

List of Figures

1.1	Scholarly Interests in International Relations	13
1.2	Four Worldviews	15
1.3	Idealist Transformation Theories	16
1.4	Realist Transformation Theories	17
3.1	Existing World Order System	139
3.2	Projected Growth Curves for Actors in the World Order System	142
3.3	World Polity Association	143

Acknowledgements

This study grew slowly and went through a number of stages. It originated in the typical frustrations of a graduate student trying to cope with the conceptual chaos of our field. It found its first outline while teaching Cameroonian students at the University of Yaoundé, and it matured in lectures at the University of St. Gallen. Parts of the book were written down in 1989 at the University of Virginia, while on sabbatical. A first draft was completed back home in Switzerland and then rewritten at Stanford University, where I spent two terms as visiting professor in 1991–92.

At Virginia, I had the valuable advice of Inis Claude and Whittle Johnston. At Stanford there were stimulating discussions with Stephen Krasner, and I profited from the many interesting seminars at the Center for International Security and Arms Control. Furthermore, I was very pleased that Kenneth Waltz took time to go through the manuscript and make a number of important suggestions. I would also like to thank Patrick de Souza, a Stanford graduate, who read the opening chapter critically and suggested changes.

At St. Gallen, Doris Rudischhauser, Marcel Müller and Armin Guhl helped with proofreading, producing the final draft and preparing the index. Finally, thanks go to my students whose many questions and comments have forced me to think in neat categories.

JÜRIG MARTIN GABRIEL
St. Gallen, Switzerland

Introduction

A perusal of contemporary theory in international relations leaves one with a mixed impression: on the one hand there is a great outpouring of new contributions suggesting unbroken optimism about the possibilities of progress in our field; on the other hand there are indications that theorizing meets with innumerable obstacles and that some authors are highly pessimistic about the state of our discipline.

The optimists keep searching for systematic knowledge, for the causes of war, the dynamics of international change, the patterns of world order or the reasons for failure in crisis control. They ask interesting questions and try to come up with answers permitting improved understanding and possibly improved management of world politics. Some show how nuclear proliferation can be curbed; others argue that massive war is outmoded. Some predict the rise of the trading state, while others see the continued dominance of the military state. Some deplore the decline of American hegemony and fear it will lead to instability; others argue that there can be stability without hegemony. There are those who see the post-Cold War era as unipolar, and there are others who perceive a return to multipolar balance. There is no lack of new theory; on the contrary, the flow of new ideas is so copious that it is difficult to preserve an overview.

But there are also frustrations. One of the most common complaints expressed is that knowledge in our field is not cumulative, that after years of intensive research there are at best "islands of explanation." Theorists of international relations seem to turn in circles: each generation deals with the same fundamental issues over and over again whereas progress remains elusive. The reasons are partly substantive and partly methodological. Important terms like "system," "hegemony," "regime," "war" or "integration" are difficult to define precisely, and it is impossible to get agreement on techniques of observation, methods of collecting data, and standards for testing hypotheses. The complaints are familiar and need not be repeated here in detail.

Whom is one to take seriously, the representatives of hope or the representatives of frustration? The tenor of this study is on the side of optimism, not because I believe that a significant breakthrough is possible but because a careful look at the work of important theorists in our field suggests that there is a set of central questions which guides their efforts, questions that are relatively timeless and that have been asked before. Knowledge in the social sciences is repetitive more than it is cumulative.

We certainly know more today about arms races and disarmament negotiations than earlier generations did, but it is also true that each generation has to deal with a set of basic questions that change very little over time. Nuclear proliferation and arms-control verification are children of the twentieth century, but the Greeks already knew the basics about armament dynamics and threats. The task of scholarship is not only to search for more knowledge but also to deal repeatedly with fundamental issues and to do so in the light of new circumstances. We cannot expect knowledge in the social sciences to cumulate like knowledge in some of the natural sciences, but we can expect that the central questions belabored by each generation are dealt with in a self-conscious and orderly way. Flashy and impressionistic work may be stimulating, but it is not academic.

The purpose of this study is to show that there is a set of relatively permanent issues that scholars in our discipline identify with and theorize about. I do this by introducing the concept of *worldview* and by demonstrating its usefulness against the background of a number of *classical* and *contemporary* theories.

Worldviews are different from theories. Worldviews are simple devices but their very simplicity allows the isolation of a handful of terms central to describing and analyzing international relations.¹ Theories are more demanding, they are built upon worldviews but go beyond them; theories are more elaborate and contain numerous features not inherent in worldviews; theories are shaped by circumstance and have to be relevant for men acting under particular constraints. The theory of deterrence, for instance, has emerged in the nuclear age and must be useful to men acting in today's world, but the worldview on which it is based has a much more timeless character. The same holds true for theories of integration, collective security, imperialism, regimes and so on.

Worldviews and theories are not essentially different, however. Both share a number of features. Neither are objective constructs free of values and assumptions, and both exhibit a preference for rational schemes over empirical patterns, for understanding over explanation. Neither worldviews nor theories are purely descriptive but embrace a prescriptive and action-oriented component.

The ideas presented here show the influence of a number of scholars in our discipline. As a graduate student I was impressed by Waltz's *Man, the State and War*.² In that seminal work Waltz makes an effort to group the many theories of international relations. Based on what various authors regard as the causes of war, Waltz divides them into three broad categories, into what he calls first-, second-, and third-image theorists. I also read Aron's *Peace and War*,³ but that experience was different. I did not

appreciate the book at first because it contains too much redundant information. However, the way in which Aron presents the antinomies of war and peace is impressive, and the various levels of conceptualization on which the book is based also made a lot of sense.

When, much later, I read Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*⁴ I was again stimulated. It was not the central (or neo-realist) argument that made the greatest impression on me but his treatment of such basic concepts as anarchy and hierarchy. I also liked the manner in which he ties these terms to cognitive questions, to wholes and parts, to causality and explanation. I came away from reading Aron and Waltz convinced that the antinomies of war and peace, anarchy and hierarchy were fundamental to our field.

The present study begins in Chapter 1 with a detailed account of worldviews. As already mentioned, worldviews are simple devices. They are defined along two dimensions only – the duality of war and peace on the one hand, and the duality of anarchy and hierarchy on the other. Based on these limited criteria a matrix emerges which permits the characterization of four separate and mutually exclusive worldviews. The presentation of the matrix (framework or “field”) is followed by a discourse on theorizing in general. Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate the usefulness of the framework by applying it, first, to classical and, second, to contemporary theories. Chapter 4 sums up some of the findings with reference to the various worldviews.

Given the fact that knowledge in the social sciences is repetitive as much as it is cumulative, it pays to look back at the classics. These texts, by virtue of being classics, have the distinctive advantage of dealing with important questions lucidly and without some of the modern jargon. In a number of ways, therefore, the discussion of classical authors paves the way for a more thorough analysis of contemporary authors.

Chapter 2 begins with three well-known German authors: Friedrich von Gentz, Carl von Clausewitz and Friedrich von Bernhardt. All three are exponents of *Realpolitik* but disagree on a number of important issues. They view war as a normal instrument of politics but differ widely about the context. Gentz, writing at the height of the Napoleonic domination of Europe, advocates the restoration of the balance of power,⁵ but Bernhardt, a century later, calls for its abolition.⁶ Gentz and Bernhardt disagree on whether war should be associated with a decentralized system, with anarchy and equilibrium, or with a degree of centralization, with hierarchy and hegemony. Their disagreement points to the fundamental realist cleavage in the study of war and peace.

Clausewitz is also a realist but not an easy one to classify.⁷ He is the author of the famous dictum that “war is nothing but a continuation of

politics by other means" – but he is not explicit about the nature of politics. Is war a continuation of anarchical or hierarchical international politics, is it an instrument of balance of power politics or of imperialism? The difference is important because in one case war is a restrained instrument of politics, in the other case it is unrestrained. Clausewitz is not clear on this point. Nevertheless, he raises important questions about war as an instrument, questions that are of relevance to this very day.

The chapter then turns to four exponents of classic idealism – J. A. Hobson, Norman Angell, Immanuel Kant and Woodrow Wilson. Hobson's *Imperialism: A Study*⁸ is a book known for its critique of modern imperialism but which in fact contains an interesting plan for what could be called "anarchic peace through social democracy." Norman Angell in his long and active life wrote a great deal, but his most famous publication is *The Great Illusion*,⁹ a book in which he becomes one of the earliest theorists of decentralized interdependence. Hobson and Angell continue to be of interest because they discuss the question of war and peace in terms of social justice, democracy, free trade, interdependence, and even integration. These are issues that motivate many contemporary theorists of international relations.

Immanuel Kant and Woodrow Wilson also deal with eminently modern topics. Kant, in 1795, wrote his famous treatise *Perpetual Peace*¹⁰ in which he suggests that republics have the inherent ability to live in anarchic peace, in a rather informal "Federation of Republican States." Wilson, by calling for the creation of the League of Nations, transcends such informality.¹¹ He outlined a path that, with the founding of the United Nations, led "beyond anarchy" because that organization represents a (modest) first step in the direction of a more hierarchical world order.

Chapter 3 turns to contemporary authors, first to four realists. In view of the rich literature in this area of international relations theory, it is difficult to make a choice. After much reflection I decided to settle for Kenneth Waltz, Herman Kahn, Colin Gray, and Robert Gilpin.

Waltz, in his *Theory of International Politics*,¹² is credited with having established neo-realism, an up-to-date version of classical balance of power theory and an improvement on the kind of realism propagated most prominently by Hans J. Morgenthau. Waltz derives his theory from the innate structure of the international system, from the logic of anarchy and self-help. Neo-realism is therefore also referred to as "structural realism."

Kahn is not the most important theorist of deterrence but his *Thinking About the Unthinkable*¹³ is a highly trenchant (and controversial) presentation of the logic of nuclear war. Furthermore, Kahn emphasizes the need for American superiority, a theme that transcends Waltz's balance of power

theory and takes us into the realm of hierarchic realism, of hegemonic theory. Colin S. Gray and Robert Gilpin also deal with this theme, although in very different ways.

Gray is a civilian writing on military themes, and in his *Geopolitics of Superpower*¹⁴ he calls for American superiority in the struggle against the Soviet Union. The Cold War context makes the book somewhat dated but since the theory is grounded in Halford Mackinder's axioms on geopolitics it has an importance that carries well beyond that struggle. Gilpin is a political economist who presents a theory of cyclical hegemonic change tied to rational choice.¹⁵ From a formal point of view his work is of interest because it represents the recent tendency in our field to combine the language of microeconomics with the classical ideas of war and peace. From a substantive angle the contribution is important because it raises many of the issues that arise from hegemony and, now that the Cold War is over, from a unipolar world.

Chapter 3 then deals with four contemporary idealists – Richard Rosecrance, Robert O. Keohane, Charles E. Osgood, and Richard A. Falk. Rosecrance has become a proponent of peace through free trade because in his *Rise of the Trading State*¹⁶ he anticipates an anarchic world in which trading nations are on the upswing. Keohane has become known as a theorist of international regimes. In his *After Hegemony*¹⁷ he argues that following the decline of American hegemony regimes develop a measure of autonomy and help to stabilize the international system. Keohane, like Rosecrance, believes that peaceful order is possible in a decentralized world.

In the early sixties, Osgood, a political psychologist, made a case for unilateralism, for reversing escalation by unilaterally induced tension reduction and by initiating a veritable spiral of peace.¹⁸ In the midst of the Cold War the theory appeared utopian: if tension reduction was possible at all in those years it was through bilateral or multilateral means – never unilaterally. Now that the Cold War is over Osgood's ideas are of renewed interest because unilateral tension reduction (and even disarmament) is common. Osgood has lost the image of a utopian.

Falk still has that image. In a book entitled *A Study of Future Worlds*¹⁹ he presents what amounts to a plan for world government. Falk prefers to call it "Central Guidance" but the difference is mostly semantic. It is Falk's contention that only supranational institutions will be able to preserve peace and to handle the many other problems confronting mankind in the decades to come. Falk is an idealist with a strongly hierarchical bent.

It is impossible to do full justice to fifteen different authors. Many have written extensively on international relations, and some have endorsed

more than one theory. This study deals with only one book by each author and makes no effort to discuss any one author in a comprehensive fashion. Neither is it the purpose of this study to cover all theories in our field and to provide a comprehensive overview. Important contributions are left out,²⁰ and the fifteen authors have not necessarily been included because they are well-known, although many are, but because they demonstrate that worldviews can provide an instrument to gain an overview of our field. Finally, no new theory is proposed in this volume. While it is true that worldviews could provide a stimulus for the formulation of theories in the future, no such effort is undertaken in this study.

1 Worldviews and Theories

CONVENTIONAL CATEGORIES

There are many different theories of international relations and they are so diverse that a cursory observer can easily get the impression of diversity overpowering unity. What, after all, does Robert Keohane's treatment of regimes have in common with Herman Kahn's ideas on deterrence? Where is there a link between Charles E. Osgood's work on unilateral tension reduction and Colin Gray's notions of geopolitics? Can there be any trace of similarity between the work of a political economist, a nuclear strategist, a psychologist and a geopolitician? It appears quite impossible to find a unifying theme among so many disparate efforts stemming from such diverse specialties.

Still, there are times when it is necessary to gain an overview of our field, to see the wood for the trees. Such occasions arise when professors of international relations have to teach survey courses on theory and are forced to make up a syllabus that structures the broad spectrum of theories; it happens when they are confronted with the request to define their discipline, to explain, in a nutshell, what the study of international relations is all about; it becomes necessary when they organize scientific meetings and have to assign priorities to topics and papers; it is the case when texts and readers are edited, books that are meant to be representative of our field. In all of these instances we are called upon to press our discipline into some organizational framework, to categorize the innumerable concepts, variables, terms, theories, paradigms, models, and approaches.

A common way of summing up the field is to distinguish between realism, pluralism, and structuralism or, more popularly, between the billiard-ball, the cobweb, and the layer-cake approach.¹ The billiard-ball approach is identified with the state-centered model of international relations, with the rather traditional notion of highly sovereign states acting in a decentralized system where conflict is endemic and security is managed by self-help. Each state has to provide for its own security, each state is forced to arm. Economic considerations are subordinate to security considerations; relative advantage is regularly more important than absolute advantage. The Prisoners' Dilemma is a fact of international life, suboptimal solutions are the rule. Perpetual peace is impossible; at best there can be stability through the adroit management of alliances that counter-balance potential hegemons.²