to widen the classic understanding of power and also introduce other minor side-actors and factors to the state. This enables the creation of a more comprehensive theory at the expense of the simplistic appeal of realism.

One of the founders of neorealism, Kenneth Waltz, concentrates on the systematic differences of states and their domestic systems, but dedicates

little attention to the decision making process and thus disregards domestic political struggle as non-influential on foreign policy. Instead, he highlights the structural differences of states that lead to different decision-making processes of states. Waltz states: “A domestic political structure is defined, first, according to the principle by which it is ordered; second, by specification of the function of formally differentiated units; and third, by the distribution of capabilities across those units” (Waltz, 1979, 82). What he means is that domestic politics is made up by a hierarchic structure where institutions interact with each other and domestic politics differ based on the set-up of these. While this is no doubt true, it leaves analysts into the dark about how to evaluate real domestic influences on foreign politics. Even though he stops at systemic connections, it leaves some room to continue from that and explore into how domestic politics shapes foreign policy, just as his own “second image” (Waltz, 1959) determines.

Turning more attention to the systematic differences of states, it is important to keep in mind that Kenneth Waltz himself presents a crucial point. The systematic layout of institutions does play an important role in both domestic and foreign politics. Because of this, some states' foreign politics are much more open to domestic political influence than others'. Even in such similar systems as the UK's and the USA's, Waltz notes differences affected by the constraints that the system imposes on the representatives as he compares the British Prime Minister's seat and the US President's seat in their freedom to act as they please (Waltz, 1979, 83).

Bureaucratic realism

The bureaucratic influence on foreign policy cannot be denied by the realists, and some have even highlighted it. The connection can be drawn from a bureaucratic approach of Max Weber, who establishes the state apparatus as key in all policy making regardless of the internal or external direction (Weber, 1978). While somewhat uncharacteristic to realism, Robert Jervis does attribute to leaders a predetermined proneness for flawed perspective of rational and irrational decisions and, together with possibly

flawed information, states are bound to take unreasonable actions rather sooner than later (Jervis, 1976)*.

As if that were not enough, all policies are constrained by budgetary limitations, and in democratic societies it may be very difficult to justify foreign policy expenditures without jeopardising the objectives. As this irrationality is present (and the frequency of its occurrence is not limited) it is possible to argue that in international relations states cannot be presumed to be rational actors. However, the realist theory can be employed in order to explain this irrationality as merely a weakening condition of the state, which can result in governments' being more prone to foreign influence and thus becoming non-independent actors. In fact, the practice of international relations rather confirms this approach – the satellite and vassal states come to mind.

Deterrence theory

As most realists theories, deterrence does not deal with domestic politics either (George & Smoke, 1974, 11), but can be employed and discussed in this context. It is possible to relate deterrence and domestic politics as states are never homogeneous, and thus this context allows room for debate of how the international effect may be used by the domestic political opposition.

Domestic factors on the international stage can be witnessed as the states' unitary appearance is only illusionary. Deterrence works mostly on the public of the targeted state and less directly on the political elite making the decisions (conveniently referred to as the state). How much this public influence reflects on states' behaviour may vary depending on a number of factors including systemic differences.

Should a foreign actor (let us call it state 1) prefer an action in another state (state 2) supported by a domestic faction in state 2 (suitably called faction 2 as it is not dominant in its state), then any rational actor (state 1) would

* Robert Jervis draws our attention to the fact that the tendency toward egocentric perception makes leaders interpret their own decisions as responses to objective conditions, while attributing the actions of foreign rivals to hostile disposition.

consider applying threats to ensure that the supportive faction (faction 2) prevails over the initial power faction (faction 1) in a domestic struggle.

This is a case of international relations modifying states' domestic politics, but the opposite direction of foreign-domestic influence is just as true if this policy is successful and the domestic faction (faction 2) gains decision making rights and starts or stops the state from using the policy that triggered deterrence in the first place.

Revolutionary systems

Domestic revolutions are also a cause for international instability. Both Henry Kissinger and Stephen Walt agree that with stable states, the international arena is less prone to shifts as well.

Kissinger sets the domestic political structure of states as a key element of international relations. He separates stable and revolutionary system models in both international and domestic structures. Stable international systems are characterized by actors with domestic political structures based on compatible notions about the means and goals of foreign policies. As a rule of thumb, governments with stable domestic political structures do not resort to revolutionary or adventurous foreign policies to restore or preserve domestic unity. In contrast, revolutionary systems contain actors with domestic political structures that contrast sharply with each other (Kissinger, 1977, 12).

Stephen Walt takes this idea a bit further and attempts to determine what the aspects are that transfer domestic revolutions to an international level. He reaches the understanding that the revolutionary ideology and the desire to spread the ideology is the only factor that seems to be in place on most cases (Walt, 1992, 321).

Another interesting aspect in this is the result of a study conducted by Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder (Mansfield & Snyder, 1995) stating that democratizing nations are much more likely to enter wars than either stable democracies or stable autocracies. This clearly reflects on the influence of domestic politics, where the active struggle for domestic power could cause heightened hostility towards neighbours.

Defensive realism

There are a number of refinements to the realist theory; one of the most notable among them is the offence-defence theory, as laid out by Robert Jervis, George Quester, and Stephen Van Evera, constituting that war was more likely when states could conquer each other easily. When defence was easier than offence, security was more plentiful (Walt, 1998). While important enough to note in this context, these defensive realists concentrate on the international system level and pay little respect to domestic developments (other than technological).

However, with a little imagination, it is possible to develop this theory to take the public into account as well. Certainly any analyst of international relations has noticed differences in the defensive behaviour of populations throughout history. From that, it is possible to combine that knowledge with the defensive realists' theory and reach a conclusion that states also rely on their populations and on popular support.

The defensive realism framework also offers connections between internal stability and foreign policy, but that constitutes primarily as a question of government legitimacy and can be used on a long-term evaluation of defensibility. Different factions inside the state (like the 5th column of the Spanish Civil War) can be attracted to weaken the state's defence and thus reflect in international actions.

LIBERALS AND FOREIGN-DOMESTIC CONNECTIONS

In international relations theories, liberal thoughts have often been branded as theoretical naiveté by the realists. However, along with the truly utopian works, there are more than enough “serious” and rational flows that have been unfairly disregarded because of their liberal principles. States' foreign policies are not driven by the desire for power, as the realists suggest, but rather by the aspirations of increased wealth and their citizens' well being.*

* The modern homo economicus is bound to realize that war does not pay and the free trade policies can be most beneficial only in a predictable commercial environment of international peace. The basis for a majority of economic models is the assumption that all states, like human beings, are rational and will always attempt to maximize their utility - whether it be for monetary or non-monetary gains.

Liberalism often treats foreign and domestic politics as one, but among the numerous sub-theories there are several variations, and the connection are often unclear. In general, domestic politics is considered to be the foundation of foreign policy, and because of that, public opinion is held at much higher regard than realists usually give to it. This is apparent in the analysis level, which is evidently the domestic level in this case.

Liberal peace theory (perpetual peace - Kant)

Based on liberal values, foreign policies should be used to spread democracy and thus ensure the growth of peaceful neighbours and the number of allies. These ideals rely on the liberal democratic peace theory - liberal democracies do not go to war with each other. The question of how much the liberal nations are forced into war with other, non-democratic states is still up for debate, but most modern theorist agree that there is no empirical or logical reason to suggest that democratic nations are less inclined to war than other forms of government (Doyle, 2006).

It is possible to argue that it would be difficult to elucidate wars to constituencies, and domestic politics will play an important role in this. Prolonged wars can play an internal role in democracies as public support can turn against any foreign policy and bring forth a change in government if that foreign policy cannot be altered. This is true not only for democracies alone though. Looking back into history, the downfall of three out of five European empires was caused by the Great War. However, one must admit that democracies are much more susceptible to such problems than autocracies.

As modern wars have suggested, it is impossible to alter foreign policy narratives quickly enough to relax public demand if the initial policy does not hold a long-term appeal, but is only briefly “sold” to the electorate. So democratic states have to be very careful as to what wars to enter, because every government is interested in maintaining its position and, even though economic and administrative issues outweigh foreign policy issues, it is impossible to control the course of military campaigns, and these endeavours can yield disastrous results in terms of public support to governments (The Vietnam War 1959-1975 and Iraq War 2003-present day are the most obvious examples). On the other hand, democracies can exit wars with less threat of personal consequences to the leaders (Goemans,

1995) (in comparison to fallen autocrats and dictators) and this could be the equalizing factor that levels the propensity to enter wars.

A more complex situation is in place when liberal-democratic states are interacting with non-liberal states. While liberal democratic states often employ neoliberal principles between themselves, the realist paradigm is used for authoritarian states. The reason is simple, and an explanation can be drawn from the prisoner's dilemma (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985, 229)*. When dealing with non-liberal states, the democratic leaders do not enjoy the same level of trust and understanding that they have amongst themselves and often fear being exploited, thereby choosing not to emplace their confidence in their counterparts. As realism offers much safer positions in this case, a link can be drawn between employing realism in foreign affairs and defecting in the "prisoner's dilemma".

The whole liberal peace theory relies strongly on the constituency to make sure that the state prefers peaceful solutions over armed tests of strength, or, as that statement on a general level has been challenged by many theorists and analysts, at least not against each other.

Also the technological advances made in communications technologies over the past decades support the democratic peace. The increased prosperity and the spreading of liberal values such as human rights, tolerance and diversity contribute to the expansion of cosmopolitan perspective that abolish almost any reason to war amongst liberal states (Onuf & Johnson, 1995, 192-193). Even though the internet has been generally perceived as a democracy spreading medium, recent analyses tend to question that; Evgeny Morozov advocates that in the cases of China, Belarus, and Russia, the internet has been employed in the service of the regime and there is no reason to believe that it has developed democratic notions (Morozov, 2009).

* While not the creator of "Prisoner's dilemma" Axelrod was one of the first to employ it in international relations theories. The principle of the dilemma is that while two "prisoners" cooperate with each other, they have the highest relative gains. When one cooperates and the other defects, the defector gains more than either would have gained from cooperating, but the cooperator gains nothing. When both defect, both gain less than when they would have cooperated, but more than they would have gained when being the cooperator in the second strategy.

The economic development and spread of liberal values has even sparked some very optimistic ideas, such as Micheal Howard's, that while wars may still occur between less developed societies, between highly developed societies wars may not recur, and that a stable framework for international order will become firmly established (Howard, 1991, 176). Even though it is possible to brand these statements as post-cold war euphoria, they seem to hold some truth.

While Wilsonian idealism as a school of thought in international relations theory does not directly deal with the connections of foreign and domestic politics, in idealism the democratic state is expected to represent the voice of people. Idealism eventually renders foreign policy obsolete, and states would become purely administrative institutions while perpetual peace ensures that no hostile foreign policy is needed.

Idealists set a normative goal that states should strive for, but lacking the realistic insight of how things are in practice, it would seemingly take an absolute miracle to reach the set values. However, when we look at the principles proposed by Wilson close to a century ago, a great many of them have come true. Democratic states have taken the stance towards defending each other from non-democratic threats – the war in Afghanistan can be perceived as such. The nations based liberal democracies do indeed have little reason to attack one another if all they have to gain is more voters and tax payers, but also more responsibilities and probably more restlessness to re-establish self-governance.

Neoliberals

Neoliberalism, similarly to liberalism, is again not a specific theory, but a wider understanding of worldly affairs. Two neoliberal authors, Joseph Nye Jr. and Robert Keohane, established the concept of complex interdependence as a key factor in international relations in 1977 largely in order to counter the popularity boost of neorealism (Nye & Keohane, 1977).

Even though a system level theory, neoliberals add multinational corporations, non-government organisations, and the global financial market entity as actors on the international relations stage. States still hold the most important role, but that is diminishing in the long run (Keohane & Nye jr, 1998, 81-82). In the complex interdependence that is a norm throughout the

democratic world, these non-state actors are starting to play an even bigger role than states.

As the non-state actors do not commonly have a foreign policy (or a domestic policy as such) they do not directly contribute to the solution of this article. However, the states are much more reliant on their domestic politics, as the decisions made on the internal frontier, more often than not, reflect on the international frontier through the same non-state actors (ibid, 83).

Warmongering holds little reason in the neoliberal perspective, because the interdependent international pressure discourages non-collective war efforts with third parties (non-democratic nations). Inside the complex interdependency, regime wars hold little to no point at all, as ruling more territories populated by voters with diverse ethnic and cultural background would add more problems than it would solve. However, parts of complex interdependence ends on the “edge of the democratic world”, so the whole international system is not really included.

The neoliberal concept of soft power (Nye Jr, 2004, 8)* also supports domestic influence on the international stage. It allows a domestic to domestic level to be employed on a global scale, and thus the domestic actors can contribute to the foreign relations of a state. In a sense, soft power is the true product of “public diplomacy”.

It is impossible to distinguish foreign from domestic politics in the soft power concept, as the domestic policies carry out the foreign goals as well. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise that most states are determined to maintain their hard power and have little regard to soft power, which they have little understanding of and limited control over.

* Joseph Nye jr. argues that soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion, so that they want what you want. If you can get others to be attracted to want what you want, (to help set their preferences), it costs you much less in carrots and sticks and the result would be more favourable public opinion and credibility abroad, which in turn regenerates soft power.

Neoliberal institutionalism

Neoliberal institutionalism relies on international organisations to bring order to the anarchic world of international relations. The organisations are supposed to ensure that rules and norms, agreed upon by the states, are followed. As institutionalism moves up to the system level, it helps little in determining the role of domestic politics in it.

However a flow of institutionalism, the regime theory generates a new understanding of the international system and domestic politics connections. In order to enhance cooperation, states form international regimes – a set of mutual expectations, rules and regulations, plans, organisational energies, and financial commitment, which have been accepted by a group of states (Ruggie, 1975, 570). Regimes may concentrate on a single issue or several issues. Regimes consists of norms – standards of behaviour defined in terms of rights and obligations; rules – specific prescriptions; and decision making procedures – prevailing practices for making and implementing collective choice. Regimes can be either formal or informal and can be consensual or imposed by a dominant actor (Krasner, 1985, 1-3).

As two sets of regimes can be distinguished (Keohane, 1984, 50-62), it is important to see how either is treated in relation to domestic actors. Robert Keohane establishes regimes based on either harmony or cooperation. Harmonious regimes are characterised by all actors automatically achieving their goals by pursuing self-interest. International regimes that function on harmony, often lack formal structures. Cooperation regimes are created either in reaction to an existing conflicts or as an effort to avoid future conflicts and the actors adjust to each other.

In harmonic regimes it is impossible to separate foreign factors from domestic ones, and so all politics forms a solid set. One could argue that relations in these regimes are in no way political, and from a realist's point of view, that would probably be correct; but as these regimes do influence the lives of the public, liberals can see the political connections of regimes.

In cooperation based regimes, domestic actors have a role in maintaining the regime and thus interlink with states' foreign politics. Through this, domestic and foreign politics are connected as the non-state actors most commonly participate on both state and system level.

MULTI-LEVEL SOLUTIONS

The single level analysis can really be used in only a limited set of empirical international relations problems. While attractive and simple, the pure international relations theories offer few solutions when submitted to criticism consisting of empirical problems and theoretical limitations of explanations that require the inclusion of domestic factors. So it seems like a crucial necessity to formulate a theory integrating the international and domestic levels.

Economic theories

Peter Katzenstein has targeted the importance of domestic factors in foreign economic policy and cross-national variation. "The main purpose of all strategies of foreign economic policy is to make domestic policies compatible with the international political economy" (Katzenstein, 1978, 4). In this, the state must be concerned with domestic and foreign pressures simultaneously. Katzenstein has focused on a structural factor such as "state strength/state weakness". What he unfortunately fails to do is really provide a tangible determination of how that "state strength" can be measured.

In international economic relations a considerable number of works have dealt with domestic-political causes in foreign trade policy. Domestic protectionist notions are used to explain suboptimal policy decisions. One of the most noteworthy works in the field of foreign-domestic economic politics colliding is Stephan Krasner's argument that stagnated domestic institutions prevented Britain and the United States from choosing optimal trade and monetary policies accounting for the changes in their international positions before and after the Great War (Krasner, 1976, 338).

Two-level games

The balancing between domestic and foreign economic politics is a concept similar to the two-level games of Robert Putnam, who concentrates on international negotiations in order to explain his singular approach to domestic and foreign politics. In this perception, statesmen are involved in decisions that affect both domestic and international levels simultaneously. Robert Putnam stresses the need to address the role of social classes, interest groups (both economic and non-economic), legislators, and even public

opinion and elections, not simply executive officials and institutional arrangements, into the domestic equation (Putnam, 1988, 433).

In order to do that, international negotiations are described as two card-tables, where the decision maker's chair is situated behind both at the same time. The foreign policy agents attempt to maximize the gains on the international field, while insuring their seat of office. Decisions not acceptable on either level can end the negotiations or cost the chiefs of governments (COG) their jobs.

Though the two-level games are most useful in case studies, they can also be widely conceptualized and generalised to international relations theory as a whole. The complexity of the interrelation and lack of attention drawn to non-state actors has provided some valid criticism, and the game concept needs a great deal of work in order to become a widely acknowledged theory, but the general idea is promising. There have been a few attempts to alter Putnam's concept in order to mend the rough edges, like Jeffrey Knopf's three-to-three game (Knopf, 1993, 599-600) but these have been too concentrated on broadening the idea in order to grasp all aspects of international negotiations instead of simplifying and applying the games to international relations in general, which would allow it to become a comprehensive theory.

It is difficult to relate the two-level games with any existing theory, as they seem to incorporate the liberal understanding of domesticity constrained COG negotiating in order to gain more power and influence while considering the other side's domestic options as well. However, it is clear that the process of decision making constitutes both foreign and domestic politics at the same time, and, thus, there is no difference between them.

CONCLUSIONS

Connections between images

Both realism and neoliberalism assume that states are rational actors with stable preferences and domestic resources. While the system level tries to marginalize the debate over the influence of domestic politics, it is still constrained with the reality that domestic politics does in reality have an indisputable role of a "black box". Even though it is not necessary to understand the internal complexity of the "black box", the coherence

between input and output should still be subjected to theoretic debate and empirical scrutiny.

Researchers of international relations often employ system level as the primary and introduce domestic factors as needed (when impossible to avoid). This encourages ad hoc interpretations, thus failing to provide any generalizations to the interactions of domestic and foreign policies. In this case the source of domestic policy is left undefined, and it is possible to include or exclude internal incentives from any of them at the whim of the researcher. As a result, the domestic conclusions drawn from the internal influences not only fail to contribute to the study, but may even damage the credibility of the results. This problem is also raised by Andrew Moravcsik, who points out how granting priority to systemic theories introduce an unwarranted bias into conducted research (Moravcsik, 1993, 14).

In the defence of system theories, Robert Keohane has claimed that we must first understand the context of action before we understand the action itself, and thus systemic theory provides a necessary analytical basis for analysing domestic influences (Keohane, 1986, 193). Understanding the international level can indeed provide crucial insight into why domestic decisions and actions take place. On the other hand, it is just as possible to argue the opposite – understanding the domestic politics and decision making process makes it possible to understand international factors.

So while most realists agree that domestic politics does play its share in development of foreign policy, most of them concentrate on the system level and do not give much significance to the domestic variables. As they have set an ideal of how foreign policy should be developed, they must also acknowledge that this ideal is seldom reached. So in such a situation, it seems that the domestic connections are left unattended in order to maintain the simplicity of realism (even neorealism can be considered simpler than most multilevel theories). The level of generalisation that is used on the few occasions that realists do turn their attention inside states maintains their international system level emphasis.

The “second image” of Kenneth Waltz (1959) does provide some ground for domestic research into international relations, but the author of the concept plays down the importance of this image (unless dealing with a specific case study, in which case paying attention to it may be warranted) and suggests

concentrating on the “third image” and systemic level in order to provide researchers with a generally usable theory. Domestic level is also usable as the level where anomalies, defects, and geographic or economic deprivations caused to the systemic theory by the domestic politics level can be explained, but these alone, without system level, have no significance in understanding international events.

Nearly 20 years after Kenneth Waltz's definition of second image, which determined that states can influence international affairs, Peter Gourevitch emphasized the opposite – Foreign relations can influence domestic structures and thus the international system can become a cause instead of a consequence.

Second Image Reversed (Gourevitch, 1978):

1. Military intervention and occupation are the two most obvious external influences (ibid, 883);
2. “Meddling” in other nations affairs through subsidies to opposition newspapers, fifth columns, spying, assassination and the like are less clear empirically, but examples are in abundance (ibid, 883);
3. Trade - Distribution of economic activity and wealth. Hitler's accession to power is one of the most vivid examples here as it is impossible to imagine how Germany's domestic factors could have resulted in Hitler’s coming to power without the “Great Depression” (ibid, 884);
4. International state system. States are induced to organize themselves internally so as to meet the external challenges of the anarchic international system (ibid, 896);
5. Ideas – though Gourevitch does not elaborate on the subject of external ideas and ideologies influencing politics, the connection is noted (ibid, 883).

So economic relations and military pressures constrain an entire range of domestic behaviours, from policy decisions to political forms. Gourevitch concludes that “international relations and domestic politics are therefore so interrelated that they should be analysed simultaneously, as wholes. However compelling external pressures may be, they are unlikely to be fully determining, save for the case of outright occupation” (ibid, 911). So there is always room for the domestic politics to formulate a response, which

needs to be explained and cannot be done so without integrating the two levels.

Just as there are contending international relations theories, there are contending understandings of the connections between domestic and foreign factors of international relations. Unfortunately, it is impossible to prefer one interpretation over another and to claim that this article has concluded that one is correct and the rest are faulty. Still, as noted in the text, a number of these theories have not given any regard to domestic politics. As in the modern world no democratically elected leader can disregard domestic influences, these theories seem oversimplified and unrealistic.

What this article has hopefully managed is proving that international relations can be understood better from the multi-level perspective, as there are too many variables to rely on only systemic level or domestic level. While the two-level game can be used as a concept of understanding, it is unfortunately not yet a consolidated theory that could be employed in explaining most global effects. In addition, it seems reasonable to take both directions of the “second image” and “second image reversed” into account when imagining the two-level concept.

The differences between the nature and target of domestic and foreign politics are far too large to be ignored. Foreign and domestic politics can be perceived separately, but should be considered as strongly interlinking. It is not possible to determine the importance of domestic factors, but it is clear that the importance is much larger than Kenneth Waltz suggests.

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