War and Reason

Domestic and International Imperatives

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With affection, appreciation,
and admiration for our teachers
and our friends
A. F. K. Organski
and
William H. Riker

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Preface

International relations research has been dominated by a state-centric, realist view of foreign policy. Nations are widely believed to pursue the maximization of power or security because to do otherwise is to diminish their chances of survival. The realist and neorealist perspectives have encouraged a natural focus on war and its avoidance. We set out to address questions of just that nature: what cause war, and how can it be avoided? Yet this book has grown in directions we did not anticipate. We have written about foreign policy choices and their implications for a wide variety of events, including, but not limited to, war and peace. The book is neither primarily about war nor illustrative of a rational-choice approach to realism. It is a general assessment of foreign policy choices, using a game-theoretic approach coupled with statistical and case-history analysis and embedded primarily within perspective that takes very seriously the consequences of domestic political choices on foreign policy actions.

We propose two competing theories of international interactions. In one, the realpolitik/unconstrained international interaction game, we assume that immediate foreign policy objectives are determined by the structure of the international context in which nations relate to one another. In the other, the domestic/constrained international interaction game, national leaders choose courses of action to maximize their view of the national welfare or at least the interests of supportive constituents, given that domestic political processes have first determined the goals or objectives to be pursued. We deduce the necessary and sufficient conditions for several classes of events: negotiation, maintenance of the status quo, acquiescence of one rival to another without resort to violence, capitulation by one adversary to the other following an initial use of force, and war. We address these outcomes under conditions of full information and limited information.

The theory leads us to examine four norms of action that are widely believed to encourage cooperation in an otherwise anarchic world. We find that two of the norms generally foster peace, although we also assess their robustness in the face of uncertainty. We find considerable theoretical encouragement and empirical support for the notion that cooperation is a common response to disputes, despite the absence of mechanisms for enforcing promises in international affairs.

We propose solutions to several empirical puzzles about the behavior of democracies toward one another and toward nondemocratic states. We also examine several features of war, including stakes, expected costs, and their impact on system transformation. This volume, then, addresses questions of cooperation and conflict; full information and incomplete information; deductive logic and empirical evidence. Although we begin as agnostics with regard to the domestic and realist versions of the theory, the evidence adduced here strongly supports the domestic variant of the game we propose and just as strongly contradicts the realpolitik version. Whether our theory of foreign policy is credible remains for the reader to judge. We have endeavored to make judgment feasible by proffering the formal logic and the empirical evaluations that seem germane to the assessment of our theory: we deduce and test more than twenty-five propositions about international affairs.

In developing this book we have incurred a great many intellectual debts. Foremost is our debt to James Morrow of the Hoover Institution, who has been a constant source of intellectual stimulation. Jim has been tireless in his willingness to teach, prod, cajole, criticize, and inspire us. He has saved us from countless errors in our theorizing and has tried to save us from others.

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Part I
A Theory of Foreign Policy

Chapter 1
Reason and War

At the age of sixty-four, the great Spanish artist Francisco Goya y Lucientes began his series of etchings entitled *Disasters of the War*. The horrors of the Peninsular War and, indeed, of all war are vividly depicted in scenes, some witnessed personally by Goya, others learned of by word of mouth, that leave no doubt that war is the worst of inventions. The second of these etchings is captioned "Con razón o sin ella": "With reason or without it." This is the enduring question of warfare.

Is war the product of blind passion or of reasoned judgment? "Con razón o sin ella" shows a horridly realistic vision of battle and seems to support a belief in blind passion. Soldiers fire point-blank on peasants armed with daggers and sticks. Blood runs from the contorted face of a dagger-wielding man who lunges at a soldier. In moments that must seem an eternity, the soldier will surely kill the peasant. We utter a silent plea at the image, frozen in time, before us. We pray to stay the hands of soldier and peasant, to preserve a life, to impose reason where fury and passion reign.

Goya's later etchings from the Peninsular War stand in sharp contrast to the realism of his earlier images of men and women murdering one another furiously, bestially, pitilessly. In the seventy-first etching Goya depicts a demonic figure writing in a book resting on its lap, its clawed feet protruding from beneath. Captioned "Contra el bien general"—"Against the general welfare"—could this be the answer to "Con razón o sin ella?" Does war arise from considerations contrary to the general welfare? These are the issues that motivate this study. Is war fought with reason or without, and if with reason, is that reason contrary to the general interest?

What might reason or the general welfare mean for foreign policy? For us, questions of reason address the method of conducting foreign affairs. The reasoning process about choices of action by statesmen is the connection between their actions and their objectives. General welfare concerns the connection between the goals of the citizenry and the objectives and actions of those statesmen. Have leaders chosen the best course of action, given their constrained opportunities, to enhance the welfare of the people?

Goya's captions suggest a tension between the rational calculation of costs and benefits and the blind emotions and passions that lead to the tragic acts of war. This tension is not new for students of war. Socrates, Herodotus, and Thucydides were fascinated by it more than two millennia ago every bit as much as we of the nuclear age. And their answers were no less varied than ours.

Socrates, speaking of the division between the body and the soul, explains the origins of war by noting that "the body … by filling us so full of loves, and lusts, and fears, and fancies, and idols, and every sort of folly, prevents our ever having, as people say, so much as a thought. For whence comes [sic] wars, and fightings, and factions? For wars are occasioned by the love of money, and money has to be acquired for the sake and in the service of the body" (Plato 1937, 449–50). For Socrates, war was less the consequence of rational calculations of benefits and costs than the product of emotion and lust. Although such a perspective could be compatible with the reasoned pursuit of goals, Socrates seems to have believed that war resulted from personal passions untempered by thoughtful objectives.

Miltiades, on the eve of the battle of Marathon, weighed the general interest of the citizens of Athens before engaging the Medes. Herodotus reports Miltiades' exhortation to his fellow generals:

> Never, since the Athenians were a people, were they in such danger as they are in at this moment. If they bow the knee to these Medes, they are to be given up to Hippias, and you know what they then will have to suffer. But if Athens comes victorious out of this contest, she has it in her to become the first city of Greece. Your vote is to decide whether we are to join battle or not. If we do not bring on a battle presently, some factious intrigue will disunite the Athenians, and the city will be betrayed to the Medes. But

we fight, before there is anything rotten in the state of Athens, I believe that, provided the Gods will give fair play and no favour, we are able to get the best of it in the engagement. (Herodotus 1954, book vi, sec. 109)

Certainly these are nobler motivations for war than simple avarice. Here we also see the essence of a reasoned approach to the fundamental choice between war and peace. Miltiades' calculation of the interests at stake brings him to the conclusion that the Athenians should risk defeat at the hands of the much larger Persian army. If the Athenians "do not bring on a battle presently … the city will be betrayed to the Medes," whereas by fighting, the Athenians have some chance of winning ("provided the Gods will give fair play and no favour").

That Thucydides believed in the existence of universal truths about war is evident from his well-known statement "It will be enough for me, however, if these words of mine are judged useful by those who want to understand clearly the events which happened in the past and which (human nature being what it is) will, at some time or other and in much the same ways, be repeated in the future. My work is not a piece of writing designed to meet the taste of an immediate public, but was done to last forever" (Thucydides 1954, book 1, para. 22). If universal principles exist, as Thucydides suggests, what guides them? We return to Goya's caption "Contra el bien general." What defines the general welfare in all states, and is that general welfare the objective behind policies of war and peace?

Can we today imagine that war is an instrument for advancing the national welfare? Can war still be viewed as a rational, calculated action, rather than as a mistaken or accidental consequence of policy? Can all wars be understood within a single theoretical framework, or are the antecedents of cataclysmic wars so different from those of lesser disputes that fundamentally different theories are required for each type of conflict? Can war be fought with reason and for the general welfare?

Nothing in history has made the rationality of war a more urgent issue than the flight of the Enola Gay on August 6, 1945. When its bomb-bay doors opened and its cargo of one atomic bomb fell over Hiroshima, the world was compelled to ask whether future wars would be guided by rationality or irrationality. This same question was prominently discussed after the battle of Ypres in 1915, when German commanders exposed the world to the horrors of chemical warfare for the first time in modern history.[1] And it was raised when the cannon was introduced into warfare, when gunpowder was introduced, and even when the horse cavalry charge was introduced. So long as people invent ever-greater means of their own destruction, it will be prudent to question the rationality of their actions, whether the actions involve calamitous violence or appeasement and acquiescence.

1.1: Con razón o sin ella, by Francisco Goya. Courtesy of the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. Gift of Philip Hofer.

The rationality of war has been approached from a variety of perspectives. Philosophical, historical, statistical, and mathematical methods have been brought to bear on this crucial issue. For the past several years, mathematical and empirical approaches have been joined together to investigate the implications for war and peace embedded in the axioms of self-interested, expected-utility-maximizing behavior. This study follows that practice of using formal modeling techniques combined with empirical assessments. We explain why we chose this methodology in the final section of this chapter, but to start with, we focus on some of the substantive questions of concern to us.

First, we try to improve upon the basic formulation of the conditions for war and other foreign policy choices suggested in our own earlier studies (Bueno de Mesquita 1981, 1985; Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1986; Lalman 1988). In doing so, we propose a game-theoretic framework for understanding not only war and peace but also a wide variety-of interactions between nations, whether friendly or hostile, cooperative or conflictual. Our aim is to build better theory and to build it not from whole cloth but cumulatively from the research that has preceded this investigation. Second, we investigate the consistency between the theory of international interactions set out here and the record of international relations during the past two centuries or more. Third, we examine how well our game-theoretic analysis fares in comparison with several important alternative lines of argument. And fourth, we conclude with some speculations about the practical policy implications of the theory.
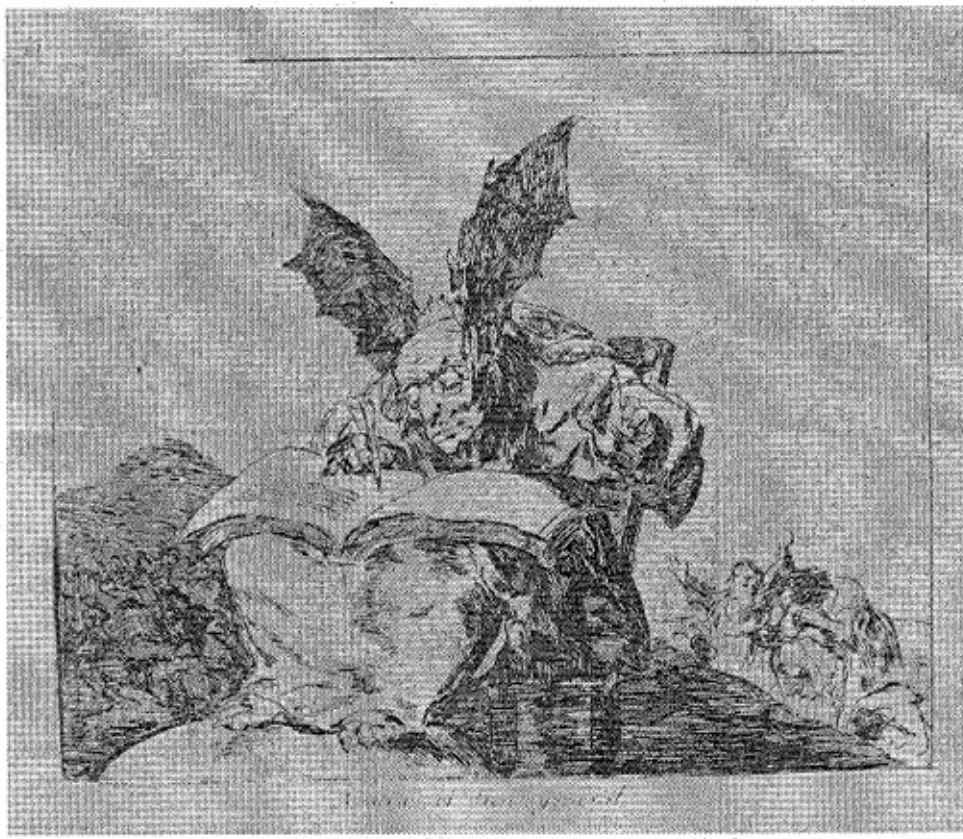
1.2: Contra el bien general, by Francisco Goya. Courtesy of the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. Gift of Philip Hofer.

The book is organized into four sections. part I includes chapters on the substantive, theoretical, and epistemological underpinnings of our approach, the structure and rules of our international interaction game, and the identification of the full-information conditions required for each outcome of the game to be an equilibrium outcome. In this chapter we begin to draw distinctions between two fundamental views of international affairs: a realist view and a domestic view. In chapters 2 and 3 we explore these as competing variants of the international interaction game. The variant that we refer to as the realpolitik/un-constrained interaction game treats foreign policy demands as emanating from a realist or neorealist perspective on international affairs in which the choice of demands is a function of the structure of the international situation unconstrained by domestic objectives. In this perspective, structural features of the system influence the magnitude of demands that foreign policy leaders dare to make. The second variant, which for want of a better term we call the domestic/constrained interaction game, takes seriously the notion that foreign policy choices emanate from domestic political considerations.[2] In this perspective, foreign policy elites act as agents for the goals of their domestic population. Part I concludes with an assessment of the empirical support for each of these different points of view.

In part II we explore the implications of the theory with respect to questions of values and norms of action. It includes a chapter that identifies possible strategies for promoting international cooperation and for avoiding violence, as well as theoretical and empirical assessments of the efficacy of several widely discussed norms of action. These are evaluated under the assumption that information is perfect and are then reevaluated under the assumption that information is imperfect. In the next chapter we undertake a close analysis of the role of domestic opposition to the use of force as a means of promoting peace or encouraging violence. We also evaluate hypotheses concerned with the observation that democracies do not appear to wage wars with one another, although they do wage wars against nondemocratic states. The international interaction game suggests some new propositions that may elucidate the debate regarding the behavior of democracies toward one another. We develop

these propositions by opening the black box of domestic politics, which is typically sealed tightly shut in ~~studies of international relations. The importance of domestic politics is highlighted, then, in~~ part II, as well as being a center of concern in the domestic variant of the game developed in Part I.

In part III, we evaluate the consequences of the theory for the realist focus on power and security forces that drive foreign policy choices. Here we directly compare our theory to balance-of-power and power preponderance perspectives. We deduce several propositions complementary to the theory of power transition or hegemonic stability, some that are consistent with balance-of-power and power preponderance arguments and some that are incompatible with either. Most of the propositions deduced from the international interaction game are subjected to empirical tests to assess their merits compared to those of alternative points of view. In another chapter in part III, we develop a detailed case history of the Seven Weeks' War, fought in 1866 between Prussia and Austria, with the intention of showing how the game can help enrich our understanding of the strategic details of specific events. Through broad-based empirical tests and detailed case analysis we hope to foster confidence not only in the external validity, or generality, of the international interaction game but also in its internal validity, or rich contextual potential.

Although we set out with no preconceived notions about the relative merits of the realpolitik and domestic interpretations of the game we propose, the logic and evidence developed in this book provide a foundation for the claim that a perspective that is attentive to the domestic origins of foreign policy demands gives a richer and empirically more reliable representation of foreign affairs than a realist emphasis. The results from parts I, II, and III have strong positive and normative implications. We explore the advantages and disadvantages of leaving diplomacy to the diplomats—as some realists would have us do—or encouraging an attentiveness to the politics of domestic interest groups and bureaucracies as vehicles for shaping foreign policy objectives.

Finally, in part IV we try to assess the ramifications of our theory for foreign policy strategies in times and relations of calm and stress. Here we not only summarize and highlight key elements of our study but also explore the possible value such research may have for dealing with problems in the emerging world order. We identify questions for future research implied by this undertaking and conclude with a hope for richer theory and more reliable evidence as the two critical prongs to future research.

The first appendix is a detailed accounting of the measurement and coding procedures used for the empirical components of this study. We urge those readers concerned with the statistical evidence to examine this appendix before going on to chapters 3–7. The second appendix contains technical proofs of two propositions in chapter 5. It is not essential, however, for understanding the arguments or political implications of those propositions.

The remainder of this chapter concerns three matters: (1) the origin of foreign policy goals as understood from an unconstrained, realist or neorealist perspective and from a constrained, domestic point of view; (2) the implications of these alternative outlooks for the concept of a unitary actor and for the assumption of rationality; and (3) the reasons for using a formal modeling approach coupled with empirical tests, rather than a more historically oriented method of analysis.

WAR'S REASON: REALISM AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

We begin our investigation with an acknowledgment that international affairs can be distinguished from other aspects of politics. Most politics is constrained by recognized rules and procedures. Voting, for instance, takes place according to some explicit method, whether it be the secret ballot, a

show of hands, or a voice vote. The summation of votes to select winners and losers likewise follows prescribed rules. ~~Much is known about the implications for candidates competing in a plurality voting~~ system or a proportional representation system. The properties of various rules for aggregating votes including, for instance, the Borda count method, the March Hare system, run-off election systems, plurality systems, approval voting methods, and so forth, have been carefully explored because the rules of each system are specific and explicit (Riker 1982; Ordeshook 1986). Amendment procedures in legislatures are governed by clear rules of order that constrain the sequence of events and even the unfolding of debate. Constitutions and lesser laws bring some degree of order to national and subnational politics that facilitates explanation and prediction. Equilibria can be and often are induced by structure, agenda, and other mandated items (Kramer 1972; Davis, DeGroot, and Hinich, 1974; Shepsle and Weingast 1981, 1987; Riker 1986).

Few such rules or structures exist in international affairs. It is true that there is an extensive code of international law intended to govern a variety of interactions ranging from the most minor commercial intercourse to the rules of war and to the very structure of the global and interplanetary environment. Yet, unlike laws and rules within states and many other organizations, the arrangements and structures that exist between nations are not easily enforced.

Borders, for instance, induce considerable structure in the relations among nations, making some prone to conflict with each other and others virtually certain to live in peace or at least in ignorance or indifference to each other's wants (Starr and Most 1976, 1978; Siverson and Starr 1990). But no credible international mechanism exists to fix borders or to arbitrate disputes when a powerful party to the dispute wishes to enforce an alternative resolution. For instance, in spite of the condemnation of virtually every nation in the world, Iraq violated the border of Kuwait in 1990; Germany violated the borders of Poland, Belgium, and too many others between 1939 and 1945; the Soviet Union swallowed Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia in much the same way that the United States and the earlier American colonies swallowed the territory of the Indian nations, and on and on into the remotest antiquity.

The fundamental difficulty in studying international conflict is that sound theory must rely on mechanisms that are internal to the states choosing the path of war or peace. Existing structures, such as the distribution of power, borders, or international law, cannot by themselves impose outcomes. As Henry Kissinger has observed, "In a society of Sovereign states, an agreement will be maintained only if *all* partners consider it in their interest. They must have a sense of participation in the result. The aim of diplomacy is not to outsmart the other side but to convince it either of common interests or of penalties if an impasse continues" (1982, 214). In the absence of external enforcement mechanisms, agreements must be self-enforcing.

To be sure, the loose structural factors of international politics— polarity, balance of power, long cycles, borders, regimes— may constrain individual choices, but they do not determine behavior. We hope in the following chapters to demonstrate that this contention is correct, and in trying to do so, we develop a theory of international relations that provides insights into the existence of equilibria in international politics and that relates those equilibria in part to domestic political factors. We hope to show the conditions under which disputes are resolved peacefully and those under which violence and war are anticipated. We try to show when the status quo is expected to prevail and when change is likely to take place. We will show that love of the status quo is not a guarantee of the peace, just as a desire for change need not be a threat to that peace. We will demonstrate that even the widespread adoption of norms to prevent violence is no guarantee of cooperation and that cooperation is the most likely outcome of international interactions, even among purely self-interested actors, in a world that precludes binding commitments.

We begin our inquiry by assuming that national governments are the central agents of policy

implementation in international affairs. They, as the metaphorical embodiment of the general welfare are ~~the natural unit of analysis even for a theory, such as ours, that is grounded in the axioms of~~ individual rationality. We assume that national government exists so that citizens can freely pursue their interests without fear of their neighbors. However disparate the objectives of those who reside in different countries, the purpose of national government is one and the same: to secure citizens against foreign incursion. Yet how national leaders go about advancing those interests—we recall Goya's question "Contra el bien general?"—is much contested.

Two perspectives are at the core of debate in the study of international affairs. From one viewpoint foreign policy goals grow out of the political leadership's interest in advancing the welfare of the state within the international community, unencumbered by considerations of domestic affairs. The other outlook indicates that foreign policy goals grow out of the give and take of domestic politics, with all its prospects for generating problems of coherence in the aggregation of individual preferences. Lacking any a priori reason to accept one or the other position, we began this study as agnostics with regard to the debate between these two different perspectives.

In the realist perspective, the very structure of nations and the incentives and punishments that confront decision makers fosters a commonality of interests among all leaders charged with responsibility for choices that affect the prospects of war. Realist theorists insist that foreign policy leaders—professional diplomats, if you will—select policy goals by examining the external constraints and opportunities that confront their nation. In the realist or neorealist view, all nations share a common interest in enhancing their power or security, and therefore, all nations are always in a state of competition and potential conflict.

Where do the goals or preferences of leaders come from? For the (neo)realist theorist the answer is that foreign policy goals are selected *within* the foreign policy context, with little or no regard for how this or that goal might advance one or another decision maker's domestic political agenda. Goals are selected to advance power or security considerations and are constrained by the structural characteristics of the system.

We have in mind by the realpolitik/unconstrained version of our international interaction game something similar to Kenneth Waltz's third image. As Waltz observes, "Because any state may at any time use force, all states must constantly be ready either to counter force with force or to pay the cost of weakness. *The requirements of state action are, in this view, imposed by the circumstances in which all states exist*" (1959, 160, emphasis added), or, more succinctly, "Everyone's policy depends upon everyone else's" (226). According to this (neo)realist viewpoint, foreign policy leaders live in a rarefied world of high politics that is responsive to external pulls and tugs but is relatively inattentive to and unconstrained by the low politics of domestic affairs (Kaplan 1957; Morgenthau 1973; Waltz 1979; Posen 1984).[3] This select attention is the essential feature of the realpolitik variant of the game we propose.

A realist outlook requires that the articulation of foreign policy goals arises from the need to protect the state. "Covenants, without the sword, are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all" (Hobbes 1962, 129). The quest for national security takes precedence over all lesser domestic considerations. For the realist, the specific policies a state pursues are structurally constrained by the nation's endowments of power, geography, alignments, and the like. The leader, then, is the conventional unitary actor selecting policy objectives with the constraints of the international environment firmly in mind and implementing strategies to maximize those chosen objectives. To be sure, domestic political pressures, especially in the form of costs for utilizing force, may constrain actions, and leaders may be punished after the fact for policies that clearly have failed (Denzau, Riker and Shepsle 1985; Bueno de Mesquita, Siverson, and Woller 1991), but it is fundamentally the

leader's understanding of international circumstances that dictates the selection of the state's tactical and strategic actions.

The second perspective is at the heart of arguments favoring a bureaucratic politics or interest group point of view (Allison 1971; Posen 1984; Bueno de Mesquita, Newman, and Rabushka 1985; Putnam 1988). Domestic constituencies—whether in a democratic or in an authoritarian society— express preferences. Some political participants may seek to maximize the external security of the nation by accommodating the demands of rivals, whereas others may desire to expand military capabilities to maximize jobs in local defense industries. Some may promote protectionist trade barriers or a free trade regime, or they may promote pacifist policies that guarantee no use of force, or policies that expand the size of the defense budget for defensive purposes (but that also may be interpreted by rivals as reflecting aggressive intentions). Each constituency is interested in influencing the policies pursued by the national leadership. The leadership, in turn, is dependent on those constituencies for its continuation in office and so wishes to meet their desires to the greatest extent possible. This dependency is at the heart of the domestic/constrained variant of the game we propose. As Charles Beard has claimed, "However conceived in an image of the world, foreign policy is a phase of domestic policy, an inescapable phase" (Waltz 1959, 80).[4]

At the same time, leaders must be conscious of the costs they will bear if their responsiveness to domestic pressures leads to foreign policy disasters. They confront the additional serious problem that the foreign policy goals of competing domestic groups may themselves be incompatible and irreconcilable. Those who subscribe to a domestic point of view note that the internal political processes may be dominated by bureaucratic infighting, interest group competition, and a narrow pursuit of localized interests, even at the expense of secure or stable foreign relations. Worst of all, the domestic political process may be characterized by Condorcet's paradox: the fact that individual preferences are well ordered is not sufficient under majority rule procedures to guarantee that collective choices will be coherent.

When cyclical social preferences exist—and they are more and more likely as the number of relevant choosers increases or the number of dimensions to the issues at hand increases—they may make nonsensical any notion of the pursuit of "the national interest" (Niemi and Weisberg 1968; Krasner 1978; Bueno de Mesquita 1981). Yet this does not mean that goals are not chosen and pursued. Indeed, it does not even mean that the relevant foreign policy elites know that a social intransitivity exists. The structure of the domestic political process in which goals surface may mask the existence of cycles. Discussions between leaders and their advisers and constituents, for instance, may pit alternatives against one another, eliminating seemingly inferior options until only one choice still looks viable.

The domestic fabric of decision making may induce a choice that is inferior in two senses. The selection process may eliminate an alternative that is strongly, even unanimously preferred over the option finally chosen, thereby implying that the actual decision is inferior from a domestic political standpoint. Furthermore, the selection process may lead to the elimination of an alternative that is preferred by domestic groups attentive to the foreign policy environment, thereby implying that the actual decision is inferior from a foreign policy standpoint. The domestic groups may even unanimously prefer an eliminated option over a chosen policy exactly because that choice makes the most sense in the strictly foreign policy context. In that case, the unanimously preferred but unchosen alternative may be equivalent (or identical) to the goal that would have been pursued if such decisions were left up to the key foreign policy elite, as in the realist view. Thus, even if domestic constituencies, like realist foreign policy elites, give priority to alternative goals as a function of international circumstances, still the structure of domestic politics may induce an outcome that is

inferior from a foreign policy perspective (Ostrom and Job 1986; Russett 1989; James and Oneal 1991; Morrow 1991b; Gaubatz 1991a, 1991b).

The impact of domestic politics on foreign policy choices can be profound even if the domestic structure does not lead to cyclical preferences. For instance, weighting alternatives from most preferred to least preferred by each interested party (as in the Borda count method) can yield differ results than does a run-off system, which in turn can yield an entirely different policy choice than would arise if a plurality system were used. These differences in policy choices can arise even thoug preferences are held constant across rules of aggregation and even though there is a Condorcet winne (Riker 1982). As we have emphasized, the political structure of decision making can sometimes determine policy choices or at least severely constrain the set of feasible outcomes. The domestic political process can—though it need not—turn aside a goal that would have been selected in a realis context.

A fundamental objective of our investigation, therefore, is to ascertain how the empirical record matches deductions derived from the realist and domestic perspectives. We will explore how these two points of view alter predictions, given that options on foreign policy actions are the same in both perspectives but the demands or proposals brought forward are different.

REALISM VERSUS DOMESTIC POLITICS

The selection of foreign policy goals and the role of senior foreign policy elites varies greatly depending on whether foreign policy choices are conceptualized from a realist perspective or a domestic politics point of view. We have seen some hints of how these different views of foreign policy can lead to quite different expectations regarding the objectives a nation pursues in the foreig policy context. Now we will explore the implications that these alternative views have for the unitary actor assumption and for the assumption of rationality.

We view power, policy, and place as the foundation stones of international politics. Through each national leaders establish the agendas that promote international peace or war, prosperity or privation glory or dishonor. No one of these stones is sufficient to build a polity secured against foreign invasion or a citizenry content with its lot in the world. What good does it do a state to have a preponderance of power if its citizens cannot agree upon the use to which that power should be put (Organski and Kugler 1980; Lamborn 1990)? What good does it do a state to be remote from its enemies if that very remoteness also limits its ability to pursue the citizens' interest in commerce an communication? What good does it do a state to accept the policies of its rivals, removing thereby an conflict of interest, if its citizens do not themselves generally share in the desire to promote those ve policies? Security devolves from the ability to pursue objectives without undue fear of foreign reprisals (Morrow 1991a; Lalman and Newman 1991). It is the freedom to choose a course of action restrained only by domestic considerations of what is desirable, right, and proper. We build our theo around this notion of the state as an agent pursuing the security and interests of its citizens, the principals for whom it exists and acts. We emphasize, however, that different societies may seek entirely different policies and goals and that it is the quest for those goals that is one driving force behind international interactions.

In our view, the basic interactions of international affairs occur within dyads or pairs of nations (Zinnes 1968). We assume that each nation's foreign policy is the outcome of a complex process of give and take, perhaps among elites from competing countries or among competing elites (and masses) within a society such that the nation's policies can be represented as a coherent reflection of some process of domestic preference aggregation. We assume that each nation's chief executive—

whether a monarch, a dictator, or a freely elected representative of the people—acts as if his or her ~~welfare and the preferences of those whose support is needed to retain power were the same. Indeed,~~ the record of leaders who have experienced war suggests that such an assumption is well warranted. During the past two centuries, the leaders of nations defeated in wars they began have had significantly foreshortened tenures in office, whereas those who have initiated victorious wars substantially extend their average time in power or the stability of their regime (Bueno de Mesquita, Siverson, and Woller 1991). In decisions that carry the risk of war, national leaders have strong personal incentives to link their own actions to the welfare of their supporters.

A problem arises, however, in theorizing about this linkage between the actions of leaders toward other states and the welfare of constituents within their own state. As we have seen, one view of the world— the realist view— suggests that leaders select policies vis-à-vis putative rivals to maximize the welfare of their own state (and presumably themselves) in the foreign policy context. The other view constrains such leaders to take fully into account the domestic costs and benefits associated with alternative foreign policy goals.

The realist view makes a fairly strong assumption of a unitary actor. The leader is the person who decides what goals to choose and what strategy to implement in pursuit of those goals. The goals (perhaps in terms of power or security) are determined by assessing the constraints of the international environment and thereby determining what is the most that can be gained on net given those constraints. Strategic actions are then chosen by the key leader—the unitary actor—to arrive at the best possible expected outcome.

In the alternative view the unitary actor assumption is somewhat weaker. Here there is a domestic political process that leads to the selection of foreign policy goals. That process may be more or less attentive to foreign policy constraints and, indeed, may select inferior policies, as noted earlier. The key foreign policy leader, the unitary actor, undoubtedly plays a role in shaping foreign policy objectives but is not the only source of influence. In this view the unitary actor is an agent charged with implementing actions in pursuit of whatever objectives result from the domestic political process. Like the realist unitary actor, the domestic unitary actor is responsible for selecting the strategic actions required to implement the society's objectives to the best of his or her ability. Unlike the realist unitary actor, the domestic unitary actor is not charged with defining the aims of foreign policy. These aims originate from the domestic political process. We are reminded, for instance, that Woodrow Wilson's internationalist view prevailed over U.S. isolationism in 1917. Yet he was unable to overcome isolationist opposition to U.S. membership in the League of Nations.

Whichever view is taken, we still postulate that in prospectively conflictual circumstances the structure of the situation induces in all leaders a primary interest in maximizing those interests of the state that ensure for themselves the opportunity to survive in a leadership position and the concomitant opportunity to pursue their more individualistic preferences. The actions required to maximize those interests differ depending on whether one focuses only on the foreign policy environment (as in the realist view) or also on domestic pressures (as in the constrained, domestic view) in defining the situation.

Either of our unitary actor assumptions—the unitary actor as the person who determines goals and the actions required to promote the goals or the person who is given the goals and assigned to carry them out—is not quite so encompassing as is common in much research on international affairs. When we construct our model of international interactions in the next chapter, we assume the existence of domestic political opposition to some foreign policies even in the realist context and that such opposition imposes costs on leaders. We treat this opposition as an important constraint on the foreign policy leadership—as a punishment for selecting "bad" strategies (but not as a punishment for

selecting "bad" goals). This cost term, then, is compatible with either view of how goals are selected. It ~~does not treat interest groups as a rival source of decision making but rather as reactors to the~~ choice of actions by the leadership.

We also assume that decision makers are rational in the sense that they do what they believe is best, given the constraints of the situation. Naturally, their beliefs may be mistaken and therefore ex post knowledge of outcomes is not an appropriate yardstick for evaluating their ex ante judgments. Edward Creasy, in the preface to *The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World* (1851), makes this quite clear when he writes, "We thus learn not to judge of the wisdom of measures too exclusively by the results. We learn to apply the juster standard of seeing what the circumstances and the probabilities were that surrounded a statesman or a general at the time he decided on his plan."

Our assumption of rationality is not particularly exclusionary. By assuming rationality, we accept that the actions of national leaders are motivated by the desire to pursue some valued goal or goals, but we do not limit the content of such goals or their source. Leaders or the publics who determine goals may be interested in maximizing wealth, security, religious zeal, ideological purity, or any of a host of other objectives that have been thought to be central to foreign affairs at one time or another. Our theory is not about what goals people hold but rather about how they behave given their goals. It is about the instrumental selection of actions to maximize expected utility given particular aims. Consequently, we are particularly interested in how goal-seeking behavior is constrained by circumstances that make some goals or some strategies more likely to succeed than others. Our model of rationality, then, ultimately joins together the two main intellectual traditions in international relations: the realist viewpoint and the domestic perspective.

Models in which decision makers are assumed to be rational, expected utility maximizers have often been categorized as realist theories. We do not fully share that view. Rational actor models can — and usually do— represent the bringing together of at least some realist and some nonrealist, liberal, or domestic perspectives. This is true of both variants of the game we propose in the next chapter.

Rational decision makers are motivated by their values and constrained by their power. Preferences over alternative strategies or outcomes are the foundation of all choice models. Such preferences, or the utility attached to them, are in part expressions of the values that decision makers hold.[5] Such values are the core concept of non-realist theories. But rational actors do not make choices naively on the basis of their preferences. Indeed, in many circumstances to do so would be irrational. Rather, the array of individual values is modified by the realization that some strategies, some courses of action, are more likely to succeed than others and by the recognition that some ends are more attainable than others. In international affairs power is often a prominent determinant of the probability of attaining this or that end. Thus, models of rational behavior take into account the nonrealist's focus on values and the realist's focus on power as constraints on action. These constraints are at the core of instrumental rationality, which is the perspective taken here (Zagare 1990).

To evaluate decision making from either the realpolitik or the domestic point of view, we find it helpful to represent the selection of actions and strategies through a formal model. The remainder of this chapter explains the epistemological bases for our choice of methodology.

WHY MODEL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS?

Some might wonder why we take the path of abstract model construction before turning to a close examination of history. After all, no theory, regardless of its logical validity, elegance, or intellectual

appeal, can substitute for a hard look at the facts. No abstraction is likely ever to be a practical guide to behavior until it has been confronted by reality. And we will most assuredly not allow ourselves to be swept away in theorizing without frequent recourse to the test of history.

We model because we believe that how we look at the facts must be shaped by the logic of our generalizations. We are deeply committed to the notion that the evidence cannot be both the source of hypotheses and the means of their falsification or corroboration. By approaching our analytic task from a modeling perspective we improve the prospect that our propositions follow from a logical, deductive structure and that the empirical assessments are derived independently from the theorizing. But why look with such abstraction and in so arcane a manner as to rely on mathematical constructs in our quest for human understanding? If the deductions do not follow logically, then the formal structure will facilitate discovery of this condition.

Students of international relations have always been interested in constructing models of conflict, although it is only lately that models have been embedded in very precise formalism. Often past models have been motivated by a desire to distill and understand a particular event, such as World War I or the Cuban missile crisis. Sometimes the informal modeling process has been concentrated on providing insights into a few important but very rare events, like hegemonic or power transition wars. Occasionally, as in Robert Jervis's (1976) model of the relation between misperception and conflict behavior, or Robert North's event-interaction model of crises, a goal has been the identification of universal-law-like generalizations.

Since the end of World War II, there has been a proliferation of modeling in the study of international relations. Hans Morgenthau (1973) suggested a model of the balance of power at roughly the same time that Bernard Brodie introduced a general model of deterrence. In counterpoint to their perspectives, Kenneth Organski (1958) suggested the power transition model of cataclysmic great power wars while George Modelski (1987) suggested a model of long cycles. While these realist theories dominated discourse, Karl Deutsch, Ernst Haas, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, and others promulgated models of cooperation and integration as an alternative view of international interactions. Many other prominent theorists proposed equally interesting and provocative models of conflict processes.

During roughly the same period, two more formalized models, with their assumptions clearly set out, were also introduced into the literature. We have in mind Lewis Fry Richardson's (1960) arms race model, which assumes a mechanistic stimulus-response pattern of behavior, and Thomas Schelling's (1960) deterrence model, which assumes rational, welfare-maximizing behavior.

It would be unfair to say that one set of models has dominated another set during the past few decades. Rather, there has been a proliferation of approaches with few, if any, earlier constructs being wholly set aside. But it is clear that theoretical modifications and empirical tests of the Richardson and Schelling models have been facilitated by a clearer understanding of what each model assumes about the world. Modifications of the less formalized constructs have been more problematic.

Formalism certainly does not guarantee the construction of useful theory, but it facilitates the avoidance of inconsistencies. Formalism strives for direct, clear, and unambiguous statements. It helps minimize the "that's not what I meant" discussions while revealing for all to see both the strengths and the weaknesses of the argument.

Sometimes there seem to be very good reasons to avoid modeling and to turn directly to empirical evaluations of the "real" world. This perspective holds most appeal to those students of international relations who are deeply concerned about the specific details, texture, and context of a singular incident. We recognize that each event is necessarily singular in the totality of its particulars, and this, presumably, is why the study of international affairs has so emphasized detailed investigations of

individual events.

We strive to adopt methods that distinguish the particular from the general and that provide explanations optimizing internal and external validity. For us, theory and conceptualization serve to organize ideas as history while data serve to evaluate generalizations in light of particular observations. One without the other is incomplete and not satisfying.

Models often highlight specific and peculiar circumstances that help the analyst search out particular relations that might otherwise go unnoticed. Our discussion of the Fashoda Crisis in chapter 3 or the *Punktation* of Olmütz in chapter 4, for instance, shows how a model can help in a detailed, particularistic investigation of an individual event, as does our illustrative assessment of the Greek-Turkish crises over Cyprus in chapter 5 and the Sino-Indian War in chapter 6, or our more thorough evaluation of the Seven Weeks' War in chapter 7.[6] The statistical analyses in chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 similarly highlight the breadth of the generalizations deduced from the international game structure we propose and facilitate comparisons of the realist/unconstrained and the domestic/constrained perspectives.

The art of modeling resides in the ability to sense what is of primary importance, as distinguished from what is of only secondary consequence. It relies on the selection of details for inclusion or exclusion in a simplified representation of reality. The science of modeling depends on the ability to extract testable, falsifiable relationships among variables that follow in a logically coherent fashion, so that the connection between the model's structure and its empirical implications is clear and consistent. These latter functions are best assured of being fulfilled when all of a model's assumptions are explicit.

Whether a model improves our understanding of some feature of the world cannot be determined solely by its internal structure. The usefulness of a model depends upon its ability to elucidate previously not-so-well-understood empirical phenomena, to account for seeming anomalies without creating excessively many new ones. Models without testable empirical referents are not refutable and so may be indistinguishable from metaphysical arguments. Models with such referents provide an inducement to invent the tools of measurement necessary to test their implications, to turn the historian's lens anew on the record of observations.

Today we have only a few tested models of international relations and an only slightly larger collection of testable, but as yet untested, models. Still, even in their very early stage of development explicit formal models of international relations have contributed in a progressive way to our empirical knowledge. Even though our commitment to the benefits of explicit logic motivates the modeling that characterizes much of this volume, it is our commitment to the importance of empirical assessment that motivates our attention to the historical record, albeit too often our empiricism must be crude and our indicators inadequate. Perhaps our study can be in some small way an inducement to others (and to ourselves) to construct the tools of measurement that are necessary to test comprehensively the implications of our and other theories of international interaction. We cannot emphasize enough how important we believe it is for all social science research to marry careful reasoning with systematic empirical analysis and close scrutiny of specific events.

Of the approaches to model building that one might take—including models of evolutionary processes, cognition, structural imperatives, temporal imperatives—we choose to focus on models of choice processes. We do so, using a game-theoretic perspective, because we believe this approach holds out great promise for explaining hitherto seemingly anomalous behaviors. Other approaches may also hold out as good or greater promise. The give and take of alternative research agendas will, in time, help resolve that issue.

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