

*New Thinking
in International
Relations Theory*

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22. For an excellent discussion of these problems, see E. Leamer, *Specification Searches: Ad Hoc Inferences with Nonexperimental Data* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1978); E. Leamer, "Let's Take the Con out of Econometrics," *American Economic Review*, vol. 73 (1983):31-43; or Frederick Mosteller and John W. Tukey, *Data Analysis and Regression* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1977), especially chapter 13, "Woes of Regression Coefficients."

23. O'Neill, "A Measure for Crisis Instability," p. 662.

24. Albert Wohlstetter, "Scientists, Seers, and Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1963.

25. Charles Kupchan, "Setting Conventional Force Requirements: Roughly Right or Precisely Wrong," *World Politics*, vol. 61, no. 4 (1989).

26. Barkenbus and Weinberg, introduction in *Stability and Strategic Defense*, ed. Barkenbus and Weinberg, p. 6.

27. An application of this approach to the nuclear arms race may be found in James DeNardo, *The Amateur Strategist*. The book explores the connection between cognitive foundations of strategic preferences and the factional structure of arms control politics. For recent developments in the burgeoning fields of complexity theory, bounded rationality, behavior game theory, and cognitive psychology, the reader might consult Epstein and Axtell, *Growing Artificial Societies*; John H. Hagel and Alvin E. Roth, eds., *Handbook of Experimental Economics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); George Lakoff, *Moral Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Ariel Rubinstein, *Lectures on Modeling Bounded Rationality* (CORE Lecture Series, 1995); and John H. Holland, Keith J. Holyoak, Richard Nisbett, and Paul Thagard, *Induction: Processes of Inference, Learning, and Discovery* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1986).

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Realist International Theory and the Study of World Politics

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For almost half a century—since the publication in 1948 of the first edition of Hans Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations*—realist international theory has been at the heart of the study of world politics in the United States.¹ Many scholars have found realist theory to be a useful framework within which to investigate world politics. This is because realist theory addresses the key questions in international relations: What are the causes of conflict and war among nations, and what are the conditions for cooperation and peace among them?² Precisely because it engages these fundamental international problems, other scholars, seeking to develop alternative analytical approaches to international affairs—for example, different types of liberal institutionalism, domestic structural analysis, group decisionmaking theory, individual cognition and personality theory, and most recently, postmodern constructivism—have often defined their theoretical perspectives and research programs in large measure through their opposition to one or more elements of realist theory. Hence if we wish to understand the development and current status of academic discourse in the United States on international relations, we need to understand realist international theory and confront its analysis of world politics.

In this chapter I present a critical appreciation of realist international theory. The first main section provides an outline of realism's main assumptions about states, and the central propositions that realists derive from these core assumptions about the preferences and behavior of states in world affairs. In the second section I examine a sampling of realist-informed scholarship in the fields of international political economy and in-

ternational security studies in order to assess the degree to which realist theory has contributed to our understanding of international relations. The view put forward in that section is that realism does in fact provide substantial leverage on many aspects of world politics. However, in the third and final main section of the chapter I identify two serious conceptual ambiguities and tensions in realist theory and offer a discussion of possible lines of analysis that might address these problems and thus allow realist theory to provide a more effective understanding of politics among nations.

The Core of Realist International Theory

Assumptions

About the Actors in World Politics: Centrality of the State

For realists, as Robert Gilpin suggests, “the essence of social reality is the group,” and in particular, “in a world of scarce resources and conflict over the distribution of those resources, human beings confront one another ultimately as members of groups, and not as isolated individuals.”³ For realists, the fundamental unit of political organization for the past several centuries has been, and at present it is, the nation-state. Realists recognize that other actors such as international institutions, multinational enterprises, and transnational bodies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross operate in the international system, but, as Kenneth Waltz suggests, “states set the scene in which they, along with nonstate actors, stage their dramas or carry on their humdrum affairs. Though they may choose to interfere little in the affairs of nonstate actors for long periods of time, states nevertheless set the terms of the intercourse. . . . When the crunch comes, states remake the rules by which other actors operate.”⁴ Similarly, Gilpin observes that “the state is the principal actor in that the nature of the state and the pattern of relations among states are the most important determinants of the character of international relations at any given moment.”⁵ Finally, Stephen Krasner justifies his assumption that states are the “basic actors in the international system” by arguing that “the behavior of other actors, including multinational corporations and international organizations, is conditioned and delimited by state decisions and state power.”⁶

About the Context of Action: The Anarchy Assumption

Realism’s second core assumption is that states coexist in a context of international anarchy, that is, the absence of a reliable central authority to which they can appeal for protection or the redress of grievances.⁷ The assumption of international anarchy has at least two main realist-posed implications for states. First, in light of the absence of a reliable central au-

thority, states know that others may renege on promises, use force or the threat of force as a way of exerting pressure on them, or even try to hurt or destroy them. Raymond Aron, for example, observes that international relations “present one original feature which distinguishes them from all other social relations: they take place in the shadow of war, or, to use a more rigorous expression, relations among states involve, in essence, the alternatives of peace and war.”⁸ E. H. Carr makes a similar point: War “lurks in the background of international politics just as revolution lurks in the background of domestic politics.”⁹ Similarly, Waltz argues that “if force is used by one state or its use is expected, the recourse of other states is to use force or be prepared to use it singly or in combination. No appeal can be made to a higher entity clothed with the authority and equipped with the ability to act on its own initiative. Under such conditions the possibility that force will be used by one or another of the parties looms always as a threat in the background.”¹⁰ For realists, then, states recognize that they coexist in a dangerous environment.

Second, and related to the first implication, the absence of a centralized authority means that states are by definition self-help agents. As Waltz puts the matter, “to achieve their objectives and maintain their security, units in a condition of anarchy—be they people, corporations, states, or whatever—must rely on the means they can generate and the arrangements they can make for themselves. Self-help is necessarily the principle of action in an anarchic order.”¹¹ As I will show later, realists argue that it is the violence-permissive anarchical context of the international system, together with its associated implication that states recognize that they are self-help agents, that profoundly constrains and shapes both the goals states choose to pursue (their substantive rationality) and the means they elect to pursue in order to achieve those goals (their instrumental rationality).

About the Actors: States as Rational, Autonomous, and Unitary Agents

Realists work with a cluster of three interrelated assumptions about states. The first part of this cluster is the assumption that states are rational actors.¹² State rationality, from a realist viewpoint, has at least three elements. First, realists assume that states are goal-oriented. Although realists diverge in certain important respects with regard to the primary ends they ascribe to states (see the discussion later in the third main section of the chapter), they assume that states have such goals and devise strategies specifically aimed at their achievement. Second, realists assume that states have consistent goals. That is, state preferences are ordered and transitive in the sense that if outcome A is preferred to B, and B is preferred to C, then A is preferred to C. Third, states are assumed by realists to devise strategies to achieve their goals. These strategies take into account the rank-ordering by states of these goals. As an extension, realists assume that states are “sensitive to costs”

and thus can change their strategies in the face of changes in external constraints and opportunities, negative experiences of their own, and observation of both the successes and the failures of other states.¹³

The second part of the cluster of realist assumptions about the nature of states is that they have sufficient autonomy from their national societies to recognize and pursue the interests of the nation as a whole, and not just those of particular powerful groups within the community, and they might actually establish goals and strategies that run counter to the preferences of important parts of society. This is a vitally important assumption for realists, for it enables them to posit the view that decisionmakers respond on behalf of the nation-state as a whole to the opportunities and dangers engendered by the international system.¹⁴

The third and final part of the realist cluster of assumptions about states is that states possess the capacity for unity of action. This means that states have the capacity to act in a coherent manner with regard to other countries.¹⁵ Coherence in turn means that central decisionmakers maintain sufficient control over different organizational elements of their governments to allow them to direct and coordinate government actions in such a way as to implement the decisionmakers' strategies, and to do so in a way that reflects their rank-ordering of goals. Thus endowed with the capacity for coherent action in support of a centrally established and consistent hierarchy of goals, states, according to realists, are able not just to perceive systemic-level constraints but also to formulate and to execute measures in response to them.

Propositions

State Interest in Security: States as Defensive Actors

On the basis of its three core assumptions, realism has developed a number of propositions about the essential character of states and their basic preferences as they interact with other states. First, for realist theory the key result of the recognition by states of the possibility that force can be used against them is that they have security as their principal interest. Gilpin, for example, suggests that although individuals or groups may seek truth, beauty, and goodness, "all these more noble goals will be lost unless one makes provision for one's security in the power struggle among social groups."¹⁶ Similarly, Waltz notes that "in anarchy, security is the highest end. Only if survival is assured can states safely seek such other goals as tranquility, profit, and power."¹⁷ In the same vein, Krasner observes that "all states share the same minimalist objectives of preserving territorial and political integrity."¹⁸ In addition, Aron argues that "politics, insofar as it concerns relations among states, seems to signify—in both ideal and objective terms—simply the survival of states confronting the potential threat created by the existence of other states." "What then," he asks, "is the first objective the political unit [i.e., the state] may logically seek?" His re-

sponse, following Hobbes, is that "each political unit aspires to survive. Leaders and led are interested in and eager to maintain the collectivity they constitute together by virtue of history, race, or fortune."¹⁹ In realist theory, anarchy causes states to be agents concerned first and foremost with their survival and security, and therefore we may say that, to the extent that they are responding to and are being shaped by their external environment, states, according to realist theory, are profoundly *defensive* actors.

The Relativity of Power: States as Defensive Positionalists

Because realists argue that states recognize that their security depends on their own efforts, they also argue that states tend to be concerned about their *relative* capabilities, for it is these that determine whether states are able to meet actual or potential threats posed by other states. State power, then, is by definition relative—indeed, Morgenthau points out that "the concept of power is always a relative one."²⁰ The relativity of power in turn causes states to be positional actors. That is, states, from a realist viewpoint, typically compare themselves to others and assess their own actions, the actions of others, and their relationships and interactions from the viewpoint of their effect on relative capabilities. Tying this realist argument to the realist view that anarchy causes states to be concerned about their security and survival, realist theory argues that anarchy causes states to be *defensive positionalists*.²¹

It should be noted that many realists assert that states seek not just to minimize gaps in power that favor others but also to maximize gaps to their own advantage. This ambiguity creates a number of problems for realist theory, which are discussed more fully in the third major section of this chapter. However, for the moment I would only suggest that in my view, although there is nothing in realist theory that would preclude us from observing that *some* states may seek to maximize their relative power (perhaps because of the particularities of national leaders or domestic structures), the theory's emphasis on anarchy itself probably does not predict more than that *most* states (and certainly *all major* states) will seek the minimum level of power that is needed to attain and to maintain their security and survival. Indeed, and as is discussed more fully later, given realism's emphasis on state defensiveness, it would follow that if a state had an opportunity to increase its power, but this conflicted with its goal of security maximization, then the state—to the extent that it is responding to systemic constraints—would forgo the former in favor of the latter.

State Interest in Independence and Autonomy

Realists also argue that because they are defensive positionalists and are concerned about their relative power, states seek to be free to choose strate-

gies that are most likely to promote their security and to try to undertake those actions both internally and externally that they believe are most likely to maintain their relative power position and thereby to help ensure their safety. Hence anarchy causes states to value autonomy of decision and independence of action. In addition, states, according to realist theory, seek in the self-help context of anarchy to retain a capacity to carry out those functions that are conducive to security, survival, and maintenance of relative position: They seek, for example, to have an independent capacity for diplomacy, for the gathering of intelligence, and, ultimately, for the credible threat or actual employment of force. Since these functions in turn require national control over certain resources—most important, a diversified economy able to support military power—states are wary, according to realist theory, of becoming dependent on others (for example, as a result of specialization on the basis of comparative advantage) to the extent that they can no longer act autonomously.²² Of course, not all states may be able actually to perform all of those functions, but most—and certainly all of the major states—will have as an interest the retention of the capacity to carry them out to the greatest degree possible.

In sum, realist theory assumes that states are the key actors in world affairs; that they are rational, autonomous, and unitary actors; and that their goals and strategies are shaped by their anarchical context. On the basis of these assumptions, realists argue that states are fundamentally concerned about their security and in consequence are defensively positional in character; that as such they are anxious about their relative capabilities; and as a result they are attentive to their capacity for autonomous choice and independent action. These assumptions and propositions form the core of realist international relations theory.

The Utility of Realist Theory

The previous section provided a brief outline of the main elements of realist theory. The question, of course, is whether they can be used to shed significant light on the actual behavior of states and the outcomes of that behavior in the international system. The present section addresses that question.

Evaluation of the State-as-Unitary-Actor Assumption

Most applications of realist theory test propositions that are derived from realism's core assumptions and general propositions. However, it should be noted that many realist-informed scholars have investigated directly the feasibility and usefulness of what is perhaps realism's most controversial assumption, namely, that states can act as unitary actors relatively unconstrained by

the character of domestic institutions or the content of the preferences of particular societal segments.²³ For example, Stephen Krasner finds that substantial governmental autonomy can be observed even in the seemingly hard case of a generally "weak" U.S. state interacting with a "strong" American society. In particular, in his study of postwar U.S. monetary and commercial policy (in which he suggests that the state has had greater autonomy in the former than the latter) and in his investigation of U.S. foreign policy in the natural-resources issue area during most of the twentieth century, Krasner demonstrates that the key foreign policy-making sectors of the U.S. government—that is, the executive branch in general and the office of the president in particular—have been able to attain the autonomy and coherence of action needed to meet to an important degree the unitary-actor assumption.²⁴

Krasner's key finding—that the U.S. executive can act with substantial autonomy and coherence—is supported by John Ikenberry's study of U.S. oil-price decontrol policy during the 1970s. As in the Krasner studies, Ikenberry argues that the U.S. government came to specify its goals and to devise a policy to move toward the decontrol of oil prices not in response to domestic interests—which were divided among themselves or argued in favor of continued controls—but instead as a part of a U.S. bargain made with the other major industrialized countries at the Bonn summit meeting of 1978.²⁵ Similarly, David Lake demonstrates that even in the hardest of hard cases—that is, commercial policy in the United States, in which a particularistic Congress is constitutionally entitled to share in policymaking—the U.S. executive was able from 1887 through 1939 to respond to a surprising degree to systemic opportunities and constraints.²⁶ Hence studies that directly address the utility of the assumptions of state autonomy and coherence—the assumptions without which realists could not argue that states respond to external stimuli—appear to have solid empirical grounding, and beyond that they shed light on the actual foreign policies of even a highly pluralistic political system such as that of the United States.

Realist Empirical Propositions: Tests and Extensions *Balancing*

In addition to undertaking studies that address core realist assumptions, realist-informed scholars have developed and investigated three major clusters of expectations about actual state behavior and international outcomes. The first specifies what is perhaps the major realist expectation regarding the behavioral manifestation of the interest of states to ensure their survival in the face of anarchy. That expectation concerns the tendency of states to engage in *balancing* behavior; that is, if the security and independence of some states are threatened by the growth in power of one

state or a group of states, the threatened states, according to realist theory, will respond to that challenge by seeking to take actions that mitigate or offset the growth in power of the rising side. They will not, by way of contrast, engage in *bandwagoning* behavior, that is, they will not rush to join the stronger side in the hope of making the best arrangements possible and of exploiting those that are the (immediate) target of the rising side.

Balancing efforts may include individual attempts by the threatened states to accumulate additional national capabilities sufficient to match those of the challenger.²⁷ Alternatively, balancing may take the form of states seeking to establish informal or formal alliances aimed against the rising state or group of states. Aron calls this tendency to undertake balancing through alliances a "policy of equilibrium" and defines it most generally as "maneuvering in order to prevent a state from accumulating forces superior to those of its allied rivals." He notes further that "every state, if it wishes to safeguard the equilibrium, will take a position against the state or coalition that seems capable of achieving such a superiority."²⁸ Aron emphasizes that balancing is systematically induced. He observes, for example, that "hateful or admirable, baneful or precious, the diplomacy of equilibrium does not result from a deliberate choice on the part of statesmen—it results from circumstances."²⁹ He also stresses that balancing is usually defensive in motivation, arguing that it "issues from the prudence necessary to the states concerned to preserve their independence and not be at the mercy of another state possessing irresistible strength"; he returns to this defensive motive in balancing when he notes that "the concern for equilibrium inspires diplomacy to the same extent that men—both governed and governing—cling to the independence of their political unit."³⁰

For realist theory the tendency of states to balance against challengers through the formation of defensive alliances is a strong behavioral expectation about the effects of anarchy on states. It is also a key sign, according to realism as it has been articulated by Waltz, that states are more interested in security than in power. Waltz argues that "if states wished to maximize power, they would join the stronger side, and we would see not balances forming but a world hegemony forged. This does not happen because balancing, not bandwagoning, is the behavior induced by the system. The first concern of states is not to maximize power but to maintain their positions in the system." He goes on to note that "secondary states, if they are free to choose, flock to the weaker side; for it is the stronger side that threatens them. On the weaker side, they are both more appreciated and safer, provided, of course, that the coalition they join achieves enough defensive or deterrent strength to dissuade adversaries from attacking."³¹

In recent years Stephen Walt has modified the basic realist argument that states will balance against and not bandwagon toward a rising challenger. Realist theory, Walt argues, has too readily equated physical power with

external challenges, and therefore it has too readily predicted that states will determine against which country they should balance solely on the basis of which is rising in sheer material power. Walt argues that power is indeed a key factor on which states focus in making their balancing decisions, but in addition to power they are sensitive to the level of political threat that a state may pose against them. In other words, states balance against those that are most *threatening* to them. Walt illustrates the efficacy of this argument by demonstrating that threat-balancing has prevailed over bandwagoning in the Middle East and in Southwest Asia since World War II, and that the threat-balancing thesis provides a better grasp on alliance decisions in the region than do such alternative explanatory factors as ideology, foreign aid, or foreign interventions in local politics.³²

The realist proposition on balancing has recently been subjected to an important critique by noted historian Paul Schroeder.³³ Schroeder says that instead of self-help and especially balancing, states historically have often pursued alternative strategies in the face of threats from others. They have, he suggests, often turned to "hiding" (avoidance of the threat posed by other countries) or to "transcending" (seeking to solve the problem that brought the countries into conflict). Most interestingly, Schroeder indicates that in contrast to the views of Waltz and Walt, "I see bandwagoning as historically more common than balancing, especially by smaller powers."³⁴

In addition, Michael Barnett and Jack Levy, in their study of shifts in Egyptian military alliances from the early 1960s to the early 1970s, find that Egypt's movement from hostility to progressively closer coordination with the conservative oil-rich Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia over the course of that period, and its decision to move first from partial engagement in the early 1960s to close alliance with the Soviet Union between 1967 and 1970, followed by disengagement from 1971 until 1973, cannot be readily attributed simply to changes in Egypt's diplomatic position with respect to Israel. Instead they emphasize and persuasively argue that these shifts were the result both of international factors *and* the domestic political situation and the struggles of Egypt's leaders, Gamal Abdel Nasser and Anwar Sadat.³⁵ This finding about the impact of domestic factors is important because, as they note, the particular case of Egyptian alliances has been cited by realists as confirming their approach to the subject.³⁶ Their study is also important because it presents disconfirming evidence for realist expectations precisely in circumstances (international security affairs) that otherwise would be thought to be most likely to yield a confirming case for realism. At the same time, the case offers supporting evidence for a theory (domestic-structuralism, loosely defined) in circumstances in which such confirmation might be expected to be least likely to occur.³⁷

In the same vein, Steven David argues that in addition to—and sometimes, if necessary, instead of—responding to external threats, national

state elites, acting to protect their personal as opposed to state interests, make alliance choices on the basis of internal threats to their domestic political control. He refers to this as "omnibalancing." He finds that Mengistu Haile Mariam's decision in the mid-to-late 1970s to switch Ethiopia from a pro-U.S. to a pro-Soviet alignment is puzzling from a balance-of-power viewpoint but makes sense when one takes into account the fact that although the United States was not prepared to support Mengistu in his efforts to suppress the secessionist movement in Eritrea, the Soviet Union was willing to provide such support. In contrast, Anwar Sadat's move away from the Soviet Union and toward the United States in the late 1970s, David suggests, was driven by Sadat's concerns and calculations about which patron would help him contain challenges to his personal power from within Egypt.³⁸ As in the Barnett and Levy study, domestic dynamics, and not just international imperatives, appear to drive exactly the form of behavior that is presumably at the center of the realist understanding of world politics, namely, state choices and strategies regarding political-military alliances. This argument about the domestic sources of state alignment choices (discussed more fully later) is a challenge not only to realist ideas about balancing but also to the entire realist orientation to world politics.

System Polarity and Stability

Realists, while emphasizing that the international system is conducive to competition and conflict among states, also argue that the stability of the international environment can be affected by systemic factors and particularly by system polarity, that is, the number of major states in the system. Most significant is Waltz's thesis that multipolar systems tend to be more prone than bipolar systems to instability and possibly severe military conflict.³⁹ He suggests, for example, that balancing is relatively more difficult in multipolar than in bipolar systems; that the risk of miscalculation is higher in multipolar than in bipolar systems; and that alliance leaders are more likely to be drawn into conflicts by their weaker partners in multipolar than in bipolar contexts. He also argues that bipolar systems are by definition ones in which there is less economic interdependence (defined as mutual vulnerability) than in multipolar systems, and this too causes bipolar systems to be more stable and less conflict-prone than multipolar systems.

Waltz's polarity thesis has been subjected to a number of useful criticisms. For example, Thomas Christensen and Jack Snyder point out that there is a troubling indeterminacy in Waltz's arguments about the manner in which alliance dynamics in multipolar international systems might result in unintended war. That is, they note that according to Waltz such wars in multipolar systems might arise from "chain-ganging" (allies are dragged

into war by reckless partners) or "buck-passing" (each ally hopes that its partners will stand up against a rising challenger, and thus none do so until it is too late). They show with substantial persuasiveness that an understanding of the "pathologies" of multipolarity prior to World War I (chain-ganging) and World War II (buck-passing) requires the addition of a factor not included in Waltz's structural analysis, namely, perceptions of national decisionmakers about the likely efficacy of offensive military strategies.⁴⁰

Another interesting critique of Waltz's polarity thesis is provided by Ted Hopf. He suggests in a study of European international politics from 1495 to 1559 that there was no significant change in the level of stability of the system in spite of a shift from multipolarity (which characterized the 1495–1521 subperiod) to bipolarity (1521–1559). He claims, as do Christensen and Snyder, that an argument focusing on decisionmaker perceptions about the advantages of offensive as opposed to defensive military strategies provides greater insight into the continuities in conflict across the two time periods than does a focus solely on the structure of the international system.⁴¹

Yet, in spite of its problems, the polarity thesis retains a remarkable degree of vitality. Joanne Gowa, for example, while not addressing specifically Waltz's arguments about system structure and stability, shows that the international trading order is likely to be more liberal and more stable if it is embedded in alliances that are formed under conditions of bipolarity than of multipolarity.⁴² The salience of realism's polarity thesis is also evidenced by the debate that John Mearsheimer has sparked about the future of Europe. Mearsheimer argues that the bipolar structure of the international system from 1945 until 1989 was the main cause of the security and stability that obtained in Western Europe during that period and was also the main factor facilitating the cooperation that evolved among the nations in that region. He argues further that in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, it is likely that Europe will return to multipolarity and that this will possibly mean a return to instability and conflict on the continent.⁴³ Only time will determine the degree to which Mearsheimer's argument about multipolarity is correct, but at the very least it may be predicted with confidence that his realist-informed analysis will set the terms of debate in much of the literature on intra-European relations for many years to come. In addition, Aaron Friedberg and Richard Betts, though not writing from a realist perspective, both focus in their respective studies of the future of East Asia on the impact of growing multipolarization in that region, and both suggest that this trend—especially in light of the low presence or even the absence of the domestic-political and regional-economic characteristics that may be promoting peace and inhibiting conflict in Western Europe—has the potential to produce serious instability in that part of the world, including arms races and perhaps even war.⁴⁴

Realism and the Problem of International Cooperation

Hypothesized Constraints on Cooperation. Realism holds that states may cooperate by forming defensive alliances aimed against external challengers. More generally, it should be emphasized that realist-informed scholars have long recognized that cooperation is an important feature of world politics. However, they have argued—and in doing so have produced a second set of empirical expectations—that cooperation is harder to achieve and more difficult to maintain than is suggested, for example, by the liberal-institutionalist tradition. In particular, realists have identified at least three systemically induced constraints on the willingness of states to cooperate even when they share common interests.

The first constraint (and the one most typically emphasized by realism's liberal challengers) is the problem of cheating. Without a centralized authority capable of enforcing promises, and in the face of common but also mixed interests, states both will be tempted to cheat and will fear being the victim of such cheating by their partners.⁴⁵

Second, as noted earlier, realists argue that states as self-help agents prefer to be able to perform as many functions (especially those having an effect on their security and autonomy) as possible. The preference of states, then, is to maintain a low level of functional differentiation between themselves and others. However, cooperation usually entails some degree of specialization of function: In the military realm, for example, an alliance is strengthened as a collective if the sea powers within it concentrate resources on their naval strength at the expense of their ground forces while the ground powers do the reverse. Similarly, in the economic realm the gains arising from trade liberalization are maximized if such liberalization permits specialization on the basis of comparative advantage. Yet it is precisely this specialization in function that states resist, according to realists. As Waltz puts the matter, although "the domestic imperative is 'specialize'!", one finds that "the international imperative is 'take care of your self!'"⁴⁶ In other words, to ensure their security states prefer to have a "robust" military force structure; if and to the extent that it is possible, they would like to have formidable naval *and* ground *and* air forces. States also prefer a "balanced" economic structure—that is, to possess, if and to the extent possible, advanced-technology industry *and* basic heavy industry *and* agricultural self-sufficiency *and* a diversified service sector. In sum, to the extent that cooperation entails functional differentiation, states, according to realist theory, will be wary about such cooperation as a result of anarchy-induced concerns about their security and independence.⁴⁷

The third constraint operating on the willingness of states to cooperate, realists suggest, is the matter of relative gains. Waltz defines the issue in these terms: "When faced with the possibility of cooperating for mutual

gain, states that feel insecure must ask how the gain will be divided. They are compelled to ask not 'Will both of us gain?' but 'Who will gain more?' If an expected gain is to be divided, say, in the ratio of two to one, one state may use its disproportionate gain to implement a policy intended to damage or destroy the other. Even the prospect of large absolute gains for both parties does not elicit their cooperation so long as each fears how the other will use its increased capabilities."⁴⁸ Drawing from this argument, it may be suggested that defensive state positionalism fosters a relative-gains problem for international cooperation: Given its defensive concerns about relative capabilities, a state will decline to join, will leave, or will sharply limit its commitment to a cooperative arrangement if it believes that gaps in gains will substantially favor partners.⁴⁹

Several analytical critiques have been offered recently of the realist expectation that states will tend to exhibit defensively oriented concerns about the distribution of gains arising from cooperation with others. For example, several authors suggest that state concerns about relative gains may dissipate in the face of large numbers of actors or when the possibility of war is low.⁵⁰ Yet recent works by Michael Mastanduno and Stephen Krasner support the realist view that the relative-gains problem may hinder efforts by states to achieve otherwise mutually beneficial forms of cooperation. In a study of U.S.-Japanese state interactions affecting cooperation between corporations based in their respective countries, Mastanduno finds that important elements of the U.S. government became more concerned about the distribution of gains between the United States and Japan in the fields of fighter aircraft, civilian satellites, and high-definition television (HDTV) as Japan went from a position of clear subordination in these areas prior to the 1980s to one of substantial competitiveness during that decade. He demonstrates that organizational politics determined whether the U.S. government actually acted on the basis of such relative-gains concerns, and he shows that the U.S. government, though deciding not to intervene in the HDTV area, did seek to reduce what it viewed to be unfavorable distributions of gains in the cases of satellites and to some degree aircraft.⁵¹

Stephen Krasner presents similar findings in his study of international cooperation in the field of global communications.⁵² He demonstrates that in instances in which states have had to coordinate their policies so that global communications could grow and provide important absolute benefits to all—the allocation of the electromagnetic spectrum for radio transmissions, telecommunications, and satellite communications—much of the negotiations revolved around the precise distribution of gains. The states in these negotiations all agreed that coordination would allow each to enjoy an improvement in its absolute welfare. However, they disagreed as to the distribution of rewards to be generated by their cooperation. According to Krasner, what then determined whether cooperation would occur, and

what form it would take, was the relative power of the United States, the European countries, and the developing countries in the particular field of communications in which they were trying to coordinate policies.

In sum, realists have argued that cooperation among states is difficult to achieve because of fears about cheating, dependency, and relative gains. Yet realist-informed scholars have also argued that cooperation can be achieved and have tried to specify the conditions necessary for it.

Conditions for Cooperation: Hegemonic Leadership. As noted earlier, a long-standing realist argument is that states will cooperate through alliances in order to balance against external challengers. In addition, realist-informed scholars have sought to develop an explanation for cooperation in the international political economy: the theory of hegemonic leadership.⁵³ Drawing from the theory of collective goods, Robert Gilpin and Stephen Krasner argue that a necessary condition for the formation and maintenance of a liberal (i.e., market-based) international economy is that a single state be available that is both able and willing to invest the resources and to bear the burdens associated with the operation of such an economic order.⁵⁴ According to Gilpin, the worldwide spread of British foreign direct investment during the nineteenth century was a manifestation and a key element of a liberal world economy that in turn was made possible by British power, and the similar spread of U.S.-based firms around the globe in the 1950s and 1960s was the result of the liberal international order established by the United States immediately after World War II.⁵⁵ Similarly, Krasner suggests that changes in relative national power—in particular, the rise and decline first of Britain and then of the United States—explain many of the changes in the degree of openness that can be observed in the international-trade order from the early nineteenth century through the latter third of the twentieth century.

The Gilpin/Krasner argument about hegemonic leadership has been subjected to sustained critical examination. For example, John Conybeare, Timothy McKeown, Arthur Stein, and Duncan Snidal identify important problems with its theoretical logic. McKeown and Stein also question the historical interpretation offered by Gilpin and Krasner regarding the degree to which Britain played a key role in bringing about freer trade during the nineteenth century, and Stein criticizes Krasner's argument that protectionism increased in the late nineteenth century in the way and to the degree suggested by Krasner.⁵⁶ Further, Robert Keohane suggests that what he terms the hegemonic stability thesis, although helpful in accounting for changes in the post-World War II international petroleum regime, does less well with regard to money and especially trade.⁵⁷ He also suggests that the hegemonic stability thesis is unable to account for the continuance of what he takes to be moderately high levels of economic cooperation among the

advanced democracies in the 1970s and 1980s in spite of the apparent decline of the U.S. hegemon.⁵⁸ Moreover, Bruce Russett and Susan Strange raise important questions about the Gilpin/Krasner view that there has been a deterioration in the economic order to the degree they suggested, about their thesis that U.S. material power has declined since the 1970s, and about their use of sheer economic-physical capabilities as a measure of U.S. hegemonic ascendancy and decline as opposed to (potentially still very great) U.S. military, technological, intellectual, and cultural capabilities and status in the world.⁵⁹

Yet the realist-informed hegemonic leadership thesis still has life in it. For example, Joanne Gowa offers thoughtful realist-informed responses to two of the main criticisms often made of the hegemonic leadership approach, namely, that hegemons would be irrational to pursue free trade rather than an optimum-tariff strategy, and that hegemons are not really needed insofar as a small "k group" (a small number of system-critical countries) can by itself maintain a liberal economic trading order.⁶⁰ Further, John Ikenberry and Charles Kupchan show that one aspect of U.S. hegemonic leadership after World War II took the form of the United States using its power to socialize the Western European states to be more oriented to international economic openness.⁶¹ In addition, David Lake demonstrates that the basic trajectory of U.S. trade policy from the latter quarter of the nineteenth century to the first third of the twentieth conforms to the basic expectations of the hegemonic leadership approach. For example, Lake argues that what might be called U.S. predatory protectionism at the end of the nineteenth century is consistent with the approach's thesis that in the face of (in this case, British) hegemony, some states will free-ride and use protectionism to advance national economic interests. Lake demonstrates further that, the 1930 Smoot-Hawley Tariff notwithstanding, as the United States became more economically developed it began to show limited leadership and sought to move its trading partners in a more liberal direction during the 1920s and the second half of the 1930s.⁶²

Realist International Theory: Standard Criticisms, New Problems, and Prospects for Future Research

Many students have found realist theory to be helpful in their investigations of international relations. Other scholars, however, argue that realist theory is severely flawed and that there are sharp limits on its ability to shed light on international affairs. Many of the particular criticisms that scholars offer of realist theory have already been noted in the discussions of balancing, hegemonic leadership, system polarity and stability, and the relative-gains problem for international cooperation. In this section I discuss

my own concerns about realist theory after assessing some of the standard criticisms in the international relations literature.

Standard Criticisms

The Issue of International Change

Criticism. A major line of criticism that is pursued in regard to realist theory is that the approach does not recognize and cannot account for international change, including, very significantly, the end of the Cold War. For example, Friedrich Kratochwil provides a powerful critique of modern realist theory in the light of the peaceful end of the Cold War. His major theme is that realism could not anticipate and may not now readily explain the end of the Cold War because it pays too much attention to structural constants and not enough to domestic change and the evolution of norms that are commonly held among nations.⁶³ Of course this criticism regarding the momentous events of 1988–1991 is not being directed only at realist theory; John Lewis Gaddis argues that virtually every major behavioral and structural approach to international relations is fatally flawed because all failed to forecast the end of the Cold War.⁶⁴

Speaking in more general terms, Robert Keohane argues that “realism is particularly weak in accounting for change, especially where the sources of that change lie in the world political economy or in the domestic structures of states.”⁶⁵ Keohane acknowledges that Gilpin, for example, tries to explain the rise and decline of hegemons and the effect of this on war and peace among states, but he argues that Gilpin’s theory is flawed insofar as its explanation of the decline of hegemons is partly based on domestic factors. Overall, according to Keohane, “this Thucydides-Gilpin theory is a systemic theory of change only in a limited sense. It explains the *reaction* to change systematically, in a rationalistic, equilibrium model. Yet at a more fundamental level, it does not account fully for the sources of change.” Keohane goes on to suggest that “although it is insightful about systemic factors leading to hegemonic decline, it also has to rely on internal processes to explain the observed effects.”⁶⁶

Similarly, John Ruggie argues in his critique of Waltz’s *Theory of International Politics* that Waltz fails to tackle the key question of how the modern interstate system evolved out of feudalism. Ruggie argues that Waltz is unable to explain such a momentous development because he ignores progressive increases in domestic integration—what Ruggie, following Emile Durkheim, calls increases in the “dynamic density” of societies. Today such increases, according to Ruggie, might be taking the form of “demographic trends, quantitative and qualitative changes in industrial production and location as well as in technologies, ecological and resource constraints, and

shifts in the international balance of forces.”⁶⁷ Ruggie suggests that he “would be surprised to learn that some of the changes alluded to above do not adversely affect the managerial capacity of bipolarity and, thereby, alter systemic outcomes.”⁶⁸ Yet these factors, Ruggie stresses, are left out of Waltz’s model, making the latter undetermining; as Ruggie emphasizes, “the problem with Waltz’s posture is that, in any social system, structural change itself ultimately has no source *other than* unit-level processes. By banishing these from the domain of systemic theory, Waltz also exogenizes the ultimate source of systemic change.”⁶⁹ In a similar vein, Alexander Wendt suggests that the very ideas of “states” and “anarchy” are socially constructed—that is, they exist because individuals and human collectivities think they exist—and states could escape both anarchy and the dangers it engenders through new ideas and new, more cooperative practices.⁷⁰

Response. One response by realist-informed scholars to this first general line of criticism might be to question its premise, namely, that what is most important “out there” is international change. Realists in fact have offered the counterclaim that continuities are more important than changes in interstate (and before that, intercity; and before that, intertribe) politics. Robert Gilpin, for example, although noting that there have been changes in statecraft, nevertheless makes it clear that, in his view, “the fundamental nature of international relations has not changed over the millennia.” He goes on to suggest that as a result of such continuities in the nature of world politics, “the classic history of Thucydides is as meaningful a guide to the behavior of states today as when it was written in the fifth century B.C.”⁷¹

Similarly, Waltz notes that “although changes abound, continuities are as impressive, or more so, a proposition that can be illustrated in a number of ways.” One such illustration is that “one who reads the apocryphal book of First Maccabees with events in and after World War I in mind will gain a sense of the continuity that characterizes international politics”; another is that “whether in the second century before Christ or in the twentieth century after, Arabs and Jews fought among themselves and over the residues of northern empire, while states outside of the arena warily watched or actively intervened.” For Waltz, then, “the texture of international politics remains highly constant, patterns recur, and events repeat themselves endlessly. The relations that prevail internationally seldom shift in type or in quality. They are marked instead by dismaying persistence, a persistence that one must expect so long as none of the competing units is able to convert the anarchic international realm into a hierarchic one.”⁷² Waltz also says more specifically with regard to unit-level forces that although they might in principle yield international changes, nevertheless “the structure of a system acts as a constraining and disposing force, and because it does so systems theories explain and predict continuity within a system. A sys-

tems theory shows why changes at the unit level produce less change of outcomes than one would expect in the absence of systemic constraints.⁷³ More recently Waltz assigns importance to one major unit-level factor—nuclear weapons—in bringing about a “troubled peace” among the major powers since 1945. Nevertheless, while there has not been war among the major powers, Waltz stresses that “states have continued to compete in economic, military, and other ways. The use of force has been threatened, and numerous wars have been fought on the peripheries.”⁷⁴

In sum, realists might first respond to the claim that they pay insufficient attention to change by suggesting that this relative neglect is warranted insofar as it allows them to concentrate their attention on what for them are the more important aspects of international affairs, namely, the continuities in state preferences in the face of the continuing absence of centralized international authority, and the resulting regularities in state behavior and international outcomes. Yet realists can go on to offer a second argument, namely, that while they find that there are important continuities in certain basic features of world politics, they nevertheless observe and can account for some very important shifts in national policies and in international outcomes.

It will be recalled, for example, that the goal of Gilpin and Krasner is to formulate a structural theory that explains the rise and the decline of world liberal economic orders. It will also be recalled that Keohane accepts the point that change in the sense of the movement toward a more liberal order requires a hegemon, and restricts his critique to trying to show that such an order might endure for some period of time without the *continued* support of a hegemonic leader.⁷⁵ Similarly, it may be recalled that Lake's study sought to explain changes in U.S. trade policy over half a century by focusing on changes in the world trading position of the United States. In the same vein, one of the main conclusions that Barry Posen draws from his study of British, French, and German military doctrine during the interwar period is that a focus on changes in systemic constraints and opportunities provides a firmer grip on understanding changes in such doctrines than might be provided by a focus on such factors as organizational politics or technological change. For example, Posen finds that given Hitler's interest in aggression, Germany's geographic position in the center of Europe made it structurally more predisposed than France or Britain to take note of the potential efficacy of armored warfare and to develop the appropriate doctrine for the offensive use of tanks—the Blitzkrieg strategy. Similarly, the rise in German power, according to Posen, caused Britain, with some slippage, to shift from an air-deterrent to an air-defense-oriented strategy.⁷⁶ Thus, notwithstanding their claim that continuity in the basic elements of international politics is high and consequential, realists might claim that their theory actually does explain quite a bit of the change that we observe in the international system.

The Issue of Unit-Level Variables

Criticism. The second standard criticism that is frequently leveled against realism—and the line of analysis that largely undergirds the criticism that realism is unsatisfactory in its understanding of the question of international change—is that it does not take into account the impact of *domestic factors* (political, economic, and social processes) on the foreign behavior of states.⁷⁷

Response. Realists might claim in the first place that it is not true that they pay insufficient attention to domestic forces in world affairs. For example, as noted earlier, Waltz has adapted his structuralist argument to suggest that it was nuclear weapons, together with bipolarity, that mitigated (but did not terminate) U.S.-Soviet competition during the Cold War. He also suggests that in the future nuclear weapons will probably restrain (but, again, they will not wholly prevent) big-power competition (especially in the technological-economic domain) if and as the international system moves toward a multipolar structure including the United States, Russia, Japan, China, and either Germany or a united Europe.⁷⁸

Similarly, it may be recalled that Stephen Walt has modified realist theory to suggest that states do not balance only on the basis of power calculations, although this is a major factor in their calculations, but that they balance against threats. One important element of such threat calculations, according to Walt, is whether a particular state is *perceived by others* to have *aggressive intentions*.⁷⁹ In the same vein, Christensen and Snyder, in their discussion noted earlier of chain-ganging and buck-passing, do not argue that a focus on decisionmaker perceptions about the efficacy of offensive strategies can by itself account for international conflict—that is, that it can replace structural theory—but rather that a focus on perceptions helps to account for the particular way in which multipolarity breeds such conflict.⁸⁰

Displaying a similar sensitivity to unit-level factors but placing them in a context of a systemic explanation, Posen notes that institutional dynamics—and in particular the availability of individual “mavericks” such as General Heinz Guderian in Germany and Fighter Command chief Sir Hugh Caswell Dowding in Britain—play an important facilitating role in allowing systemic constraints and opportunities to make themselves felt and thus to yield doctrinal innovations.⁸¹ Along the same lines, I suggest in *Cooperation Among Nations* that one reason a state might be concerned about relative gains arising from a cooperative agreement to liberalize trade might be its concern that the partners possess domestic structures better suited to take advantage of the new commercial opportunities produced by such an arrangement. In particular, that Economic Community (EC) members were concerned that their regulatory frameworks and overall capacity

to compete internationally would allow the United States to achieve disproportionate gains from an aggressive implementation of the Tokyo Round government procurement and technical standards codes, and this concern led the EC to resist the United States (and the Nordic countries) in pressing for such an aggressive administration of those two codes.⁸² Finally, Walt finds that a state that experiences a revolution is particularly likely to view the international environment as being hostile, and others are especially likely to view that state as being dangerous, and the resulting "spiraling" of mutual suspicion, fear, and perceived threat may ultimately propel all to ward war.⁸³

Hence realist-informed scholars have demonstrated an acute awareness of unit-level factors, and they have moved to incorporate such factors into their systemic-level arguments. But realists might even go further in responding to the criticism that realism ought to focus on unit-level variables and say that in addition to, or perhaps instead of, such domestic structures affecting outcomes in the international system, it is the former that are actually shaped by the latter. For example, Posen suggests that Franco-Prussian/German military conflict from the mid-1800s to the outbreak of World War I was itself an important (but by no means the only) cause for many of the military and, more interestingly, the educational reforms that took place in each of the two countries during that period. France and Prussia/Germany, Posen argues, sought to have available a pool of disciplined, motivated, and above all *nationalistic* soldiers willing to work together as effective military units and to accept the enormous hazards associated with large-scale land warfare as it was then developing in Europe. Therefore, each state moved to institute educational programs for progressively larger portions of their respective populations in order to increase military efficiency and, more important, to transmit to young men a national "high culture" to which they would assign their loyalty and in the defense of which they would, if necessary, willingly give their lives.⁸⁴

This argument about the impact of interstate dynamics on the specific characteristics of domestic political, social, and perhaps even cultural structures is anticipated and supported by the work of such historians as Otto Hintze.⁸⁵ It is also a major theme proposed by students of comparative government and sociology. Aristide Zolberg, for example, discussing the political development of the European states between 1450 and 1750, suggests that the simultaneous emergence of a number of such entities both created a system of states and that this system "developed its own particular dynamism whose repercussions may be regarded as specific variables having retroactive effects upon each unit of the whole."⁸⁶ Similarly, Charles Tilly notes that one of Gabriel Ardant's most controversial insights is that "the pressure to extend the suffrage, increase national consciousness, give presentation to the working classes, and generally draw

the bulk of the national population into political life, which so marked the nineteenth century in Europe, came to an important degree from the fiscal demands of the great military and administrative machines brought into being by the Napoleonic Wars."⁸⁷ In addition, Theda Skocpol demonstrates that the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions were in great measure triggered by, and followed a particular path as a result of, the interstate strategic situation in which these countries found themselves prior to the onset of domestic sociopolitical turbulence.⁸⁸ Finally, Brian Downing shows that variance in the geostrategic situation of European countries led to different national reactions to the military revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—that is, the development of expensive modes of warfare requiring large land armies and therefore vast increases in state revenues. Downing also finds that this difference in state responses to the need for resources to meet the requirements of the military revolution was an important contributing factor leading, for example, to the long-run development of a hard form of militaristic absolutism in Brandenburg-Prussia on the one hand and, on the other, constitutional government and ultimately democracy in a more favorably positioned England.⁸⁹

Hence it is highly possible that important features of the domestic institutions of states, aspects of the ways in which those institutions work, and the manner in which they emerged and developed historically—that is, the way in which social mobilization occurs or "dynamic density" increases—may be the result of interstate competitive forces and dynamics.⁹⁰ Realist theory, it should also be noted, has at its disposal an explanation for such an observation of external influences on internal development. That is, Waltz suggests that states are socialized over time into acceptance of interests and policies required by their anarchical environment as a result of experiences in that environment, and, as noted earlier, they have the ability to learn not just from those direct experiences but from observation and imitation of others as well.⁹¹ This argument, as Posen suggests, can be readily applied not just to external influences on national interests and policies, but also to the development of national institutions. If this is so, then in fact Ruggie's important challenge to realism can be addressed effectively: The international system may be "generative" not just in the sense of inducing and constraining national behavior in the international system but also in the sense of shaping the timing and manner of the emergence of that system and even the character of the entities—that is, the internal structures of nation-states—constituting that system. Indeed, as Markus Fischer suggests, the (mostly conflictual) relationships of the various political entities that existed during the feudal period themselves appear to have emerged and evolved without effective and legitimate centralized authority, and were driven instead by the exercise of raw power, and therefore the character of

those relationships appears to be readily explained by realist-informed concepts and arguments.⁹²

Additional Puzzles and Problems for Realism

Realism may be quite successful in responding to the general criticisms discussed thus far. However, there are at least two other problems in realism that may leave realists with less reason to be sanguine.

The European Union and the Continuing Puzzle of International Institutions

The Issue. Realist theory, as made clear by an important essay by John Mearsheimer, heavily discounts the salience of international institutions as objects of state policy or as autonomous actors in world politics.⁹³ Yet states (especially in the post-World War II era) seem to have a persistent habit of investing time and resources in the construction of institutions. An important example of state attention to and investment in institutions is the recent and quite remarkable resurgence of the European Community, now renamed the European Union (EU), beginning in the mid-1980s and carrying over into the early 1990s: the Single Market Program, such technology programs as ESPRIT and EUREKA, and especially the attempt (now seriously off-track) to attain Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) by the end of the 1990s. The interest displayed by the European countries in the EU creates a problem for realist theory.⁹⁴ That is, it may bring into conflict some of the major assumptions that realist theory makes about states and its major proposition about international institutions.⁹⁵

Realism's core assumptions, it will be recalled, include the ideas that states are rational in their specification of goals and in their selection among alternative policy instruments, and that the substantive and the instrumental rationality of states is influenced heavily by international anarchy. Its major proposition about international organizations is that states, as a result of the danger-laden context of international anarchy, are extremely unwilling to assign importance to international institutions or to allow them to constrain their freedom of action. The problem for these key aspects of realist theory is that the EU's resurgence in the late 1980s and early 1990s entails the assignment by member states of greater responsibilities to EU institutions, and several elements of the union's proposed institutional program in monetary policy could lead to a fundamental shift in policymaking authority from the national to the union level. Hence the EU's revitalization puts realists in an awkward position: Either they must say that the EU member states have been behaving irrationally in assigning

such greater authority to the union, or they must acknowledge that their understanding of international institutions is defective.

The best realist-informed response that is now available to the challenge of the EU attempts at reform and revitalization is to argue that its member states are increasing their cooperation in order to balance against Japan. This is a powerful argument. Yet the balancing argument raises a problem that realists would themselves pinpoint. It is quite possible that the EU members fortified their commitment to work together in the late 1980s in part to balance against Japan; however, this increased cooperation took place precisely as Germany was hegemonic in the area in which the EU renaissance was most ambitious—monetary affairs—and has continued (albeit with great unevenness) even though Germany might be poised to achieve relatively greater power in Europe. This is possible because of German unification (after a costly and difficult transition period) as well as the integration of the East European states into the West European economy, which will probably benefit Germany disproportionately, and because countries that are relatively more tightly connected to Germany, such as Austria and Sweden, have joined the EU. Hence, on the basis of realist theory, one might expect balancing against Germany by the other Europeans. Yet not only are these partners failing to balance against a potentially more powerful Germany, but they also appear to be “bandwagoning” toward Germany by way of integrating more closely with it in the context of the institutions of the EU. This would appear to be in contradiction to what one would expect of them on the basis of realist theory.

Possible Paths: Voice Opportunities and Dominance Rationalization.

Scholars who find realism to be a helpful starting point for analyzing international politics may wish to review the realist perspective on international organizations. In particular, efforts need to be made to develop a realist-informed argument as to why the EU countries have been seeking to bring about a significant development of European institutions, and, more generally, why international institution-building may be a rational strategy for states.

One possible line of analysis in this respect might be to suggest that relatively weaker states may choose to cooperate through an institution in order both to pursue balancing against an external challenger *and* to mitigate their domination by the strongest partner in the balancing coalition by ensuring that the institution is composed of rules and practices that provide the weaker partners effective “voice opportunities.”⁹⁶ This thesis could account for aspects of the EU's efforts at revitalization and particularly the efforts by the member states to achieve EMU.⁹⁷

The voice-opportunities thesis could allow realism to retain its core rationality and anarchy assumptions as well as its key argument that states fear

domination by others, while shedding light on the tendency of states to structure their collaborative relationships through formal institutions. But what about Germany? Why would it accept institutionalization if it is precisely the objective of its neighbors to employ such institutionalization to limit and contain German influence?

In response to this question it might be suggested by realists that European integration has yielded Germany tremendous economic benefits. It has also permitted German reentry into European and world affairs. Finally, the diplomacy of the European Community and now the European Union makes it clear that no important European initiative can occur without German support, and the case of EMU shows clearly that Germany is now coming to dominate—in a tactful, diplomatic, but unambiguous way—the key characteristics of important union initiatives.⁹⁸ Earlier institutional arrangements—the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Economic Community, and the European Community—gave Germany ways by which it could again be a civilized element of Europe; the EU may now provide it with a vehicle by which it may exercise its great and possibly growing power discretely and legitimately and thereby dominate its neighbors without arousing substantial resistance on their part or even very much resentment.

The Problem of Security vs. Power Maximization

The Issue. The second—and possibly more challenging—theoretical problem for realism can be phrased as a question: Does anarchy lead “normal” states to be security or power maximizers, and is there an observable difference between the two goals?⁹⁹ I suggested in the first main section of this chapter that states, from the realist viewpoint, are “defensive positionalists.” That is, by virtue of being in an anarchical environment in which self-help is the principle of action and relative capabilities constitute the basis for such self-help efforts, states will seek to attain that level of capabilities and retain that margin of autonomy that are needed to maintain their relative power position. It is not expected, according to this view, that states will respond to their anarchical environment either by seeking to achieve the maximum absolute power that might be generated by their internal resources and external efforts, or, more pointedly, by trying to maximize the gap in power between themselves and others to their advantage.

However, there is an alternative view that has been put forward with great vigor from within the general realist perspective. Randall Schweller suggests that modern realist theory as presented by Waltz and Walt has a problem, namely, that “it views the world solely through the lens of a satisfied, status-quo state.”¹⁰⁰ In contrast to their view that states are primarily interested in maintaining their position and thus their relative power stand-

ing in the international system, Schweller, drawing upon earlier realist writings, points out that at least some states want to change their status in the system and therefore will want to advance their relative power position.¹⁰¹ Thus Schweller suggests that in an anarchical environment in which some states are dissatisfied, at least some of the latter will seek to be offensively positional—they will seek to maximize gaps in power to their advantage and will take big risks to achieve those gaps in relative power.

But it is not necessarily the case that only revisionist states will be power maximizers. John Mearsheimer suggests that, as a general matter, “states in the international system aim to maximize their relative power position over other states.”¹⁰² He seeks to fix this view in the same basic structure of assumptions presented in the first section: specifically, that interstate anarchy shapes state preferences, and one key result is that “the most basic motive driving states is survival.”¹⁰³ There is no question that Mearsheimer grounds his power-maximization thesis about states in the realist (including the modern realist) tradition and its focus on state defensiveness: For any given state, “the greater the military advantage one has over other states, the more secure it is.”¹⁰⁴

This question of whether states seek to maximize power for its own sake or attempt to maximize security *and therefore* are power maximizers is an important one for realism for at least two reasons. First, if realists think that states value power *even more* than security, then they would need to expect states to bandwagon rather than balance in those instances in which the former yielded greater power than the latter. This is a point that is made to great effect by Schweller in his analysis of revisionist states.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, if states seek to maximize power and therefore bandwagoning may sometimes prevail over balancing, then realists would need to predict that we will see world hegemony from time to time. Yet realists want to argue that states balance and that balancing explains why the state system remains characterized over time by a multiplicity of independent states.

The second reason for the importance of the security-power issue is that an assumption that states value power above all else would require realists to change their current specification of the problem of international cooperation. That is, they would need to argue that states seek not to avoid gaps in gains favoring partners, but instead to maximize gaps in their favor. This would imply a vastly more aggressive specification of the interests of states in circumstances in which they are considering cooperation with others: It would mean acceptance by realists of what Arthur Stein correctly calls a mercantilist understanding of such interests.¹⁰⁶ Operationally, a strong desire to maximize gaps in gains would make cheating much more attractive to states, and therefore the fear of cheating would be much greater. States would also have a much more aggressive set of interests regarding the distribution of gains from cooperation. They would not be interested only in

making sure that they obtained absolute gains, and they would not be satisfied if they received absolute gains and if partners did not achieve relatively greater gains; instead, they would seek to enjoy a gap in gains to their advantage. In specifying such a world, realists would be driven to argue that cooperation among states is essentially impossible to achieve. Yet this would cause them to face the unbearable burden of explaining why there is in fact a substantial degree of cooperation among states.¹⁰⁷

The question of whether states seek maximum power or maximum security is, therefore, of major importance to realist theory. In the second section of this chapter I suggest that realism argues that the anarchical structure of the international system causes states to be defensive positionalists that are interested in security, not power. Yet Hans Morgenthau viewed states precisely as power maximizers. For example, he argued that "what ever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim," and that "the aspiration for power being the distinguishing element of international politics, as of all politics, international politics is of necessity power politics."¹⁰⁸ With regard to how much power states want, Morgenthau argued "all nations actively engaged in the struggle for power must actually aim not at a balance of power, that is, an equality of power, but at superiority in their own behalf. And since no nation can foresee how large its miscalculations will turn out to be, all nations must ultimately seek the maximum of power available to them."¹⁰⁹

One possible realist response to such citations from Morgenthau is to argue that he is not representative of realist thinking about the particular matter of state preferences for security versus power. It could be suggested, on the one hand, that he locates the ultimate source of state behavior not in the environment of states but rather in the nature of human beings, and on the other, that he attributes to the latter a deep, unchanging desire to dominate others for no other reason than to do so.¹¹⁰ Yet other realists who seek to be more explicitly systemic in their analyses also ascribe a power-maximization preference to states. More awkwardly (in terms of opening realism to the difficulties noted earlier), they suggest that states seek maximum power because they want security. For example, Nicholas Spykman suggests that although states in the international system have many goals, as do individuals in domestic society, "international society is, however, a society without a central authority to preserve law and order, and without an official agency to protect its members in its enjoyment of their rights. The result is that individual states must make the preservation and improvement of their power position a primary objective of their foreign policy."¹¹¹

This same attribution of a power-maximization preference to otherwise security-oriented states can be observed in John Herz's specification of what he calls the "security dilemma." Herz argues that "where groups live alongside each other without being organized into a higher unity"—that is,

"whenever such anarchic society has existed"—one finds that "groups or individuals living in such a constellation must be, and usually are, concerned about their security from being attacked, subjected, dominated, or annihilated by other groups and individuals." Herz argues that states respond to this concern for security in the following manner: "Striving to attain security from such attack, they are driven to acquire more and more power in order to escape the impact of the powers of others. This, in turn, renders the others more insecure and compels them to prepare for the worst. Since none can ever feel entirely secure in such a world of competing units, power competition ensues, and the vicious circle of security and power accumulation is on."¹¹²

It might be suggested that regardless of whether early realist writers argued that states sought to maximize power, this problem no longer obtains with regard to modern realists and their focus on the defensive orientation of states. Yet there are at least two points in Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* in which he appears to suggest that states are power maximizers. First, in a discussion of the intellectual background to his own balance-of-power theory, Waltz notes that the latter is deeply grounded in realpolitik thinking. He summarizes the main elements of realpolitik as follows: "The ruler's, and later the state's, interest provides the spring of action; the necessities of policy arise from the unregulated competition of states; calculation based on these necessities can discover the policies that will best serve a state's interests; success is the ultimate test of policy; and success is defined as preserving and strengthening the state."¹¹³ Here it appears that states are both security and power maximizers, and that there is no difference between the two goals. This same line of discussion is presented a second time in *Theory of International Politics* when Waltz suggests in discussing the bases of his balance-of-power theory that "the theory requires no assumptions of rationality or of constancy of will on the part of all the actors," and that "nor need it be assumed that all of the competing states are striving relentlessly to increase their power. The possibility that force may be used by some states to weaken or destroy others does, however, make it difficult for them to break out of the competitive system."¹¹⁴ Again, and in contrast to views on his part cited earlier regarding the primary interest of states in security as opposed to power, it appears that Waltz is saying that the competitive nature of the international system tends to foster in states a defensively oriented interest "relentlessly to increase their power."

A certain tension may also be discerned in Robert Gilpin's work on the question of the goals of states. On the one hand, Gilpin chides political realists for suggesting that states seek to maximize power by observing that "there have been many cases throughout history in which states have forgone apparent opportunities to increase their power because they judged the costs to be too high."¹¹⁵ On the other hand, Gilpin himself seems to at-

tribute offensive positionalism to states. Stressing the importance of economic issues in world affairs, for example, he suggests that "in a world of scarcity the fundamental issue in domestic and international politics is the distribution of the available 'economic surplus,' that is, the goods and services produced in excess of the subsistence needs of society. Groups and states seek to control and organize economic relations and activities in ways that will increase their own relative shares of this surplus."¹¹⁵ Similarly, and as part of his critique of the "new economic history" that posits the view that social and political arrangements are adapted to maximize social welfare, Gilpin suggests that "this liberal assumption regarding sociopolitical change takes insufficient account of the fact that an equal, if not greater, motivation for political change is the desire of groups, social classes, or states to increase their individual welfare at the expense of others and at the expense of economic efficiency itself."¹¹⁷ Finally, in seeking to locate a restraint on the interest of states to increase their power, Gilpin finds it not in the international system but within states: "The strong tendency of interstate oligopolistic competition to stimulate states to expand their power is offset by the fact that power and its exercise entail costs to the society; the society must divert human and material resources from other social objectives."¹¹⁸

Possible Path Forward. Perhaps one way that realist theory may be able to avoid the power-security maximization trap is to restrict, in the manner suggested in general by Waltz, its expectations about the impact of anarchy on the interests of states regarding relative power. The argument would be that realism's focus on anarchy cannot readily lead it to expect more than that states are concerned primarily about their survival and security and that they seek to ensure both not by maximizing power to their advantage but by minimizing gaps in power that are likely to favor rivals or adversaries. This restricted understanding of the effects of anarchy on state preferences regarding power may itself be rather far-reaching, for it yields such important expectations as those regarding the tendency of states to choose balancing over bandwagoning, the tendency of states to fear functional differentiation, and the likely prevalence of the relative-gains problem for cooperation.

Of course there are states that seek to maximize their power, and some do so to enhance their security. Yet realists may wish to acknowledge that a systemic theory may not be able to account for these instances of state behavior by itself. They may wish instead to argue that the factors leading states to define their security problem in terms of the need for a favorable imbalance of power may be driven by such nonsystemic factors as military technology or the perceptions of national decisionmakers, although they could still argue that international anarchy exacerbates tensions or "tight-

ens" the security dilemma.¹¹⁹ At the same time, realists would be able to argue that realism's expectations and analyses become highly relevant as soon as a power-maximizing state comes into being and begins to operate in the international system—for example, that one would expect to see balancing against that highly assertive state.

Conclusion

Two conclusions may be drawn from the discussion in this chapter. First, realism provides a well-developed perspective on world politics. It has a clearly delineated set of assumptions, basic propositions, and empirical expectations regarding politics among nations across a wide range of international issue areas. It provides substantial (although certainly not complete) leverage on many aspects of international politics. Realism's particular strength lies in its pointing out and explaining important continuities in world politics. Yet it is also true that realism can be used to understand such vitally important dynamic aspects of international history as the emergence of the nation-state, the rise and decline of major powers, and the oscillation in history between international conflict and cooperation. Given its tight analytical parsimony and wide empirical reach, it is likely that realism will continue to play a key role in setting the terms of debate in the field of international relations.

Yet the second conclusion that may be drawn from this chapter's discussion is that there are important unresolved questions within the core of realist international theory. Among the most important of these are whether states are security or power maximizers, and whether this makes a difference for their behavior toward one another. There are also important empirical puzzles for realist theory regarding state balancing and state interests in international institutions. Realism may be a helpful approach to the study of world politics, but it has several problems, and it has certainly not yet reached intellectual closure. There are contributions yet to be made by realism to our understanding of world politics.

Notes

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1. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948).
2. This is the purpose Quincy Wright posits for the field of international relations in his *Causes of War and Conditions of Peace* (London: Longmans, Green, 1913).
3. Robert G. Gilpin, "The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism," in *Neorealism and Its Critics*, edited by Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 304–305.
4. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), p. 94.
5. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 18; also see p. 17.
6. Stephen Krasner, *Structural Conflict: The Third World Against Global Liberalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 28.
7. Anarchy, according to Waltz, means that among states, "formally, each is the equal of all the others. None is entitled to command; none is required to obey." *Theory of International Politics*, p. 88.
8. Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, abridged edition, translated by Richard Howard and Annette Baker Fox (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1973), p. 6.
9. Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964), p. 109.
10. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 113; and Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 23.
11. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 111.
12. I thank David Pries for his help in formulating this paragraph on the meaning of state rationality.
13. On state sensitivity to costs as an element of rationality, see Kenneth N. Waltz, "Reflections on *Theory of International Politics*: A Response to My Critics," in *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ed. Keohane, p. 331.
14. A very helpful discussion of the question of realist theory and the problem of state autonomy is provided by Stephen D. Krasner in *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). Also see David A. Lake, *Power, Protection, and Free Trade* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 67–74.
15. I thank Ajin Choi for emphasizing to me that there is a distinction in realist theory between its assumptions of state consistency of the formulation of policy goals and coherence of state implementation of strategies in pursuit of those goals.
16. Gilpin, "The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism," p. 305.
17. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 126; also see pp. 91–92. Waltz (pp. 91–92, 111) treats the survival/security preference as an assumption and not a proposition derived from realist premises. However, I would suggest that it is the dangers that result from international anarchy that cause states to focus so heavily on survival and security.
18. Krasner, *Structural Conflict*, p. 28.
19. Aron, *Peace and War*, pp. 7, 64.
20. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 112.
21. This term resulted from a telephone conversation I had with Robert Jervis in the fall of 1987.
22. On this point, see Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 106.
23. For examples of scholarship that criticizes the assumption that states can be autonomous from their respective societies, see Peter A. Gourevitch, "International Trade, Domestic Coalitions, and Liberty: Comparative Responses to the Crisis of 1873–1896," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 8 (Autumn 1977):281–313; Peter J. Katzenstein, "Introduction" and "Conclusion" in *Between Power and Plenty: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States*, edited by Peter J. Katzenstein (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press), pp. 3–22, 295–336; Jeffrey A. Frieden, "Sectoral Conflict and U.S. Foreign Economic Policy, 1914–1940," in *The State and American Foreign Economic Policy*, edited by G. John Ikenberry, David A. Lake, and Michael Mastanduno (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 59–90; and Beth A. Simmons, *Who Adjusts? Domestic Sources of Foreign Economic Policy During the Interwar Years* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994). Key examples of scholarship on how intragovernmental politics prevents states from acting coherently include Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971); and John Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974). Finally, for important examples of scholarship that argues that individual-level psychological and cognitive factors prevent national leaders from making decisions rationally in the way expected by a systemic perspective, see Ole R. Holsti, *Crisis Escalation War* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1970); Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980); Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crises* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981); Deborah Welch Larson, *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); and Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, *Psychology and Deterrence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988).
24. See Krasner, *Defending the National Interest*; and Stephen D. Krasner, "United States Commercial Policy: Unravelling the Paradox of External Strength and Internal Weakness," *Between Power and Plenty*, ed. Katzenstein, pp. 51–87. Joanne Gowa offers a useful critique of Krasner's trade-monetary and congressional-executive dichotomies as a basis for specifying the conditions under which the state may be more or less insulated from societal pressures; she argues that a more parsimonious and accurate analysis can be gleaned through the use of the theory of collective action. See Joanne Gowa, "Public Goods and Political Institutions: Trade and Monetary Policy Processes in the United States," in *The State and American Foreign Economic Policy*, ed. Ikenberry, Lake, and Mastanduno, pp. 15–32.
25. G. John Ikenberry, "Market Solutions for State Problems: The International and Domestic Politics of American Oil Decontrol," in *The State and American Foreign Economic Policy*, ed. Ikenberry, Lake, and Mastanduno, pp. 151–178.
26. Lake, *Power, Protection, and Free Trade*; also see Lake, "The State and American Trade Strategy in the Pre-hegemonic Era," in *The State and American Foreign Economic Policy*, ed. Ikenberry, Lake, and Mastanduno, pp. 33–58.
27. See, for example, Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 136, and Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 168.
28. Aron, *Peace and War*, pp. 118–119.
29. Aron, *Peace and War*, p. 121.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 118–119, 121. Similarly, Morgenthau argues that “the struggle between an alliance of nations defending their independence against one potential conqueror is the most spectacular of the constellations to which the balance of power gives rise”; he suggests further that “the opposition of two alliances, one of both pursuing imperialistic goals and defending the independence of their members against the imperialistic aspirations of the other coalition, is the most frequent constellation within the system of the balance of power.” Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, pp. 138–139. One can see from the Morgenthau quotation that at least one coalition may have imperialistic goals; but note also that he does not say that it is inevitable that both will, and that he does say that only one might.
31. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 126–127.
32. See Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); and Walt, “Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia,” *International Organization* 42 (Spring 1988):275–316. Another realist-informed analysis of Egypt’s alliance choices through the late 1970s is provided by Shibley Telhami, *Power and Leadership in International Bargaining: The Path to the Camp David Accords* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).
33. Paul W. Schroeder, “Historical Reality vs. Neo-realist Theory,” *International Security* 19 (Summer 1994):108–148. For an interesting response to Schroeder’s critique, and Schroeder’s rejoinder, see Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, and Paul W. Schroeder, “Correspondence: History vs. Neo-realism: A Second Look,” *International Security* 20 (Summer 1995):182–195.
34. Schroeder, “Historical Reality vs. Neo-realist Theory,” p. 117.
35. Michael N. Barnett and Jack S. Levy, “Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments,” *International Organization* 45 (Summer 1991):369–395.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 379. Barnett and Levy specifically refer to Walt’s *Origins of Alliances* and Telhami’s *Power and Leadership*.
37. For a discussion of the capacity of such carefully chosen case studies to permit highly suggestive tests of competitive theories, see Harry Eckstein, “Case Study and Theory in Political Science,” in *Strategies of Inquiry*, edited by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, volume 7 of *Handbook of Political Science* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975), pp. 118–120; and Arthur Stinchcombe, *Constructing Social Theories* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1968), pp. 19–20.
38. Steven R. David, “Explaining Third World Alignment,” *World Politics* 43 (January 1991):233–256.
39. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 138, 158–159, 163–176. For the alternative argument—that multipolar systems are more stable than bipolar systems—see Karl W. Deutsch and J. David Singer, “Multipolar Power Systems and International Stability,” in *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Theory and Research*, revised edition, edited by James N. Rosenau (New York: Free Press, 1969), pp. 315–324.
40. Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, “Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity,” *International Organization* 44 (Spring 1990):137–168.
41. Ted Hopf, “Polarity, the Offense-Defense Balance, and War,” *American Political Science Review* 85 (June 1991):475–493.
42. Joanne S. Gowa, *Allies, Adversaries, and International Trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
43. John J. Mearsheimer, “Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War,” in *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace*, edited by Sean M. Lynn-Jones (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), pp. 141–192. For arguments that Europe has the potential to remain stable in spite of multipolarity, see Jack Snyder, “Averting Anarchy in the New Europe,” in *The Cold War and After*, ed. Lynn-Jones, pp. 104–140, in which Snyder emphasizes that domestic institutional factors will play a much more important role in determining the future trajectory of European affairs than the structure of the international system; and Stephen Van Evera, “Primed for Peace: Europe After the Cold War,” in *The Cold War and After*, ed. Lynn-Jones, pp. 193–243, in which Van Evera suggests that changes both in military technology (nuclear weapons) and in the sociopolitical structure of European countries resulting from World War II will likely yield a more peaceful European future than that envisioned by Mearsheimer.
44. Aaron L. Friedberg, “Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia,” *International Security* 18 (Winter 1993/1994):5–33; and Richard K. Betts, “Wealth, Power, and Instability: East Asia and the United States After the Cold War,” *International Security* 18 (Winter 1993/1994):34–77.
45. See Robert Jervis, “Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics* 30 (January 1978):167–214.
46. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 106.
47. It may be argued, then, that one reason that trade increased during the postwar period was that the trade regime encouraged the growth of *intraindustry* as opposed to *interindustry* trade. For an assessment of the postwar trade regime that argues that it promoted intraindustry commerce—without, however, attributing this to realist-specified concerns about security and independence—see Charles Lipson, “The Transformation of Trade: The Sources and Effects of Regime Change,” in *International Regimes*, edited by Stephen D. Krasner (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 233–272.
48. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 105. Important discussions of the possible inhibitory effects of relative-gains concerns on the willingness of states to cooperate are also provided by Joanne Gowa, “Anarchy, Egoism, and Third Images: The Evolution of Cooperation and International Relations,” *International Organization* 40 (Winter 1986):175–179; and Robert Jervis, “Realism, Game Theory, and Cooperation,” *World Politics* 40 (April 1988), especially pp. 334–336.
49. Joseph M. Grieco, *Cooperation Among Nations: Europe, America, and Non-tariff Barriers to Trade* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 10, 44.
50. See Duncan Snidal, “Relative Gains and the Pattern of International Cooperation,” *American Political Science Review* 85 (September 1991):701–726; Robert Powell, “Absolute and Relative Gains in International Relations Theory,” *American Political Science Review* 85 (December 1991):1303–1320; and Helen Milner, “International Theories of Cooperation Among Nations: Strengths and Weaknesses,” *World Politics* 44 (April 1992):466–496. The essays by Snidal and Powell, together with a critical essay by Robert Keohane, “Institutionalist Theory and the Realist Challenge After the Cold War,” are also in *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, edited by David A. Baldwin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). In addition, see Emerson M.S. Niou and Peter C. Ordeshook, “Less Filling, Tastes Great”: The Realist-Neoliberal Debate,” *World Politics* 46 (January 1994):209–234. I try to respond to the arguments put forward