I, Hasan B Yalcin, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science.

It is entitled:  
International Politics as a Struggle for Autonomy

Student's name: Hasan B Yalcin

This work and its defense approved by:

Committee chair: Richard Harknett, PhD

Committee member: Dinshaw Mistry, PhD

Committee member: Thomas Moore, PhD
International Politics as a Struggle for Autonomy

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Hasan B. Yalcin

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M.A. Koc University, 2006
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Committee Chair: Richard J. Harknett, Ph.D.
Abstract

This study is about structural theorizing in International Relations. Based on a review of current theories of International Relations, it argues that current approaches are not purely structural but hybrid theories composed of conflicting unit and structural level assumptions, which produce internally inconsistent theories and externally partial depictions of international politics. The study attempts to develop a purely structural theoretical framework that argues that international structure, which is composed of anarchy and the distribution of power, shapes state identities, motivations, behaviors and international outcomes. In anarchic systems, units struggle neither for power nor for security. International politics is a struggle for autonomy. Units populating anarchic systems are concerned with sustaining their autonomy and a system is anarchic if the units can rely on their own capabilities in a specific distribution of power. In concentrated power structures, states are concerned with sustaining the status quo but take offensive actions which tend to produce minor conflicts rather than major systemic wars. In distributed power structures, states are concerned with change but take defensive actions that tend to produce major systemic wars. The study measures these theoretical predictions against the history of the Cold War. The case study is divided into three time periods according to the specific power structures: concentrated (1945-1957) and (1979-1991) eras and an intervening distributed power structure (1957-1979). It is concluded that the history of the Cold War provides strong support for the arguments developed on state motivations, behaviors and their international outcomes. While the first and third eras of the Cold War were characterized by status quo-oriented motivations and centrifugal, aggressive behaviors in the periphery, the second era was characterized by change-oriented motivations and centripetal defensive behaviors on the central issue areas. While the first and third eras can be characterized as the times of minor conflicts, the second era was the time of the real Cold War that consists of major superpower confrontations.
Aims and Scope

This study is about structural theorizing in International Relations. It has four specific aims:

- pointing out the promise of structural theorizing in principle in explaining causes and effects of social phenomena,
- evaluating central approaches of International Relations with a special focus on differentiating structurally-oriented approaches from a purely structural perspective,
- developing a new structural framework for the study of international politics,
- measuring the predictions developed in a well-established field of great power behavior.

Firstly, the study advocates for the promise of structural theorizing in principle, despite its poor development in many disciplines of the social sciences. From a critical perspective, the study targets hybrid theorizing that conflates structural with individual level factors in social sciences generally and in the field of International Relations, specifically. In contrast to the increasing tendency to build multi-causal and multi-level analyses, for the sake of theoretical rigor, the study provocatively aims to revive the idea of a purely structuralist approach, which is based solely on structural factors to explain identities, motivations, behaviors and their consequences in human affairs with a special attention to the consistency of social scientific theorizing.

Secondly, the study reviews the central approaches of International Relations from a purely structuralist perspective. It aims to show that the mainstream structurally-oriented theories of
International Relations, namely defensive and offensive realisms, fail to meet the requirements of a pure structuralism. Despite their claims for and their critics’ recognition of the title of structuralism, these theories of International Relations are hybrid theories composed of both unit and structural level assumptions. They combine their fixed state motivation assumptions with structural conditioning and argue that states act to attain those specific goals assigned by the theorists. In those depictions of international politics not state motivations, in other words not the causes of behaviors but only behaviors are shaped by international structure. Therefore, the comprehensive literature review presented in the study aims to show that those theories professing structuralism are indeed hybrid theories that are internally inconsistent because of the presence of conflicting assumptions on two levels (unit and structural level), and externally partial because of the presence of fixed state motivations.

Thirdly, the study tries to develop a purely structural realist theoretical framework, which argues that state motivations and behaviors and also international systemic outcomes are shaped by the combination of two elements of international structure, namely anarchy and distribution of power. Anarchy as a self-reliance system rather than a self-help system motivates states not for survival or power maximization, but for autonomy. Therefore, it is argued that international politics is a struggle neither for power nor for survival. It is a struggle for autonomy. States that rely on their capabilities to sustain or promote their autonomy define their motivations and arrange their behaviors in accordance with distributed and concentrated power structures.

Lastly, the study aims to measure the validity of theoretical framework developed in a well-established field of great power behavior. For that end, it uses the history of Cold War to discuss the main great power motivations and behaviors and their international outcomes. It also aims to
contribute to the study of the history of the Cold War by providing a consistent structural theoretical framework that reflects a new interpretation.

**Literature: Structural Theory and International Relations**

To meet these aims, the study starts with a discussion over the problem of human motivation in social sciences since this is a fundamental meta-theoretical problem that requires any student of the social sciences to take a position. Social sciences differs from natural sciences, in addition to some other differences, on the characteristics of human agency as a reasoning and responsive unit. In contrast to the unconscious masses in natural sciences, human beings are able think and act in accordance with their considerations and, therefore, considered as holding their motivations that produce the central puzzle of all social sciences.

In order to understand general social science perspectives on the problem of human motivation, the study introduces a threefold-classification to illustrate their strengths and weaknesses. According to this classification, theories of social sciences can be grouped as essentialist, intentionalist, and structuralist. Essentialist theories hold a belief that human beings or human organizations act because of their essential characteristics. So an answer given about the identity of any agent is believed to explain its behaviors. On the other side, intentionalist theories hold a belief that we can assign specific intentions for human agencies and these assumptions of human intention help us in building theories to explain human behavior. These two groups of theories about the problem of human motivation are internalist (unit level) theories that try to find causes of behavior in identities or interests of agents. While essentialists assume that we act because of who we are, intentionalists assume that we act because of what we want. Because of that unit level focus on identities and interests that come at the expense of environmental conditioning,
despite their descriptive richness, these unit level approaches fail to comprehensively explain causes of social behavior.

On the other side, structuralism, with a broader scope, provides at least in principle the opportunity of understanding human identity, motivation, and behavior by tracing their roots to the environment in which they are all located. It is based on a belief in the shaping power of conditions over agency. Instead of “who we are” or “what we want,” structuralism is about “what we have.” Our possessions in an environment which is constituted by the distribution of our possessions influence “who we are,” “what we want,” and “what we do.” In contrast to essentialism and intentionalism, structuralism tends to neglect unit level identities and interests for the sake of a broader look. Therefore, despite its theoretical explanatory power, structuralism is criticized for its lack of detailed descriptive accuracy.

Under these circumstances, a view to combine both agent and structural level factors in building social science theories is quite tempting and recent scholarship appears to be fascinated with that temptation. Contrary to that widely common tendency of hybrid theorizing, this study offers to revive pure structuralism for two reasons. Firstly, with its perspective structuralism compared to unit level theories offers a broader stage to understand human affairs. Secondly, hybrid theories by nature hold inherently conflicting assumptions that produce internally inconsistent theories and externally partial depictions of social reality because of conflicting hypotheses that can be derived from these multi-level and multi-causal characteristics.

The study views social sciences in accordance with the perspective of these two reasons and it claims that most of structural theories in the social sciences are in fact hybrid theories combining unit and structural levels. In the literature review that follows the classification of social science
theories around the problem of motivation, the study mainly focuses on mainstream theories of
ternational relations, especially on defensive and offensive realisms, to illustrate their hybrid
nature so as to highlight their failures in providing internally consistent theories and externally
complete depictions of international reality.

Based on the classification of social science theories as essentialist, intentionalist, and
structuralist, the study introduces the history of international relations theory as degenerating
rather than progressing from a purely structuralist perspective. Theorizing in the modern study of
international politics started with essentialist theories of early realists and idealists\(^1\) and
progressed to intentionalist formulations of early classical realists.\(^2\) With the advance of
structural realism (neo-realism), international relations theory aimed to move to a structural
approach.

However, “structural” theories of International Relations could not speak with one voice because
of their hybrid natures. Different structural theories emerged because of different assumptions
held about state motivations, despite their similarity on structural level assumptions.\(^3\) Offensive
and defensive realists and also neo-liberal institutionalists built theories of international relations
that reflected their biased assumptions on the unit level. Those biased unit level motivations
combined with structural factors produced hybrid theories rather than purely structural ones,

\(^1\) What is generally called the “First Great Debate” in International Relations between the idealists and early modern
realists will be presented as an essentialist debate about the state identity.

\(^2\) The study focuses mainly on Morgenthau’s formulation of classical realist position, but some other realist works
can also be viewed as holding a similar position with some minor differences. Morgenthau, Hans J., *Politics among
1993); For some other classical examples of intentionalist theories of International Relations focusing on aims and

\(^3\) This study will focus on two structurally oriented realist frameworks known as defensive and offensive realisms:
offensive realism: Mearsheimer, John, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company
which would be internally consistent and externally comprehensive. Therefore, they failed to build a consistent common ground in explaining international politics. However, the failure of structurally-oriented theories has not triggered attempts to build more consistent and comprehensive theories. Rather the emphases have been shifted towards the unit level. The common dissatisfaction with the structural theories of International Relations, especially with predominant defensive realism, produced not attempts of further study on structuralism but largely produced a return to essentialism⁴ and intentionalism.⁵ Even the most recent example of structural theorizing presented by offensive realists largely recognized main tenets of defensive realism with only a minor change in interpreting state reaction to structural forces. On the other side, neo-classical realists returned to a new form of intentionalism, while constructivists and some liberals⁶ returned to essentialism.

The study pays a special attention to defensive and offensive realist theories, in accordance with its aim of assessing structural realist theories of international relations. These structurally-oriented theories assume that the international system is anarchic but they differ in interpreting what states want. They define anarchy as “the lack of a central authority” and as a self-help

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system in which states wish to survive, but they differ in the ways of attaining that fundamental motivation. While defensive realists claim that states want to maximize security, offensive realists claim that states want to maximize their power in order to survive.

This study challenges both defensive and offensive realists on both the survival assumption and the ways of survival arguments. It argues that anarchy cannot be defined as a self-help system that motivates states to wish their survival without the knowledge of the distribution of power and their standing in the system. Contrary to the simplifying expectations of offensive and defensive realists, without the knowledge of a particular distribution of power and their relative place in that distribution, states cannot decide \textit{a priori} whether maximizing security or power is the best or only way. Anarchy, defined in the literature as the “absence of a central authority,” properly interpreted, does not include a constant threat dimension that invariably causes states to worry about their survival in a \textit{self-help} system. Instead, it means nothing more than a need to remain autonomous in a \textit{self-reliance} system. Self-reliance requires the capacity to act, consideration of both opportunities and threats rooted in the distribution of power. It is what is possible and not what is desirable that drives state behavior.\textsuperscript{7} Despite what they might wish to achieve, states must take the distribution of power and their relative position into consideration. Therefore, a purely structural theory of international politics should pay sufficient attention to both anarchy and distribution of power, rather than attributing an unsustainable threat dimension to the concept of anarchy or making unit-level assumptions about what states want.

\textbf{Argument: International Politics as a Struggle for Autonomy}

The theoretical framework developed in this study argues that international politics is a struggle neither for power nor for security. It is a struggle for autonomy. Power must be understood not only as an instrument that can be adjusted by states in accordance with their goals, but as the most fundamental organizing principle of all forms of politics and the productive force behind state identities, motivations, and behaviors.

Anarchic international environment is not an outcome of an equal power distribution. It is anarchic because the distribution of power across the system of states as measured by their capabilities is uneven. Therefore, in deducing the most fundamental state motivation one should start with both elements of the system – anarchy and the distribution of power. If the system is anarchic and there are units with differing capabilities then we can deduce that units in this system struggle for their autonomy since only units with some level of capacity to act can promote their autonomy and sustain an anarchic order. If the system was defined by units wishing to survive and an equal distribution of power it would inevitably produce a hierarchic order as classical state of nature theorists claimed for the development of the modern state. Therefore, if there is a fundamental state motivation in anarchic international system it is the struggle for autonomy, not for survival or power.

The autonomy motivation is a nonbiased, comprehensive, and primitive one and structurally justifiable in contrast to the threat-oriented unit level survival motivation assumed by defensive and offensive realists. Therefore, it does not provide any specific prescription on how to secure that fundamental state motivation. Units struggling for autonomy adjust their identities, motivations, and behaviors in accordance with specific power structures. In order to understand causes (motivations) and consequences (international outcomes) of behaviors of units struggling
in an anarchic system, the study depends on purely structural and realist assumptions which are restricted to the properties of international structure – anarchy and distribution of power.

Anarchy is the constant element of the analysis setting general conditions. The distribution of power is the changing variable that shapes specific state motivations, behaviors, and their international outcomes. Accordingly, the distribution of power can be distinguished as either concentrated or distributed. Either power structure carries with it its own behavioral logic. Then it is argued that in concentrated power structures, units struggling for autonomy are concerned with sustaining the status quo, but act offensively, while units in distributed power structures are concerned with changing it, but act defensively. Overall, offensive behaviors of concentrated power structures tend to produce minor confrontations, while defensive behaviors of distributed power structures tend to produce major systemic wars.

**Empirical Study: History of the Cold War**

The study uses the history of Cold War in order to test the arguments developed and illustrate their implications and contributions, which offer a new consistent interpretation. The study of the Cold War history provides an invaluable opportunity to test and illustrate unit motivations and behaviors and their international outcomes. This well-established field of study of great power behavior is characterized with a substantial literature enriched with substantial amount of data. The Cold War case is full of detailed information that includes even specific statements of decision makers in secret meetings and public declarations. There are large numbers of biographical studies going deep into the motivational levels for most of the significant events of it. Any study which aims to measure a theory on state behavior would find it necessary to study the Cold War history. Therefore, study of the Cold War does not suffer from the lack of enough
data. It is probably the large amount of data gathered since 1940s that creates the main obstacle for the students of international relations and history to understand its nature.

Although it is commonly admitted that “structural” theories of international relations performs the task of explaining great power behavior and its outcome for the case of Cold War, this study argues that the main dynamics used by structurally-oriented realist theories as the balancing behavior or balance of power is too broad to understand the causes and consequences of state behavior in the Cold War. These theories just superficially take balancing (especially internal balancing) as the main currency of bipolar structures mainly because of the lack of alternative policy tools, like buck passing for instance, and explain the fifty years of a confrontation by broadly naming it as balance of power. They do not help historians of the Cold War in understanding the causes and consequences of offensive and defensive superpower behaviors in the large number of cases that took place in this fifty years period. Depicting the entire Cold War history just broadly as a balance of power creates an inevitable gap between the structurally oriented theories of international relations and empirical studies of the Cold War.

That gap between the theory and the empirical field combined with the large amount of available data tends to produce theoretically weak and empirically rich studies. The eventual outcome of the attempts of descriptive accuracy and explanatory weakness is the large number of eclectic studies that produce biased interpretations and ideological stands rather than theoretically consistent studies and impartial depiction of the history. The ongoing ideological polarization in the literature on the Cold War between the orthodox⁸ and revisionist⁹ views is largely related to

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the lack of theoretical rigor. Historians who are not restricted with the limits of specific theories tend to put their ideological lenses instead of theoretical lenses. They choose to blame one side of the confrontation rather than finding theoretically consistent explanations for superpower behaviors.

Even theoretically oriented post-revisionist\(^\text{10}\) historians of the Cold War cannot elude their studies from the established ideological positions mainly because of the gap between international relations theory and history of the Cold War as well as their orientation towards descriptive accuracy which requires multi-level and multi-causal analyses. As claimed by Gaddis, after the collapse of Soviet Union, *We Now Know* what happened, but we hardly know why it happened, since we lack theoretically powerful explanations. Multi-causal and multi-level studies are able to describe everything but they cannot explain consistently why anything happened.

This study following the arguments developed for concentrated and distributed power structures divides the Cold War history into three time intervals. Accordingly the first (1945-1957) and the third (1979-1991) eras are defined as concentrated power structures, while the second era (1957-1979) is defined as a distributed power structure. It mainly claims that the second era was the real Cold War, which was characterized by a distributed power structure that produced change-

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oriented motivations, defensive behaviors, and major systemic confrontations on central issue areas in form of direct competition. The second Berlin Crisis, Cuban Missile Crisis and the détente periods are used as cases of that period. On the other side, the first and third periods were characterized by concentrated power structures in favor of the US that produced status quo oriented motivations, offensive behaviors, and minor conflicts in the periphery without any direct superpower confrontation on the core issue areas.

This empirical study will be based on secondary sources. The objective is not new discovery, but rather the theory presented in this study can offer a consistent theoretical interpretation of the already available data. The study attempts to test a theory with the current data and contribute to the Cold War history theoretically. It aims to explain the causes and consequences of the significant events of a fifty years long event.

This research is a qualitative analysis with multiple sub-cases. It tries to cover the tendencies in the entire history of the Cold War by focusing on significant cases in it. Based on the periodization of the Cold War history it aims to show that the independent variable of power structure explains the main tendencies on state motivations, behaviors and international outcomes as the dependent variables in that specific era. It also compares the dynamics of the two different power structures.

**Plan of the Study**

The first chapter is a general introduction to the problem of human motivation in social sciences. It tries to highlight the promise of structuralism as a comprehensive answer to the problem of human motivation and the false promise of hybrid theorizing, which is composed of multi-level
and multi-causal analyses. It discusses intentionalist, essentialist, and structuralist answers to the problem of human motivation in separate sections.

The second chapter reviews the main approaches to the study of International Relations. It introduces the history of international relations theory around the problem of motivation. It mainly focuses on structurally-oriented realist theories by criticizing their hybrid nature. Then it argues against the recent tendency of multi-level and multi-causal analyses common in the field.

The third chapter presents the structural theoretical framework offered in this study. It first discusses five main assumptions of a pure structural realist theory. Second, it develops the idea that international politics is a struggle for autonomy. Third, it presents a discussion on how to conceptualize power structurally in International Relations. Last, the chapter tries to deductively relate the main assumptions, the fundamental motivation of autonomy and the structural view of power to make predictions for state motivations and behaviors and also their international outcomes in distributed and concentrated power structures separately.

The fourth chapter presents the fifty years of Cold War history to test the theoretical predictions and also to show the contributions of the theoretical framework in providing a new interpretation of the Cold War. Based on the claim that there is a large gap between theories of International Relations and empirical studies of the Cold War because of the hybrid characteristics of structural theories, the chapter attempts to show that students of the Cold War history provide descriptively rich but theoretically weak histories. Then it introduces the three periods of the Cold as distributed and concentrated power structures in which specific cases of Cold War competition discussed around the problem of motivation, actions taken, and international outcomes emerged.
The fifth chapter concludes with some general thoughts about the contribution and shortcomings of the study. It also suggests some future research both on the theoretical and the empirical level. On the theoretical level it highlights the need for further studies to develop the implications of the theoretical framework offered here on some specific research programs, like deterrence, alliance formation, and international cooperation. On the empirical level, it suggests, as further research areas, some other historical time periods like the concentrated power structures of 19th century and the current unipolar structure and the distributed power structure of early 20th century, which was characterized by two World Wars.
For Hacer
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Although I am responsible for the arguments in this study, it is, in no sense, the work of an individual. It has come into its being with the help, guidance and encouragement of loyal allies. I was fortunate to have many. First and foremost, I am deeply indebted to my supervisor, Richard J. Harknett, for all his ideas, suggestions, and queries. He kindly lent me his generous support at every stage of writing and planning the dissertation. His warm welcome, thought-provoking ideas and continuous encouragement have been of inestimable value and source of my inspiration.

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Chapter I

The Problem of Human Motivation

1. Introduction

The problem of human motivation is the most fundamental difference between social and natural sciences and it is one of the most central problems in social research. Reasoning and responsive human beings, unlike the objects of the natural world, possess their motivations, goals, and intentions, which create the problem of less predictability. Any theory in social sciences explicitly or implicitly holds a dogmatic approach to the problem of motivation because otherwise human agency would be an empty concept. In predicting possible reactions of humanly agents, social scientists employ different assumptions and research models.

This chapter introduces a classification of social theories according to their approach to the problem of motivation in social sciences. Theorists from various disciplines contribute to the efforts of how to describe human agency and how to decide over human motivations. Within a rough classification the approaches to the problem of motivation can be separated into two broad groups. On the one side, internalist theories focus on agency to find out or simplify human motivations. Two groups of internalist theories can be identified: essentialists and intentionalists. While essentialists try to find out the essential characteristics of agency under question, intentionalists make simplifying assumptions or classify possible assumptions about motivations.
On the other side, externalist approaches omitting the essential characteristics and motivations of agency try to provide the environmental conditions by identifying the structure of environment, which shape agency motivations and behaviors.

Table 2.1 Classification of Social Theories around the Problem of Human Motivation

<table>
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<th>Unit of analysis</th>
<th>Internalism</th>
<th>Externalism</th>
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<td>Theoretical</td>
<td>Essentialism</td>
<td>Structuralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approach to the</td>
<td>Intentionalism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>problem of</td>
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<td>human</td>
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<tr>
<td>motivation</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The main</td>
<td>Who we are</td>
<td>What we want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>question</td>
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<tr>
<td>answered</td>
<td>What we have</td>
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This chapter presents the argument that compared to essentialist and intentionalist theories, structural theorizing still provides a more comprehensive solution despite some of its shortcomings. Essentialist and intentionalist theories are, in fact, incomplete forms of explanations. Such theories rely to some degree on the possibility of reading others’ minds or at least the possibility of explaining social relations through individual characteristics or motivations. Even if we ignore the problem of accessing others’ minds and characteristics, these theories improperly assume inevitable bridges between the character of agency and motivation and between motivation and action. They ignore environmental conditions that shape agency properties, desires, and beliefs. Structural theories by identifying the codes of environmental
conditions provide a more comprehensive ground in understanding the motivation problem and explaining agency behavior. They assume that even if human agencies hold their motivations and goals and feel themselves free to act in accordance to their choice, there are some structural forces shaping not only agency behaviors but also motivations.

Structural theories are heavily criticized, because of these deterministic characteristics. Scholars believing in freewill by exemplifying some anomalies that cannot be explained by structural theories claim that structural theories are too broad and are unable to account for individual cases. To be fair, structural theories are broad and unable to explain all cases. However, it is unfair to claim that internalists are necessarily better equipped than structuralists.

On the other side, our positions in the agency-structure or freewill-determinism debates are fixed with our subjective assumptions. For this reason, there is no simple evidence of which one is superior to the other. It seems that there is a complicated relationship between these two levels that is not easy to identify or judge. It is strictly dependent upon our views about the world. We will never be sure about whether one of our motivations belongs to our own identity or it is imposed upon us through environmental conditions. However, structuralism, properly applied, tactically provides a safer ground since it provides a more comprehensive framework for human behavior.

This study does not aim to support or revive an old idea in a new dress. It actually tries to show that even some of the most famous theorists who are considered as being the pioneers of structuralism violated the boundaries of their approaches.\textsuperscript{11} It argues that these structural theories

\textsuperscript{11} The problem of labor class motivation concerning the nationalist identity during the interwar period in Marxist theory will be used below as an example to show the hybrid nature of Marxism despite the claims about its extremely materialist and structuralist character. It also presents a good opportunity to show the deficiencies of adopting hybrid theories.
turned into hybrid forms which are composed of assumptions belonging to two different groups. Those assumptions rooted in two different sources might easily conflict or overlap with each other. In case of a conflict these theories produce incompatible arguments, while, in case of an overlap, these multi-causal and multi-level theories fail to identify the real causes of behaviors. So, the chapter mainly targets social theories that employ both agential and structural assumptions. It argues that despite their shortcomings internalist and externalist theories of human motivation reflect consistent theoretical frameworks. On the other side, hybrid theories, by combining the properties of different level assumptions, combine not only strengths but also weaknesses of these different levels.

In recent years there is an increasing tendency towards hybrid theories because of the claimed failures of current structuralist or internalist theories.12 These kinds of studies are tempted by the idea of combining the beneficial dimensions of these two levels. They generally ignore that they are also combining the shortcomings. Beyond that there is not a simple solution to the problem of how to relate these different groups of assumptions. Although they claim to pay equal attention to both structure and agency in their theoretical frameworks, these approaches end up as a qualified restatement of structuralism or individualism. For instance Roy Bhaskar’s critical Realism and Margaret Archer’s morphogenetic approach are more structural while Anthony Giddens’ structuration theory is more agency-oriented. Both internalist and structuralist theories

might be incomplete explanations for human behaviors but hybrid theories are deficient and conflictual by definition. This chapter tries to show that despite its shortcomings in accounting for some outliers and deficient examples in practice, pure structuralism, in principle, still is the most promising approach to the problem of motivation.

In one of the widely used introductory books on political inquiry, it is stated that “It would now be a brave person who argued that agency is all that matters or that structure is all that matters in explaining political processes and outcomes.” Complaints about the limitations of internalist and externalist theories are so common that advocating purely structuralist or individualist arguments are essentially equated to simplistic thinking. According to this new trend the social world is a complex network that requires multi-causal analysis and multi-level assumptions. The responsibility of the analyst is to understand “the complex relations” lying among these complex variables. These anti-simplistic and pro-complex relations understanding of social world fails to develop arguments to discuss and compare. The “complex relation” language is indeed a cover over the lack of an argument in these kinds of studies. As an example in the discussions over the lack of democracy in Middle Eastern countries, experts generally argue similar things. There are several articles claiming that the causes are not only political but also economic and not only economic but also social. According to these kinds of studies, the real cause the lack of democracy can be found in the “complex relation” among these different causes. One can hardly find any argument in such a study. In fact the only argument in it is its failure to bring an argument. For the sake of descriptive accuracy, they just repeat what we already know. Of course, there is a complex relation and it is difficult to explain with just one variable. But the

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responsibility of the researcher is to make a claim to simplify that complexity. For this reason we need theories of the social world. Otherwise we would provide detailed histories of every event with no effort in making generalizations. That aim in mind, this chapter criticizes hybrid theories and argues for brave theories of social sciences.

The next section introduces the problem of motivation and its centrality in social sciences. The third section is divided into two subsections in which internalist and externalist approaches are discussed. The concluding section provides an overview of the chapter. The entire chapter is an effort to provide a useful but rough classification of social science theories around the problem of motivation. It does not go into details and understandably does not provide a comprehensive evaluation of social science theories. Some examples are employed where they are necessary. It draws mainly from debates in philosophy of social sciences and philosophy of action.

2. Natural sciences vs. social sciences

The unity of method in sciences has been a long standing discussion in the philosophy of social sciences. Leaving aside the substantial literature about the unity of method in sciences, it seems that there is an overall agreement about a fundamental difference between social and natural sciences at least in one respect. That agreement is related to the unique characteristics and nature of the things studied in these two forms of sciences.\textsuperscript{15} While natural scientists study about

\textsuperscript{15} Even Karl Popper known with his insistent support for the unity of method admits the differences between natural and social sciences by stating that “I do not intend to assert that there are no differences whatever between the methods of the theoretical sciences of nature and of society; such differences clearly exists, even between the various natural sciences themselves as well as between the various social sciences.” Popper, Karl, \textit{Poverty of Historicism} (London: Routledge & Keagan Paul Ltd., 1960), p: 130. For a similar vision of the unity of method
unconscious things or the happenings among these things, social scientists study about unpredictable and conscious human beings or the relations among them. The capacity of human beings to think (reasoning) and to respond according to his reasoning (responsiveness) set the stage for the most fundamental difference between social and natural sciences that determines the limits for social sciences because of the difficulty of finding out a comprehensive answer about the reasoning and responsiveness of human beings.

In the study of physics, for instance, researchers do not need to spend too much time and effort in order to understand the varieties in the reaction of an object of study. All masses will always react in the same way to the same set of conditions. “Knowing the value of the acceleration of gravity and Galileo’s laws of descent, we possess simple and compendious directions for reproducing in thought all possible motions of falling bodies.”

Apples cannot consider rejecting the laws of gravity. Apples do not have freewill and consciousness which require us discovering. Once the rules of gravity discovered and the required calculations handled, researchers can explain and predict the reaction of any apple to any kind of gravitational cause. Water always evaporates at the same level of temperature all other conditions being equal. Although different liquids evaporate at different levels of temperature, this is because of their predictable nature, not because of their subjective positions or consciousness. The absence of the free will in unconscious masses makes the natural sciences able to develop mature covering laws. Any apple would not think to reject the requirements of the natural laws. Where the force of gravity exists, apples fall. Any researcher, for an adequate prediction and explanation needs only to know the values related to the calculation.


“God Gave Physics the Easy Problems.”¹⁷ However, in social sciences any researcher should also have some knowledge of considerations in the minds of the agents. “The object of the social sciences is man, not as a product of nature but as both the creature and the creator of history in and thorough which his individuality and freedom of choice manifest themselves.”¹⁸ Therefore, for the social sciences there is a fundamental problem of reading the minds of the agents under consideration.

This long standing problem of reading the minds of agents in social sciences has constituted one of the major limits in developing mature theories in the study of human action. This difficulty, nevertheless, has not set people aside from trying to find a solution. From one perspective, the whole history of social sciences can be understood as the effort of developing a method for this problem. All social scientists explicitly or implicitly have to take their position in answering the problem of motivation. While some thinkers have developed taxonomies, some others have offered simplified abstractions about agent motives; still others have tried to understand their object of study by putting themselves into the shoes of their object of study. These methodological solutions brought the differing social science perspectives to the study of human affairs. In a very rough fashion, these efforts can be classified into two main groups: internalism that aims at finding agency motivation through focusing on the unit level characteristics or intentions and externalism that believes in the significance of environmental conditions in shaping agency motivations.¹⁹

¹⁹ This classification is a re-conceptualization of the unit of analysis debate around the problem of human motivation. It is related to the discussions about the sources of human behavior: agency or structure. The classical examples of agency based and structural theories can be found in the writings of Max Weber and Emile Durkheim.
3. **Approaches to the Problem of Human Motivation in Social Sciences**

In introductory texts over social science theories there are three widely used classifications. The first classification is based on the epistemological differences between positivist and hermeneutic approaches.\(^{20}\) The second classification is based on the unit of analysis: structural or unit level.\(^{21}\) The third is based on the ontological differences between materialism and idealism.\(^{22}\) Even though all these classifications are helpful in grasping the nature and main dividing lines in social sciences, in their current form they do not provide clues for understanding the problem of motivation in social sciences. For instance, there might be an idealist theory that uses an essentialist answer to the problem of motivation, but at the same time there can be theories using the same ideological ontology with a consequentialist assumption about actors’ motivations.

In the long search of a solution to the problem of human motivation two broad groups of theories have emerged: internalist and externalist theories. Internalist theories either specify particular agency intentions or try to find out intentions by describing the essential nature of agency, while externalist theories rather than reading the minds of human agency try to describe the environment that shapes minds and, thus, behaviors of the agency.

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\(^{21}\) This is mostly a debate between methodological individualists and holists. Examples of this debate might be found in most of the readers: Martin, Michael and Lee C. McIntyre, *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994); Ryan, Alan, *The Philosophy of Social Explanation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).

Internalist theories of human sciences hold the premise that human agency has specific intentions that are accessible or presumable and those intentions are the main reasons of human action. They either simply assume agency intentions to build explanatory theories or trace the roots of investigation to the essential characteristics of agencies to discover the real desires and beliefs. These theories are in fact based on a belief in the possibility of reading the minds of agent and also the direct link between intentions and action. They mainly ignore the difficulty of accessing others’ minds or claim the manageability of the subjective interpretation of agency properties and intentions. Setting aside these difficulties, there is a further problem about the inevitable and irreversible gap between agency intentions and action. That gap is inevitable because of the environmental effects on agency beliefs, desires, and other characteristics. It is irreversible because once assumed this motivation with its operation on every stage of theory will define agency behavior and the environmental effects will be unable to shape it. If someone tries to add structural variables into this framework there will be no consistent theoretical ground of how to integrate these two groups of factors because of already assumed agency motivation. In case of an agreement between these two levels of assumption, the analyst will be unable to distinguish the most fundamental cause, while in case of a conflict he/she will have the difficulty of deciding which level of factor has the highest priority in relation with the other level.

For instance consider that we assume Jones as a person motivated by security maximization and we are trying to predict his behavior under some specific circumstances. There might be two sets of conditions: threatening and opportunistic environments. In these two cases we fail to identity

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the real cause of Jones’ defensive behavior. In the first case, if the environment is threatening, we will be unable to distinguish whether Jones’ individual aims or structural conditions is the fundamental cause of his behavior. In the second case, if the environment is an opportunistic one and the structural forces conflicts with the agency motivation, then any decision to prioritize one level over the other would be arbitrary, because agency motivation is already assumed and cannot be transformed by structural forces.

On the other side, externalist theories aim at understanding agency action by considering the environmental conditions that have a specific structure that is constituted by the arrangement of agents. Externalism is based on an assumption of the shaping and limiting influence of structure over agency desires, beliefs, and behaviors. As a tactical quasi-solution to overcome the problem of human motivation, it wants to ignore agency intention in theorizing behavior. Instead a comprehensive definition of agency properties and intentions is assumed at the early stage of theorizing, and then the effects of environment on shaping and limiting agency properties and intentions are investigated. This approach is based on the belief in the power of environment over agency properties and freewill. What agency is or what its beliefs and desires are does not matter because these individual characteristics are shaped and limited by the environmental conditions. Therefore, human action can be explained by defining and assuming objective external conditions rather than subjective minds of others. This is obviously a determinist depiction of human behavior, so it might be and has been criticized by the supporters of a libertarian idea of human freewill.
The literature on freewill and determinism is one of the most extensive discussions in the history of philosophy. This is not the proper space to reflect or even summarize it. But libertarians have a great difficulty in finding an explanation for the “Libertarian Dilemma,” which is related to the problem of compatibility between free-will and indeterminism. Even if there are agency actions that are not determined, they must be indeterminate, which would mean that they are actually happenings of chance. If it is by chance then its explanation turns to be arbitrary. Even if we recognize the existence of chance and its incompatibility with determinism, it seems to be incompatible with indeterminism as well. “Even some of the greatest defenders of libertarianism, such as Immanuel Kant, have argued that we need to believe in libertarian freedom to make sense of morality and true responsibility, but we cannot completely understand such a freedom in theoretical and scientific terms.”

Externalism, in principle, does not reject the idea of free-will but because of its broader framework provides the ground for integrating individual properties. If an externalist theory is able to ignore individual properties at the early stage just by providing a comprehensive nature for agency, it can integrate them in a compatibilist form. Compared to irreversible nature of internalist assumptions, externalist theories can refine the intentions of agents.

But in practice most of the externalist theories in social sciences, because of their unit level early, biased, and specific assumptions violate the boundaries of structuralism in the form of hybrid theories. The present hard determinism, which is heavily criticized by the supporters of the idea of human freewill, results mostly from the hybrid character of famous theories claiming to be structural. In these studies the determining factor is in fact the biased agency motivations, not the

power of structure over agency. In principle, structuralism still offers the most useful solution at hand even if it is a quasi-solution.

3.1. **Internalist Theories of Action**

Internalist theories can also be divided into two groups in terms of their method to assign intentions to agency. Firstly, intentional theories focus on desires of the actors in explaining human action. For this end, they either define a specific motivation for all agents or make classifications about possible motivations. While defining a specific motivation requires some sort of simplification and choosing just one motivation for all human action (utilitarian simplification for utility maximization, for instance), making classifications requires a long list of human wants and desires (Aristotelian\textsuperscript{28} or Weberian classification of human motives, for instance). Secondly, essentialist theories strongly dissatisfied with classifying and simplifying assumptions about human intentions, offer to go deeper to the nature of human agency to find out what is the real nature of agency that will shed light over possible intentions (like Weberian Verstehen and hermeneutic school in general).

These internalist theories are indeed based on a famous formula of action which is rooted in folk psychology and composed of desires plus beliefs.\textsuperscript{29} Human action is explained by the combination of desires and beliefs. If any agent, $x$, wants $d$, and $x$ believes that $a$ is a means to attain $d$ then $x$ does $a$.\textsuperscript{30} While intentional theories assume $[d]esire$, essentialist theories try to find $[d]esire$ by describing the essential characteristics of $x$ (agent). For instance, the most


\textsuperscript{30} Rosenberg, p: 31.
fundamental characteristics of \( x \) is \( y \) (the essential characteristic), so \( x \) wants \( d \) which is in accordance with \( y \) and again \( x \) believes that \( a \) is a means to attain \( d \) then \( x \) does \( a \) which is also in accordance with \( y \).

As an example in explaining why Jones saved money, an intentionalist theory would claim that Jones, like all reasonable men, wants to live in comfort even in hard economic times and Jones believes that saving money is a means of having that comfort in hard times then he saves money. The explanatory factor in this formula is Jones’ intention to live in comfort in the future. An essentialist theory, on the other side, can explain the same action not with the intention to live in comfort in the future but by understanding the personal characteristics of Jones. For instance based on a deep investigation on the personal attributes of Jones and in some cases also his kind, an analyst would claim that Jones is an ungenerous man (the essential character of Jones). So he wants to have large amounts of money (intention) and believes that saving money is the means of that end, so Jones saves money. The real reason in this explanation is Jones ungenerous character.

Besides other critics about the internalist theories of action like accessibility of individual properties and intentions and explanatory power of individual level theories, the one which is most relevant for the aims of this study and will be raised is related to the gap between intentions and actions. For intentional theories, there is an inevitable and unimprovable gap between intention and action, while for essentialist theories there are inevitable and unimprovable gaps between essential characteristics and intentions and also between intentions and actions. Therefore, identifying an agent as having some specific characteristics, even if we achieved to describe it objectively, does not mean that it will bring the proper motivation and also even if it brings the proper motivation, it does not mean that the requirements of the motivation will be
performed by that agent. First we cannot read the minds or essential characteristics of the subject of study and second even if we achieved to read we do not know whether they are going to be carried out. There might be some other conditions that shape and limit the motivations and identities of agents.

3.1.1. Intentional Theories of Action:

The most common and maybe the easiest way of dealing with the problem of motivation is assigning particular motivation(s) according to the consequences of action. In this form of explanation, researchers start the process by asking “what actors want” questions and end up with the consequences attained by that action. If we knew human desires for each case, there would be no problem of motivation in social sciences. If we do not know, then we can use either instrumental motivational assumptions that require oversimplifications for the sake of theoretical elegance or real descriptions of motivations that require reading the minds of agents through the help of classificatory schemes, which are generally products of empirical observations.

For the former, researchers just assign an oversimplified motivation to all agents in the field of study then try to predict the possible action consequences of that motivation. This type of explanation ignores the individual attributes of an agent and other possible motivations. Even if directly related to the behavioralist movement in social sciences it is still a specific form of folk psychology.31 All kinds of $x$ always want $d$ and they believe that $a$ is a means to attain $d$ then they do $a$. It is based on a specific simplification of agents’ identity for just one drive. Definitions like utility maximizing homo-economicus in economics, rule following homo-sociologicus in constructivist research programs and political animal in Aristotle’s writings are some examples of simplified assumptions about human motivations. They all single out one

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31 Rosenberg, p: 60.
property of human agency and for the sake of simplification. They claim that we can assume that all human behavior is in correspondence with that property and its motivation. Intentional theories of action are the ones defined by Weber’s ideal type.\textsuperscript{32} According to Weber’s concept of ideal types, in order to provide a theoretically useful tool, analysts can build theoretical abstracts that do not entirely correspond to the reality but hypothetically cover the most significant similarities available.

These theories do not explicitly claim that the assigned motivations for agents are real. They just claim that these micro-foundational assumptions instrumentally serve to produce valuable information and prediction.\textsuperscript{33} We assume that $x$ wants $d$ and if $x$ wants $d$ then it does $a$. These kinds of theories should be evaluated according to their internal consistencies in hypothetical conditions. However, in this type of explanation there is always the problem of conflict between the conditional assumptions and individual assumptions. For instance, the utility maximizing assumption in economics works only in conditions where this micro-foundational assumption does not conflict with other macro-foundational assumptions. If they are in conflict, researchers would be forced to make a decision to prioritize one over the other. This micro-foundational explanation has to assume the environmental conditions as constant. $X$ might desire to do $a$ to get $d$ but $x$ might be unable to do $a$ because of environmental factors.

Indeed this folk psychology model of action, which is composed of desires plus beliefs, contains some implicit assumptions. In order to work, this model should be restated as follows:\textsuperscript{34}

\begin{center}
For any agent $x$, if
\end{center}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{33} Friedman, Milton, \textit{Essays in Positive Economics} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).
\item \textsuperscript{34} Rosenberg: 32.
\end{itemize}
1. x wants d,

2. x believes that doing a is a means to bring about d under the circumstances

3. there is no action believed by x to be a way of bringing about d that under the circumstances is more preferred by x,

4. x has no wants that override d,

5. x knows how to do a,

6. x is able to do a,

then

7. x does a.

Statements in 3, 4, 5, and 6 specify further assumptions for x to do a. A motivational theory can only explain the occurrence of any event under these conditions. If x is not able to maximize its utility then assuming the utility maximization motivation does not work in the analysis. In other words, the content of d is to a great extent shaped by conditional factors. That was a distinctive contribution in economics made by Keynes through introducing macro variables like unemployment that set the conditions for the invisible hand and other agents’ operations.

A second group of intentionalist theories, which can be named as classificatory realism, tries to draw descriptive schemes for possible agent motivations. Weber, in addition to his instrumental rationality assumption, was aware of the fact that human motivations could not be reduced to just one assumption. Beyond rationality, human beings were equipped with other motivations like values, emotion, and habitat. So there might be multiple numbers of human motivations for
action. Although more realistic, this sort of explanation is no better than instrumentalist model. Because of the ignorance of conditions shaping and limiting agent motivations, this model too bears the same problems with other intentional theories. Beyond that “in the absence of a theoretical specification of their interrelations, arguments using different micro-foundations to explain different actions will be *ad hoc.*”

3.1.2. Essentialist Theories of Action:

Essentialist theories of social sciences can be considered as the most primitive form of a search for human motivation. Essentialism is based on the belief that if we are able to know what is the real nature of the agency in question and define its essential properties we can know its intentions so understand, explain, or predict the behavior. The answer for the problem of human nature lies at the proper definition of the actor. An ungenerous man, for instance, would avoid paying money for some luxury goods. A revisionist state, for instance, would want to change its relative position in the distribution of power and go to war. A democratically governed state would not go to war with another democratic government, because the democratic nature of that government defines what it wants and its action.

Essentialist theories ask the question of who is it? They assume that it is possible to infer the most fundamental characteristics of the agent and there is a natural bridge between the essential identity of the actor and its wants and also its action. They also implicitly assume that all other conditions are fixed and the agent is totally free to act in accordance with its identity independent from the environmental conditions. In fact these are strong assumptions but since in our daily life we are accustomed with the folk psychology mostly, we frequently ignore the heavy burden of

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holding these strong assumptions. We swiftly judge that our characteristics define our desires and beliefs and they define our actions. Savings of an ungenerous man is not surprising for us. We can give reasons for his savings going back to his personal characteristics. As a real social science example of this kind of explanation take for instance Max Weber’s famous thesis in Protestant Ethics about the relation between the fundamental characteristics of Protestantism and the rise of capitalism. According to this argument the emergence of the spirit of capitalism was the outcome of Protestant ethics that was composed of values like saving, rationalization of the world, and accumulation of wealth.

Essentialist theories of action are related to the dissatisfaction with intentional theories of action, which provide oversimplified motivational assumptions for agents or classifications of possible motivations, instead of tracing the roots of any motivation to the essential properties of agents. Weber’s studies exemplify all these forms of approaches to the study of human action. His concept of “ideal types” for instance represents the oversimplified motivational assumption approach. It was based on the idea of instrumental rationality. However, Weber also believed that there are cases in which the rationality assumption does not work. He provided a classification of the other possible motivations for human action. In addition to consequentialist instrumental rationality he described value-oriented action, emotional action and habitual action. He also offered Verstehen as a method of understanding the identity of agent which will explain the motivation and action.

Therefore, there are two fundamental methods in essentialist theories. The first one is a primordialist one, which claims to objectively define the identity of agent and the second one is

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the Verstehen approach, which is a method of understanding the reasons for action by finding out
the essential identity of agents through putting yourself into the shoes of others. Since it is based
on the empathetic understanding, it is still a subjective process. It cannot be used as a means of
objective verification. “Since the operation consists of the application of knowledge we already
possess, it cannot serve as a means of discovery. At best it can only confirm what we already
know.”38 It does not claim to give the real reason behind the action. It aims just telling a story not
the real story. Essentialist theories are commonly reason giving explanations in form of Donald
Davidson’s argument for reasons as causes. According to Davidson, reasons can serve as causes
when we are able to identify the primary reason for action but not just a reason.39 So the pro-
attitude toward some goal and the essential belief must be identified in explaining action. On the
other side, other essentialists following the hermeneutic interpretative method believes in the
possibility of differing interpretations of the essential character of agency.40 Everyone’s
subjective point of view determines his/her essentials and gives a reason for action. Therefore,
instead of defining the primary reason the researcher finds his/her reason and as a consequence
multiple stories emerge. These sorts of differing perspectives about the methods of determining
the essentials of agency indeed reflect the problem of reading the human mind.

Essentialist theories of human action can be criticized and in literature have been criticized from
multiple dimensions. One of the most relevant critiques of essentialism is related to its
descriptive nature. Giving the fundamental properties of the agency in question as the reason for

39 Davidson, Donald, “Actions, Reasons, and Causes,” The Journal of Philosophy, 60(23), American Philosophical
40 Following the line of Heidegger and Gadamer: Heidegger, Martin, Being and Time, translated by John Macquarrie
and Edward Robinson (Harper & Row Publishers, 1962); Connolly, John M. and Thomas Keutner, Hermeneutics
versus Science? Three German Views: Wolfgang Stegmuller, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Ernst Konrad Specht (Notre
Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988).
an action is not indeed an explanation. These types of arguments just repeat the very nature of the process. The notion that revisionist states, for instance, want to revise the international system is not an explanation. It is an uninformative restatement of a tautological description. Such an explanation requires knowing who the revisionist is in the system. If we already have that knowledge we would not search for an explanation for the foreign policy of a revisionist state. Why that state tried to revise the system? Because it wanted to revise it. Why it wanted to revise it? Because it was a revisionist. This is not an explanation indeed but a restatement of a character of agency in a reason form.

Beyond that there is a further difficulty for essentialist theories. It is the problem of knowing the most fundamental and essential characteristics of the agent. Individuals, societies, cultures, groups, states and any other agency in the social world all have multiple attributes. In most cases we have difficulty in describing even our own personal characteristics. We generally assign ourselves the characteristics that we want to have rather than we already have. We might hold a totally misguided characterization of someone else, even for one of our closest friends or relatives. A Western scholar might have a biased characterization over the essentials of Oriental life styles. Who has the right to decide over one of these characteristics as essential? Where is the Archimedean point of view? Even if it is a proper method how do we know that we are able to put ourselves into the shoes of others?

Leaving all these sorts of arguments aside, there is one further issue about essentialism in relation to the purpose of this study. Even if the problems some of which mentioned above are solved or ignored, it does not necessarily mean that essentialism provides a ground for finding out desires and explaining actions of agents. There is still a gap between identity and motivations

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and also between motivations and action.\textsuperscript{42} Having a specific identity does not inevitably require having a related motivation and having that motivation does not inevitably require to act in accordance with it.\textsuperscript{43} There might be various numbers of conditions which can shape and limit the identity and motivation of the agent. Dissatisfaction with the international order might be the most essential characteristic of a state but the very same international order might probably force that state to reconsider its desires or even to rearrange its revisionist identity in accordance with the circumstances. Even if there was a Protestant ethic to save more and more money, without some money to save, there would be no emergence of capitalism. The spirit of capitalism without capital is not possible. Essentialism assumes that agents always have the capability to emphasize their identities and interests. However, in fact there is a huge gap between ‘who we are’ (identity) and ‘what we want’ (motivation) and also between ‘what we want’ (motivation) and what we do’ (action). Without an idea of what we have we cannot understand our identities, desires, beliefs and actions.

3.2. \textbf{Structural theory as a way of transcending the motivation problem}

Externalism is based on the assumption of the inaccessibility of internal conditions of the human mind. Externalists aim to find out the codes of social life that shape human motives, rather than defining them according to the essential characteristics or specific intentions of agency, because of a general belief in the accessibility of societal facts. “There are societal facts which exercise external constraints over individual.”\textsuperscript{44} Externalists ask questions not about the essentials or intentions of agency but about its abilities in relation to the conditions in which agency generates

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its identity and motivation. Structuralism as a form of externalism which tries to find the codes of social life can be considered as a method of dealing with the problem of human motivation in social sciences. Instead of focusing on the problematic human motivation, shifting the focus of the study to the conditions that shape and limit human motivations appears to be an applicable quasi-solution by omitting identity and motivation of agency.

Although structuralism is heavily criticized in practice, arguably it still provides a method of dealing with human motivations in principle by ignoring human motivations. The main idea behind structuralism is deriving the subjective and incomprehensible motivations of human beings from the objective and observable societal facts. Although in practice most of the studies claiming to be structuralist keep attaining a particular motivation to the agents rather than ignoring the motivations, in principle a pure structural theory should be able to ignore specific motivations that have a potential to conflict with the requirements of environmental conditions.

Internalist theories of human agency (both essentialist and motivational), share some common problems despite their differences in deriving the motivations from some different sources. In addition to other problems like functionalist (goal directed), tautological, reductionist nature of internalist theories, they have a further problem of what we can call the gap between intentions and actions in relation to the problem of motivation which is the focus of this study. The environmental conditions that have formative effects over agency motivation are ignored in internalist theories. By definition an agent might have properties that would lead to some specific motivation and action but some other external factors might easily reshape those motivations. Again an agent might be assumed to have some specific motivations in almost all cases but it might fail to follow his/her motivations because of other external factors. Externalist approach to the problem of motivation provides a more comprehensive way of analysis in understanding the
motivation problem. However, the externalist approach does not actually solve the problem of motivation. It just offers to ignore it tactically. It has a determinist assumption that structural factors are superior to individual motivations and shape what the agents want whatever their individual characteristics are. So the description of the structure helps in deriving the motivation of agency. Instead of providing essentialist descriptions about the nature of agency or motivational assumptions about what agents want by reading others’ minds, externalist approaches offer to derive it from the codes of environment namely structure. The most classical example of this approach is found in Durkheim’s sociology. For instance in explaining the phenomenon of suicide, Durkheim claimed that suicide cannot be explained by just taking it as an individual phenomenon. For Durkheim, the structure of society was the most important factor in explaining the differing rates of suicides. By comparing the solidarist Catholic society with mechanic Protestant society he claimed that the higher rates of suicide in Protestant societies can be explained by this structural difference.45

In opposition to the ontological superiority of methodological individualism, methodological holism with its methodological superiority provides a good method to solve the problem of motivation. Methodological structuralism does not claim the inexistence of agency or its motivation.46 Ontologically all social events can be reduced to the agent and its motivations but that ontological truism does not guarantee that we have access to that reality. The problem is not about the reality of motivation for the social scientist but it is about the access to the real motivations.47 Without developing a mind reading tool, the ontological reality of agential motivation means nothing for the improvement of social theories. Method of structuralism with a

tactical assumption that human motivations are to a greater extent shaped by the structural conditions rather than intentional states claims to provide a tool in understanding social reality. The concept of “societal facts” advanced by Durkheim served a similar task. There might be multiple individual reasons that are rational or irrational, which motivate suicide, for example. Using psychoanalytic methods focusing on individual id, ego, and super-ego, psychologists might try to understand the reasons of suicide. By its nature, psychoanalysis is a method of reading others’ minds and even the reasons, which are secret even for the individual under study. Freudian essentialism, for instance, claims to describe the deep reasons of action rooted in the conscious or unconscious mind. Tracing the personal history back and building some correlations between earlier events and the action is at best pedantic judgment with no reason. Indeed, unconscious action explanations are products of a belief in the absence of a direct relation between action and motivation. If there is no access then a correlational story can be written. On the other side, a Durkheimian method tries to explain suicidal action through the structure of society, which shapes the minds of people living in that society. In this method, the structure of society that is described as solidaristic or mechanistic rather than the intentional states of individuals shapes human action. It does not explain why Jones killed himself but it accounts for the large number of suicide in some societies compared to others.

Structural theories do not actually provide an ultimate solution for the problem of motivation. Of course, agents of any sorts will always hold their own desires and beliefs, although they are inaccessible to us. Inaccessibility does not mean inexistence. We can only assume that they are the products of environmental conditions. Any agent with motivations that are independent from the environmental effects might play a role in agency behavior. They may follow alternative possibilities if there are any. This seems to be a problem for structural approach. Ignoring the
motivation seems like creating a gap between the real behavior and conditional factors if there are these sorts of alternative possibilities. However, remember that alternative possibilities are too products of environment. But one can still argue that agencies hold their free will of doing the wrong things even under the most deterministic conditions. In this case structural theories fail to provide knowledge for individual cases. However, the virtue of structuralism is based on its limits. Structural theories give us not the immediate but underlying, permissive, and formative causes. They cannot explain behaviors emerging from individual attributes. All objective circumstances might force an actor to follow a specific path. Even in this case, anomalous behaviors can take place. Structuralism does not explain individual cases. It just shows us the tendencies formed by the structure. If theorists try to cross this line they will need to provide special attributes and/or motivations of those actors.

The individual level attributes and motivations require additional assumptions in theories. In most cases structural theorists resort these kinds of individual level assumptions which spoil the structural characteristics of theories. While the structural conditions shape actors to follow a certain path those independent assumptions might cause in exactly the opposite direction since they are not part of the same logic.

Structuralism emerges from a belief in the significance of circumstances in shaping behavior. Structure has a power over agency. So the response of the agent to the structure can best be understood through developing a model of whatever its motivation or identity that agent will be able to respond with its relative capability position in that structure. Capability to perform its own desires sets the stage for agency motivations. Agents arrange their desires according to the influence of structure and try to reshape it according to its own position in relation to other

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agents and also structure. An agent would carry out its real intentions whenever it is freed from the structural influence. Otherwise intentions will be reshaped according to the rules of the game. If an agent would overcome structural constraints, that would be revolutionary and bring a new structure which is dominated by the rules of that one agent. Therefore, in understanding the behavior of agency whose motivation is shaped by the structure, structuralists should ask questions about the capabilities rather than questions about the identities or motivations of agents.

However, in most cases even the famous structuralists in explaining the agent behavior repeatedly resort to motivational or identity assumptions. Most of the structuralist arguments in social sciences are hybrid forms rather than pure structuralism. Holding assumptions on two different levels that are generally in contrast with each other produces deep anomalies in internal logics of these theories. Take for instance, the Marxist expectation for a proletarian consciousness which would bring a proletarian revolution.

Marxist theory of history is the most famous capability based and structural model because of its emphasis on the material basis and structural determinism. But it fails when unit level motivational assumptions are included into the model. According to the Marxist analysis, it was expected that the labor class would overthrow the capitalist system and its exploiters as in the case of earlier class conflicts. Based on dialectical reasoning, newly rising classes would overthrow the former ones. Even if the argument seems to be structuralist and capability based, it includes specific motivations that are not the products of structure and capability distribution. Marx and his followers generally impose an independent motivation on the labor class in its

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conflict with the bourgeoisie. Labor class is expected to rebel when they will understand their unbearable position during the times of crises. They will start to see the exploitation, feel a deprivation then want to revolutionize the capitalist order. Marxists at this stage read the minds of labor class, define what is important for them among other things, independent from the structural requirements, and then predict the revolutionary behavior. Without considering the possibility of an autonomous labor class which would have the power to negotiate its rights or even to exist as an independent class, Marxists just jump to the question of what the labor class wants. On the agency level, they assume that labor class wants to bring a revolution. That unit level motivation is obviously in conflict with the structural logic of theory that describes labor class as a weak group in the power composition (relations of production in Marxist terminology) of the capitalist system. Structural logic of Marxism with its materialist basis rules out the possibility of a revolution, while the unit level assumption sees it as inevitable. Ironically, alienated workers were expected to form their own motivations for a desirable revolution. The incompatibility between these conflictual assumptions on two different levels of theorizing has been one of the most fundamental problems in the long history of Marxist apologetic discussions over the false prophesies of Marxism. Without a capacity to act there would be no autonomous labor class. Without an autonomous labor class there would be no labor class consciousness which would intent to demolish the capitalist order. When Marxism started to develop an ideological motivation for labor class, it was obviously out of the territories of structural rigor.

Instead of identifying themselves as the parts of a labor class, workers of Germany were fighting against other workers in Europe in the name of national consciousness. Confronted with these kinds of anomalies during the World Wars, followers of Marx started to explain the lack of labor class consciousness by resorting to other unit level assumptions rather than improving the
structural logic. That brought new contradictory interpretations about labor class motivations. Refinement efforts so much stretched Marxism that researchers claimed that they know the real intentions of the labor class even better than workers themselves. The concept of “false consciousness” is the utmost phase of that refinement.

Gramsci and other culturalist Marxists claimed that workers were illusioned by the institutions of capitalist system, so they were unaware of their real interests.\(^5\) In a form of conspiracy theory by claiming to find some more deep meanings as in the case of Freudian psychoanalytic, if the realities do not match the theory then there must be some deeper meanings inaccessible to the agent itself but accessible to the analyst. The concept of “false consciousness” that is accessible to researchers appears to be the explanation of the lack of labor movement. This new form of Marxism was not a materialist history but a cultural one in entire contradiction to Marx’s main argument against Hegelian idealism. Instead of improving structural materialist argument of Marxism to overcome the conflicts of labor class motivational assumption, they aggravated the situation by turning to more and more unit level idealist assumptions.

Another example of Marxist refinement for the already given class motivation can be found in Lenin’s writings. He also took the class identity and motivation as granted and tried to explain the absence of action. According to Lenin, since labor classes in industrialized societies bribed with the revenues coming from colonies, they lost their motivation. Workers of Germany for instance were motivated to serve to the ends of capitalism just because they were paid well. What Lenin did was attaining a new motivation for the workers without considering the possible conflicts of that assumption with other structural assumptions.

Maybe because of the ideological nature of Marxist school, they spent too much time about the ideas of labor class instead of attempting to describe the influence of structural material conditions on labor class motivations. In such an analysis if the labor class was being exploited that would mean that they were disadvantaged in the relations of production which is an indicator of the distribution of capabilities in society. Workers were in fact unable to build a capacity to form an autonomous group and identify their own ends. Without that capacity to act they would be unable to bring a revolution even identify themselves as the agent of that motivation. A similar argument has gained popularity in general revolution studies. Theda Skocpol for instance claims that “Revolutions are not made they come.”51 The timing of French revolution for instance illustrated the relation of capability to the revolution. Revolution in France did not come while the greater population was economically under terrible conditions, but it came when the country was economically in a better off position.52 Marxists could not admit the reality that if there is no capability at hand there is no chance to bring revolution even to form a labor class. This does not mean that all capable classes are going to bring the revolution but means that most of the capable groups will be formed and permitted by the structure to demand more while in the worse off situations they will not be motivated to demand more. In explaining the revolution which brought the capitalist order, Marxists refer to the power of bourgeoisie class in comparison with the aristocratic class. Capitalist revolution succeeded because of its material capabilities not because of the deprivation which produced some kind of motivation. Without a capability to act there would be no autonomous workers class without an autonomous class there would be no motivation for revolution.

51 Skocpol, Theda, States and Social Revolutions: Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p: 17.
52 Hobsbawm, Eric, The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848 (Cleveland, World Pub. Co. 1962)
4. Conclusion

Structural theories by their nature should focus on capabilities of agents that make them actors rather than assuming what they want, since these assumptions generally conflict with the overall logic of structuralism. But in practice most of the structural theories assign independent assumptions with specific ends. Most of the anomalies in structural theories are related to the incompatibility between unit level and structural assumptions. These kinds of theories are not purely structural but are hybrid forms. In contemporary social sciences these hybrid forms are quite famous because of the lack of confidence in structuralism and its mono-causal nature. They generally claim that since structural theories highlight just structural factors, they ignore other causes based on the free will or reflexive nature of human beings. But in practice, as I tried to illustrate, these are hybrid theories. Most of the current structural theories are mostly criticized for wrong reasons. These famous structural theories hold implicit or explicit assumptions about agency motivation that makes their theory biased and inconsistent. Of course, pure structuralism does not cover all particular actions. Purely structural theories will also be incomplete but not deficient. On the other side, hybrid theories are deficient because of incompatibilities in their internal logic. Pure structural theory enables integration of other factors once it is defined correctly and unless the effects of those individual factors do not exceed the boundaries of structural level conditioning. But hybrid theories because of their biased nature for individual motivation cannot integrate individual level assumptions. They are already given.
Recent tendency in social sciences is towards more and more hybrid theorizing. This new tendency is actually related to the dissatisfaction about the famous structural or agency level explanations of action. Those arguing for a hybrid theory generally consider that if both unit level and structural level explanations have their shortcomings then combining these two levels might produce the real depiction of social reality. Although this is a tempting solution, as I tried to show in this chapter this is neither innovative nor helpful. Maybe in descriptive terms the combination of both levels can bring the promises of both levels but it also brings the shortcomings of both. In addition there is no simple answer how to relate these two groups of assumptions. Assumptions of a theory based on just one level can be regulated according to the internal logic of that level, but assumptions of two different levels cannot be regulated because of their separate characters. For this reason, even the most famous recent efforts to provide neutral description of agency-structure relationship are destined to fail. Without making a claim about one level has a power over the other, it is impossible to build explanatory arguments. For instance, while Antony Giddens’ structuration theory is criticized to be a unit level theory, Roy Bhaskar’s critical realism and Margaret Archer’s morphogenetic approach seem as prioritizing structure over agency, despite their claims that they do not single out one level.

Internalist theories by their nature are irreversibly incomplete, while hybrid theories are irreversibly defective because of the clashes in their internal logic. Structural theories are also incomplete but once the structural sources of effects are properly understood they can in the long

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run integrate unit level intentions which would not exceed the boundaries of structural shaping. Pure structuralism in the long run can be compensated for its shortcomings through compatible integration or at least it can explain the general tendency even if it fails to explain outliers. Beyond that, any argument for preferring the unit level internalist theories and pure structural theories are actually based on a dogmatic belief whose roots can be found in the biased positions of researchers in the century’s long discussion about freewill and determinism.

However, selecting determinism over freewill is the safe ground because of the parsimonious nature of determinism. Both freewill and determinism require dogmatic assumptions in belief but in the next steps freewill requires more assumptions. Building parsimonious theories is not only good but also necessary since each assumption is a further step away from the reality towards personal belief of the researcher.

Each assumption is actually a value judgment in a theory. It is based on the subjective view of the theorist. The important part is to provide a method of measuring the validity of that assumption. But if there are conflicting or independent value judgments there will be no way of integrating them into a meaningful whole. In hybrid forms theories do not speak for themselves. Each value judgment is also a claim about the essential characteristics of something. As in a simple mathematical formula if there are more than one indeterminate in an equation we cannot make any calculation. Take for instance a definition like $x + y = 1$. In order to find what is $x$ we need one more definition like for instance $x = 3y$. Structuralism assumes that $x$ is always shaped by $y$, while hybrid theories depict an illustration in which $x$ and $y$ are independent. Unfortunately there is no solution for this formula if we claim that $x$ and $y$ are separate with their emerging properties.
All theories are based on some assumptions that reflect theorists’ point of views. So, increasing the number of assumptions increases the subjective nature of a theory. Moreover, making assumptions for two different levels of reality is a more serious problem. Assumptions related to the same group can be organized in a priority relation towards each other since they belong to the same group of reality and logically require each other. A theory based on structural assumptions might be unable to cover all the realities in defining the nature of structure. In such a case it will be confirmed or falsified since it provides a bold argument for the test. If for instance anarchic structure is not the real organizing principle of international structure, then researchers can show that there are more important realities in international structure that shape state behavior. However, in case of a hybrid theory which assumes, both state motivations and structural conditions, a researcher cannot decide which assumption was not reflecting the reality properly. If for instance x plus y is not equal to 1 but equal to 2 and if there is no relation between x and y (that is, if x cannot be defined in terms of y), no one can judge what is the missing part of this equation.

In short, even if internalist and externalist theories of action have their shortcomings they are not deficient by nature because of some incompatible assumptions. Despite that fact, in real world social theorists generally ignore the requirements of their approach. Theories claiming to be structural in International Relations are not the exception for this general tendency. Because of their well-specified state motivations and their unit level and structural level assumptions, they produce incompatible hypotheses in terms of internal logic and differing depictions of international reality compared to each other.
Chapter II

The Problem of Motivation in Theories of International Relations

1. Introduction

This chapter reviews main theories of International Relations according to their approach to the problem of state motivation. It provides a history of international relations theories contextualized around the problem of motivation. Based on this classification theories of international relations are introduced as evolving from essentialist towards intentionalist then from intentionalist towards structuralist theories. In a recent trend, it seems that there is a common tendency of fleeing from structuralism towards essentialism and intentionalism. The chapter argues that mainstream international relations theories (offensive and defensive realisms and neo-liberal institutionalism) claiming to be structural are in fact hybrid theories composed of both structural factors and unit level motivations. It also argues that state level motivational assumptions, which are independent from and incompatible with structural assumptions, are the causes of internal inconsistencies in these theories and constitute main differences between them. Therefore, there is no pure structural theory of international relations that would provide the grounds for state motivations and behaviors.
The history of theories in International Relations is introduced in different forms. There are different introductory texts employing various criteria to classify theories of international relations. It can be introduced, for instance, as the history of the discussions between realists and others. It can also be introduced in form of continuous great debates like the first, second, and third great debates.\(^55\) It can be introduced in terms of methodological and philosophical differences.\(^56\) However, an alternative way of understanding the history of theories in International Relations introduced in this study is to contextualize it around problem of state motivation.

The history of International Relations can be conceptualized and contextualized in a form of discussions over the problem of state motivations. The debates in the field evolved from the essentialist toward the intentionalist then towards the structuralist arguments and then again towards essentialist and intentionalist ones. The First Great Debate between Realists and Idealists was actually an essentialist debate, a discussion over the attributes of the states reflected in the conflict over the concept of human nature. Both sides defining different human natures drew different consequences for actors’ behaviors in international relations. How they defined human nature was defining what kind of behavior they were expecting from states. They thought that human nature, whatever it is, can be transferred to the nature of the state, and then if we know what, the nation-state then we can know what nation-states want and what they will do.

It seems that the distinctive contribution of Morgenthau is related to his efforts to overcome that discussion about human nature by the instrumental rationality assumption that reduced human

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nature into a single form, by fixing it into one identity and one motivation.\textsuperscript{57} Morgenthau represents intentionalist theorizing in international relations theory, although he, to some extent, was also a part of the discussions over human nature. While idealists mainly because of their liberal belief in human reason believed that human beings are reasonable, realists like Niebuhr claimed that human beings are originally bad.\textsuperscript{58} On the other side, Morgenthau claimed that a theory of international relations should recognize the rationality assumption. Morgenthau carried the Weberian instrumental rationality into International Relations by largely employing the term interest as the only state motivation.

Dissatisfied with Morgenthau’s individual level rationality assumption according to which states are motivated to maximize power, structuralists claimed that the nature of a country’s identity does not matter, but the structure of international politics shapes state behavior. Despite some various efforts of structuralism\textsuperscript{59}, Kenneth Waltz’s structural realism was highly appreciated and considered to be a good example of structuralism. In his “structural” theory, Waltz claimed that states are motivated to maximize their security rather than power. However, Waltz did not solve the problem of state motivation in accordance with the requirements of his structuralism. In response to structural realism, neo-liberals offered “structural” liberalism. Neo-liberals claimed that states are motivated to increase their wealth and power under the influence of structural conditions. However, in this case again, neo-liberals were also operating outside the confines of structural theory. Their wealth and power maximizing state assumption was also independent


\textsuperscript{58} Niebuhr, Reinhold, \textit{The Nature and Destiny of Man: a Christian Interpretation} (New York: C Scribner’s Sons, 1943).

from structural factors. The latest trial of structuralism came in a realist form. John Mearsheimer in opposition to Waltzian defensive realism claimed that even though states are motivated to survive, they believe that the best way of survival is power maximization. So, states in this offensive realism intend to increase their power. This state level assumption was also far removed from structural conditions. As a consequence, these mainstream theories of international relations are, in fact, hybrid rather than structural theories. Strongly dissatisfied with these mainstream theories, some recent studies started the process of going back to intentionalist and essentialist roots of state motivation in theories of international relation, rather than improving structural theorizing.

The next section will introduce the essentialist debate about human nature between early realists and idealists and the realist formulation of intentionalist theorizing by Morgenthau. It presents Morgenthau’s classical realism as a combination of both essentialism and intentionalism, although Morgenthau tried to overcome the essentialist debate. The third section introduces the three mainstream theories of international relations (defensive and offensive realisms and neo-liberal institutionalism), criticizing them because of their hybrid character, although they claimed to be structural. In the fourth section, some neo-classical realist theories are reviewed to reflect their renewed intentionalist character. The sixth section introduces the constructivist research program as a renewed effort to bring essentialism back in a complicated but non-compelling defense of hybrid theorizing.

2. From Human Nature Essentialism to Morgenthau’s Intentionalism
Discussions over state motivations, conceptualized as the debate over human nature between realists and idealists, played the formative role in the early development of the field of international relations. What is termed the first debate in the field was a debate whether human nature is good or bad was a discussion over how to identify the actors and describe the motivations of those actors in international politics. Idealists using liberal arguments about the harmony of interests between reasonable actors, assumed an inherently good human nature. Because of their belief in the reasonable character of human nature and the promise of scientific study of international politics in particular and social sciences in general, idealists claimed that the sickness of international society (war) could be treated. As in the case of the increase of public benefits in domestic capitalist societies, because of the harmony of interests, the greatest happiness of the greatest number would be achieved when the reasonable actors understand that sometimes the minorities should sacrifice their interests for the well being of the international society. Reasonable actors would follow the rules of that utilitarian logic if they build institutions that would produce greater public interest. In the lack of such institutions international politics was dominated by illusions about the existence of diseased institutions, like balance of power. Reasonable actors were considered to be able to transform that inadequate institutionalization. Change would come because of the essential characteristics of human nature. Essentially, good human beings were thought to be able to bring that transformation.

On the other side, early realists, in opposition to idealist optimistic definition of human nature and capabilities, held a more pessimistic definition. Realists, like Niebuhr, for instance, strongly argued that human nature is actually bad, relating that assumption to the concept of original sin. Since the most essential characteristic of human is its self-interested nature, extrapolating to

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international politics, states would not sacrifice their interests for the well-being of the international society. Because of human nature, there would be no harmony of interests or an able institution that would sustain the harmony. The promise of scientific study of politics based on the idea of reasonable human nature was considered to be a misguided description of the field of politics and human nature. Humans were equipped not only with reason but also biological and spiritual needs which would spoil their nature. In sum, early realists held a belief which portrays the essential characteristics of human nature pessimistically.

Despite their opposition both idealists and realists used the same method to explain international politics. They employed their interpretation of human nature as the essential characteristics of nation-states. The arguments about how world politics work were based on the philosophical or metaphysical understandings or at best on some empirical generalizations. While idealists employed traditional ideas like liberal political philosophy, humanist idea of freewill, and scientific belief of enlightenment, realists exploited some different traditional ideas like conservative political philosophy about spiritual character of human beings and Christian theological understanding of the concept of original sin. They inferred possible state actions from essential characteristics. It was argued that if human beings are reasonable then peace among states could be sustained, if human beings were originally sinful then there would be no chance for peace, if there were biological and spiritual needs then nation states in order to satisfy those brutish needs would resort to use of force. The logic was simple. What the nation-states are tells what they do. In such a framework, it was assumed that essential attributes determine desires and desires determine behavior. The possible gaps between attributes and desires and between desires and behavior were ignored.

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Morgenthau was the first who tried to transcend this essentialist debate about the human nature, although he also supported one side of the debate. He offered to transcend this impasse by arguing that we actually do not know the real nature of human, so we will be unable to understand what human beings want. Even if we know what they want, this knowledge is useless in theory construction. Therefore, we need to ignore human motivations altogether and instead find an objective criterion to understand state behavior. Morgenthau transcended this debate by arguing that the question of what is the nature of nation-state is not important for the analysis of state behavior, and offering to ignore actor motivations.

What Morgenthau did was indeed not to ignore state motivations, but to fix them into one oversimplified form. In addition to liberal definition of human of human nature about rationality he added two more attributes: biology and spirit. Morgenthau’s man was not just rational but also emotional. While the first debate between early realists and idealists was a discussion among essentialist understandings, Morgenthau’s approach was a step further towards intentionalism since he assumed one intention to be superior to other intentions.

The Classical Realism of Morgenthau emerged as a practical and ideological solution to the problem of human motivation. With its emphasis on the “reality” it was based on a belief in the “sharp distinction between what is the desirable and possible.” The idea about the difficulty of determining the state motivations and building a theory on those motivations is considered to be futile and deceptive by Morgenthau. In his criticisms against the interwar period idealists’ human nature perspectives, Morgenthau in his classic work, properly reflects the separation between the motivations and the real world:

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A realist theory of international politics, then, will guard against two popular fallacies: the concern with motives and the concern with ideological preferences.

To search for the clue to foreign policy exclusively in the motives of statesmen is both futile and deceptive. It is futile because motives are the most illusive of psychological data, distorted as they are, frequently beyond recognition, by the interests and emotions of actor and observer alike. Do we really know what our own motives are? And what do we know of the motives of others?

These statements reflect his views about the ambiguity of the concept of motivation in theorizing about international relations. More interestingly, for Morgenthau, even if the motives are accessible, they are hardly useful in building theories:

Yet even if we had access to real motives of statesmen, that knowledge would help us little in understanding foreign policies, and might lead to us astray. It is true that the knowledge of the statesman’s motives may give us one among many clues as to what the direction of his foreign policy might be. It cannot give us, however, the one clue by which to predict his foreign policies. History shows no exact and necessary correlation between the quality of motives and the quality of foreign policy. This is true in both moral and political terms.

For his “sharp distinction between the desirable and the possible,” Morgenthau persuasively argues that “[j]udged by his motives, Robespierre was one of the most virtuous men who ever lived.” Because of the inaccessibility of motivations and their uselessness in theory construction, Morgenthau turns to the concept of interest which is “defined as power” that is an objective and useful concept to build a theory. Since interest is defined as power, all agents of international politics are motivated to accumulate power, so the field of international relations is an arena of “struggle for power.” Morgenthau believed that we need to assume the instrumental

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63 Morgenthau, p: 5-6.
64 Morgenthau, p: 7.
rationality of agents and ignore other human motivations like reasonableness in search for a peaceful world. He actually did not reject that social activities are to some extent motivated by reason but he rejected the argument that it only consists of reason. Morgenthau’s rational interest assumption includes reason, biology, and emotion.\textsuperscript{66} State action is not only reasonable but also biological and spiritual. As in the case of conservative human nature definition in political theory, Morgenthau provides a pessimistic definition. Because of this threefold definition, Morgenthau derives that the real rational behavior is to search for interests which can be gained through power maximization. So, the roots of power maximizing state still lie at the essential features of states. His intentional theory was based on the essentialist understanding.

Morgenthau was in search for an objective definition for the question of what do states want. Employing Weberian instrumental rationality he reduced the numbers of possible motivations to one, choosing one among others. In this form, his theory of international relations shares most of the problems common in both essentialist and intentional theories. There is an inevitable gap between rational, biological and spiritual human nature and self-interested state motivation and also a gap between self-interested state motivation and state behavior. For the latter, based on his definition of multiple features of human nature, he claims that states are motivated to search for their own interests, which can be gained by power maximization. It seems that there must be a huge gap between rationality and power maximization assumptions. He thinks that rationality is the essential feature that requires desire in interest, which can be gained by increasing power. Although power is a means to gain interest, it is so significant that it becomes the immediate end of international politics. Single rational desire is interest and single rational belief is the idea that increasing power is the only means of that end. Formulated in folk psychology, state action is the

result of desires and beliefs that are rooted in the characteristics of states. His singled out state motivation comes from his philosophical perspective. It was no more legitimate than for instance idealist characterization of human nature. Morgenthau was also reading the characteristics and minds of state actors. Beyond a pessimistic philosophical perspective and some empirical generalizations, which were highly shaped by that perspective, Morgenthau did not provide any other justification for why we need to assume that interest is the only motivation of men. He traced the roots of that motivation to the internal features. If the search for the motives of statesmen is both futile and deceptive, why his rational, biological, and spiritual human nature description is useful and correct? If we do not know motives of others, how we can generalize all others will hold the same motives? Morgenthau’s internal characteristics of human agency cannot legitimize the assumption about the desire for interest.

Even if the motivation for self-interested action is granted, it does not inevitably follow that states will hold the specific construct that such self-interest can be defined in terms of power. Even if this power maximization belief as a means of self-interest is granted that does not mean that states will be able to act in accordance with these desires and beliefs. In each stage of that process state desires and beliefs are open to structural determinants. Because of the sharp distinction between the desirable and the possible, increasing power might be costly. Similarly a revisionist identity of a state does not necessarily mean that states will resort to revisionist forms of behavior. Dissatisfaction with the international order might be the most essential characteristic of a state but the very same international order might probably force that state to reconsider its desires or even to rearrange its revisionist identity in accordance with the circumstances. Because of the sharp distinction between what is possible and desirable, desire for revision, or status quo or power cannot explain state behavior.
Even if this power maximization assumption is recognized a second problem arises because of the unit level all covering form of that assumption. If all states are motivated to increase their power why do balances of power occur? “Realism relies on the concept of national interest. Yet if every state is following its national interest by maximizing power, how can Realists account for situations when states seem to behave in a way that undermines their power?”

If all states were in search of increasing their power, no state would sacrifice its power to hold the balance. Buck-passing, for instance, and so uninterrupted wars would dominate the history. Instead, Morgenthau believes that world history has progressed both by balances and imbalances of power. So, there must be some other reasons explaining that variation. In explaining that variation, Morgenthau increases the numbers of unit level assumptions which also increases the level of essentionalism and intentionalism in the theory. As in the case of Weberian classification for other possible motivations, Morgenthau divides states into two groups: On the one side, revisionist states want to revise the international balance of power, while status quo powers want to protect it. If we do not know the motives of states, how it is possible to know who revisionists are and who status quo powers are? He provides some random and arbitrary examples like British foreign policy orientation as the balance of power holder. He keeps reading the minds of state leaders based on the historical record. In this case, new further difficulties, which are related to the gap between motivations and actions, rise even if we again grant those new motivational assumptions. Holding revisionist motivations does not mean that a state will try to change the status quo. But because of the classification character of the theory any behavior in international relations can be explained by referring to these two groups of motivations if it is at all an explanation. All state behaviors can be related to one group of ad hoc motivation to give

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an account. If the states desire to increase their power why did Great Britain play the role of balancer? According to Morgenthau this was because of the status quo character of Great Britain. Why did Great Britain follow a policy of colonialization? It was because of a motivation to increase its power. *Ad hoc* motivations can be employed to explain different foreign policy behaviors. In short, it is hard to tell that Morgenthau followed his own prescription of ignoring the motivations. In order to explain state behavior we still need to know the essential characteristics of that state and its motivations.

Morgenthau strived to transcend essentialist discussion since he believed that we cannot read the minds of agents. The proposed solution was viewing states as agents in search of self-interest, which is achieved through power maximization. The method used to define the nature and motivation of the state was no more different than other essentialist and motivational approaches. Morgenthau probably selected this motivation because of his own empirical generalizations rather than conceptual clarity. However this offensive power maximization assumption could not account for defensive balancing behavior. Because of this difficulty Morgenthau devised two groups of states with particular motivations, which too were productions of empirical generalizations. Although he attempted to ignore the questions about state intentions he actually prioritized one state motivation over others by providing an essentialist legitimization rather than a conditionalist one. This was the fundamental reason for the development of structural realism, which claimed to overcome reductionist nature of classical realism.

3. **Motivation in Structural IR Theories**
The classical realist theory of Morgenthau and others was based on either attributes of states or some specific state motivations about human nature. Structural theorists in IR strongly dissatisfied with these characteristics of theories emerged as the supporters of a new understanding about state motivations. Kenneth Waltz in his strong criticism against any kind of intentional theories, referring them as reductionist, offered to focus on structural factors. His theory of structural realism with small refinements still holds the main ground both in realist and anti-realist paradigms. A critical contribution to Waltzian defensive realism came in about thirty years later. John Mearsheimer against Waltz’s defensive structuralism provided his offensive structuralism. During these stages of development liberals developed their structural theory in form of neo-liberal institutionalism. Although these theories were created in opposition to each other and although they all shared a structuralist perspective claim, they all failed to achieve to overcome the problem of state motivation. Instead each theory like all other intentional theories developed its distinctive assumption about state motivation. Those state level assumptions drew the distinctions between these theories. While Waltzian defensive structural realism assumed states as security seeking actors, Mearsheimer’s offensive structural realism assumed states as power maximizing units and Keohane’s neo-liberal institutionalism assumed states as egoist units in search of wealth and power. The only real difference between all these widely used and cited theories lies in their differences about state motivations. That shows why these theories failed to provide a real structuralist argument. If they shared structural assumptions and there was no unit level assumption then there would be no differing interpretations of state behavior.

3.a. “Structural” Realists: Waltzian Defensive Realism vs. Mearsheimer’s Offensive Realism
Two forms of structural realism (offensive and defensive) assume same unit level motivation. States want to survive in an anarchic environment. Offensive and defensive realists differ in their views about how to secure survival. According to defensive realists, states resort to defensive policies since the best way of securing the survival is security maximization. On the other side, offensive realists believe that states are conditioned to follow aggressive policies since the best way of securing the survival is power maximization. Both varieties of structural realism differ in their interpretation of how to secure the most fundamental state motivation that is survival. Their difference in interpretations comes from the differences in unit level assumptions. While offensive realists believe that states believe that the best of securing the survival is acting aggressively, defensive realists believe that states believe that the best way is acting defensively. As a consequence both forms of realism because of the contribution of unit level assumptions lose their internal integrity as hybrid forms of theories and conflict with each other although they use the same structural factors. For the former the incompatibility between unit level and structural assumptions create internal conflicts in the logic of theory for state actions. For the latter, different unit level assumptions produce incompatible interpretations of realism. In other words, the main distinction between offensive and defensive realisms is not structural; it is based on the hybrid forms of these theories. A pure structural theory of realism would produce neither internal conflicts between structural and unit level assumptions nor differing interpretations of international reality.

3.a.1. Waltz’s Defensive Realism

In opposition to the unit level theorizing which was based on the state level motivations, Kenneth Waltz offered structural realism. He convincingly argued that unit level theories hold reductionist assumptions about the attributes of units and those attributes cannot explain
international relations since they do not reflect the influence of international structure over units. According to Waltz, whatever the unit level features, states in the anarchic environment act in accordance with the structural constraints. “Waltz complains that reductionist theories fail to notice the difference between the intentions of actors and the results of their interaction,” since there are important causes which “intervene between the aims and actions of states and the results their actions produce.”68 Clarified in this form Waltzian realism appears like a structural theory which derives states’ actions from structural constraints. In fact, Waltz’s theory of international politics is not a pure structural theory. It is a hybrid one constructed by two different level assumptions that produce internal conflicts and a distorted image of international relations.69 The motivations of agents are not derived from the structure but they are assumed independently as in the case of micro-economists think of “the famous economic man, as a single-minded profit maximizer.” Using a similar method, Waltz defines states as security maximizers without considering the possibility of conflicts between this independent assumption and structural constraints.

Waltz clearly intends to develop a structural theory of international politics. He properly thinks that structural theory should include only structural factors and “omit all other factors like individual properties or process level variables.” As a model, Waltz uses structural anthropological studies and states that anthropologists “leave aside the qualities, the motives, and the interactions of the actors, not because those matters are uninteresting or unimportant, but because they want to know how the qualities, the motives, and the interactions of tribal units are

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68 Hollis, Martin and Steve Smith, Explaining and Understanding in International Relations (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p: 106.
69 For an argument about interactive nature of Waltz’s theory between agency and structure see: Tin-bor Hui, Victoria, War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2005), p: 13-20.
affected by tribal structure.” 70 According to Waltz, all other factors “are omitted because we want to figure out the expected effects of structure on process and of process on structure.” 71 Quoting Graham Sumner, he maintains that “Motives from which men act have nothing at all to do with the consequences of their action. I would say little rather than nothing, but the point is clear, and structural theory explains why it holds.” 72 However, we will see that instead of omitting motivations of units or properly deriving them from the structural conditions, he defines a specific unit level assumption. He assumes that states want to survive and they believe that the best way of survival is maximizing security. In form of an intentional theory based on folk physiology rather than a conditional one, Waltz formulates the action as the sum of a desire (survival) and belief (security maximization). A pure structural theory would derive state desire and belief from the structure, instead of assuming them separately. As a consequence his theory ends up as a mixture of both unit and system levels rather than a purely structural one and as an explanation of balance of power rather than a comprehensive depiction of international politics.

There are three main tenets of Waltz’s structural realism: 1) ordering principle (anarchy) 2) the character of the units, and 3) the distribution of capabilities. The first and third tenets are clearly structural ones while the second one is related to the unit level properties. Although it is commonly held that Waltz ruled out the second one, 73 it was not ruled out but was fixed into a specific form. Waltz defined a specific character for units but those characteristics were not derived from the structural tenets. The anarchic order and the distribution of power do not shape units’ desires and beliefs. In any case, free from the structural determinants, states want to

70 Waltz, p: 81. Emphasis is added.
71 Waltz, p: 82.
survive and believe that the best way of survival is security maximization. Anarchic order and/or distribution of power in this schema cannot influence what states want and believe. They always want to survive and believe that security maximization with an appropriate amount of power is the means of survival.

Waltz’s realism concludes that balance of power is the systemic outcome. The whole argument can be summarized with that statement: “Balance of power politics prevail wherever two, and only two, requirements are met: that the order be anarchic and that it be populated by units wishing to survive.” Notice that the third fundamental assumption of his structural theory that is the distribution of power is not included in this argument. Waltz says that if we assume anarchy and survival motivation the outcome is balance of power. Logically if the world politics was characterized by these two features then surely balances of power would prevail. The first requirement (anarchy) is quite obvious and structural but the second one is unit level and disputed. Also the distribution of power, which would contribute to shaping units’ motivations is ignored in this formulation. Instead survival as the unit level motivation is assumed independently.

In order to legitimize survival motivation Waltz follows two tracks. First, he independently assumes states as wishing to survive and claims it as “the most sensible and useful” assumption to build a theory of international politics. Second, he improperly argues that anarchy leads to survival motivation and security maximization belief.

**Independently Assuming Survival Motivation**

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74 Waltz, p: 121.  
75 Waltz, p: 91.
Waltz firstly makes an independent assumption about the motives of the states. He “assume[s] that states seek to ensure their survival.” Leaving aside, the structural requirement of omitting individual properties, he provides a well-specified unit level motivation, which is independent from the structural conditioning. Instead of his claimed position, which argued against “the error of predicting outcomes from attributes” and “leaving aside the motives and the interactions of the actors,” he defines the state motives as seeking survival. In that form Waltz does not, indeed, ignore the motives of the states he chooses a defensive one without a proper justification.

For the justification of this selection Waltz borrows from the methodological individualism of micro-economics:

I assume that states seek to ensure their survival. The assumption is a radical simplification made for the sake of constructing a theory. The question to ask of the assumption, as ever, is not whether it is true but whether it is the most sensible and useful one that can be made. Whether it is a useful assumption depends on whether a theory based on the assumption can be contrived, a theory from which important consequences not otherwise obvious can be inferred. Whether it is a sensible assumption can be directly discussed.

Despite this defense, he has been criticized in two terms. Firstly some scholar like Alexander Wendt claimed that Waltzian structural realism in this form was based on methodological individualism. According to Wendt, if Waltz was holding an individual assumption about state motivation he had to problematize it and justify that state assumption by tracing its roots to the essential properties of the units. Otherwise it would be an oversimplified reduction based on an

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76 Waltz, p: 91.
77 Waltz, p: 60.
78 Waltz, p: 81.
79 Waltz, p: 81.
implicit understanding about state identity. Unsurprisingly, from a constructivist perspective Wendt asks to discuss the essential identity of units which will produce and will be produced by the structure. For Wendt, without developing a state theory which will give the essential identity Waltz would not be able to justify his selection of survival motivation. However, Waltz’s aim was in fact to omit the essential characteristics debate. From a structuralist perspective, Waltz was expected to resort to the structural influence over state motivations. But Waltz did neither of these alternatives. He defined a teleological reason and claimed that this is the most useful assumption from which important consequences can be inferred, not otherwise obvious. Therefore, in Waltz’s terms validity of a theory and its assumptions should be judged on their fruitfulness to infer important and scientifically interesting consequences that would otherwise be unknown to us.

Secondly Randall Schweller evaluates the content of the survival assumption. He argues that the survival assumption has a status quo bias and ignores other possible state motivations. According to Schweller states might have both revisionist and status quo motivations and a theory of international relations should cover all of these motivations. He provides a fourfold classification of possible state motivations, which are named according to distinctive characteristics of lions, wolves, jackals, and lambs. As in the case of an essentialist critic, Schweller’s criticism, which is based on a classification of agent motivations, is also far from Waltz’s structural aims. Waltz instead of providing a classification of possible motivations like revisionist or status quo powers wants to single out the most sensible and fruitful motivation since he wants to avoid producing ad hoc motivations for possible outcomes as in the case of classical realism.

Both criticisms (essentialist and intentionalist) do not go to the structural core of the Waltzian argument. From their own theoretical perspective about the problem of motivation in social
sciences, they provide non-structural arguments rather than questioning or offering to improve the structuralism of Waltz. They do not attempt to derive state motivation from structural conditions or highlight the possible conflicts in the internal logic of theory because of holding two different assumptions on two levels. However, these criticisms are important to show the intentionalist nature of Waltzian realism. They show that Waltzian state motivation assumption is no more different than other intentionalist unit level motivations, which are implicitly embedded into the essentials of state agency.

In response to these kinds of criticisms, Waltz argues for the necessity of making some fixed assumptions about the units for the sake of theory construction. Surely, total ignorance of agency properties is impossible. The most important part of this characterization is its compatibility with structural forces. In order to avoid a conflict, this characterization should be in the most primitive and comprehensive form rather than a selection of one among all other possible characterizations. Waltz might be right in arguing for the necessity of making a unit level description but cannot be right to select one which carries a biased baggage and fix it especially when there might be more primitive and neutral ones like wishing to maintain its existence. Survival as a term is related to a never ending threat perception and claiming that all states always perceive threat without considering their power positions is a selective oversimplification rather than being a comprehensive one compatible with structural determinants. From a structural point of view, Waltz can argue against Schweller’s categorical classification of states as lions, lambs, jackals and wolves.\textsuperscript{81} However, at the same time, defining all states as lions is also a problem when we have the opportunity to define states as animals and consider the necessity to look for structural variables as shaping their goals.

Waltz likes to draw analogies between natural sciences and social sciences. He tends to use the way of Newtonian simplification as a ground for his own survival assumption and argues that Newton defined a point of gravity that is indeed inexistent, in order to explain the free fall of bodies. Based on this idea and also drawing from Milton Freedman, Waltz claims that such unrealistic assumptions can produce fruitful theories. However, one should make a distinction between what Newton did and what Waltz did. Newton hypothetically created a gravity point which is actually inexistent, while Waltz chose one motivation among other existing motivations. While Newton’s unrealistic notion can be employed to all masses because of its hypothetical and comprehensive character, Waltz’s assumption is not so comprehensive. Waltzian oversimplification is not a hypothetical one but a selective one.

In addition to this, judged by his own criteria of fruitful assumptions, even if we grant that this assumption is a comprehensive one, Waltz’s theory of balance of power proves poorly in producing an interesting knowledge that would not otherwise be explained. By assuming survival motivation, Waltz explains why balancing behavior prevails. Balancing as a foreign policy behavior is a restrictive one by its nature for both actors’ own power and others’. It is a defensive posture aiming to limit power of both sides of the international equation. An actor motivated to survive keeps an appropriate amount of power that does not provoke others but is capable of building counterbalancing coalitions against possible dominant powers.\(^{82}\) In other words, in Waltz’s balance of power theory defensively motivated actors act defensively and produce a defensive international outcome. In this framework, an actor’s motivation is not transformed by the structure and there is no requirement for the operation of an invisible hand. In this form, structure is an ineffective element in the theory. It has no power over motivations,

\(^{82}\) I would like to thank Richard J. Harknett for this argument.
actions, and outcomes. Actors are able to pursue their own desires and their actions produce an international outcome, which is compatible with actors’ motivations and actions. That is hardly a strange explanation that would be unobvious without considering an extra structural transformation. In this reasoning there is no invisible hand that operates against the wishes and actions of agents. There is no gap between actors’ desires and international outcomes, which would be filled by the influence of a structural determinant.

Indeed, during the construction of balance of power theory, Waltz’s security seeking actors do not interact with the structure.\textsuperscript{83} The assumed motivation does not change in the process of structural interaction. His systemic outcome, balance of power, can be directly derived from his security seeking state goal. Unlike micro-economic theory, his units do not reach an outcome that is not intended. In micro-economic theory, for instance, profit-seeking firms’ interaction, interestingly, constitutes a structure that is actually profit minimizing. However, in Waltz, uninterestingly, against his argument for radical simplification to have interesting hypothesis, units wishing to maintain their power are able to maintain it by balancing policies. This is hardly an interesting outcome for his simplification. While he was mentioning the virtues of structural theorizing by making radical simplification he uses his famous market analogy:

\begin{quote}
In a purely competitive economy, everyone’s striving to make a profit drives the profit rate downward. Let the competition continue long enough under static conditions, everyone’s profit will be zero. To infer from that result everyone or anyone, is seeking to minimize profit, and that the competitors must adopt that goal as a rule in order for the system to work, would be absurd.\textsuperscript{84}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{83} Waltzian claim of deriving the survival motivation and security seeking actor identity will be further evaluated in the next subsection and an alternative reading of anarchy and its outcomes on state motivations will be presented in Chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{84} Waltz, p: 120.
In this analogy profit seeking intentions results in profit minimizing. However, in Waltz, power maintenance intentions results in power maintenance with balance of power. If, for instance, he was assuming that states are actually power maximizers but, due to the constraints of structure, they have to balance others, then we would observe that the structure shapes the behavior. However, Waltz does not need to employ the structural variables. His unit level assumption performs the entire work even without interacting with the structural assumptions. This example shows that his unit level assumption is too powerful, specific and qualified for structural theorizing. It is far from being primitive and comprehensive, which would be compatible with structural assumptions.

In fact, the specific survival motivation serves at best to justify balancing behavior rather than reflecting a comprehensive depiction of international relations. If the states are hypothetically motivated to survive and the system is anarchic then balancing occurs. If they are not motivated to survive or if there are other factors like the distribution of power then balancing might not occur. Waltz’s argument ignores these possibilities. It seems that Waltz was preeminently determined to write a theory of balance of power, not a theory of international relations.

This partial and biased nature of Waltzian realism is the main reason for internal inconsistencies. The selective oversimplification of agent motivation that is in conflict with structural determinants produces incompatibilities when it comes to its applications in most cases. Because of the survival motivation it is predicted that states when feel threatened by others’ powers and will resort to balancing behavior. This reasoning, for example, because of the setting aside of the structural effect of the distribution of power cannot explain the absence of balancing behavior in unipolar structures as in the case of the absence of a labor class consciousness in Marxist analysis. As Marxists ignored the effects of relations of production in the society, Waltz ignores
the distribution of power and its effects on state motivations. In reality states without having a capability to act, states in the system do not desire to balance.

Considered under these circumstances, the Waltzian criterion of ‘useful assumption’ does not justify reliance on a selective survival motivation. The explanation of balance of power that is just one dimension of reality comes at the expense of providing a comprehensive depiction of reality.

**Deriving from anarchy**

Secondly, Waltz tries to derive support for his security maximizing states from the concept of anarchy. He argues that anarchy forces states to follow security maximizing policies. Anarchic structure of the international system, defined as the absence of a central authority, according to Waltz, creates a self-help system. Since no one is responsible for the security of all, everyone has to take care of themselves. For Waltz, self-help system produces strong survival incentives, so they attempt to maximize their security. Since security can be ensured by an “appropriate amount”\(^{85}\) of power without provoking others to form counter balancing coalitions, states choose to balance other emerging powers. Balancing dynamics creates a balance of power. An illustrative summary of Waltz's linear model is shown in Figure 1.

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In this model, Waltz derives many central concepts from anarchy. Presented in that way, the model is quite simple and convincing. However, a deeper analysis shows that there are at least two unjustified derivations in the model: the first one is deriving the self-help dynamic from anarchy; the second one is deriving security maximization from the survival motive. Anarchic order cannot be equated to self-help system and security maximization is not the only way of survival even if states wish to survive.

Firstly, Waltz unjustifiably derives the self-help system from anarchic order. If anarchy is defined as the absence of central authority, its logical outcome would be self-reliance. However, Waltz tends to use some concepts, like self-reliance, self-regarding and self-help, interchangeably. More precisely treated, however, one can argue that anarchy can be considered as a self-reliance system, not as a self-help system. The concept of self-help, compared to the concept of self-reliance, embraces an additional element that is the permanent existence of threat. Anarchy, by definition, cannot be interpreted as including an ever-present danger. It does not imply more than self-reliance. If a unit believes that there is no one to take the responsibility of defending it then it will be forced to rely on its own resources. The term of “help” compared to the term of “reliance” unjustifiably adds the implication of a threat dimension to the system.
However, domestic political structures and international political structures do not principally differ from each other on the permanency of threats. They differ from each other on the positioning of the units either functioning similarly or differently.

In anarchic orders, as Waltz taught, units are differentiated by their relative standing in the distribution of power, not by their functions. So capabilities of the states in responding to threats are different. Although all states have to rely on their capabilities, the survival of all states is not threatened. To assume that all states are equally threatened by the anarchic structure is a huge oversimplification on the unit level that goes back to Hobbesian exaggeration of physiological fear and the equality of men to kill each other. For Hobbes, “the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest.” However, for Waltz, as in the case of Rousseau’s “origins of inequalities,” the distribution of power matters. He employs it, for instance, in explaining the stability of bipolar compared to multipolar structures. But Waltz does not employ the idea of differing capabilities in understanding what states want. For Hobbes, all states are in search of power after power because of the equal capability to kill each other, for Waltz all states are in search of survival and an appropriate amount of power because the same reason. Ignoring the distribution of power is like claiming the existence of a veil of ignorance in which everything even the distribution of power is totally uncertain. However, Rawls used the hypothetical veil of ignorance in order to justify the desirability of equality if actors do not know what their position

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will be in the distribution of power for the next step.\footnote{Rawls, John, \textit{Justice as Fairness: A Restatement} (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 2001).} Agents would prefer a distribution that will work to the benefit of the worst-off agents. The agreement is reached when agents do not know about their position in the distribution of power. The Leviathan was required because of the equal capability of each agent to kill each other.

Therefore, if international anarchy would mean a self-help system in which all agents have equal fears of survival then the emergence of a world government (global Leviathan) would be inevitable. But because of the unequal distribution of power all states do not feel equally threatened. Based on certain distributions of power, one could surmise a condition in which a state will not feel or be threatened. Anarchy simply requires states to be self-reliant (essentially, it requires states to have some independent capabilities to act), but the ordering principle in and of itself cannot predict that states will feel or be threatened (essentially, that states must have enough capabilities to help themselves survive). Certain distributions of power may structurally pressure states to do more than having independent capabilities; that is having capabilities sufficient to survive, but that structural dynamic emanates from the combination of an anarchic ordering principle and particular distributions of power. It does not flow directly as a starting point for all states in anarchy. The notion of ‘help’ implies help from some condition (threat), whereas, more neutrally, the notion of reliance more precisely retains a focus on simply the independent possession of capabilities.\footnote{I would like to thank to Richard J. Harknett for his suggestions on this point.} So, international system is not a self-help system but a self-reliance system in which the distribution of power matters and self reliance does not motivate states to survive but to rely on its capabilities. This is why international structure reproduces the anarchic order. In both cases of exaggerated concentration and exact equal

distribution of power, the system would not reproduce anarchy. It would transform into a hierarchic one.

Secondly, even if the survival (as a motivation) is granted, security maximization (as a belief and a second level goal caused by the primary motivation) does not cover all implications of survival motivation. For Waltz, if the states in anarchic order want to survive then they will/should adopt the security maximization as their highest goal. They will not seek to increase their power to the level which will provoke others. However, is the security maximization the only way of securing survival? Waltz argues as if the survival motivation and security maximization goals are interchangeable and the latter is the direct and inevitable consequence of the former. As we will see, however, many people deny such a direct interchangeability. If Mearsheimer is one example, Charles Glaser’s optimistic realism can be considered as another example.⁹⁰ Although both recognize the self-help dynamic, they differ in the form of help.

The essence of Mearsheimer’s and Glazer’s criticisms of Waltz is well-known so it is not necessary to delve deeper. But two things are worth to mention. Firstly, if the way Waltz argues is not the only way of survival then the way both Mearsheimer and Glaser argued are not also the only ways. Secondly, while deriving security maximization from survival motive serves Waltz’s building of balance of power theory, Mearsheimer’s interpretation serves for the explanation of offensive behavior and Glaser’s interpretation serves to explain cooperation. So, all these biased positions explain just one side of the reality. It is clear that these biased interpretations are the byproducts of a personal attitude towards understanding the international arena rather than being the logical derivations of baseline assumption of anarchy. Otherwise, there would not be such

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controversial interpretations. Waltz in his search for the theory of balance of power seems as choosing among alternatives the one that fits to his aim of building a theory of balance of power. Probably, cognizant of those shortcomings, Waltz provides three supporting arguments on the significance of defensive motivations and goals. These are: 1) seriousness argument, 2) priority argument, and 3) empirical argument.

The first supporting argument is related to the nature of inter-state relations. In his comparison of international relations with economic affairs, Waltz argues that international relations is a serious business. For Waltz, “states can seldom afford to make maximizing power their goal. International politics is too serious a business for that.”91 What Waltz has in mind while arguing for the seriousness of international political system is its comparison with the economic market system. Following from this comparison he finds that firms can afford pursuing profit maximizing policies but states are not allowed to take that risk due to the seriousness of the structure in which states play the game.

The main difference lies at the different natures of threat in these two systems. Are they really different? If so, what might be the source of the difference? In fact, except for the case of the seriousness argument, Waltz rarely finds differences between these two systems, otherwise his market analogy would not fit into international politics. On the contrary, Waltz provides support for the similarities in responses to threats. “Like nations, oligopolistic firms must be more concerned with relative strength than with absolute advantages.”92 So, we can argue that Waltz considers both as security maximizing systems.

91 Waltz, p: 127.
92 Waltz, p: 106.
Even though it is difficult to sustain such a claim we can grant it for the sake of argument. Then it turns to find the sources of difference. In Waltz’s definition of international system (without consulting to some unit level assumptions) one cannot find why threats in the international political systems are more serious. In his definition of anarchy there is nothing about the seriousness of that business. Anarchy, defined as the absence of a central authority (and that is all), does not grant the clues for considering the threats emanating from it as more serious. It seems that Waltz holds an independent assumption either on the structural level or unit level. If it is on the structural level it has to be integrated into the theory and should be justified. However, I think it is related to the survival motivation that is at the unit level. As argued above, anarchy, appropriately understood, does not tell about the seriousness. It just tells that there is no central authority. So why we are required to think it is more serious than other anarchic systems. Even if it is more serious, then why states will choose to limit their powers? Mearsheimer uses exactly the same seriousness analogy between markets and international system. But building upon it, he argues in exactly the opposite direction.93 Similarly, Schweller argues that “international relations is too serious a business to entertain any form of voluntary self-limitation on the use of force.”94 So, under these circumstances, this supporting argument of seriousness fails to support the security maximization argument.

The second supporting argument is related to the priority relations among state motives. Waltz claims that security is the primary goal, although state goals might differ endlessly from survival to world hegemony. It seems that here again there is a problem about the interchangeable use of survival and security. Waltz fails to differentiate between these two terms which are separated

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93 Mearsheimer, p: 32-33.
for instance in Mearsheimer’s offensive realism, as survival is the main motive but the best way of securing it is power maximization. Waltz maintains that “Beyond the survival motive, the aims of states may be endlessly varied; they may range from the ambition to conquer the world to the desire merely to be left alone. Survival is a prerequisite to achieving any goals that states may have, other than the goal of promoting their own disappearance as political entities.”95 Then he continues “in anarchy, security is the highest end. Only if the survival is assured can states safely seek such other goals as tranquility, profit, and power.”96

It seems that Waltz thinks the only way of surviving is seeking security. However, as Mearsheimer shows people can easily think different strategies for the survival. In addition to that, states do not always have to turn to their prerequisites. If there was a veil of ignorance about the distribution of power then it would be meaningful to assume that all states use the same order of goals and prioritize the highest end over others. For this reason, it is important, to turn to the conditions of the distribution of power in defining state goals and strategies. Anarchy in itself does not specify any particular goal that is the best way of securing the survival. Without having an idea about their position in the system states cannot form a belief about the highest end or the means of survival.

The third supporting argument is an empirical one. According to Waltz it seems that states are security maximizers since balancing is more common than bandwagoning. “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

95 Waltz, p: 91-92.
96 Waltz, p: 126.
maintain their positions in the system." This argument can be considered as one of the most serious problems in Waltzian theorizing. These statements reflect his perception of international history in which balancing is more common than bandwagoning. In fact, the validity of balancing argument has been challenged by the supporters of bandwagoning. It is not as obvious as Waltz put it.

However, the point that I want to raise is not about the empirical discussion between those two camps. The important part is that by offering the prevalence of balancing behavior as the reason of security maximization argument, Waltz falls into a methodological problem. He tends to support his assumption (security maximization) with the expected outcome of the theory (balancing). Under the normal conditions, the theory is expected to move in that order: anarchy causes security maximization motives and these motives produce balances of power. However, if one takes the above quotation, his theory turns in that cyclical tautological form: states balance so we can argue that they are security maximizers and if they are security maximizers then they balance. It seems that he assumes both the independent and the dependent variable in a circular way. Balancing behavior should be the argument which will be tested by researchers, not the biased support for the assumptions of the theory without any empirical investigation. For this reason, Waltz’s empirical argument does not support his claim for security maximizing motivations. Since balancing in his theory is the systemic outcome, it should not be expected to justify security maximizing goals.

In short, Waltz assumes an independent state motivation that is free from structural conditioning. He either misreads the influence of anarchy over state motivations because of his setting aside

97 Waltz, p: 126.
the distribution of power or provides a separate unit level motivation for all states that is in conflict with other structural factors. In both forms, Waltz’s theory of international politics amounts to a hybrid theory of balance of power. It is not structural but hybrid because it is based on both structural and unit level assumptions. It is a partial theory of balance of power not a comprehensive depiction of international reality. As a consequence the theory firstly produces internal conflicts because of the different natures of the two groups of assumptions. Secondly it reflects just one dimension of international reality that is the balance of power.

Firstly, Waltz’s defensive realism produces internal conflicts since his survival assumption is not compatible with his structural assumptions about anarchy and the distribution of power. These two structural factors do not require predicting survival motivation. That logical disconnection creates inconsistencies that make the theory unable to produce consistent predictions for different situations. We need to sacrifice one of these two groups of assumptions when the direction of their effects conflict. In an anarchic environment the distribution of power might offer opportunities rather than threats. In this case we cannot judge which factor is more influential. Alternatively there might be some cases in which some states cannot maximize their security because of their relative power positions. The distribution of power might be so imbalanced that others might be unable to balance the potential dominant power as in the case of unipolarity. Waltzian defensive realism predicted that the system would not turn into a unipolar structure because balancing would prevail wherever two, and only two, requirements are met: that the order be anarchic and that it be populated by units wishing to survive.99 Under anarchic order, units wishing to survive would balance. But it is now clear that there are cases in which those units might be unable to balance. At the same time Waltz was claiming that the lesser the more

99 Waltz, p: 121.
stable the system. Based on this argument one can hypothesize that the unipolar structure would also be more stable. But Waltz rejected that proposition. According to Waltz a unipolar structure is the least stable system because units wishing to survive would eventually balance. In this conflict between the requirements of the distribution of power and unit level assumption of survival, it seems that Waltz prioritized the unit level motivation over the requirements of the distribution of power. The implicit non-application of the distribution of power as a structural influencer causes Waltz to assume states as security maximizers and when those security maximizers cannot balance unipolarity prevails. Waltz as a theorist has the luxury to expect balancing behavior since he assumes states as units wishing to survive and ignoring the distribution of power, but the real units seem to be aware of that international reality. It seems that states choose to react according to the effects of international structure by reorienting themselves to the conditions rather than holding unrealistic and fixed motivations.

Secondly and related, Waltz’s theory narrow to a theory of balance of power rather than being a comprehensive depiction of international reality. In the conflict between these two groups of assumptions, Waltz insists on holding to a unit level assumption. His insistence can be related to his engagement in the idea of balance of power. The unit level survival assumption enables Waltz to build a theory of balance of power. Like the ideological side of Marxist theories, Waltz was so engaged to explain why balances prevail; he ignored to employ the distribution of power at the expense of state motivation. As the labor class of Marxists was motivated to bring revolution, Waltzian states were motivated to survive. Marxists were trying to explain labor class revolution while Waltz was actually trying to explain balance of power rather than international politics. Marxists ignored the weak position of the labor class in the distribution of tools of production while Waltz ignored differences of states in terms of their capabilities. States wishing
to survive would balance. Because of this unit level assumption and despite the similarities in structural assumptions there is no single structural theory of international politics. As will be explained in the following sections this error is made by others as well with liberals trying to explain international cooperation just assumed states as motivated for wealth and power and offensive realists trying to explain offensive state behavior rather than balancing just assumed states as power maximizers. Despite their claim about structuralism, motivations of their units are not shaped by the structure. Their unit level descriptions are no more different than the descriptive analysis that follows from intentionalist theories.

3.a.2. Mearsheimer’s Offensive Realism

The second structural theory of realism was developed in the nineties and gained its most comprehensive form in John Mearsheimer’s writings. Some realists, dissatisfied with the defensive nature of Waltzian realism and its anomalies in explaining the high volume of offensive behaviors in international affairs, attempted to develop a structural theory which claimed that states are actually motivated for offensive behavior to protect their survival. Offensive realism recognizes the Waltzian simplification of state motivation about survival, but it denies that states act defensively to maximize their security. According to offensive realism, states wishing to survive act offensively to maximize their power in order to survive. In a nutshell, offensive realism like defensive realism was based on the same formula of folk physiology and intentional form of action. International action was formulated as a composition of desires and beliefs. States wishing to survive believe that the best way of survival is increasing power, not maintaining it in certain amount. Those assumptions about state desires and beliefs are independent from the structural determinants. The main distinction between defensive realism and offensive realism lies at the unit level assumptions rather than structural
interpretation although offensive realists claimed that it is a structural one. As a consequence, offensive realism became a new hybrid realist theory of international relations, which is internally inconsistent and externally unable to cover multiple dimensions of international behavior.

Mearsheimer’s offensive realism has surprisingly similar problems in attaining motives for states. Despite his structural level claims, he also fails to show how the structure of the international system produces aggressive incentives. So, his argument for the offensive state motivations is unsatisfying. Like Waltz, Mearsheimer reflects a particular understanding about how the world works. Unlike Waltz, his perspective that is based on aggressive motivations of states, contrary to his structuralist claims, seems closer to the unit level attributes, since he does not sufficiently explain why similar assumptions about the international system create differing explanations about state motives.

Mearsheimer is quite clear in stating his assumptions. He lists five main assumptions that constitute the properties of international politics: anarchy, offensive military capabilities, uncertainty about other states’ intentions, survival and rationality. For Mearsheimer, these five properties of international politics results in “three general patterns of behavior: fear, self-help, and power maximization.” The first three assumptions (anarchy, offensive military capabilities, and uncertainty about other states’ intentions) refer to the systemic properties while the last two (survival and rationality) refer to unit level. Mearsheimer presents a mixture of the two levels.

\[100\] Mearsheimer, p: 32.
Unlike Waltz, Mearsheimer did not attempt to discuss the legitimacy of his unit level assumptions characterizing the attributes of states. The absence of a legitimization of the survival motivation can be criticized as in the case of defensive realism, but it can be ignored since it was shown to be unjustifiable in the discussion of defensive realism above and also it is not so central to Mearsheimer’s argument. However, it is worth to state that in both forms of realism, assuming the survival motivation independently at the very beginning of theory construction without any consideration of structural determination over state assumptions constituted the hybrid forms of these theories. Mearsheimer states that “None of these assumptions alone mandates that states behave competitively. Taken together, however, they depict a world in which states have considerable reason to think and sometimes behave aggressively.”101 “When the five assumptions are married together, they create powerful incentives for great powers to think and act offensively with regard to each other. In particular, three general patterns of behavior result: fear, self-help, and power maximization.” Mearsheimer does not discuss why those five assumptions produce fear rather than self-confidence or opportunity rather than threat. He does not give reasons for why states feeling fear and threat do believe in holding an appropriate amount of power instead of increasing power.

Mearsheimer does not explain how this mechanism works. “He makes no attempt to show that his conclusion follows from these premises. Had he done so, it would have been more obvious that, while his premises are clearly stated, it is far from clear what the conclusion actually is.”102 However, Mearsheimer strongly believes that it is easy to reach the inevitable conclusion when these five assumptions are listed and he writes that:

101 Mearsheimer, p: 29.
Given the difficulty of determining how much power is enough for today and tomorrow, great powers recognize that *the best way* to ensure their security is to achieve hegemony now, thus eliminating any possibility of a challenge by another great power. Only a misguided state would pass up an opportunity to become hegemon in the system because it thought it already had sufficient power to survive.\(^{103}\)

Under these conditions, “states quickly understand that the best way to ensure their survival is to be the most powerful state in the system.”\(^{104}\) Mearsheimer’s belief is hardly convincing. If it was so easily and quickly understood we would have no intra-paradigm debate between defensive and offensive realists, who hold similar assumptions. If Waltz, for instance, as an expert, can easily fall into a mistaken understanding why do states not fall into the same mistake in believing the necessity of increasing power? Anarchic structure, uncertainty about others’ intentions, and offensive military capabilities do not inevitably lead survival motivations and also having survival motivations does not straightforwardly require power maximization beliefs. Also holding power maximization beliefs cannot single-handedly cause offensive behaviors due to the external conditions shaping state motivations. There are huge gaps between what states want (survival) and what states believe (survival is attained through power maximization) and what states can do (offensive or defensive behaviors). Structure does not only fill these gaps but also shapes desires and beliefs of states in indicating what is desirable and possible. Although he presents the differences between offensive and defensive realism he avoids from discussing the reasons of the division. In sum, the explanation of how the leaders decide to act offensively in response to the systemic constraints fails to justify Mearsheimer’s argument.

\(^{103}\) Mearsheimer, p: 35

\(^{104}\) Mearsheimer, p: 33.
Beyond the quickly understood best way of survival argument, Mearsheimer turns to the “dangerous business”\textsuperscript{105} argument, like Waltz. He makes a comparison between the market affairs and international affairs and argues that in the international arena “stakes are high.”\textsuperscript{106} Again, as argued in the case of defensive realism, this dangerous business argument is hardly convincing. It is also surprising to see that how the exactly same arguments can be used by the both sides. While Waltz was claiming that states cannot afford to maximize power because the international affairs is a serious business compared to economic affairs, Mearsheimer claims that states cannot be satisfied with an appropriate amount of power for exactly the same reasons with Waltz. So there must be a problem right here. We can easily argue that the seriousness of the international affairs has nothing to do with the defensive or offensive motivations or ways of securing those motivations. If it can be used as a justifying reason by both sides then we can logically conclude that it is, indeed, an ineffective factor for the states in deciding the best way of securing the survival. This example illustrates how the personal expectations of the theorists are brought into the theory as if they were structural causes. If such similar factors can bring so opposite outcomes at the hands of different theorists then that means they are interpreted according to the theorists’ subjective idea about the nature of the units.

Mearsheimer’s offensive realism can be considered as broader than Waltz’s defensive realism in scope. While Waltz writes obviously against power maximization and leaves it outside the theory, Mearhseimer did not give up security-seeking policies. Under certain conditions, for Mearsheimer, states might choose defensive policies if they have to. Units, in his theory, exploit the opportunities to expand power, when it is possible.\textsuperscript{107} In his model, there are two intervening

\textsuperscript{105} Mearsheimer, p: 32.
\textsuperscript{106} Mearsheimer, p: 33.
\textsuperscript{107} From this perspective, Mearsheimer provides a probabilistic theory, unlike Waltz possibilistic one.
variables that eventually shape states’ foreign policies: the distribution of power and geography ("stopping power of water"\textsuperscript{108}).

While reading the historical cases in Mearsheimer’s study, the reader can easily get the impression that those two variables are actually doing most of the work. For this reason, he was criticized as being a soft offensive realist.\textsuperscript{109} In theoretical chapters, Mearsheimer strongly defends offensive realism and the strategies that flow from its assumptions, however, when he started to evaluate historical cases he frequently had to turn to survival strategies. This point shows two things: he built a covering theory that explains empirical anomalies of defensive realism and motivations are indeed less important.

Waltzian defensive realism argues that the only possible way of securing survival is seeking security. This was indeed a bold statement that can be put under empirical test and many studies have been conducted in favor or against it.\textsuperscript{110} Mearsheimer’s effort provides a model which broadens the motivational assumption that will cove aggressive behaviors based on offensive intentions.\textsuperscript{111} In that form, his thesis becomes a functionalist explanation that can explain every incidence by resorting to the offensive intentions. In order to avoid it, Mearsheimer should provide a theory of his intervening variables. However, in his theoretical chapters there is no mention about the effects of the distribution of power and geography. Although there is a separate chapter about the stopping power of water, the distribution of power is brought to the

\textsuperscript{108} Mearsheimer, p: 41.
scene in the case studies. While the stopping power of the water variable can be seen as theoretically developed, its interaction with other variables is not clear. Distribution of power variable, on the other side, enters randomly and arbitrarily because of the lack of theoretical relation between the distribution of power and other variables. Without theoretical elaborations they appear as serving the offensive intentions just when it is needed. If they were integrated into the entire theory, they would surely diminish the assertions on offensive intentions.

In short, although Mearsheimer covers the anomalies of defensive realism to some extent, offensive realism fails to justify structurally why states carry offensive intentions and how those offensive intentions shape aggressive behaviors. Without combining unit level and structural assumptions he would be unable to interpret international structure in offensive terms. International system, in itself, does not force states to be motivated offensively. Also, defining state motivations as aggressive or defensive does less than expected when they are compared to other structural elements.

What is the difference between those two statements? 1) States wish to survive so they seek to maximize their power when it is possible? States wish to survive so they seek to maximize their security? The difference obviously lies on the last part of the first statement that is “when it is possible”. However, if we add a similar part to the defensive statement then there will be no difference between these two statements. So the important part here is the statement of when it is possible? If this is correct, than it raises the questions as to why Mearsheimer assumes that all states are power maximizers. Instead of drawing the implications of international structure over state motivations, Mearsheimer just independently assumes states as power maximizers.
Mearsheimer concludes that even if the states are motivated to survive because of their belief in the way of survival that is power maximization, international relations is a tragedy of great power politics dominated by wars. In other words, the most important factor in IR is what states believe in. Their belief that survival is possible only through offensive strategies characterizes their action. There is no room for structural factors in this argument. For instance, if the international outcomes were peaceful ones despite the offensive strategies of states we would observe structural influence over state behavior. If not, we see that state action and international outcomes are explained by unit level state beliefs.

In conclusion, if offensive and defensive neo-realist approaches are really deriving their theses from the same set of assumptions how it is logically possible to reach opposite claims? Of course it would not be possible, if they were not bearing tacit theories about the way the world works. As it is illustrated in their explicit or implicit assumptions about state identities, they actually hold different perspectives about how states should behave rather than how they do behave, which ironically is considered to be the main argument of any realist perspective.

3.b. Neo-liberal institutionalism

Structural liberalism as a theory of international relations is also a hybrid theoretical formulation, which is composed of structural conditions and independent unit level motivations. Neo-liberal institutionalists mostly adopting the structural assumptions of realism tried to build theories that explain the possibility of cooperative behavior. In reaching their aim, they assumed that states are self-interested rational actors in search of increasing their power and wealth, which are gained in some cases through cooperation. In this theoretical framework, too, the problem of

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state motivation was handled by an intentional theory of action. States desire to increase their power and wealth\textsuperscript{113} and they believe that even if it is not the only way, cooperative action is one of the ways of securing that desire. States act because of those desires and beliefs. In this form liberal institutionalist theory has a more restricted area of explanation, but they do it through a less restricted assumption of state motivation. The military threat oriented survival motivation is broadened to include economic and political interests. The assumption of states wishing to survive in structural realism is converted to states wishing to increase their interest, which is composed of both wealth and power, although liberals generally and improperly ignore their differences from realists in defining state motivations. Thus, the unit level motivation, not the structural condition, defines state action in neo-liberal institutionalism since it performs all of the tasks of explanation of state action. Therefore, the distinction between realism and liberalism is related to their hybrid forms that hold differing state motivational assumptions.

As a consequence, the discussions between structural realists and neo-liberal institutionalists in the eighties and nineties were no more different than the discussions between realists and idealists of the interwar period. The main distinction was still on the essential characteristics and motivations of states. The idealist characterization of the state was substituted by the ego-centric state, which is a wealth and power maximizer able to cooperate, while the realist sinful human nature was substituted with the survival-oriented state that is a security or power maximize that finds cooperation elusive.

Neoliberal Institutionalism is no more different than structural realism in assigning specific motivations for states and indeed presents a good case in illustrating how much of a role those specific motivations play in all these structural theories. The only difference between these two

schools of thought lies in their motivation assumptions. Neo-liberal institutionalists instead of assuming a security seeking or power seeking motivation for states, developed theories of cooperation by broadening horizontally and extending vertically the realist state motivation assumptions.\textsuperscript{114} According to this new flexible assumption, states want not only power but also wealth and they are long-term calculators. Once these two properties are included, it was easy to explain and rationalize international cooperation. Adding wealth to search for power enables neo-liberal institutionalism, to broaden the context of IR to include the economic field and also to claim that states do not just care about high politics considerations but are also concerned with other fields. An actor who cares not only about high politics, under some circumstances might consider economic benefits prior to high politics considerations depending on issue area it is operating. This reasoning enables neo-liberal institutionalist to explain cooperation rather than conflict by broadening agency motivation. Additionally, when the static nature of structural theory transformed into a dynamic one by including the dimension of time (especially in form of future expectations and shadow of the future through iterated games models) the possibility of an actor’s prioritization considerations can also be included.

In his seminal study, \textit{After Hegemony}, which is dedicated to the explanation of cooperation even in the absence of a hegemon in the system, Robert Keohane clearly states his assumption about state motivation. He writes that like realists he assumes that states want wealth and power.\textsuperscript{115} This is clearly not correct for realist theories, since realists ignore wealth and focus on other mostly political desires of the states like power and security. However, Keohane wants us to believe that he is using the same assumptions. Beyond that he also assumes that states consider

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the long term consequences of their actions. This is too not the case in structural realism, which is a highly static theory.

Here again, two questions rise: first is it legitimate to assume that states want wealth and power and are they long-term calculators? Why should we broaden the state motivation and include the time dimension? Second, even if this is a better assumption for state motivation how much work is performed by this assumption versus the structure of international relations as a core variable in explanations of cooperation?

For the first question, neo-liberal institutionalists do not provide any legitimization of why these more flexible state motivations are better than the realist assumptions. Instead they either ignore the difference between realist and liberal assumptions of state motivation as in the case of Keohane or try to stretch the concept of anarchy with a looser interpretation to cover less serious cases like economic affairs as in the case of Milner\textsuperscript{116} or include the time dimension like iterated games as in the case of Axelrod.\textsuperscript{117} They just claim that like realists they are assuming an egoist actor. As a separate theory of international relations, if neo-liberal institutionalists assumed states as egoists who are in search of wealth and power then they would need to provide some legitimization for that assumption. But by claiming similarity with realism they relieve themselves from the task of legitimization. Why would they need to provide philosophical legitimization if they were doing unit level analysis? They would provide a methodological legitimization like Waltz’s if they were doing structural analysis. However, they ignore all these types of legitimization issues by claiming similarity with realism. Keohane states that in structural theory state motivations should be taken as constants, since “any theory will, of course,


take into account the distinctive characteristics of actors as well as of the system itself.”\footnote{Keohane, Robert, \textit{After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy} (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 25.} But he does not explain why his constant is different from another structural theory and its distinctiveness, especially when it performs most of the job in theory.

Even if this legitimization problem set aside, there is a second problem in the neo-liberal assumption of state motivations. As in the case of structural realisms, most of the job in analysis is done by that state motivation. How it would otherwise be possible to claim that they reach different conclusions, if they were really using same sort of assumptions? The discussion between realists and liberals illustrates most of the analysis is done by their state level assumptions. Remember the complaints of Grieco in repeatedly stating realist state motivations. States having flexible motivations in liberalism and states having just one specific form of motivation in realism would inevitably lead to interpretations of relative and absolute gains considerations differently. A state holding long-run considerations and caring not only about threats but also gaining more wealth can respond in favor of absolute gains. That was not a dialogue between two groups holding similar beliefs about state intentions but restatements of differing unit level assumptions. While defensive realists restated their belief in the security maximizing actors, offensive realists restated their belief in power maximizing actors and liberals noted their broadened concept of state motivation.

4. Return to Intentionalism
Neo-classical realist theories are inspired by the idea of insufficiency of structural theory in general and Waltzian structural realism, in particular, in explaining state behavior. However, in the end the new development was not a production of an improvement effort of structural theorizing. It emerged as a going back to the classical human nature roots of realism and providing somewhat ambiguous combination of structural and unit level factors. Critics generally claim that neo-realism fails to explain most of foreign policy behaviors because of its structural focus. This is, in fact, a misguided diagnosis. The problem of Waltzian realism was not its structuralism but its subtle unit level assumptions, which are in conflict with the structural logic of the theory. For that reason, any combination of unit level and structural level factors in neo-classical theorizing is destined to fail because of the possible conflicts in the logic of combination since neo-realism already has its own unit level assumption.

Two groups of neo-classical realists might be identified: those trying to keep their bounds with the balance of power tradition\textsuperscript{119} and those trying to revive hegemonic stability theory\textsuperscript{120}. The first group of authors increases the number of variables in the theory while the second group following hegemonic stability tradition prioritizes power at the expense of anarchy like Waltz prioritized anarchy at the expense of the distribution of power. The first group indeed exactly turns to the intentionalist and essentialist logic of classical realism in order to provide descriptive accounts of empirical reality at the expense of theoretical rigor without any improvement in


structural theorizing. The second group ignores the effects of anarchy and claims the opposite behavior of balancing; that is, bandwagoning, and reflects just one dimension of international reality as balance of power realists reflected the other dimension, namely balancing.

Despite the appreciation of Waltzian balance of power theory as a theoretical construct in realist circles, most of the scholars were dissatisfied with the specific explanations provided by this parsimonious theory. According to these scholars, although Waltzian neo-realism was doing a good job in explaining the nature of international affairs, when it comes to explaining foreign policy behaviors like alignment behaviors or expansion decisions, it was unable to provide specific explanations. Those who appreciated the balance of power theory tried to provide refinements for a more specific balance of power theory in consistence with some empirical anomalies. However, these refinement efforts increased the degree of conflict in the internal logic of the realist paradigm by integrating new state motivations into a theory, which already has its own specific motivations.

Waltz seems to be aware of this difficulty. In opposition to Elman’s request of one horse for two courses he denies the possibility of applying neorealist theory to the field of foreign policy.\textsuperscript{121} Waltz claims that his theory is about the international outcomes rather than foreign policy behavior.\textsuperscript{122} However, Waltz has never provided a satisfactory explanation for the reasons of this incompatibility. If it is not possible to explain behavioral tendencies created by structure what is the meaning of having a theory that describes structural properties? If the aim was to predict the structural outcomes by defining the essential nature of structure, then it would be an essentialist theory of structure. In defining the essential characteristics of structure we hold structural

assumptions and if we explain structural outcomes with those assumptions it means we explained nothing at all. It means that tautologically we just assumed the properties of structure and claimed that this is an explanation. For instance comparing solidaristic and mechanistic structures is a unit level study while explaining the behaviors of agents in a mechanic society is a structural one. Assumptions about structures should be employed in explaining agent behavior, not structural outcomes. Description of structure cannot explain structure instead it provides a theory for agent behavior. Assuming anarchy helps to expect some specific forms of behavior. It does not explain the anarchic nature of that system as in the case of assuming survival motivation and cannot explain the reasons for survival. Therefore, a structural theory should explain the tendencies in agency behavior rather than explaining the structural outcomes. Otherwise the theory turns to be an essentialist description of structure. In accordance with this logic, most of the supporters of neo-realist theory tried to apply it to foreign policy behavior. When confronted with the incompatibilities of neo-realism, they tried to refine the theory not by amending conflicts between structural requirements and unit level assumptions but by injecting more descriptive unit level assumptions. As in the case of Marxist refinement efforts about labor class motivation, these new theories in their effort to account realist anomalies crossed the boundaries of both realist and structural frameworks.123

For example Stephen Walt’s balance of threat theory is one of these kinds of refinement efforts.124 According to Walt, although balance of power theory explained most of the historical alignment behaviors, in some cases it needs some additional factors to fit in more cases. He claimed that states do not ally just against power but they ally against threats which are in

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addition to power composed of geographical proximity, offensive capabilities and offensive intentions. Indeed this was an obvious turn to unit level analysis because of its focus on state intentions. Therefore states are more likely to ally against the most threatening actor rather than the most powerful. For instance, during the Cold War West European countries allied with the US against the Soviet Union not because of power considerations but because of the factors like offensive intentions and geographical properties of the Soviet Union. Similarly, based on balance of threat theory, the US is not balanced in the unipolar structure because of its unthreatening characteristics. Walt’s theory claims that states can know each other’s intentions and we as observers can also know those intentions. Despite his belief in the security oriented nature of agents because of his appreciation of defensive realism, Walt also believes that some states hold offensive intentions. If states are able to know each others’ intentions so why we need to assume that all states believe that security is the highest priority. Adversely, if states are motivated to maximize their security why are there some states holding offensive motivations? Researchers attempting to employ balance of threat theory are directed to read the minds of agents in a framework where agents are also able to read the minds of their adversaries.

Multi-causal nature of balance of threat theory makes it a study that is based on classifications about state intentions and employs ad hoc explanations for different cases. There is no priority relation among the four variables of balance of threat theory. Consider a state is threatened because of the offensive intentions of another state. The same state is also threatened because of the geographical proximity and offensive capabilities of its neighbor. It is not clear what would

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be the prediction of balance of threat theory. For this reason, it can employ any combination of those variables without a proper specification among them to account for any case.

Jack Snyder’s studies represent another example of refining defensive realism. In defending the predominance of security maximization against power maximization as a goal of foreign policy behavior, Snyder admits the presence of some offensive behaviors but he argues that this is the outcome of a misperception about the advantages of offensive behavior. He explains the anomalies of overexpansion by resorting to a concept of false consciousness as the case of Marxist arguments in explaining the reasons for the lack of a labor class consciousness. This is to claim that intentions of the agents in the study are accessible to the researcher even if it is not accessible to the agent itself.

Some realists in explaining the anomalies of structural realism try to revive hegemonic stability theory. Although some students of hegemonic stability theory do a good job in ignoring state motivations in their analysis, this comes at the expense of the ignoring the effects of anarchy. They depict the international environment as a hierarchical order in which nothing other than power counts. The anarchic structure of international relations does not affect states decisions. When confronted with a threat states jump on the bandwagon. There is an implicit state level assumption behind this argument. It assumes that states are not concerned about the conditions of the anarchic environment. They think that they can appease their possible conquerors by sacrificing their autonomy. If international relations is defined by distributions of power in an anarchic environment then a theory of international relations should take both of these factors seriously. If only the distribution of power would matter all states would jump onto bandwagon

and the system would turn into a hierarchical order in which not only power would count but also other factors like norms, laws and any other domestic system factors would be effective.

In this framework, the anarchic structure does not have any influence over what states want. They are just rational animals calculating their power. Because of the lack of anarchic influence it is difficult to understand for what reason states calculate their power. The concept of anarchy makes the accumulation of power meaningful. Otherwise hegemonic stability cannot legitimize the power accumulation. An anarchic depiction of the structure requires autonomy for the agent while a hierarchic order ignores the need for autonomy. If states are bandwagoning how is it that they reason that they need to bandwagon. If one part of an explanation for bandwagoning is related to the distribution of power the second part must be related to anarchy. Do states bandwagon to maximize security or power? Although power considerations explain how they act it does not explain why they act.

In explaining the stability of unipolar structure William Wohlforth using the main assumptions of hegemonic stability theory argues that other states do not balance against the unipole because they simply cannot. He argues that uniopolar structure is stable because balancing is costly and states have to jump on the bandwagon. It seems that in this analysis there is no room for the effects of anarchy. States are not in a self-reliance system and they do not feel that they have to take care of themselves. They delegate their autonomy to the unipole. This line of thinking obviously conflicts with the requirements of an anarchic system dominated by a distribution of power. The distribution of power is a meaningful concept when it is located in anarchic systems. In hierarchical domestic systems, the distribution of power is a much less important variable.

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because of the rules governing that system. As a theoretical concept the value of the concept of
distribution of power depends on the concept of anarchy; that is the distribution of power as a
variable and anarchy as a constant stand as two distinct but interrelated concepts. Otherwise both
would be constant and so there would not be any behavior which would require an explanation.
Unipolarity would inevitably turn into a world government. There would be no distinction
between unipolarity and overall hegemony.

Setting aside the formative effects of anarchy on state motivation causes to the recognition of a
covert assumption of cost benefit calculating actor. Although it is not clear whether supporters of
hegemonic stability theory assume a utility maximizing or security maximizing motivation,
because of their emphasis on the prevalence of defensive bandwagoning we can derive that the
rational actor in hegemonic stability theory is a defensively motivated rational actor in all cases,
so motivated for defense that they sacrifice their autonomy that must be thought as the reason to
exist as a state.

Since balance of power theorists emphasized state motivation and ignore the effects of the
distribution of power and anarchy on state motivations, they viewed international politics as
balances of power. Since hegemonic stability theorists emphasized the distribution of power and
ignored the affects of anarchy, they viewed international politics as dominated by bandwagoning
behaviors. Both attempts were partial views of international politics.

Randall Schweller is another example of a recent revival of hegemonic stability theory in which
he tries to combine balance of power with hegemonic stability.\textsubscript{129} Unlike Wohlforth, he does not
ignore the effects of anarchy but he provides a hierarchy in anarchy. According to Schweller, we

\textsuperscript{129} Schweller, Randall L., “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In,” \textit{International
can identify the states in the system according to their characteristics, like lions, wolves, jackals, and sheep.\textsuperscript{130} This effort is actually a return to Morgenthau’s revisionist-status quo classification. Schweller assigns specific goals for specific states. His approach can be called the highest state of an intentional theory in IR. This is an enrichment of classification rather than an improvement of structuralism.

Schweller cannot resist the temptation of assigning different motivations for the states which are located on similar power positions. In addition to the first-level powers as lions, for example, there are second-tier states whose actions are motivated by different desires and beliefs like status quo-oriented wolves and revision-oriented jackals.

Despite their differences these neo-classical theories share a common ground. Because of their dissatisfaction with neo-realism, they turn to unit-level motivations. They see neo-realism as an adequate form of structural theory and think that structural theory fails to explain international affairs. They do not try to improve the structural logic of realism but give up structuralism. They do not explore whether Waltz’s logic of structuralism has an inherent flaw. Since Waltz and other structuralists made unit level intentional assumptions, which means an intervention to the field of foreign affairs, there are conflicts in the logic of structuralism of these theories. In that form, any theory of foreign policy cannot be integrated into neo-realism. If neo-realism did not use unit level assumptions it would provide a ground for more specific intentional theories, which try to build theories of foreign policy behavior.

5. Return to Essentialism

\textsuperscript{130} Schweller, Randall L., “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In”, p: 100.
The current trend in general social sciences and IR is towards essentialist analysis. Strongly dissatisfied with intentionalist or structuralist theories, some scholars offered to turn back to essentialist explanations and the field of international relations was not an exception. According to neo-essentialists, the utility maximizing rationality assumption of consequentialism and its fixed unique identification and motivation fails to provide correct analyses because of its oversimplification without problematizing the essential identity of agency in international relations. They claim that there might be different properties of the actors and there might be different motivations emerging from those different properties. Therefore, neo-essentialists believe that in order to understand what agents want we need to first understand the nature of agents. Based on this method, we might find one essential characteristic for all actors or different characteristics for each actor. Those characteristics define what actors want and the resulting actions because of these wants. Specifically, as an alternative to structural and materialist explanations of international relations, they claim that cultural identity shapes state behavior.

foreign policy behavior that traces the roots of foreign policy behavior to the nature of decision-making process.\textsuperscript{132} These neo-classical liberals as in the case of neo-classical realists return to the intentional roots of international behavior. Unlike neo-classical realists, they are not satisfied with fixed motivations but they derive state motivation from the characteristics of states, like other essentialist approaches. Both constructivism and neo-classical liberalism are based on the characterization of properties of agents. However, neo-classical liberalism in a positivist and rationalist fashion focuses on a unique identity of modern nation-states, constructivism attempts to problematize the identity of the state to find multiple identities through focusing on unit level identity or cultural context, which is constituted by the mutual relationship between agency identity and structural culture.

Constructivism can best be described with its opposition to the consequentialist logic of positivist simplifications about state motivation rather than a substantive theory of IR.\textsuperscript{133} It is a framework that claims that in order to understand action we need to understand the essential identity of agency. According to constructivists, identity can come from two sources: internal characteristics and inter-subjective understandings. Internal characteristics refer to defining unit level identity of agency. Desires and values which are located in the identity of actors have casual autonomy to bring international action. Not material structural forces but cultural identities of the states shape their behavior. For instance “culture affects the formation of military doctrine”\textsuperscript{134} as in the case of French military behavior before World War II. “Chinese decision-makers have internalized [a] strategic culture such that China’s strategic behavior

exhibits a strategic preference for offensive uses of force, mediated by a keen sensitivity to relative capabilities.”  

“[T]he momentous turn in Soviet international policy was the product of cognitive evolution and policy entrepreneurship by networks of Western-oriented in-system reformers coincident with the coming to power of a leadership committed to change and receptive to new ideas for solving the country’s formidable problems.”

“[A]n adequate explanation of German and Japanese antimilitarism requires us to look beyond international structure and examine the domestic cultural-institutional context in which defense policy is made. The central thesis is that Germany and Japan, as a result of their historical experiences and the way in which those experiences were interpreted by domestic political actors, have developed beliefs and values that make them peculiarly reluctant to resort to the use of military force.”

The origins and endurance of NATO alliance can be explained by the idea of “republican liberalism, emphasizing collective identities and norms of appropriate behavior.”

“[S]tate identity offers theoretical leverage over the issue of the construction of threat and the choice of the alliance partner. It is the politics of identity rather than the logic of anarchy that often provides a better understanding of which states are viewed as a potential or immediate threat to the state’s security.”


All these explanations are based on the idea of the researchers about the characterizing distinctive attributes of the agents in question. Agents’ identities shape their interests then they act in accordance to those interests. Because of their antimilitarist identities Germany and Japan independently from other structural and material conditions are uninterested in the use of military force. The end of Cold War was related to the new ideas developed in the Soviet Union. It was not about Soviet Union’s power position in the structure. These explanations hold an assumption that state identities can directly shape interests and states are able to act according to their own interests. There is no structural or material influence shaping or limiting state identities and interests. Aware of such a difficulty most of constructivists studies state that even though identity is not the only factor it has some power to explain international behavior. But it is not clear how they relate those two different groups of factors. How much explanatory power is assigned to internal or external factors is not clear. There would surely be some cases in which the requirements of identity and structural factors conflict with each other. In addition, one can still argue that the identity of agents can be shaped to a great extent by the distribution of power. Would Soviet leaders really think to bring those revolutionary ideas of Glasnost, Perestroika, and New Thinking if the Soviet Union was still one pole of the bipolar structure?

Most of the constructivists, however, probably would reject the title essentialism for their research. They would consider essentialism as a primordialist and static study of identity. Instead mainstream constructivists offer a dynamic understanding of identity, which is constituted by the mutual relationship between agency and structure. That never ending construction repeatedly forms the identities of agents. Therefore constructivists claim that they do not look for static identities but try to characterize the process of the mutual construction between agency and structural context.
Because of the emphasis over the mutual construction of agency and structure in constructivist research, they claim that the best way to understand international relations is to focus on that mutual construction rather than essential features of structure and essential identity of agency.\textsuperscript{140} According to this understanding, both agency and structure have influences over the other because of their “emerging properties.”\textsuperscript{141} Although it seems that by referring to the dynamic nature of mutual relationship they refrain from the title of essentialism, the reality is that they actually essentialize both agency and structure or at least the process of that mutual construction without a clear method of showing which essential feature is more important than the other essential features in this multiple level analysis with multi-causal frameworks.\textsuperscript{142} Contemporary constructivism is a dynamic form of essentialism.

Mainstream constructivists focus on inter-subjective understandings rather than individual identities. According to this approach, the concept of identity is a relational one.\textsuperscript{143} An agent’s identity is defined in relation to other’s identity. In order to understand the identity of agents, we need to understand the cultural context that is constituted by the mutual construction between agency and structure. As a consequence, cultural context shapes state identities and identities shape interests and actions then shape cultural context. This mutual constitution introduces the idea that the context of international relations is shaped by agency identity. What the agents are shape what the culture of the system is. But in turn the culture of the system shapes agent identity. Although this formulation at first seems like an unessentialist method, it is still essentialist because of its emphasis on the process. Process level explanations are not structural

\textsuperscript{140} Klotz, Audie and Cecelia Lynch, Strategies for Research in Constructivist International Relations (New York: M.E. Sharp, 2007).
\textsuperscript{141} Wight, Colin, Agents, Structures and International Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
\textsuperscript{142} Kurki, Milja, Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
\textsuperscript{143} Wendt, Alexander, Social Theory of International Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
explanations. They refer to dynamic historicism and relations among the agents rather than static theoretical structure and arrangement among the units. Relational process variables should not be confused with positional structural variables. In addition constructivist argument for the mutual constitution is the most obvious example of hybrid theorizing which inevitably produces conflicting hypotheses.

Constructivists believe that such a hybrid theory is possible and necessary. It is necessary because without understanding the essentials of both agency and structure we cannot understand the phenomenon. Although agency and structure shape each other, both agency and structure have their independent emerging characteristics. Constructivists view hybrid theory as a virtue because it is more comprehensive. On the other side, as argued above, hybrid theories are inevitably deficient because of their conflicting assumptions. Constructivists believe that we need to draw the most comprehensive picture and provide a dynamic perspective. But constructivists are generally silent about the possibility of hybrid theorizing. In search for the essential emerging properties of both agency and structure they increase the number of assumptions. The very term of emerging properties is directly related to the existence of some independent characteristics. As a consequence problematizing everything ends up as essentializing everything. It also brings the inability to decide over which level is more influential.


Despite the constructivist claim about the necessity of analyzing the mutual relationship between agency and structure, they have not shown how it would be possible. If agency and structure have their emerging properties how these properties will be related in case of incompatible expectations or who will decide which factor was more influential for an outcome in case of similarities between the effects of these two factors? For instance individual properties might require expecting friendly relations between two states because of some historical background while structural factors might require expecting enmity relations because of some inherently conflictual power relation properties for instance. In such a case the judgment over the priority of one level over the other will inevitably be arbitrary.

In bringing a theoretical argument we need to stand on somewhere. Our philosophies of science and methods are actually useful to highlight where we stand and show the promise and shortcomings of that position. Constructivists are actually offering a continuously moving position for the theorist that denies the idea of a constant position for researchers. This is related to the current trend in social science to bring dynamic theories rather than static ones. This is some kind of truism about examining the social world. The effort of reflecting “a three-dimensional globe on a two-dimensional surface,” though seems preferable is not possible. Theories should be used to try to make actual events simpler not more complex. Otherwise, there would be no need for theory. Every event on the earth would be written in chronological and spatial order to give the correct depiction. Even if it was possible, it would also be worthless.

One can easily observe the inadequacy of this in the writings of most of the supporters of that effort. Wendt, for instance, started by claiming the necessity of understanding the essentials of

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both agency and structure and the mutual relationship between these two, but in his “Anarchy is What States Make of It” he ended up by prioritizing agency over structure. In his comprehensive book Wendt anthropomorphized the state like human nature realists and idealists rather than problematizing the state. In a reply to his critics Wendt declared that if he needs to select to prioritize one he would choose structure over agency. If we have to make a decision at the end what was the meaning of claiming for the necessity of understanding the mutual relationship between agency and structure.

Constructivists have a unique understanding of the concept of structure. While they are talking about structure they generally refer to ‘context’ which is actually a distinct term. Context, unlike structure, reflects a more dynamic and ideational framework. In constructivism, every event happens in context. So in order to understand the social reality we have to understand it first. It is actually a loosely used and an ambiguous concept, covering every event in the order of things. It is so broad a concept that it is difficult to exclude any phenomenon. It is neither structure nor agency. It is characterized by the process of relationship among actors. For this reason, although context talk seems to be an improvement it is indeed an empty concept that covers all process level variables. Constructivists present context like an explanatory mechanism but this term by

150 Goertz, Gary, Contexts of International Politics (New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
nature is related to anything in the process of relations. Relational and process level explanations are not theoretical but historical. For this very reason, Waltz repeatedly made a distinction between the relations and arrangements.\textsuperscript{151} Structures are by nature static. Any effort to bring dynamism to structural thinking will end up as a historical analysis that has to have its own methods, philosophies and theories in it. Any historical statement must have a theoretical perspective. Otherwise there would be value-free description of events in a chronological order. For instance take the efforts in historical sociology. In tracing back the roots of society into history, historical sociologists did not cover any law that applies to all cases. Even historical sociologists can be grouped as individualists and structuralists. Even the history that shaped society can be interpreted from a structuralist and individualist level. If the process level explanation is more than chronological ordering of events in history then it has to make some assumptions to state what actually happened. There are always two stories to tell,\textsuperscript{152} and constructivists are not exception to this rule, even if they believe they are reflecting the essential reality. Combining two stories produces conflicting expectations. They are indeed reading the minds of actors in all cases.

In introducing the mutual relationship between agency and structure constructivists aim to reveal the importance of ideas in shaping behavior. They believe that material forces are by nature empty and they gain their meaning because of the ideas of people about them. Ideas make the world hang together.\textsuperscript{153} So still in an essentialist fashion they believe that we can read the minds

of the agents and agents perform the requirements of their ideas. Constructivists like to claim that Cold War was over not because of the distribution of power but because of the views about it.\(^{154}\)

It was over when the Soviet leaders gave up defining the capitalist block as an enemy. According to constructivists the meaning of the distribution of power is determined by our identity relations. If a state does not view the other side as an enemy its power is not threatening for the other state. Constructivists ignore the effects of distribution of power in shaping state identities. Can someone claim that if Soviet Union had enough power would its leaders still start the process of or feel a need for reform? As will be argued in the next chapter, identities do not render distribution of power and anarchy meaningful. In contrast what we have under which conditions shape our identities. The distribution of ideas does not shape the distribution of power and identity relations, distribution of power under specific circumstances constructs identities, interests and motivations.

### 6. Conclusion

It seems that, contextualized around the problem of state motivation, the history of international relations theories evolved from essentialism and intentionalism to structuralism. However, those theories introducing structuralism into international relations were formed by the combination of unit level and structural assumptions. Instead of deriving an answer to the question of what states want from the structure of international relations, they held independent constant

characterizations of state intentions. These unit-level assumptions are not compatible with and cannot be shaped by the properties of the structure. Because of the two groups of assumptions rooted in two different levels, these theories produced internally conflicting arguments, while externally incompatible interpretations of international reality despite their focus on the same structural properties of the system. The same structural conditions affect different kinds of states differently. In this form of theorizing, there is no direct relation between what states want and believe and the structural properties. International structure was considered only relevant for state behavior not for state motivation. Therefore the discussions between these theories have revolved around the plausibility of these separate assumptions. They were not sharing the same grounds, but were the products of different philosophical perspectives, so the reciprocal arguments were unconnected. Because of the widespread of dissatisfaction about structural realism and liberalism, international theory once again returned to its intentionalist and essentialist roots. While neo-classical realists restarted employing new intentional assumptions, neo-classical liberals and constructivists returned to the essentialist definitions of states. This was not an improvement but was a reinforcement of differing philosophical perspectives.

Current theories of international relations cannot explain the influence of the structure over state motivations. A pure structural theory, in principle, still provides a promise as a useful method of identifying state intentions. Structure shapes not only behavior but also desires and beliefs. The next chapter is an effort to develop a structural perspective in understanding the constitutive role of structure over not only state behavior based on a fixed state motivation but also state motivation, which is the outcome of structural properties.
Chapter III

International Politics as a Struggle for Autonomy

1. Introduction

The previous chapter tried to show that neorealist balance of power theories failed to provide a pure structural theory of international relations. Instead they defined biased state motivations which produced hybrid theories that are internally inconsistent, producing conflicting explanations and externally biased, providing partial depictions of international reality. The motivations of the states, in these theories, are not shaped by the structure. So they produced partial images of international relations.

The aim of this chapter is to build the main tenets of a purely structural realist theory of international relations by evaluating the main concepts and rebuilding them according to the requirements of structuralism. Then it tries to build prominent relations among those concepts for the aim of building a consistent and an essentially structural realist depiction of international politics although it does not claim to be the final statement of structural realism. It offers to rethink the central concepts and build some initial relations with a more realistic and structural reading of central concepts.

By highlighting the productive role of structural distribution of power on shaping agent’s identity, orientation, and behavior and combining it with the role of anarchy, it argues that
international politics is a struggle for autonomy. States under these conditions seek neither power nor security. They seek to promote their autonomy. This is the most fundamental state motivation that can be derived from the conditions of anarchic structure that is constituted by distribution of power. Any other state motivation derived from the structure of international politics would be biased and an unnecessarily specialized view.

In addition the chapter attempts to evaluate the concept of power in terms of structural requirements. For this aim, it highlights the productive, structural, and material dimensions of the concept of power in relation with the fundamental state motivation of seeking autonomy which is derived from international structure not assumed independently. It argues against the intentionalist definitions of power and supports a national capability based approach which is the only available alternative for a structural theory despite the supposed shortcomings. It also presents power as the most fundamental organizing principle of not only international politics but all forms of politics. According to this understanding, both hierarchic and anarchic structures are outcomes of specific power structures. Distribution of power plays a more fundamental role than anarchy. Power is the productive force of every political form, identity, orientation, and behavior. It is not something which can be manipulated by the actors according to their desires, but the most fundamental element of the structure which manipulates actors’ identities, concerns, and behaviors.

Furthermore, the chapter develops two models of international affairs based on two possible different power structures. According to these models, on the one side, distributed power structures produce incentives which prioritize change over stability. However the widely common priority of change does not produce offensive behaviors. In contrast they produce defensive behaviors since as the number of actors with equal capabilities in search of autonomy
and change increases, the number of defensive behaviors also increases. But the increased number of defensive behaviors does not produce peace. Because of the security dilemma it produces systemic major wars. On the other side, concentrated power structures are characterized by incentives prioritizing stability over an unmanageable transformation. However priority of stability produces offensive behaviors rather than defensive ones. But offensive behaviors produce minor conflicts rather than major wars mainly because of the large gaps in the distribution of power.

In both power structures the occurrence of war is an inevitable outcome because there is nothing to stop the possible conflicts among autonomy seeking actors.\textsuperscript{155} But the types of systemic outcomes widely differ in these two forms of power structures. Widely common offensive behaviors in concentrated power structures produce minor conflicts while widely common defensive behaviors produce systemic major wars. On all these stages, ranging from state identity to orientation, from orientation to behavior, and from behavior to systemic outcome, the structure operates as an ever-present productive factor to reshape the transitions from one to the other. The fundamental search for autonomy and the differing power structures combined operate as a structurally transformative force in relation to each other. Based on their share of power states define their expected level of autonomy and in the search of that level of autonomy states reevaluate their positions on the level of behavior. Once more, in transition from behavior to the systemic outcome structural forces produce unexpected outcomes. Therefore, the interplay between the search for autonomy and the distribution of power should be understood sufficiently to build a structural realist theory which identifies the transitions from one stage to the other in the system of states.

\textsuperscript{155} This is a reference to Waltz’s brilliant argument for causes of war in his Man, the State, and War. Waltz, Kenneth N., \textit{Man, the State, and War} (Columbia, 1965), p: 188.
The next section will state and discuss the main assumptions of a purely structural realist theory. The third section will try to explain how international structure produced by the distribution of power and characterized by anarchy produces the struggle for autonomy. The fourth section will develop the structural conception of power as a productive organizing principle of international politics. The fifth section will attempt to combine the effects of anarchy and distribution of power to relate the concepts of autonomy and power structure in order to build a structural realist theory. The sixth section will conclude the chapter.

2. Main Assumptions

If the aim is building a purely structural realist theory, its assumptions should be evaluated carefully in respect to the requirements of both structuralism and realism. Most of the attempts to clarify the central assumptions of realism are based on either the traditional understandings of traditional realists or personal understanding of a theorist rather than a clear elaboration of intersubjective meanings of these terms. Textbooks, for instance, in order to cover the whole Realist paradigm in few pages collect the assumptions arbitrarily from the history of Realism through focusing on the writings of central historical figures in the field. They provide either a full list of all main assumptions used by several Realist thinkers\textsuperscript{156} or summarize their view about what essential realism is. For instance, in a widely used textbook Tim Dunne and Brian Schmidt define the essential realism as a “broad church” in which “all realists subscribe the following

\textsuperscript{156} Viotti, Paul R. and Mark V. Kauppi, \textit{International Relations Theory: Realism, Pluralism, Globalism} (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1999).
three Ss: statism, survival, self-help.\textsuperscript{157} Although statism is as an assumption held in all realist theories neither survival nor self-help plays such a pivotal role in classical or neo-classical realism. This is an inelaborate inductive classification of realist assumptions based on a summary of early figures rather than deductively trying to find out what might realism mean with its essential distinction between the possible and desirable.

Perhaps from a pedagogical perspective such lists are natural and inventible even helpful for an introductory book. But it seems there is more than a pedagogical reason. These kinds of arbitrary classifications are indeed extensions of a wider confusion in Realist paradigm about its main tenets. The broad eclecticism in more recent realist theories makes defining the common ground for the Realist paradigm more and more difficult. These theories without clear justifications and necessary evaluations of consistency, frequently borrow from within or out of Realist paradigm.\textsuperscript{158}

A recent attempt to define central Realist assumptions, based on a complaint about recent Realists’ imperialist and eclectic writings, came from Jeffrey Legro and Andrew Moravcsik.\textsuperscript{159} They mainly argue that because of the works of neo-classical realists, Realist paradigm lost its core value and turned into a “minimal realism” which “retains only two core assumptions – little more than anarchy and rationality – neither of which is distinctively realist. By reducing realist core assumptions to anarchy and rationality, minimal realism broadens realism so far that it is now consistent with any influence on rational state behavior”\textsuperscript{160} Instead they attempt to clarify

\textsuperscript{158} As discussed in the previous section, most of the neo-classical realist theories represent this trend.
the main assumptions of Realism with a threefold classification: 1) rational, unitary, political units in anarchy 2) fixed and uniformly conflictual goals 3) the primacy of material capabilities.

This classification is also an historical one based on the writings of founding fathers like Carr, Morgenthau, and Waltz. For sure, writings of these figures are building blocks of the Realist paradigm, but it does not mean that their different assumptions consistently represent the essential Realism. As argued in the previous chapter, fixing state goals without making a distinction between what is desirable and possible and by neglecting the structural determinants of state goals these fathers constructed theories in which states are blindly and non-realistically searching for a specific goal. Additionally limiting the nature of Realism to the founders is an anachronic view which tends to bless the founders and limit the new generations. It limits the wisdom of Realism to the wisdom of early thinkers. Despite their architectural role, it is still quite possible to think that they held some non-realist assumptions in theorizing realism. For this very reason, any concept like Realism should be defined not in accordance with the tradition but in accordance with the aim of finding a more solid ground and a more real representation of the real world.

For structural assumptions the situation is no more different or better. Most of the structural assumptions of Waltzian neo-realism retains as the same without reevaluation even in most of his critics. Mearsheimer also did not feel a need to discuss the structural assumptions. He took, for instance, the survival motivation as the inevitable outcome of anarchy. Although he clearly states his structural and unit level assumptions, he did not feel any need to justify them. He just tells the reader his assumptions are more realistic compared to Waltz’s assumptions.

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In accordance with the aim of structural realism the main assumptions of the theory should be limited to those two elements: structure and reality. The fundamental properties of the structure are the main structural assumptions. First, structure is the overruling element of international politics. Second, it is composed of two elements: anarchy and the distribution of power. Third, structure as the most fundamental factor shapes not only behaviors but also identity and orientations of the units. Fourth, structure is a continuously active environment, not a passive one manipulated by agents. Fifth, agents in the system are reasoning and responsive actors. This assumption might still be considered as a consequentialist interpretation of agency and so as a biased one. But in fact this is the most primitive one, as will be argued below, and it does not assume consequentialist behavior but in fact claims that behavior is caused and produced by structure whatever the aims of agents. It is primitive because we cannot deduce any specific type of behavior offensive and defensive. With this primitive assumption we need to see the environmental effects first to make predictions about possible state behaviors and strategies. States act not because of their passions but because of their beliefs those are based on elaborate evaluation of their environment.

First, structure is the overruling factor of international politics. This assumption is quite straightforward. It is based on a specific worldview which claims that human behavior is shaped by structural factors. It is the starting point of any structural analysis. Without a belief in the capacity of structure to shape and transform agency behavior there would be no need to develop structural theories. So any structural theory has to start by recognizing the overruling force of structure.

Second, assumption is about the content of structure and it defines the structure of international politics as composed of two elements: anarchy and distribution of power. Although this
assumption is, too, quite straightforward in structural theories of international relations in principle, theorists, in practice, emphasize one structural element over the other. In case of balance of power theories, for instance, outcomes of anarchy are emphasized over the outcomes of distribution of power while hegemonic stability theorists tend to neglect the outcomes of anarchy on state behavior by depicting the international environment as a hierarchic order. In balance of power theories, distribution of power and the relative positions of actors in this distribution play only a minor role in shaping state behavior. States are expected to balance emergent hegemon as a survival strategy even though they do not have the capability to do so as in the case of unipolarity. The inability of predicting and explaining unipolarity is directly related to this omission of distribution of power at the expense of the survival motivation. On the other side, for hegemonic stability theorists, distribution of power explains all state behavior without resorting to the influence of anarchy. States jump on bandwagons even in an anarchic system without considering the risks of bandwagoning for their autonomy in an anarchic environment. A pure structural theory should be able to understand the interplay between the distribution of power and anarchy. States act in accordance with both anarchy and distribution of power. They do not a priori favor one over the other.

Third, structure shapes not only behaviors but also identities and orientations of agents. In most structural theories state identities and motivations are defined and assumed independently from the shaping power of structural factors. States are taken to have a specific motivation whatever the constraints and opportunities of structural conditions. Structure cannot affect survival motivation in neorealist theories of international relations even if there is no direct threat to the survival. Whatever the conditions of the structure they all wish to survive. There is no place for an opportunistic behavior sourcing from the very international structure. As argued in the
previous chapter, this biased state level assumption causes internally inconsistent expectations.

In accordance with the distribution of power, states rearrange not only their behaviors but also their identities and motivations. A pure structural theory has to hold the assumption that structure does not only adjust already given identities and motivations, but it is the most fundamental source of those state identity and motivation. States do not decide who they are and what they want without their knowledge of the international structure which is composed of anarchy and distribution of power.

Fourth, structure is an ever present and continuously active environment. This assumption is strongly related to the previous one which holds that structure shapes not only behaviors but also identities and motivations. Structure has an influence on all these sources of decision making and it is not only a factor that shapes once and does nothing in other stages. Instead structure repeatedly enters into the scene in transitions of a desire and belief from identity to motivation from motivation to behavior. Structure as the environment first creates the identities of the agents in it, but those identities do not directly cause behaviors. They are shaped and reshaped in each stage because of the ever present and active role of the structure. Structure affects the agents in shaping their identities and while states try to transfer their identity to their motivation they have to consider structural requirements once again and after forming the motivation they cannot transfer that motivation directly to behavior. “A nations’ ideal point gives its preferred resolution of the issues. A nation’s position specifies the issue outcomes that it is trying to realize through its actions. Because nations may choose not to pursue their preferred outcome on all issues, a nation’s position can differ from its ideal point.”

conditions of the structure in. For instance, security seeking actors might act offensively and offensive behaviors because of structural factors end up with not change but stability.

Fifth, states are reasoning and responsive actors. Without making an assumption about the nature of agents in the structure, operating the theory is surely impossible. It seems that for any social theory we need to identify at least what kind of actors we are dealing with. However that assumption should be held in a minimized form. It should not exceed the boundaries of structural factors. For instance, in a sociological study the very existence of human agency and its minimal properties need to be recognized. The important thing is keeping that assumption in a comprehensive and primitive form which will not conflict with the shaping power of structure. Otherwise without an agent who would respond to the structural conditioning, the theory cannot not be operated. Therefore a structural theory should try to and actually has to hold a minimized assumption about the agents.

What is important is the very nature of that assumption. In the case of a structural theory an all-embracing assumption should be held about the nature of states. That assumption should be applicable to all states in the system by providing their common properties and should not overcome the effects of structural assumptions. It needs to be in a form which is consistent with structural expectations. If it is a biased and a qualified one rather than a primitive and a comprehensive one, it builds an uneasy relation with the structural assumptions of the study. Therefore, the assumption about the nature of agents should not intervene to the field of structural expectations.

From this perspective assuming the reasoning and responsive nature of state actors in international structure is a justifiable one because it is both comprehensive and primitive. It does
not hold a biased believe about the desires of the states for a future action. It is not fixed to a specific form of motivation for some specific actors independently from structural formation. It tries to encompass the most fundamental properties shared by all actors in the system. Lastly it is not a consequentialist assumption as in the case of intentionalist theories, but is a conditionalist one in accordance with the structural requirements. It is based not on outcomes but on conditions. Reasoning and responsive actors form their identities, motivations, actions not for a desire that is independent from the structure but because of the structural conditioning. They respond to the structural conditions with their available capabilities.

Therefore the reasoning and the responsive characteristics of units should not be interpreted as a classical rational choice assumption. Even though reasoning and responsiveness can be considered as a loose rationality assumption, it is indeed not a classical rational choice assumption because of its responsive and inconsequentialist characteristics. States are assumed as focusing and responding to the conditions not only on the behavioral level but also on the motivational level. Reason is not an instrument of already given and unchanging motivations but can rearrange the motivations according to the circumstances. States do not follow their passions blindly at the expense of anything else. This is not a consequentialist assumption which focuses on the passions of agency, on the contrary it is an assumption based on the sources of motivation and behavior. In this form states are assumed as not unaware of the conditions of international structure and as defining and redefining their interests not according to their passions but according to the requirements of the international environment.

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In most of the theories of international relations in accordance with the classical rational choice tradition, states are treated like practically reasoning actors. According to this understanding, states hold specific desires and beliefs which compose their passions of which reason is its slave. Assuming that states hold their desires like for instance vaguely defined national interests, security, or power and beliefs about how to attain that desire is putting the reason into just an instrumental service. Reason is the instrument of passion. It is not considered as an element which motivates the wants of agency. Such an understanding is deeply rooted in social science and normative philosophy tradition of utilitarianism.

Practical reasoning argument is a reduction of agency behavior to passion rather than reason. It is an agency oriented philosophy of action rather than a structural one. Therefore a structural theory should consider the reflectiveness and responsiveness of agency in structural conditions in which agents act because of their theoretical reasons. Human action cannot be reduced to passions. Otherwise what is meant by rationality turns to be irrationality in most cases. This is especially true in the case of international politics which is populated by organized agencies. Assuming that states act because of their passions is not a justifiable assumption when their organized characters are taken into account. Those organized agencies cannot be depicted as dragged by their passions. Contrarily, they should be assumed as theoretically reasoning actors which rearrange their passions according to their reflections about the international environment. So, the states in the international environment are not blind rational calculators of their interests. They hold complicated evaluations of the world in which they act and rearrange their interests.

166 The classical example of this characterization is formulated by Max Weber’s instrumental rationality assumption as shown in the previous chapter.
167 It was presented by Jeremy Bentham in the form of “greatest happiness of the greatest number.” In this normative formulation of practical reasoning what matters is the consequences of the behavior not means used for it.
according to their capabilities. They reason and respond to the structural conditions. They might have specific desires to attain but in cases where those desires do not fit into the context they reevaluate and re-describe their interests.

This assumption might provoke criticisms from a domestic level perspective. Although it recognizes the state as an organized unity it does not justify that identity by going to the domestic roots of the state.\textsuperscript{169} However, this is not a valid argument from a structural perspective, since, as it is stated in the first assumption of structuralism, structure is the overruling factor of international politics. Even if states because of their domestic conditions might form specific preferences and passions, the overruling character of international structure adjusts these desires of reasoning and responsive actors according to the structural requirements. Domestic or unit level motivations just vanish in a structural analysis since structural factors overrule others.

This kind of criticism would actually be a recall to hybrid theorizing of which refusal is the main aim of this study. As mainly argued in the previous chapter, including the effects of different levels does not help to produce consistent hypotheses. One level has to overcome the other in order to provide consistent arguments and structuralism is a position based on a belief of the overruling character of structure. Based on empirical researches, scholars might one day decide or keep discussing whether which level of factors overcome the others, but without providing consistent structural or domestic level arguments there will be no chance of measurement and a meaningful dialogue.

\textsuperscript{169} Even if states might form their own preferences because of domestic reasons, they should be ignored in a structural analysis because structuralism is based on the belief of the removal of domestic concerns due to the overruling character of structural factors. For an example of domestic preference formation see: Moravcsik, Andrew, “Taking Preferences Seriously,” \textit{International Organization}, 51(4), (Autumn 1997): 513-53.
This reasoning and responsiveness assumption is also consistent with the previous assumption of ever present and continuously active structure. In such a structure, states cannot rely on fixed attitudes constantly. In order to respond to ever-active structure units have to repeatedly adjust their motivations and behaviors. Reasoning and responsive actors can develop necessary responses on each stages of action but a consequentialist assumption of rationality would lead to fixed motivations which would not be rearranged according to the structural conditions.

The theoretically reasoning agency does not mean that agents are making their decisions under the conditions of perfect information. They do not always act wisely. What they do is trying to rearrange their positions according to their imperfect but rough knowledge of their environment. They are bounded structurally rather than rationally. They frequently take wrong steps and their actions almost always cause unexpected outcomes. Therefore the reason for unexpected outcomes is not related to bounded rationality but to the structural factors. As Foucault put it “People know what they do, the frequently know why they do what they do, what they do not know is what they do does.”

They act because they think that is the right thing to do but their theoretical reasoning in the structural environment produces unexpected outcomes in combination with others theoretical reasoning. Although in most cases they do not act in their real interests this is not because they are acting altruistically. Inappropriate means-ends relation constructed by agents is not an outcome of altruistic or unreasoning approach but an inevitable outcome of complex structural conditioning and reproduction.

In sum, according to the requirements of structural realism international politics can be characterized by states which are the reasoning and responsive actors and the international

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structure which is composed of anarchy and distribution of power, shaping not only behaviors but also motivations of the states continuously.

3. Struggle for Autonomy

This section tries to understand the most fundamental motivation of the states in the system which is characterized by the assumptions presented in the previous section. It argues that states in international politics struggle neither for power nor for security. **International politics is a struggle for autonomy.** The concept of autonomy differently from the concepts of power and security does not have a connotation to any defensive or offensive biases. It does not tell us that states act defensively because of their defensive intentions or offensively because of their offensive intentions. The anarchic structure of international politics produces incentives to promote autonomy. As the main actors of international environment, depending on the power structure in which they are located states strive to remain as autonomous actors or increase their level of autonomy.

Anarchy as the factor shaping agents’ motivations is an overruling one. Whatever the initial motivations of the states, anarchic structure impose on the states the requirement of self-reliance which means that in any case of threat or opportunity states should rely on their own capabilities.\(^{172}\) So there can be no overarching individual motivation of survival or search for wealth and power independent from the distribution of power. States who feel that the

international environment presents opportunities will not feel threatened and states who feel that their position in the distribution of power is threatening will feel a need to take defensive measures. Opportunistic or threat oriented, in any case, states would care about their autonomy which is the number one requirement and only possible state motivation that can be derived from the structure of international politics. The only available tool of staying autonomous is having the capability to act. So what is important for the ways of achieving the goal of autonomy is the position of units in the distribution of power.

According to this conceptualization of autonomy international structure is the code of environment that restricts actors’ freedom. Instead of being driven by the conditions of the structure, they want to take control of their own destiny. It is an infinite and exhausting struggle. The search for autonomy is the most fundamental motivation about the agent behavior under the conditions of anarchy. States react to the conditions which have the capacity to increase or decrease their autonomy. In the search of this deep level motivation states rearrange their surface level and specific goals and behaviors in accordance with their capabilities. So their standing in the international distribution of power plays a significant role in defining the strategies of autonomy.

In order to understand and identify the fundamental motivation of the states in the system it is necessary to characterize how the structure of international system operates to shape it. In general, most theorists of International Relations recognize that anarchic orders are self-help systems in which all actors feel threatened so they seek to survive beyond all other motivations. According to this common interpretation, any state behavior is a means of achieving the eventual goal of survival. By seeking power or security or wealth states want to attain survival. If anarchic order was a self-help system, then this reasoning would be correct, but if it is not a self-help
system, then the fundamental state motivation is not the survival. The argument in this study is that anarchic order is a *self-reliance, not a self-help system*. States do not try to secure their survival by adjusting their power in accordance to some a priori supposed means and ends. They try to promote their autonomy in a self-reliance system by relying on their capabilities to act by adjusting their desires and behaviors in accordance with their capabilities. Not any specific desire rules state power, but state power rules the level of desire.

Waltzian linear model of theorizing is a helpful tool in establishing the present argument and making comparisons. As presented in the previous chapter Waltzian linear model claims that anarchic orders are self-help systems and in self-help systems states wish to survive. The weakest link in this chain is the description of anarchic orders as self-help systems. Therefore, it requires some closer look into the meaning of anarchy. Although it is repeatedly and consistently told by realists and non-realists that anarchy does not necessarily mean chaos, it is commonly interpreted as if involving a complete threat dimension for the units within the system. Anarchic systems are not necessarily chaotic and so do not necessarily include a threat dimension which requires the inevitable concern with the survival motivation. The term anarchy requires recognizing the existence of similar units within a system with no central authority. The lack of central authority does not necessarily mean that it is by nature a self-help system in which all units feel a threat to their survival. Therefore the translation of anarchy as a self-help system adds an unnecessary threat dimension to the definition. Systems with no central authority force the units to rely on their own capabilities to take control of their own affairs which might include both threats and opportunities. There might be different distributions of power imposing different specific goals on the states. What is important in predicting the most fundamental state motivation is what they rely on. In a decentralized system they can rely only on their own
resources rather than any other authority. By relying on their resources, states may act offensively or defensively depending on the specific conditions they face as they struggle to sustain autonomy. Therefore, anarchic order is not a self-help but a self-reliance system. And in a self-reliance system state motivations will be determined by what agents rely on.

If anarchy is assumed as the organizing principle of international politics then the most primitive state motivation should properly follow its explicit description. In the literature there is a traditional common ground in the definition of this central concept. It is commonly defined and adopted by Realists and non-Realists too, as “the lack of a central authority.”173 Considering it as the opposite of a hierarchical system metaphorically helps to understand its prime conditions. If hierarchical systems are characterized by organized rules which are defined and executed by one agency or group of agencies, then anarchic systems should be characterized by the lack of those specified rules and a dominating agency who can legislate, execute, and judge these rules. If a hierarchic system, as a solidaristic society, is constructed by labor specification among the government branches, as for instance in the case of domestic politics, then an anarchic system should be defined as a mechanistic society in which units perform the same set of tasks.174 Because of the absence of a central authority to manage the relations among the similar units, all units in the system have the same set of problems so they must hold the same set of fundamental motivations. States in the anarchic system of international politics do not delegate any part of

174 Against most of the critics, Waltz was certainly right in claiming that states are functionally similar units. This is the most distinctive and only characteristic of the concept of anarchy. If state functions are differentiated then there would be no conceptual meaning of the term anarchy. For the most prominent examples of these critics see: Ruggie, John G., “Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neorealist Synthesis,” World Politics, 35, (January 1983); Buzan, Barry, Charles Jones and Richard Little, The Logic of Anarchy: Neorealism to Structural Realism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).
their authority to legislate, execute, and judge to any higher or equal authority because they hold some share of distribution of power.

If there is no central authority then it means all units assume autonomy and try to sustain it. They reject to delegate their existential unity and integrity to a higher authority. A system becomes anarchic only as the two requirements are met: the presence of units holding appropriate amounts of capabilities to rely on and the denial of the delegation of autonomy. In this equation a system is called anarchic only when its composing units deny the delegation of their autonomies to a higher authority and able to sustain this stand. To define anarchy there is no need for further assumption. If the system is recognized as anarchic then it follows that there are some units who are capable of sustaining their denial of a central authority. That means there is a specific distribution of capabilities in the system which prevents the formation of a hierarchic system. But the distribution of capabilities would not be able to sustain anarchy if those units who rely on their own capabilities did not wish to sustain it. Therefore it can be derived from the equation that the system would not be anarchic if the units holding these capabilities were wishing to delegate their autonomies. Anarchy plus distribution of power equals to the most fundamental state motivation that is the denial of the delegation of autonomy. Defining the international system as anarchic and characterized by distribution of power by definition requires recognizing the existence of units who are motivated by the structure to promote their autonomy rather than delegating all or some parts of it to some other authority. This is the minimum condition for a system to be anarchic. This is also the maximum limit for deriving a state motivation from the equation provided by the definition of international system as a combination of anarchy and distribution of power.
Any other state motivation like wishing for survival or increasing power requires some additional properties for either the concept of anarchy or units populating it. For instance, if anarchy was defined as an environment full of opportunities then one could assume states as power seeking agents or if it was defined as an environment with no opportunity but full of threats then one could assume the survival motivation. But if it is defined merely as the lack of a central authority then logically the only available inference for state motivation is the denial of delegation of autonomy. If the units capable of relying on their own capabilities are sustaining that anarchic order then it means they either want it and capable of it or they are unable to transform it into hierarchy. If we already know that the system is still anarchic it is because of the inability of any agent to transform it into hierarchy then there remains only one explanation that is the existence of agents who both want to remain autonomous in an anarchic environment rather than delegating its autonomy in a hierarchic one and hold some capability to rely on in this search. Therefore logically the only available inference that can be made from the definition of international structure is the existence of units structurally driven to promote their autonomy by the presence of a distribution of power in which self-reliance is possible rather than giving it up to a higher authority because of the survival motivation.

System is anarchic because there are some units who are capable of sustaining their autonomy by relying on their capabilities. If the system is sustained as anarchic then it means that there is a specific distribution of power which both prevents the transformation of the structure into a hierarchic one by any of the units but still making the units able to deny the delegation of authority. Because of the power structure, any one of the units populating it does not hold enough capabilities to transform it into a hierarchic one but at the same time the same power structure makes the states believe in the sustainability of this order. Any state is never powerful
enough to dominate the system and others and there are units who rely on their capabilities to remain autonomous rather than delegating their autonomy. States are powerless to overcome anarchy but it seems that they hold enough power to prefer anarchy which is a denial of the delegation of autonomy. There must be a reason for the reproduction of anarchy and this is directly related to the states most fundamental motivation to remain autonomous. If any of the states in the system was powerful enough to turn it into hierarchy or they were helplessly in need of survival there would be no anarchic system. It seems that states are not so helpless to seek for survival which would eventually require the delegation of state autonomy to a higher authority in a fearful environment populated by units wishing for survival.

Despite this fact theorists of international relations keep to characterize anarchy as an environment full of threats and survival motivation. What might be the source of this widespread belief in admitting an unnecessary threat dimension to the concept of anarchy? The answer straightforwardly lies in the traditional interpretation and the use of the concept of the state of nature. Theories emphasizing the role of anarchy like neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism are based on the classical concept of the state of nature. For political philosophy, this highly influential concept played an important role especially in providing legitimacy for the modern-secular state and development of the liberal thought. These social contract theories, by hypothetically going back to the early roots of human existence in which there were no rules, tried to understand what would be fair or what would be inevitable if we start the analysis from an original position in which there were no values. By comparing the state of nature to the state organization they provided justification for the modern-secular state which was in need of a rational legitimacy in contrast to the divine legitimacy of the medieval state. With the help of state of nature they tried to find the natural value in a supposedly natural environment. But it
seems that in most cases social contract theorists included their own biased identification of agency or presented a misrepresentation of the concept of the state of nature.

In Hobbes, for instance, while the motivation of fear dominates the state of nature because of a chaotic reading, in Locke it is the private property rights because of a more relaxed reading of the concept of state of nature. Modern liberals and realists followed these biased interpretations of Locke and Hobbes respectively. For this reason, realists characterized international politics as a struggle for survival in a fearful environment while liberals by relaxing the fear dimension characterized it as struggle for wealth and power.

To see the unnecessary threat dimension of the concept of anarchy we can take a closer look at Hobbes’ argument. Hobbes believed that state of nature was such an environment in which no unit would feel secured because of “equality of hope in the attaining of our ends.” For Hobbes “the difference between man, and man, is not so considerable…the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest.” From this equality of men proceeds diffidence from which proceeds the search for power after power and then the advancement of a leviathan becomes inevitable. The whole argument proceeds from the assumption of the equal distribution of power among men. This reasoning about the ultimate equality among the men is related to an oversimplification without a clear justification. The main mechanism behind the advancement of a leviathan is that there is a rough equality among men to harm each other.

Hobbes neglects the influence of distribution of power which would create different motivations for different agents in the state of nature. If some men believed that they would survive without the creation of a leviathan then they would deny the delegation of their autonomy to a higher

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176 Hobbes, Thomas, Leviathan, p: 82.
authority. But in this case Hobbes would fail to explain the existence of the modern state or justify the necessity of a leviathan which would require obedience under all circumstances. The existence of the modern state could alternatively be explained by applying the concept of distribution of power through claiming that when the power of one agent overcame the power of others modern state emerged. But the establishment of this leviathan would be based on coercion rather than consent, so it would lack the legitimacy which was Hobbes’s main aim to create. For Hobbes, the emergence of the leviathan was based on consent for this reason it was legitimate. It was inevitable because of the fearful situation in the state of nature in which power was equally distributed.

One might expect Hobbes to take his argument one step forward and apply it to the international affairs because it represents a real world example in which most of the features of the state of nature are present rather than a hypothetical environment. Based on the same reading, then the establishment of a world government would also be inevitable and legitimate. But for Hobbes the situation in international affairs was different and the threats posed to the states in the state of nature of international relations were less serious. In explaining the lack of a leviathan in the international affairs he just simply puts that “because they [states] uphold thereby, the industry of their subjects; there does not follow from it, that misery, which accompanies the liberty of particular men.”177 According to Hobbes, there is a difference between particular men and states that is the industry of the subjects of states. States do not feel threatened enough to delegate their autonomy (liberty in Hobbes’ terms) to a higher authority. He does not refer to the distribution of power as a factor helping states to sustain their autonomy, instead uses an ambiguous concept of

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177 Hobbes, Thomas, Leviathan, p: 85.
“the industry of their subjects.” He does not explain why those skillful subjects cannot sustain their autonomies while they can do it for their states.

In any case, Hobbes seems to recognize that threats posed to the states by anarchic structure is not such a serious one that would make the emergence of a world government inevitable. Even for Hobbes, who is represented as one of the gloomiest philosophers of all time, the field of international affairs is not characterized by the ever-present fear and the threat to survival. Unlike particular men, states do not feel the necessity of delegating their autonomy to a higher authority for the sake of security. Under these conditions, the state of nature does not justify an anarchic order which exclusively motivates states to secure their survival. It seems that even for Hobbes international anarchy is not a self-help system which would bring a world government because of the unbearable threat to the state survival.

However, neo-realists adapt the Hobbesian equality among particular men to the equality among the states in order to create a survival oriented self-help system. They tend to neglect the influence of distribution of power over the formation of state motivations. Various distributions of power would produce different state motivations in combination with the influence of anarchy. Otherwise states, roughly equal with each other, would feel the fear of survival and that fear would lead to the delegation of autonomy to a higher authority that is a world government. If the same thinking applies to international relations and if there was a rough equality in the threats to survival, then it would be possible to justify the self-help system. But that survival motivation would also inevitably bring a world government.

Rawls’ theory of justice is a good case to show how social contract theorists attempt to neglect distribution of power to find out a naturally justifiable state organization. In proving what is fair,
Rawls used that social contract theory with the help of the concept of “veil of ignorance.”\textsuperscript{178} He asks us to imagine a negotiation process in which we would be unaware about our earlier relative positions and also comprehensive doctrines. Even if Rawlsian “veil of ignorance” plays a proper role in justifying what might be considered as fair in his hypothetical environment, in the real world of international affairs there is no veil of ignorance. “States are aware of the limitations of their power.”\textsuperscript{179} They roughly know their position in the distribution of power. In making their decisions they take their relative power positions into consideration. Otherwise they would want a world government ruled fairly which would guarantee all agents’ survival and an equal redistribution in the hierarchical society of states. However, in the anarchic world of international politics states because of their knowledge about distribution of power deny to surrender their autonomy to a higher authority.

From a different perspective, Robert Nozick’s ideas can metaphorically provide an explanation of why anarchic orders are self-reliance systems rather than self-help systems and why states do not necessarily feel that their survival is always under attack.\textsuperscript{180} Nozick claims that agents should have the right of making their decisions whether to delegate or not some parts of their autonomy to the government. There might be some agents who would decide not to buy state protection. We are born into societies and states in which we are told that our ancestors signed a contract with the highest authority which provides stability and protection in exchange for taxes. According to Nozick, let alone, each agent would freely decide to buy or not to buy the protection of a private agency as in the case of insurance policies for instance. Surely there would be some risk taking agents who believe in the possibility of survival with the help of their


\textsuperscript{180} Nozick, Robert, \textit{Anarchy, State, and Utopia} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).
capabilities and the opportunity of increasing their autonomy in an anarchic environment. Under these circumstances agents would make their decisions not because of a survival motive but according to their capabilities. It seems that in the international environment there is a power differentiation which prevents the formation of a world government. Autonomy is not a choice but an obligation. Not the delegation but the protection of autonomy is the rule in international politics.

Rawls and Nozick represent two lines in modern liberal thought which are paradoxically related to each other: equality and freedom. Classical liberal philosophy advocates both of these terms. In fact these two terms eventually represent two irreconcilable rhetorical promises of liberalism, since any attempt to redistribute justice as Rawls claimed would eradicate the freedom of the advantageous agents while providing full freedom for individual would eradicate the liberal promise of equality. Equality and freedom are inversely related to each other and as will be argued in the later sections equality of power produces limits for state autonomy in international affairs. States trying to promote their autonomy will act differently in different power structures.

In a nutshell, anarchy, defined and interpreted properly, produces a self-reliance system which is based on distribution of power. States take care of their own issues but not necessarily the ones related to threats to their survival. Autonomy is a broader concept than survival and does not include any biased perspective for fundamental state motivations or behaviors. An assumption narrower than the struggle for autonomy would be unjustifiable and biased. We have no reason to assume a more specific motivation, if we properly define it as the lack of a central authority. There is just one cause of anarchy that is the presence of a distribution of power in which self-reliance is possible. The power to shape the fundamentals of the system is not assembled in the hands of one actor; instead it is distributed among the actors and ensures the very existence of
each agent as a capable actor. An unbiased interpretation of the concept of anarchy reveals that it is a self-reliance system which is sustained and reproduced by a differentiated power structure in which all units rely on their own resources to promote their autonomy. If the system is a self-reliance system then autonomy becomes the only state motivation that can be derived from the structure rather than assuming independently and the struggle for autonomy becomes the main dynamic of the system that can be derived from it.

Autonomy can simply be defined as the ability to act independently. Autonomous actors are free agents having a control on their fates to govern their affairs without the constraints of others or the structure and they also need to hold sufficient resources and power to make their desires effective. It means full liberty. An autonomous actor would act from its desires rather than other forces like the influence of the structure over agency. However, as will be argued in the next section, despite the existence of the aim for autonomy, it is not a practical one because of the structural forces operating among and over agents that shape not only behaviors but also identities and motivations of the units. Without acquiring a full domination over the structure no actor will be absolutely autonomous.

The concept of autonomy which depends on the capabilities should not be confused with sovereignty which is a legal concept.\textsuperscript{181} Despite the legal claim for the sovereignty of all states since the Westphalia, there can be no absolutely autonomous agent in the system. Autonomy requires the full freedom of an agent which dominates the entire structure with its capabilities. If this was the case then the international structure would not be an anarchic order but it would be defined as a hierarchic one. Autonomy is essentially an elusive goal. The struggle for it

\textsuperscript{181} A similar conceptualization hierarchy in anarchic orders might be found in David Lake’s writings. But Lake uses a legalist concept of hierarchy which deemphasizes the significance of state autonomy at the expense of a higher authority. See: Lake, David A., “Escape from the State of Nature: Authority and Hierarchy in World Politics,” \textit{International Security}, 32(1), (Summer 2007): 47-79.
reproduces the anarchic order rather than demolishing it in favor of a specific unit. The combination of the struggle for autonomy and the absence of an enough concentration of power make the search for autonomy an unattainable but necessary goal. While the absolute autonomy is an elusive goal, relative autonomy is the defining characteristic of international politics and it is highly dependent on the producing role of the relative distribution of power as will be developed in the next section.

4. Structural Conception of Power

This section is about how to treat the concept of power in a purely structural theory. It tries to develop the requirements of structural conception of power. In accordance with this aim there are four interrelated issues to be dealt with. First the definition of power should be structural: not intentional or agency based as in the case of general use of the concept of power inspired by Robert Dahl’s classical definition.\textsuperscript{182} The structural conception of power should be based on the idea of the distribution of material capabilities in order to have a structurally operational definition. Second it must be viewed not only as a tool or an aim but as an element of structure which shapes not only behaviors but also identities, motivations, goals and actions. Power is not a concept that enters into the calculation only in attaining a desired outcome. It is present on all stages of action from identity formations to actions taken. It is not just a tool of units which will be adjusted according to the goals by maintaining or maximizing but is a constitutive factor of

international structure. It is not a manipulated\textsuperscript{183} but a structurally manipulating element. Third
the concept of power should be evaluated according to its relation with the concept of autonomy.
Derived from the constant element of international structure (anarchy), the concept of autonomy
is also a constant part of the theory. In this structure the varying element is the distribution of
power and the anarchic system is also an outcome of a specific distribution. This section finally
attempts to deal with the familiar difficulties of operationalizing the concept of power and states
that even though it is an “essentially contested” concept and difficult to produce a satisfying
operationalization, this does not require giving up, on the contrary requires a renewed focus
because of its essential role in any form of politics.

4.1. National Capabilities Approaches vs. Intentionalist Approaches

The history of the concept of power in modern International Relations is a replication of the
history of structuralism which is provided in the previous chapter. Classical realist studies
employed the classical definition of power which was provided by Dahl and was based on the
intentions of agents rather than structural forces.\textsuperscript{184} Then structural realists\textsuperscript{185} and especially
power transition theorists\textsuperscript{186} promoted the use of a structural power definition in form of material
capabilities. But because of the dissatisfactions\textsuperscript{187} related to the supposed gap between
capabilities and outcomes, a wide turn to intentionalist conceptualization of power reemerged.\textsuperscript{188}

\textsuperscript{183} Christensen, Thomas J. and Jack Snyder, “Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in
\textsuperscript{184} Morgenthau, Hans J., \textit{Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace.} revised by Kenneth W.
The classical definition of power as the ability of A to get B to do what B otherwise would not do is an intentional and so an individual level definition of power by nature. Despite the tireless efforts to express the ability of A over B in structural terms, they were doomed to failure because of that intentionalist character. They single out a motivation for the agents under the study and then try to explain their behaviors with that assumed intention. Since these motivations are independent from structural forces they cannot be termed in structural form because of two reasons. First there might be some conflicts between the structural forces and individual motivations. In this case the theory cannot decide to prioritize one level over the other. Second structural effects might overlap with individual motivation assumptions. In this case the theory cannot distinguish the fundamental cause of a behavior.

In this power definition there are three unknowns, so researchers hold three different forms of assumptions: intentions, power as a cause, and counterfactual evidence. The supporters of this formulation of power assume motivations of the agents in both actual and potential ways. They claim that researchers can know what the agents want and what they would do if there was no power relation between two actors. They also claim that if there is a change in B’s behavior that is because of A’s power. So power serves as the cause of any action of B if that action is not in accordance with the intention assigned to the agent. This thinking also requires a counterfactual evidence to claim that B would do something else if it was not affected by A’s power. In this closed system any of the assumptions might simply be false but researcher cannot understand which assumption is false and he can easily manipulate the study to fit his argument. Researchers might be wrong about the assigned intention of either A or B. He might also be wrong in claiming the supposed causal effect of power or supposed counterfactual evidence.
If we start from Dahl’s conceptualization as the earliest formulation of this intentionalist
definition, it has three elements: actors, function, and intentions. There are two actors in relation
while one of them is the subject the other is the object. In this two party relation, power functions
as a means of forcing the object to do what the subject wants and the object would not do
otherwise. That definition presupposes the possibility of assuming the desires of agents in theory
and the accessibility of the motivations in research. It is believed that theoretically we can
assume that we can attribute a single isolated desire for both actors and in research practice while
measuring the utility of the concept we can access agents’ wants.

In this definition of power both A’s and B’s motivations are assumed and if B acts in accordance
with A’s wants then that means there is a power relation. If B acts for some reason not in
accordance with the expected assumption of agency motivation then that means it is because of
the power of A. According to this relational power definition we need to know three things.
First, what A wants B to do; second, what would B do if A had no power over B; third, we need
to empirically know what did happen at the end of the power relation. In other words, we need to
know both what would happen if there was no power relation and what actually happened
because of that power relation. Additionally we have the assumption that whatever happened is
the outcome of power of one side over the other. It seems that we are assuming all the elements
of that definition. There is actually nothing explained in a research which applies that power
definition.

For instance, consider that we are investigating a collective bargaining process on labor wages
between employers and employees. In such a case, in order to apply that power definition, we
need to assume all three elements of the definition. We have to assume that both sides of
bargaining try to maximize their utility. After observing the outcome of bargaining we make a
judgment about who has power over the other side. An increase in wages of employees means employees exercised power over employers. However, that wage increase might be entirely related to some other reason. Since we already assumed actor’s desires, whatever happens in this dyadic relation can be explained with the effects of power. In this form of explanation, agent motivations are fixed and power relations does not affect agency motivations.

Similarly a dyadic conflict between two countries A and B over a small island for territorial ambitions represents another example. Consider that we know A has a more advantageous position than B in material capabilities terms. But because of some other structural reason like A’s problems with C, that island might not be as important as it is for B. In such a situation A might decide not to follow its supposed interests. Based on that observation we cannot judge that B exercised power over A.

Aware of the problems of this classical pluralist power definition, critics argued for multi-phased power definitions. Bachrach and Baratz for instance developed the idea that Dahl’s pluralist power definition works only for the success stories in which all sides are aware of their own interests.\(^{189}\) They showed that there might be cases in which power still exists despite the unintended effects.

However, Lukes argued that even Bachrach and Baratz formulation fails to explain the all-encompassing features of power.\(^{190}\) According to Lukes, a satisfactory conceptualization of power should understand ever-present (agenda setting) nature of power. For Lukes, even if power is appropriately observed in success stories it does not mean that power is always present. Because of its agenda setting role, overt and covert representations of power is more common.


than earlier formulations defined. Although Lukes tries to structuralize the concept of power
because of its intentionalist formulation as A’s intentions versus B’s intentions, it is not a
satisfactory structuralism. In Lukes case, the concept of power becomes an unobservable and
untestable cause of everything. Like Gramsci and other intentionalist Marxists, Lukes assumes
that there is a fixed motivation for the agents, but because of the operation of power in the
structure weaker agents become unaware of their real intentions. The problem with this kind of
an explanation is its high dependency on reading the minds of agency. If agents are not acting
according to the expectations then they are accused of “false consciousness.” Theorists of power
know what the intentions of agents are but agents do not know. In this case the effect of power is
not measured.

It seems that there is a common tendency of structuralizing the power definition from the most
individualist perspective of Dahl towards the structuralist expectations of Lukes. However, all
these attempts with the formula of A getting B to do what A wants and what B would not do
otherwise were in vain because of the individualistic and intentionalist nature of this definition.
They all assume that there are well-defined goals of agents and they were all accessible for the
researchers. Power is not considered as a constitutive structural factor shaping agents’ intentions.
What Lukes tries to do is sustaining intentionalism, structuralism, and empiricism at the same
time in the same definition despite the uneasy relation among these three dimensions. One can
build an intentionalist and empiricist definition of power but cannot structuralized it at the same
time. Again one can combine intentionalism and structuralism but cannot empirically test the
implications of such a definition.

As one of the “extremely” structuralist use of power the writings of Foucault represent a good
example of why intentionalist power definition cannot be structuralized and tested
simultaneously. Foucault’s concept of power is structural, intentional, but not empirical. Because of his post-modernist project he already rejects the requirements of empiricism and does not feel the requirement of producing testable arguments. Consistently from his own perspective he tells a post-modernist story about the productive role of power. From his perspective even if the agents of power relation are unknown and power operates in an ambiguous network there is still an intelligent higher discourse which produces and reproduces power relations. Even if the identity of the producer of power is not clear its aim is the reproduction of wide-spread discourse which produces the power relation and renders the predomination of an agent over others. This argument is surely unfalsiable on empirical grounds. For Foucault it is not a big deal since he already refuses the empirical requirement. He is just telling his story from his subjective perspective. But it must be a big deal for empirically minded researchers like Lukes. They try to build structural and empirical theories of power. But with the intentionalist characteristic embedded in their definition they fail to understand all these three dimensions. Instead their definitions of power produce empirically unsustainable new stories like the false consciousness argument.

Early realists like Morgenthau employed this classical formulation of power which matches to their intentionalist character. On the other side, structuralists and especially power transition theorists successfully employed material capability approach. Some indexes like the Composite index of national capabilities were produced in order to measure state capabilities. However, the main difficulty in this formulation of power was the difficulty of relating the capabilities to the influence. In several cases, it has been argued that capabilities of the states are not transferred to influence. The cases like the US failure in Vietnam, the USSR failure in Afghanistan were repeatedly used as examples of the failure of capability based approach to understanding power.
Because of the dissatisfaction about the gap between capabilities and coercion, there is a renewed interest for the intentionalist power definition in the field of International Relations appearing mostly in the writings of neo-liberal intuitionalists\footnote{Baldwin, David, \textit{Paradoxes of Power} (New York, NY: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Keohane, Robert O. and Joseph S. Nye, \textit{Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition} (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977); Nye, Joseph S., \textit{Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization} (New York: Routledge, 2004).} \footnote{Hay, Colin, “Divided by a Common Language: Political Theory and the Concept of Power,” \textit{Politics}, 17(1), (1997): 45-52; Barnett, Michael and Raymond Duvall, “Power in International Politics,” \textit{International Organization}, 59(1), (Winter, 2005): 39-75.} and constructivists.\footnote{Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, p: 48.} These uses of the concept of power are similar to the refinement of Lukes and others in the broader field of political science. They generally try to show the institutional, structural, and productive, dimensions of power in addition to the compulsory dimension.\footnote{Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, p: 48.} Although they are helpful tools of illustrating the direct and indirect structural affects of power, because of the intentionalist characteristic embedded in this formulation of power definition, increasing the level of structuralism comes at the expense of empirical measurement. Dahl’s formulation was also difficult to prove empirically because of the requirements of counterfactual thinking with a large number of intentional assumptions, but these structuralized refinements of the same formulation brings new difficulties. It becomes increasingly untestable and an empty concept as the ill-defined cause of everything in the system. Without any empirical ground these kinds of power definitions tend to create different stories and myths. The intentions of agents are assumed, the outcome is referred to power and the evidence is just counterfactual. At least one of these has to be empirical to produce a meaningful basis. We cannot empirically validate intentions of agents, we cannot know whether the outcome can really be referred to the power relation because this is mostly the independent variable we are going to measure and we cannot certainly know that B would do otherwise if there was no power relation. This is an equation with so many unknown elements. There is no discovered mathematical solution for such an equation without providing
the relations among the unknowns. The only available empirical ground for a testable argument of power is found on a material capability base despite its own problems.

In short for a reliable structural power definition we have to prefer two of the following three elements: intentions, structuralism, and empiricism because of the possible conflicts among these elements of definition. The supposed intentions of an agent might conflict with the structural forces or they might overlap with it. In the case of a conflict the researcher has to overemphasize one over the other and in the case of an overlap researcher cannot know which one is the main cause of behavior. In mathematical terms, in an equation with three elements in order to solve the problem we need to know two of them or at least one element should be definable in terms of the other. \( x + y = 1 \) is an unsolvable equation unless \( x \) or \( y \) is defined in terms of the other. For instance, if \( x = 2y \) then we can solve the problem. If we make a definition of power based on intentions we have to give up either structuralism or empiricism, like Dahl gave up structuralism. If we prefer structuralism and intentions we need to give up empiricism, like Foucault gave up empiricism. If we prefer structuralism and empiricism we need to give up intentions. The proposed structural solution in this study is to give up intentions because of the belief that an empirical materially defined concept of power combined with the productive role of power in a structural account can solve the puzzle. An empirically grounded material definition of power provides the first of the three elements in the equation. The productive role of power which means that the distribution of material capabilities shapes the intentions of the agents provides the second element so the equation can be solved. The productive role of power is explained in the next subsection.

4.2. Power as a Productive Factor
From a structural perspective the concept of power must be viewed not only as a tool or an aim but as an element of structure which shapes not only behaviors but also identities, motivations, goals and actions of agents. It is not only an instrument of foreign policy making that is manipulated by agents but a central element of structure which manipulates agents. It is not a concept that enters into the calculation only in attaining a desired outcome. It produces agency desires. It is something out there and present in all stages of action from identity formation to actions taken. It is not just a tool of units which will be adjusted according to the goals but is a productive factor of international structure and state motivations.

This is an unrealistic and non-structural view of power. In reality states do not act and cannot hold motivations independent from their power positions which shape their identities, motivations, and behaviors. A realist and structuralist formulation of the concept of power requires understanding two things about the nature of relation between power and states, one realist the other structuralist. First, for realistic reasons, states cannot desire what is not possible. They are not unreasoning actors blindly seeking their passions. Evaluation of the distribution of power and their standing in that distribution plays the most fundamental role in identifying who they are, motivating what they want, and finally shaping what they do. Second, due to the structural forces states cannot regulate their power and the distribution of power. In contrast the distribution of power and their standing in the distribution regulate the states. For the sake of structuralism states should be viewed as responsive to not regulator of international structure.

As a consequence, from a structural realist perspective power should be treated not as an element which is shaped by states but as an element shaping states. It is not regulated, it is regulating. It is not produced, it is the producer. What is regulating international politics is not desires of the states but the structure of the system, which is composed of distribution of power and anarchy
and populated by states. Not the intentions and identities of the states are given but the distribution of power is given. States do not design the distribution of power but the distribution of power designs states.

Not only in international structure but also in all social relations power is a productive structural element. It builds separate human identities and goals. Personally we adjust our motivations according to our power. There are structurally great differences between a five year old child’s identity and goals and an adult’s identity and goals. Abilities of these two kinds of human beings are not socially constructed but something out there because of their abilities. The labor specification in families might be socially constructed to some extent in modern times, but in pre-modern times and also to a great extent in modern times it is directly related to the differences in the abilities of family members. In modern times women and men because of their converging abilities not because of new role descriptions are increasingly performing the same functions but children because of their natural inabilities will never perform the same tasks with their parents. There are also great differences in the goals of rich and poor men. While some people are just contented with buying a house some others ambitiously look for opportunities of buying industrial complexes. “Anger,” for instance, “is a luxury that can only be felt by those in a position to seek revenge. Slaves and subordinates cannot allow themselves to feel anger.”¹⁹⁴ In our daily lives our behaviors and feelings towards our superiors or inferiors are naturally different. It is not just a conventional institution but because of our capabilities in the social distribution of power. The hierarchy in a family of lions is not based on the socially constructed conventions. It is directly related to the ability of highest ranking male lion to counter the

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challenges of inferior males even if lion families are believed to be highly socialized. When he is unable to do that he has to leave the group.

In human relations constructivists repeatedly highlight the importance of roles in social environments. According to this argument social roles directly affect human behavior. For instance in a campus, students generally show respectful behaviors to their professors because of the agreed upon conventions in the social environment of campuses. But they generally neglect the sources of roles. Roles are not naturally distributed to some people as constructivists claim. They are acquired by the material capabilities of those role holders. To play the role of professor requires a doctoral dissertation. Without a tenure track there would be no social construct. Not our roles but our material capabilities are given. The identities of professorship and studentship are not just socially constructed categories but are materially gained positions. So the claim of roles comes first is an argument which puts the cart in front of the horse as in the case of there would be no teaching position without the completion of a doctoral degree. We hold our roles because we have the required material capabilities to hold those positions. Similarly, competitions between Athens and Sparta, the US and the USSR, Germany and France were not just some accidental historical facts. Not the Melians but Spartans were the main competitors of Athenians. Not the difference of ideologies but the similarity of power positions between the US and the USSR was the main cause Cold War competition which was feeding the ideological differences. During the Second World War, neither fascist Germany failed to sign a treaty with communist Russia, nor did communist Russia failed to ally with the capitalist United States against a fascist Germany. By the end of the war the distribution of power produced a new competition between the US and USSR in form of the Cold War.

Productive role of power set aside even the causal role of power even on the behavioral level is not effectively used even by neo-realists. In neo-realist theories, the distribution of power does not directly affect state behavior or identity. It is just a general environment whose international outcomes are predicted as in the discussions of the bipolar or multipolar stability. For instance Kenneth Waltz uses the distribution of power only in explaining the stability of bipolarity.\textsuperscript{196} Even in this case bipolar structure does not directly shape state behavior. States act exactly the same way they act in a multipolar structure. But only the combination of that fixed behavior and the existence of bipolarity determines the stability of the system. States act defensively both in multipolar and bipolar structures but the bipolar environment produces more stable outcomes compared to a multipolar one because of the differences on certainty and uncertainty in these two structures. That is not the influence of structure over state behavior but the very nature of the structure what shapes international outcomes on the problem of stability. States do not calculate their behavior in differing circumstances but they keep acting defensively in all structures, just because of the different natures of different structures different international outcomes emerge.

Without having an idea about the distribution of power in the system and other structural determinants it is not possible to make judgments about state goals. Power is out there and it is rarely something which can be adjusted according to state motivations. It is either present or missing. Based on the information about its presence states make not only their decisions but also adjust their desires.

4.3. Power, Autonomy, and Anarchy

The concept of power should be evaluated according to its relation with the concept of autonomy. Because of the productive role of power, there is a direct relation between these two terms. Relative ability to act independently from structural interference depends on the relative position of a unit in the distribution of power. The concept of autonomy comes from the anarchic structure. Anarchy is both the cause and indicator of a common motivation for remaining autonomous. Anarchic structure in the international system is a constant element so its effect as the search for autonomy is also a constant. The variable in this equation is the distribution of power. Any change in the distribution of power means a change in the levels of autonomy. In a nutshell, as the power of an agent in the distribution increases its level of autonomy is also expected to increase. Relatively autonomous actors are those who hold an important share in the distribution of power. Autonomy of an actor is a production of distribution of power.

Beyond that anarchy which is the source of the search for autonomy is itself an outcome of the distribution of power. The systemic distribution of power in addition to its productive role in shaping agency plays a more fundamental productive role in the construction of anarchy too. The international system is anarchic because there is more than one actor struggling for autonomy in the system. Otherwise the system would turn into a hierarchic one. So, distribution of power should be considered as the most fundamental organizing principle in the structure.

The distribution of power is the organizing principle of not only international politics but all forms of politics. The main distinction between the hierarchical and anarchic orders is an outcome of two different forms of distribution of power. Hierarchic systems are hierarchic not because of rough equality in the distribution of power, which causes the fear of survival and requires the delegation of some parts of autonomy to a higher authority. They are hierarchic because of the large gaps in the distribution of power, which produces domination of the system
by one agent as the highest authority. In contrast to the mainstream theories of the modern state, the modern state is not a production of roughly equal distribution of power which causes fear of survival and wishful delegation of autonomy. It is not necessarily an entity which holds the “monopoly on the legitimate use of violence.”\textsuperscript{197} It is an entity which is capable of holding the monopoly on the use of violence coercively. States, of course, claim to hold the legitimate right of monopolizing the use of violence. Again states in the long run might be able to build a popular legitimacy for the monopolized used of violence. But this does not mean that modern state necessarily emerged as a legitimate entity because of the survival motivation of roughly equal agents. The modern state emerged as an outcome of the ability of one agent over other, which creates a self-reliance imperative across the system.

The confusion between the legitimacy and coerciveness of monopolizing the use of violence goes back to the writings of social contract theorists who were trying to build the legitimacy for modern state using hypothetical constructs. In reality, modern or pre-modern, hierarchical orders are not outcomes of equal power distributions. They are products of differing shares of power. As a good early example, in the prologue of the Code of Hammurabi it was announced that Hammurabi’s divine mission is to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, although Hammurabi was the strongest among others:

“then Anu and Bel called by name me, Hammurabi, the exalted prince, who feared God, to bring about the rule of righteousness in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil-doers; so that the strong should not harm the weak; so that I should rule over the black-headed people like Shamash, and enlighten the land, to further the well-being of mankind.”\textsuperscript{198}

\textsuperscript{198} Code of Hammurabi, available at: http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/MESO/CODE.HTM
In this legitimization of the state and law, not the equality among the agents but the gap is highlighted. Surely, the Code does not inform us why Hammurabi not someone else had that right of protecting the weak. However, it is clear that he was able to provide that protection because of his position in the distribution of power. The code derives the legitimacy of Hammurabi’s authority from the power differences. The authority of Hammurabi came from his ability to rule over others by forcing them to delegate some parts of their autonomy and with this Code he tried to create legitimacy by promising that there would be no other stronger parties to harm the weaker.

State failure, for instance, can be viewed as a good example of turning into an anarchic order by the demolition of a hierarchic one. If the highest authority does not have enough power to sustain its autonomy because of a new distribution in the society, the system becomes anarchic. Therefore international relations theories based on the concept of anarchy makes sense even in the explanation of ethnic conflicts with some minor changes.199 As powerfully put by Samuel Huntington in his groundbreaking study, “the most important political distinction among countries concerns not their form of government but their degree of government.”200 The functioning of a state as a hierarchical order to rule autonomously over its territory depends on its ability to govern.

What creates hierarchic orders is not equality of power and search for survival, but the inequality in the distribution. Because of the positive correlation between power and autonomy, an equal distribution of power creates an anarchic order with units denying the delegation of autonomy to a higher authority. Therefore, the most fundamental organizing principle of international politics

is the distribution of power. It gives birth to anarchy and in combination with anarchy it produces state identities, motivations, and behaviors. It is the organizing principle of not only international politics but all forms of politics.

4.4. “Essentially Contested” Concept of Power

The debates over the definition of the concept of power revolve around two main problems: the gap between national capabilities and influence and the components of national capabilities. As argued above structural theories require a national capabilities approach to the concept of power rather than an intentionalist one despite the supposed difficulties in building a common ground for the components of national capabilities.

There are different definitions of national capabilities with different components. For instance Organski and Kugler define it as the combination of “(1) the number of people in a nation who can work and fight, (2) the skill and productivity of active population, and (3) the capacity of the governmental system to the human and material resources at its disposal and devote them to national goals.” Correlates of War project uses a composite index of national capabilities which is developed by David Singer and includes total population, urban population, iron and steel production, energy consumption, military expenditure, and military personnel.

Surely, there is no simple solution to find a common ground for the components of national power. In addition to the differences among these accounts it also seems that it is time sensitive. For instance, including the iron and steel production as a component might not be an intelligent idea in an age of information technologies, although it was a good indicator for earlier centuries. In any way, it is obvious that the search for a sensitive index of national power will continue

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exhausting coming generations too. The only available option is build case and time sensitive models of power, which is actually an empirical problem rather than a theoretical one.

Beyond that formulation, it also seems that there is a common sense in international relations about the significance of some components over others. The development of the European Union from European Coal and Steel Community to European Atomic Energy Community and then to European Economic Community represents a common sense of European decision makers about what to include as important components of capabilities. National capability calculations for the Cold War cannot be handled without considering nuclear weapons. Even if theorists have failed to define and measure national capabilities in exact terms we cannot ignore that there has been a commonsensical understanding of national capabilities and recognition of the hierarchy of national capabilities in the distribution of power among practitioners. Because of this context dependence of power it is indeed more of an empirical problem rather than a theoretical one. The history of the concept of power is full of discussions about its definition. But at the same time scholars have achieved to work with it. Despite the difficulties of defining the components of national power, theorists have been able to develop and utilize the concept of polarity and apply multipolar, bipolar, and unipolar distinctions to some specific time periods.

This is not to deny that there are certain difficulties in providing a satisfactory definition of power. However, this does not require leaving the significant relative power variable aside. Instead it requires a special attention, if realists are in search of the reality with a belief in the idea of “the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.”\textsuperscript{203} Despite the difficulties of defining, measuring, and operationalizing the concept of power, it is still a necessary element in understanding the field of international politics. “The measurement of

power is both difficult and necessary." Further studies should erode “the belief that what is important cannot be measured, and that what can be quantified is not important.”

Furthermore, it is not the only essentially contested concept in political science. It is common to start writing about power by stating its “essentially contested” nature. In recent writings about the concept of power it is quite difficult to find studies giving power a central position in their analysis. Just a simple catalog search on library websites will provide more titles criticizing the usefulness of power as a theoretical element rather than giving it a central position and seriously investigating to understand its nature: Follies of Power, Paradoxes of Power, Power Curse, The Limits of Power, and The Pathology of Power are just some well-known examples. Probably there are more studies dealing with and claiming the counter-productive effects of power than the studies employing it as a useful one. From a different perspective, contrary to Thomas Kuhn’s famous depiction, the history of international relations can be viewed as dominated by a “revolutionary science” rather than “normal science.” The literature about the concept of power is so revolutionary that in order to find some paradigmatic use of the concept of power, one has to go back to the limited number of writings of the fifties and sixties. Researchers have been so concerned with the “paradigm shift” that what Kuhn termed normal science became abnormal.

In addition, there is no other important concept in social sciences that is less contested than power. There is no consensus on how to define the concept of culture\textsuperscript{212} as well as the concept of security which is also defined as an “essentially contested” concept.\textsuperscript{213} Especially after the end of the Cold War different definitions of the concept of security became the common practice.\textsuperscript{214} If the disputes over the meaning of the concepts of culture or security and the difficulties in their measurement do not require the abandonment of these important concepts so the difficulties of defining power also do not require declaring it as a useless, old-fashioned, and empty concept. There will always be discussions about the definitions of these significant concepts but studies can keep going by providing their own definitions which are consistent with their own purposes. Indeed the disputes over the meaning of these concepts are indicators of their significance, not of uselessness.

5. Orientations (second level motivations), Actions, and Outcomes

This section, by building upon the previous arguments about the constitutive role of power as the organizing principle and struggle for autonomy as the most fundamental state motivation, tries to relate these central concepts to each other in order to provide a structural realist depiction of international politics. It distinguishes between two forms of power structures (as distributed


power structures and concentrated power structures) which are in combination with the fundamental motivation of seeking autonomy produces different incentives, behaviors, and systemic outcomes. This section argues that in concentrated power structures states prioritize stability over change but act offensively while in distributed power structures they want change but act defensively. While defensive actions produce systemic wars because of the security dilemma and polarization, offensive actions produce minor conflicts because of the power dilemma. In both cases war is the eventual outcome of international politics because in a system where all units struggle for autonomy there is nothing to stop the conflicts of autonomies. But while concentrated power structures are more likely to produce minor conflicts, distributed power structures are more likely to produce major wars.215

The distribution of power produces anarchy and anarchy produces the most fundamental state motivation that is the struggle for autonomy. Despite the producing role of the distribution of power as the most fundamental element of international structure, its product, anarchy, also plays a central role in shaping state concerns. Therefore, a structural realist theory should pay equal attention to the both elements of structure. Neither the distribution of power nor anarchy should be prioritized over the other a priori. A structural theory should be able to understand the combined effects of anarchy and the distribution of power over state identity, orientation, and behavior.

Nevertheless there is a central difference between these two elements of structure. While anarchy once formed by the distribution of power becomes a constant element of structure and motivates states to the constant goal of seeking autonomy, the distribution of power depending on the

nature and form of the distribution of power as concentrated power structures and distributed power structures produces two different forms of strategies for the search of autonomy. Because of anarchy states struggle for autonomy while because of certain power structures states follow different strategies of autonomy. Here we need to make a distinction between the central motivation of seeking autonomy and the strategies of autonomy. While the first is the product of anarchic structure, the latter depends on the type of power structure. Anarchy creates the incentive for autonomy and power structure defines the ways of acquiring autonomy. There is no constant strategy of state autonomy. States do not determine their strategies either offensively or defensively without some knowledge of power structure. In contrast to the claims of defensive and offensive realisms, state strategies are not defined a priori. States cannot act blindly for some consequentialist aim. Their strategies and actions are shaped by the structure. State strategies of autonomy depend on two forms of power structure: distributed and concentrated power structures.

Firstly, because of a more equal distribution of power more and more actors become able to act in accordance to their goals and strategies. Paradoxically increased capability of each actor does not mean that they become autonomous because of the operation of structural forces. The increased number of actors capable to act in terms of their interests (self-reliant) decreases all actors’ level of autonomy. Under such a system states become more and more concerned with the structural constraints. It becomes an undesired environment because of the decreased level of autonomy. Therefore, states do not favor the status quo in such a system and if it was possible they would like to transform it. But because of the lack of enough capabilities to transform the system to its advantage, each state has to contend with this constraining structure and defensive behaviors dominate the system. However, defensive behaviors of all do not cause peace because
balancing behaviors produce polarization because of the security dilemma and then polarization produces systemic major wars.

Conversely, in concentrated power structures, states in search of an increased level of autonomy tend to prioritize stability over change because of two different reasons for two sorts of actors in the system. On the one side the most powerful actor who concentrated most of the material capabilities would favor stability since it will feel relatively autonomous compared to other actors and to some other less favorable distribution. On the other side, secondary states because of their inability to challenge the status quo have to contend with the stability for maintaining their autonomy rather than desiring an unmanageable systemic transformation. As a consequence stability is prioritized over change by both sorts of agents. However, systemic emphasis on stability does not produce defensive behavior. In contrast it produces offensive behaviors for again two different reasons for two different groups of states in the distribution of power. On the one side the most powerful actor acts preventively to counter any possible challenge to the stability and its autonomy because it believes it is able to do that. On the other side, secondary states also act offensively to increase their level of autonomy. They do not defensively balance the would-be hegemon because of the possible risks of doing so but they also do not jump on its bandwagon because that would harm their level of autonomy. Instead they try to employ clever strategies of building soft aggressive policies of increasing their level of autonomy without directly challenging and drawing the attention of the most powerful actor by dealing with diversified issue areas and actors.

In addition to the most fundamental state motivation of search for autonomy that is derived from the international structure, this study employs second level motivations (state orientations about international structure). These state concerns about the international structure ranges from
stability orientation to an orientation for change. Therefore in comparison with defensive and offensive realists, the central hypotheses that follow are based on state concerns about the international power structure rather than a uni-dimensional best way strategy of securing survival through the maximization of power or security. States in search of autonomy are mainly concerned with the power structure. Depending on specific power structures states hold second level motivations (orientation) for change or stability. Therefore, a state is defined as motivated for change if it wants to break down the distributed international power structure. In contrast a state is defined as motivated for stability if it views the status quo as a favorable international structure.

Concentrated power structure in this study refers to a high level of power concentration in the system. It can be viewed as hegemonic position gained by one unit over others in terms of power. But that concept of hegemony should not be confused with hierarchy. The term of hegemony is employed in a similar fashion used by hegemonic stability theorists. On the other side, distributed power structure refers to the lack of a hegemonic actor in the system. Power in this system is distributed more equally compared to a concentrated power structure. The exact threshold level between concentrated and distributed power structures can be debatable. However as argued in the previous section on the concept of power, it is more an empirical issue rather than being a theoretical one. Students of international relations have developed a common sense to differentiate between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries of international politics for instance, as the former characterized by a concentrated power structure while the latter is defined as a distributed one.

Offensive behaviors, which are expected to emerge in concentrated power structures, refer to any kind of opportunistic or preventive strategies while defensive behaviors refer to policies of
sustaining state autonomy rather than promoting it. Defensive behaviors are displayed in forms of diplomatic negotiations, defensive alignments, protecting already fixed borders, and deterrence, while offensive behaviors are displayed in the policies like spreading state responsibility, commitments, fait accompli and some other subtle strategies which can be extended in empirical studies.

On the level of international outcomes the study employs two concepts: systemic wars and minor conflicts. Systemic wars are defined in accordance with the general use in the literature as the wars fought by major power in the system. Minor conflicts are short of systemic participation. They are generally fought on minor issues and minor issue areas by at most single major power.

5.1. Distributed Power Structures

Equally distributed power structures are characterized by incentives for change, defensive behaviors, and the increased number and possibility of major systemic wars. Contrary to the expectations of the unit level intentionalist and essentialist theories there are huge gaps between intentions, behaviors, and systemic outcomes. Structure operates as a transforming environment on each of these stages and produces unexpected outcomes for each one. States wishing to change the structure acts defensively and their defensive actions cause major wars.

As the number of actors with equal capabilities increases or the distribution becomes more and more equal, ironically the level of autonomy for all units in the system decrease. Distributed power structures are by definition structures in which there are multiple actors with equal capabilities. If there were no structural forces then it would be possible to conclude that there would also be multiple numbers of autonomous actors. But ironically because of the increased number of actors with equal capabilities states do not feel relatively more autonomous. In
contrast, all the units in the system feel that their autonomies are constrained by other actors with equal capabilities. So any equal distribution of power produces less autonomous actors. The very existence of other actors with equal capabilities decreases the level of autonomy of all. However, this does not mean that states feel less secure and care only about their survival. By contrast because of their equal power position with others in the system they feel that their survival is secured and no actor can easily become an existential threat. Nevertheless, they feel less autonomous because of the possibility of meeting multiple actors in most issue areas. In distributed power structures states feel secured because of their power but feel less autonomous because of others’ power. In any issue area there will be more actors taking part with their equal capabilities. For instance in colonization process there will be more actors dealing with the same territories and this is an obvious limitation for the autonomy of any actor to act according to its own motivations independently.

*As the level of autonomy for all units decrease the search for change increases.* As a consequence of equal distribution of power, states with decreased level of autonomy will find this structure less attractive. They will be limited by the capabilities of others in every situation. If they were able to transform it into a more favorable one, they would certainly choose that way. So in the constant search for autonomy states in this system would want to change it. However, there is a broad gap between what states want and what they do because of equal power distribution and increased number of actors with equal capabilities. States who wish to change the structure do not act aggressively because of the increased number of actors who can act aggressively.

*As the number of actors with equal capabilities in search of autonomy and change increases the number of defensive behaviors also increases.* Each state aware of the wide spread discontent in
the system act defensively against aggressive intentions. States are aware of the fact that in an equally distributed power structure their competitors will hold offensive intentions to change the structure as they hold. Therefore equally distributed power structures force states to behave defensively even if they would like to have a change in their own favor.\textsuperscript{216} The search for the systemic change and increased level of autonomy creates a trap which actually reproduces the system and the decreased level of autonomy for all units. But defensive behaviors of states do not cause peaceful outcomes. It is quite contrary. Structural forces once again operate to produce unexpected outcomes. Wide spread defensive behaviors are the causes of major wars in the system.

\textit{As the volume of defensive behaviors increases because of the security dilemma the possibility and the number of major wars also increases.} The main structural mechanism behind this gap between the behavior and international outcome is the well-known security dilemma.\textsuperscript{217} As predicted by the security dilemma increased security of one side comes at the expense of others. So any defensive behavior triggers other defensive behaviors until it reaches to a certain limit which becomes untenable. So the spiral of defensive actions produces the unintended major wars in the system.

\textbf{5.2. Concentrated Power Structures}

Concentrated power structures are characterized by incentives in favor of stability, offensive behaviors, and the increased number and possibility of minor conflicts rather than major systemic wars. Here again systemic forces operate on each stage. States who intend to avoid any


change unfavorable and unmanageable change in the structure act aggressively but their aggressive actions do not produce major wars rather they produce minor conflicts because of the increased volume of avoidance policies in a system which is defined by a concentration.

As the capability gap between the units increases because of a systemic power concentration the number of actors who might want change also decreases. Concentrated power structures by definition are the ones in which there is a huge gap between the capabilities of one side and others. So they are populated by one powerful actor and the rest. In such a structure there is only one actor with enough capabilities to act autonomously. All others in the system lack enough capabilities to challenge that strong party or the system itself since “asymmetry produces hierarchy.”218 Under these conditions actors do not intend to change the structure because of two reasons. The first one is related to strong party’s voluntary intention and its search for autonomy as an actor “liberated from the ropes”219 of conflicting autonomies, while the second one is related to weaker parties’ obligations and their lack of enough capabilities to challenge the status quo.

Firstly since the powerful party feels a relative autonomy compared to any other power structure it supports stability. This is indeed a desirable position compared to any other system except an overall domination of it. “A hegemonic power establishes the rules and norms of international order, and acts to provide security and stability in the international system.”220 This position depends on two requirements. The powerful party is not powerful enough to turn the structure in to a hierarchic one, in other words the structure is still anarchic, and yet it is still too powerful

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compared to others. It cannot dominate the system but it has a certain level of autonomy to act independently. If there was any hope of turning the structure into a hierarchic one there would be no reason like the stopping power of waters,\textsuperscript{221} benevolent hegemony,\textsuperscript{222} etc. to stop it. The only reasons for voluntary/intentional support of stability are increased autonomy in anarchy and missing capabilities to make it hierarchic.

\textit{Secondly because of the lack of enough power to challenge the status quo secondary states have to contend with the stability.} Secondary states in the system do not hold that intention because it is a favorable position but because there is nothing they can do about it. It is an unavoidable motivation. Since they lack enough capabilities to turn the structure into a more favorable one, they are afraid of an untimely and unmanageable transformation. “The weaker actor is therefore in a conundrum: Unwilling to accept inequitable ‘take-it-or-leave-it’ policy solutions, yet unable to balance against the other actor militarily.”\textsuperscript{223} Systemic stability seems as a better than worse option. Instead of an unmanageable transformation which is inevitable because of the distribution of power the systemic stability becomes favorable.

\textit{As the number of status quo orientations increases the number of offensive actions also increases.} Status quo orientations widely spread in concentrated power structures do not cause defensive actions. Despite their support for systemic stability, structure forces all types of states to act offensively because of two reasons for two different types of states. On the one side, the powerful actor acts offensively in order to prevent any challenge to its autonomy. In other words

\textsuperscript{221} Mearsheimer, John, \textit{The Tragedy of Great Power Politics} (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001);


defensive concerns produce offensive behavior. On the other side secondary states act offensively to find opportunities of increasing their level of autonomy. Despite their lack of capabilities to openly challenge the system, this will not prevent looking for new opportunities of increased autonomy by diversified and subtle strategies.

Firstly, the powerful agent acts offensively in order to prevent challenges to its autonomy. In an anarchic environment, even if power is concentrated in the hands of one actor and increased its relative autonomy because of the lack of other actors who would challenge to it, the powerful actor acts preventively, for both it is able to do it and it is concerned with protecting any challenge to its relative autonomy. “When a hegemom finds its primacy threatened, the best strategy is to eliminate the source of the problem.” 224 So the defensive concerns of the powerful agent do not cause defensive behaviors. In contrast, they cause offensive behaviors because of the increased level autonomy to act independently.

Secondly, secondary states also act offensively to open new spaces and find new opportunities of increasing their level of autonomy. The states that have to contend with the order but also want to find the ways of gaining a more autonomous position act offensively to open new opportunities of increasing their level of autonomy. Against the expectations of hegemonic stability theorists, 225 secondary states do not necessarily jump on the bandwagon. Such an expectation neglects the system wide search for autonomy which is the requirement of anarchic order. A bandwagoning strategy in both offensive and defensive terms means the delegation of some part of autonomy to another actor. Despite their lack of capabilities secondary states try to find some clever ways of increasing their level of autonomy instead of an automatic

bandwagoning strategy. “Bandwagoning makes a country’s future security dependent on the continued goodwill of the dominant state.”

However, this does not mean that they can balance against the powerful actor. Because of their lack of capabilities secondary states, in contrast to neorealist expectations, cannot balance the powerful agent. It would be a costly and risky defensive behavior. As a response, secondary states in the system try to aggressively produce soft policies by building relations with other secondary states as a form of offensive behavior which does not directly challenge the powerful actor but creates opportunities of increased autonomy.

As the volume of offensive actions increases the possibility and the number of minor conflicts also increase while the possibility of a major systemic war decreases. Offensive behaviors are generally understood as directly causing the tragedy of major wars. However, offensive behaviors in concentrated power structures do not produce major wars because of two reasons. First offensive behaviors of the powerful party are indeed preventive behaviors in search of autonomy not for full hegemony. Second the offensive behaviors of secondary states do not directly target the autonomy of the powerful actor. Under these circumstances the possibility of the conflict of autonomies will be lower than the possibility it would take place in a distributed power structure. While the powerful actor is limited with its relative autonomy and the lack of enough capabilities to dominate the system, secondary states do not dare to challenge the system.

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228 This conceptualization of soft policies is substantially different from the concept of “soft balancing.” Supporters of soft balancing argument claim that any soft policies followed by secondary states target the power of the would-be hegemon. However the concept of soft policies does not refer to the balancing behavior targeting the powerful actor. Soft policies without clearly challenging the powerful actor requires building aggressive but soft strategies to open new spaces of opportunities of increasing the level of autonomy by diversified issue areas and increased volume of activity. For prominent examples of soft balancing argument see: Paul, T.V., “Soft Balancing in the Age of U.S. Primacy,” International Security, 30(1), (Summer 2005): 46–71; Pape, Robert A., “Soft Balancing against the United States,” International Security, 30(1), (Summer 2005): 7–45.
openly. These are the main causes of the absence of direct confrontations of offensive behaviors. Secondary states in such a system resort to soft policies to increase their level of autonomy. Those soft offensive policies are aimed at filling the niches not confronting autonomies of others. The increased number of minor conflicts does not necessarily produce serious major wars.229

6. Conclusion

The chapter tried to do two things. First it tried to develop two central concepts of a structural realist theory in terms of structural requirements. With a proper and unbiased reading of the concept of anarchy it argued that in anarchic structures states struggle for autonomy as opposed to any other specific and biased goals presented by other realist theories. Then it argued for a productive, structural, and material conceptualization of power. Second the chapter tried to build the relation between these two central concepts to create an essentially structural depiction of international politics. It promoted broad expectations and predictions about how the states react to the structural forces to point out underlying mechanisms of international politics.

Therefore the ideas produced by this general framework are broad conceptualizations of general predictions for state concerns and activities and for international outcomes. They produced broad ideas how to understand state identity, orientation, and behavior. More work is required to identify specific strategies of the search for autonomy and types of behavior and to produce specific hypotheses on specific research programs which will employ these underlying structural predictions developed. Additionally the predictions developed in this chapter should be tested.

against empirical evidence. The next chapter is an attempt organized to serve into this aim. It will use the entire history of the Cold War to measure the validity of the arguments developed in this chapter.
1. Introduction

The previous chapter concluded with a distinction between concentrated and distributed power structures. It mainly argued that concentrated power structures produce state orientations that prioritize stability over change and cause offensive behaviors that produce increased number of minor conflicts while the distributed power structures produce orientations for change and cause defensive state behaviors that produce major systemic confrontations.

This chapter tries to measure the arguments of the previous chapter in a well-established field of great power behavior. The history of the Cold War with its substantial literature provides a good opportunity in testing the relevancy of the structural model developed so far. Approximately fifty years of confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union inspired an enormous number of studies to understand and explain great power orientations, behaviors and their international outcomes. However, it seems that although We Now Know what happened in the Cold War, we perhaps do not know why it happened as well as we should because of two interrelated reasons. Firstly, theories of international relations because of their internal inconsistency and external partiality, as argued in the third chapter, fail to provide compelling

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causal mechanisms in explaining state behaviors and their causes. Secondly, the increased number of empirical data on the history of Cold War confused the historians’ view about it rather than contributing to its explanation because of the gap between the theories of international relations and the histories of the Cold War. They produced either ideological explanations as in the case of orthodox \textsuperscript{231} and revisionist \textsuperscript{232} traditions or multi-causal and multi-level descriptive studies as in the case of post-revisionist \textsuperscript{233} studies.

This chapter claims that the history of the Cold War provides strong support for the arguments developed in this study. In addition to that, the theoretical framework serves as a consistent and innovative one to provide a new and theoretically consistent interpretation of the history of the Cold War by shedding light on many controversial issues by dividing the history of the Cold War into three main time intervals.

The chapter roughly divides the entire Cold War history into three time intervals in accordance with a focus on the distribution of power. The first era (1945-1957) is defined to some extent in agreement with the conventional wisdom as a concentrated power structure. This period can be characterized with the US predominant position. The second era (1957-1979) is characterized by


a consistent distributed power structure and is accordingly termed as the “real” Cold War in this study. This is in opposition to common framing found in most histories of the Cold War that subdivides this period into two different categorizations: the brinkmanship of the sixties and détente of the seventies. The third era (1979-1991) is defined again as a concentrated power structure in favor of the US.

Based on this distribution of power classification, the chapter argues that in the concentrated power structures of the first and third eras of the Cold War, both superpowers were in favor of the status quo but acted offensively on marginal issue areas. Therefore, the Cold War started in the periphery with increased number of expansionist policies that were motivated by the aim of protecting the status quo and it ended in the same fashion with status quo-oriented aggressive behaviors. However, these two eras of the Cold War did not produce any major systemic confrontation between the superpowers. They consistently managed these peripheral competitions short of major conflict. On the other side, the second era was the phase of the real Cold War, which was characterized by the centripetal movement of superpower confrontation that resulted from change-oriented defensive behaviors. In this distributed power structure, both superpowers were oriented to change the system but they were acting defensively mainly because they wanted something they did not have but acted in accordance with what they had. They relied on their capabilities rather than their desires. Those defensive behaviors were expected to cause a major systemic war but the major confrontations of the Cold War did not produce hot wars or a Third World War only because of the nature of power was distributed,
which was characterized by a nuclear parity. The dynamics of the Cold War would have likely led to major war if it was conducted in a conventional strategic environment.\textsuperscript{234}

The chapter is not based on the primary sources but it tries to make sense of the theory developed in the previous section by reinterpreting the established evidence used in the literature to show the theoretical relevancy. This is not a chronological study of the Cold War that tries to give a comprehensive description and order of all events. Instead it will focus on significant crises with a broader structural framework to explain the general trends in the Cold War.

Each section starts with a general evaluation and characterization of the specific power structures of the three different time periods. Based on those characterizations as concentrated or distributed power structures, the predictions of the structural arguments on superpower orientations and actions are presented and the international outcomes of the superpower behaviors are introduced. Then in each section, relevant cases are discussed in more detailed forms by focusing on controversial issues and highlighting the central superpower intentions and types of behaviors.

For each specific case that will be discussed on the following pages, the chapter tries to answer three questions and compares the answers given to these questions. First, what was the orientation (second level motivation) behind that specific event for the initiator or what were the main orientations behind this event, if it was based on a joint action. Second, what kind of action was taken by both superpowers? This is an evaluation of the actions from the theoretical perspective about its meaning. The answer provided to this question tries to code the foreign policy behaviors as either offensive or defensive. The last question is about the outcomes of

these specific events. It will be posed to answer whether that event was a major systemic confrontation or just a minor conflict.

The chapter discusses the entire Cold War history around the independent variable of power structure in a dichotomous variable form as concentrated and distributed. The dependent variables evaluated in the chapter are state concerns (their second level motivations), state behavior and international outcomes. The following table is presented to serve as a guide for the reader to cover the general tendency in the Cold War politics by coding each specific case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Cases</th>
<th>Power Structure</th>
<th>State Orientation</th>
<th>State Behavior</th>
<th>International Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marshall Plan</td>
<td>Concentrated</td>
<td>Status quo oriented</td>
<td>Offensive</td>
<td>Minor confrontation on a major issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The First Berlin Crisis</td>
<td>Concentrated</td>
<td>Status quo oriented</td>
<td>Offensive</td>
<td>Minor confrontation on a major issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>Concentrated</td>
<td>Status quo oriented</td>
<td>Offensive</td>
<td>No major confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warsaw Pact</td>
<td>Concentrated</td>
<td>Status quo oriented</td>
<td>Offensive</td>
<td>No major confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran Crisis</td>
<td>Concentrated</td>
<td>Status quo oriented</td>
<td>Offensive</td>
<td>Minor confrontation on a minor issue area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey and Greece (Truman Doctrine)</td>
<td>Concentrated</td>
<td>Status quo oriented</td>
<td>Offensive</td>
<td>Minor confrontation on a minor issue area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suez Crisis (Eisenhower Doctrine)</td>
<td>Concentrated</td>
<td>Status quo oriented</td>
<td>Offensive</td>
<td>Minor confrontation on a minor issue area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean War (NSC)</td>
<td>Concentrated</td>
<td>Status quo oriented</td>
<td>Offensive</td>
<td>Minor confrontation on a minor issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Power Distribution</td>
<td>Goal Orientation</td>
<td>Strategy Type</td>
<td>Area of Confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Second Berlin Crisis</td>
<td>Distributed</td>
<td>Change oriented</td>
<td>Defensive</td>
<td>Major confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban Missile Crisis</td>
<td>Distributed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Defensive</td>
<td>Major confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Détente</td>
<td>Distributed</td>
<td>Change oriented</td>
<td>Defensive</td>
<td>Major confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>From concentrated to distributed</td>
<td>Combination of change and status quo oriented concerns</td>
<td>Offensive plus defensive</td>
<td>Minor confrontation on a minor issue area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The End of the Détente</td>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>Conventional status quo, nuclear change oriented</td>
<td>Conventional offensive/nuclear defensive</td>
<td>Conventional minor issue areas/nuclear major issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>Conventional status quo, nuclear change oriented</td>
<td>Conventional offensive/nuclear defensive</td>
<td>Conventional minor confrontation in the periphery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The End of the Cold War</td>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>Conventional status quo, nuclear change oriented</td>
<td>Conventional offensive/nuclear defensive</td>
<td>Conventional minor issues/nuclear major issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis presented in this chapter and summarized in the Table 5.1 tries to show that during the Cold War, superpowers did not hold permanent motivations like increasing power or security; rather they arranged their goals according to the structures of power. When the power in the system was concentrated both superpowers wanted to protect international stability. While the US wanted to maintain the order that was working in its benefit, the USSR was also unwilling an unmanageable change in the system which would catch it unprepared against a more powerful US. In the distributed power structure of second Cold War era, both superpowers were motivated to change the distributed power structure.
The next section provides the interpretation of the early Cold War developments by separately dealing with three different areas of superpower aggression in Europe, Middle East, and the Far East to show the status quo-motivated aggressive superpower behaviors and the absence of a major systemic confrontation in a concentrated power structure. The third section deals with the second period of the Cold War that was characterized by a distributed power structure and the centripetal movement of superpower competition with defensive policies and increased possibility of major systemic crises. The fourth section attempts to explain the developments in the final stage of the Cold War confrontation that was once again based on a concentrated power structure. It specifically deals with the end of détente, the end of the Cold War, and also the endurance of an extremely concentrated power structure, which emerged after the end of the Cold War. The fifth section concludes with some general thoughts on the relevancy of the theoretical framework to the history of Cold War.

2. **The First Era: the Rise of the Cold War**

This section defines the early period of the Cold War as a concentrated power structure. The US power in most of the indicators during this era was overwhelming. On economic terms, for instance, US power could not be compared with Soviet power. By the end of the Second World War the US emerged as an economic giant, producing nearly half of the world’s GDP. This position is generally named as the US world hegemony. On the other side, the Soviet Union’s

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economy was devastated during the Second World War as the fighting party on the main front against Nazi Germany. Other western economies were not in a better position. Great Britain would withdraw from its colonies in a few years mainly because of its failure to sustain its colonial empire as the new power realities were considered. France was also devastated as an invaded country during the Second World War. Germany, not to mention, was already under occupation. The classical great powers of early centuries were out of the scene and were replaced by superpowers, one of which concentrated an economic production of the world that was the greatest difference between the first and the second in the entire human history.\footnote{Despite the huge power concentration in favor of the United States, Soviets can still be considered on the superpower level mainly because the Soviet Union emerged as the greatest power of Europe after the Second World War.}

Another important power indicator of this period is related to the US monopoly on nuclear weapons. Until the first Soviet test of an atomic bomb in 1949, there was no other state with atomic capability in the system. Even after the test of the atomic bomb by the Soviet Union, the clear US superiority on nuclear weapons was unchallenged until the end of fifties at least and even until the end of sixties according to most experts. It seems that until the late fifties the only country, which was not vulnerable to a nuclear devastation was the United States.

The only component of power in which the Soviet Union could challenge the US power was on conventional military forces. The Soviet Union drawing from its large population built a conventional military force that was highly dependent on the large number of military personnel. Besides the number of military personnel, the US power was clearly formidable on all components of power. For the conventional military forces, too, the gap was easily compensable regarding the huge power concentration in possession of the US in other terms. Additionally, during the entire Cold War, admittedly, despite being deliberately exaggerated by the US official
view,\textsuperscript{238} there was a qualitative gap between the United States and Soviet conventional military forces that worked in the favor of the US.\textsuperscript{239}

This section argues that because of the overwhelming US position in the distribution of power, the US and the USSR were both supporters of the status quo in the system on the state concerns level. Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union would like the initiation of a crisis which could bring a change or chaos in the system. This support of the status quo from the US perspective is easily understandable because of its position as the highest ranking unit in the system. Because of the well-established premise of hegemonic stability theory about the favorability of a hegemonic position,\textsuperscript{240} predicting the US desire in support of the continuation in the system is less controversial compared to the prediction that as the weaker side of the competition the Soviet Union would not desire a change in the system, too.

The general wisdom in international relations would predict that the weaker side would want to change the system since that general wisdom is based on the assumption about the state intention to search for power after power without considering the possibility of increasing the power in such an environment. However, if we consider the Soviet power position compared to the US there is no reason to expect that the Soviet Union would like to start a process of changing the system since any attempt to change the system would turn into an unmanageable crisis that would end up with the US gain because of its advantageous position in the power structure. Since the leaders of the Soviet Union would not hold any concern which was independent of their power position in the system, they would not challenge the systemic status quo. As a

consequence, in this concentrated power structure of early Cold War, both the US and the Soviet Union supported the systemic status on the concerns level.

However, on the action level, both sides of the competition acted offensively despite their status quo oriented motivations. On the one side, the United States because of its self-confidence in its preponderance of power felt free to act offensively and considered any Soviet behavior on any issue area as a threat. The US held a position of the possibility of promoting its autonomy as an initiator of offensive strategies that increasingly extended the US responsibilities all over the world. In addition, as a response to Soviet attempts of offensive behaviors, the US again held the luxury of responding in exaggerated offensive ways in form of new commitments through multilateral treaties or military interventions.

On the other side, the Soviet Union because of the search for autonomy looked for the opportunities of finding new areas of influence. It did refrain itself from challenging the international system on significant issue areas because of the lack of a chance of sustainable systemic challenge. However, it tried to open spaces on the marginal issue areas until it faced US response. When confronted with the harsh US response on all these marginal areas, the Soviet Union followed a cautious route not to challenge directly to the US policies, despite the continuation of aggressivism in more covert and subtle forms. Stalin “was certainly prepared to stop in the face of resistance from the West: at no point was he willing to challenge the Americans or even the British where they made their interests clear.”

This is the main reason for the absence of major crises on a fundamental issue area in the first phase of the Cold War. Despite renewed Soviet offensive actions all around the world, none of

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these events produced a systemic challenge that would cause a systemic confrontation. The first phase of the Cold War was a period of competition on less significant issues and those issues were characterized by harsh US response and cautious and subtle strategies of the Soviet Union. The only crisis taking place on the main front was the Berlin Blockade that was considerably less dangerous and issue oriented compared to major systemic crises of the second era of the Cold War like the crises in the Second Berlin case or Cuban Missile Crisis case, as it will be explained in the specific case discussions.

The theoretical framework offered in this study addresses the gaps between intentions and actions and actions and international outcomes. The influence of international structure shapes all these different stages. In a concentrated power structure, states wish to maintain the structure because of the desire to protect their autonomy but act offensively because of their power position. States who wish to maintain their autonomy act offensively to promote their autonomy and increase their responsibility because of structural conditioning. Structure forces states to seek maintenance of the system and the same structure causes autonomy promotion.

By the help of these differentiated stages of foreign policy (as the levels of orientation, behavior, and international outcome), the study attempts to solve many controversial issues like the incompatibility between the articulation of state goals by the leaders and the foreign policy behaviors of the same leaders in the Cold War. For instance, in the literature over the origins of the Cold War there are multiple arguments for the aims of both sides and there are multiple interpretations of the foreign policy behaviors. The discussion over the aims and behaviors of Stalin is a good case to illustrate the contribution of the differentiation of foreign policy stages.
Without a clear specification of the differences in Stalin’s behaviors and his motivations, students of the Cold War have a difficulty in understanding several Soviet Union strategies. As a consequence, they define Stalin as a cautious but also an ambitious leader on the level of motivation and again both offensive and defensive on the behavioral level. These conflicting interpretations of motivations and behaviors generally appear arbitrarily in any single text without any clarification from Cold War historians on what was Stalin’s most fundamental motivation or general foreign policy behavior. The depiction of Stalin becomes so confusing that readers cannot conclude logically and consistently whether Stalin was in search of opportunistic expansion to challenge the system and US predominance or he was just cautiously responding to US actions.\textsuperscript{242}

There are clear irregularities in all these analyses of Stalin’s foreign policy behavior because of the general failure to make the offered distinction between orientation and actions and the belief in the possibility of what an agent does is because of what he wants. A structural analysis would rule out the simple consequentialist logic about the continuity between motivations and actions by pointing out the structural influence on both levels. State leaders rarely can act in accordance with their desires since they want what they do not have and they carry out foreign policies under the guidance of their possessions. For that reason there is a general disagreement between declared foreign policy goals and actions taken in consequence. Leaders desire what they cannot reach but they do what they can do.

Accordingly, whatever Stalin wanted, he had to follow some certain strategies that did not necessarily match his desires. Rather, his motivations and actions were shaped to a great extent

\textsuperscript{242} Even after the end of the Cold War, Gaddis, for instance, still finds that Stalin’s personality, in addition to others, was an important source of the origins of the Cold War. See: Gaddis, John Lewis, \textit{We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History}, p: 292. Most of the textbooks on the history of the Cold War generally follow a similar track. See, for instance: McCauley, Martin, \textit{Russia, America and the Cold War} (Harlow: Longman, 2004).
by the power structure. On the level of motivation, Stalin was cautious about any crises that could produce an unmanageable transformation at the expense of the Soviet Union that was already in a disadvantaged power position compared to the United States. “Every explanation of the Cold War that centers on blaming Stalin does indeed have to face the simple fact (no one disputes it) that the Cold War was not in his interest. Enter, therefore, the theory of Stalinist blunders, be it in the form of excessive security demands, faulty ideological lenses, personal paranoia or all of the above. This is certainly arguable. In his crude reductionism and brutality, Stalin blundered a great deal. But he knew (on economic grounds if nothing else) how extraordinarily powerful the West was and that conflict was out of the question.”

On the behavioral level, however, Stalin obviously followed opportunistic and expansionist policies on some minor issue areas that did not directly challenge the US power.

The most fundamental debate between revisionist and orthodox views of the Cold War can be found in the discussions about the origins of the Cold War. It seems that analytical positions of the both sides were highly dependent on their ideological views rather than their theoretical orientations. On the one side, those holding an orthodox view claimed that Stalin’s personality was the most central cause of the breakdown of the Second World War alignment and the start of the harsh competition on security. On the other side, revisionists who were reflecting leftist views in the US put the blame on US capitalism and imperialism. Advocates of the both camps spent much more time on finding the guilty party, instead of providing calmly theoretical explanations of the origins of the Cold War.

The argument developed in this section tries to overcome the inconclusive biased claims on US and USSR foreign policy behaviors by following the logic of making a distinction between motivations and actions. Without ideologically blaming anyone, analytically, it aims at explaining the first phase of the Cold War as an *inevitable* process of conflicts on minor issue areas that caused to the globalization of the competition. In this period of the Cold War, not only one side but also both sides acted offensively, because of stability oriented reasons. They increasingly spread their area of interests in overt or covert forms.

Similar to the Soviets, the Cold War, on the US side, started when the aim of containment turned into a commitment in Europe and then elsewhere.\(^{244}\) Although it was devised as a defensively motivated draft, on the implication stages, it was performed through offensive foreign policies. Containment strategy generally admitted as a defensive and the main strategy of US during the entire Cold War, but a closer look clearly indicates that it was transformed, at the very initial stages, to something different and even criticized by Kennan himself on the action level. However, as will be shown on the following pages, Kennan’s original containment strategy also required taking preventive actions for the sake of preserving the status quo, despite the general defensive tone. Additionally, increasing level and number of competition on the margins enlarged the cleavage between the declared intentions and displayed policies in new policy documents and on new issue areas although containment was referred as still being the central aim of US foreign policy. An understanding of the gap between motivations and actions provides a causal mechanism in explaining why a status quo oriented strategy of containment produced centrifugally aggressive behaviors starting from Europe and spreading to the entire globe.

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The US started the Cold War with the aim of containment which required focusing on central issues and protecting the US dominated international order against any communist expansion. However, on the behavioral level, the aim of containment implemented as a policy of commitment that was not limited to strong points but spread first to the southern flank (starting with Greece, Turkey, and Iran), then to the Far East (starting with Korea). In other words, in a very short time, the entire globe was being treated as “strong points” requiring preventive interventions. Containment became commitment, when the US increasingly enlarged and deepened its involvements to the level of domino beliefs$^{245}$ which is not indeed an anomaly in a concentrated power structure.

Starting with the commitment to NATO first, followed by the inclusion of Greece and Turkey in a few years, extended by the formation of the Baghdad Pact that was later transformed into CENTO, and globalized by the establishment of SEATO, the US leaders increasingly institutionalized not the containment but the commitment. It started with Kennan’s containment, enlarged into Truman Doctrine first, and then developed into NSC 68, and finally produced the Eisenhower Doctrine which included the entire Middle East.$^{246}$ On the other side, Stalin, who was afraid of any uncontrollable US offensive behavior aiming at systemic transformation at the Soviet’s expanse, acted offensively on any possible marginal issue area. He supported the communist parties in Western Europe, threatened Turkey for territorial expansion, tried to build a communist state on the Persian Gulf, and supported the North Korean invasion of the South.


$^{246}$ Truman Doctrine clarifies US guarantees and assistance for Greece and Turkey against any Soviet threat. NSC 68 was one of the building blocks of US foreign policy for the entire Cold War history which further militarized and intensified US position, especially before the Korean War. Eisenhower Doctrine granted the United States’ further involvement into the Middle Eastern affairs.
Whatever the motivations of both sides were, whatever the strategies followed were, because of the concentrated power structure, all conflicts were taking place on the margins, in covert forms, and, on the Soviet side, cautiously. For this simple reason, despite the large number of competition fields and increased tension, the early years of Cold War did not produce a major systemic conflict. Major confrontations would emerge in the distributed power structure of the second era in the Cold War.

2.1. Increasing Aggression and Spreading Tensions on Minor Issue Areas: From European Central Front to the Southern Flank and from the Southern Flank to the Far East

Cold War started in Europe on the ashes of the Second World War. A divided Berlin specifically or Germany generally was the central front during the entire Cold War history both in symbolic and real terms. But because of the increased number of aggressive behaviors during the early Cold War the superpower competition quickly followed a centrifugal fashion and globalized. That globalization process can be discussed under three subtitles. Accordingly, in this section, the central events in Europe, southern flank, and Far East will be discussed thematically rather than chronologically.

Firstly, for the European theatre Marshall Plan, the First Berlin Crises of 1949-49, formation of NATO and later Warsaw Pact are presented under the guidance of the evaluation of containment strategy. Secondly, developments in the crises of Greece, Turkey and Iran are used as the cases of spreading Cold War aggression on the Southern flank under the guidance of Truman Doctrine. Additionally, the Suez Crisis is introduced under the same title in relation with the Eisenhower Doctrine to show the spread of the Cold War to the Middle East. Finally, Korean War and its
mutually constitutive relation with the NSC 68 will be discussed as the final stage (not in time but in scope) of the first era of Cold War.

**The strategy of Containment and the European Theater**

Europe was the central front of the Cold War. It was divided into two parts by the two external superpowers for the first time in the history of the old continent. Previous colonialist major powers were losing their position to determine as active international players even their own destiny without the participation of new superpowers. Colonial times were over and European territories became the new battleground. Both for its symbolic and geo-strategic significance the “invading” superpowers were highly prioritizing their gained positions in Europe. They were determined to defend their area of influence. The orientation to sustain the status quo in Europe produced Soviet and American aggressive stands which were characterized by observing any possible space of maneuvering. Mainly because of the lack of enough spaces, they maintained already established positions with aggressive and preventive stands. However, that aggressive tension in Europe, despite the recurring crises, did not produce a systemic major confrontation between the superpowers in the early Cold War because of the concentrated power structure in favor of the US. Soviet aggressive behaviors in forms of subtle and covert strategies were interrupted when faced with US preventive measures.

Based on their history, Soviets viewed Europe as the source and Eastern Europe as the route of any threat. When it had the opportunity of spreading its control by overexpansion, Soviet Union did not miss it. Soviet control was expanded far into Germany where it met with other allied forces. That status quo was a valuable asset for any reason. On the level of orientation, Soviet Union would support the already established order in Europe. However, sustaining that order
would require taking preventive actions in maintaining a long-term aggressive process of behaviors. At first glance, it might appear as if Soviet Union was acting defensively to protect what it gained but a deeper look illustrates that the already established area of influence was an overexpansion and it was mainly defended by aggressive strategies as for instance the Berlin Crisis case of 1948-49 will illustrate. If it was possible there is no reason to believe that Soviet Union would limit its influence into Eastern and Central Europe. It stopped where it was no more possible to move further because of the gap between the Soviet and American capabilities.

On the other side, the US presence in the Western Europe was more interesting than the Soviet presence in the Eastern. Soviets at least shared a territorial border with Europe and it might have been considered as a source of security threat. But for the United States, secured as a self-sufficient continental power, isolated from the Eurasian mainland, there was clearly no immediate security threat arising from Europe. The only unfavorable consequence of a communist invasion of the Western Europe would be in economic terms which were far from survival needs. On security terms, only a characterization of Europe as a stepping stone for a possible invasion of the United States could be considered as a threat which was unimaginable even during the severest crises times of the Cold War. For this reason, US leaders, who were not aware of the changing power structure yet, were considering the schedule of US withdrawal from Europe.²⁴⁷

But in a few years it was clear that the international power structure was different and the new structure would produce new identities, orientations, and behaviors.²⁴⁸ The United States was no

²⁴⁸ An interesting comparison of US motivations and actions between the ends of first and second World Wars could be made to illustrate how the different power structures of interwar years and early Cold War years shaped US identity, motivation and behavior. The US in a more distributed power structure of interwar years aimed to change
more an isolationist economic giant; it was the greatest superpower. It was motivated to protect that international environment and was acting aggressively by maintaining its position in Europe, instead of standing aside. Not the individual survival motivation but the view on international structure was the central concern. The US was not a unit wishing to survive but a superpower desiring to sustain a favorable order and acting offensively. The only thing that would limit its behavior was the limit of its capabilities and newly available spaces, despite the limited desire to maintain the status quo. Therefore US desires were not unlimited but its behaviors would be limited only with its capabilities. For the sake of a limited aim of protecting the international system, it acted offensively, by spreading to the limits of its power.

By the end of the Second World War, the lines between the United States and Soviet Union were already drawn. Therefore there were just a limited number of cases to operate aggressively. In territorial terms the only ambiguous case, as will be explained below, was Berlin so it became an area of crisis as expected. Beyond that European theatre served as an area of aggressive covert operations or reinforcements by building alignment and economic systems to preventively formalize and institutionalize the status quo. It was also contributing to the spread of Cold War competition to the periphery.

The Strategies of Containment

George Kennan’s “Long Telegram” and his X article in Foreign Affairs generally appears to be one of the most significant early drafts of the US Cold War position against the Soviet Union as initial suggestions of foreign policy behavior.\textsuperscript{249} Kennan’s articulation of containment became one of the main tenets of the US Cold War policy. The containment proposal was based on

Kennan’s first hand observations about the Soviet leaders’ intentions and the Soviet Union’s nature. Therefore Kennan’s depiction of the Soviet Union and view of the possibility of the future competition was a combination of his Realist (even defensive realist if we name it anachronically) perspective as well as his ideological view. He defined the Soviet Union as expansionist because of its communist despotic nature and he mainly proposed to take preventive measures on important areas, which could be a target of Soviet expansion. Therefore Kennan’s analysis as a mixture of his theory and ideology was already confusing. While the rival was described as offensive, the US was assumed as defensive. That description of the superpowers remained untouched until sixties and justified firm US stand, even beyond Kennan’s initial aims.

Because of its centrality in the origins and continuation of the Cold War this strategy drew substantial attention from the students of the Cold War. Those historians evaluating the proposal of containment depicted it as a status quo-oriented defensive strategy. However, such a view of containment offered by Kennan misses the significant gap between the proposal itself and its implications on the field. What was proposed in this highly influential approach is interpreted as offering entirely defensive measures of foreign policy against an entirely offensive rival. Based on this logic, the US administration was offered to take necessary defensive measures to counter the expansion of the Soviet Union. Kennan found the roots of Soviet expansionism in its nature as a communist despotic state while he depicted US interests under Soviet threat. Kennan was clearly aiming for the limitation of Soviet Union, but his offered strategies were in fact preventive, therefore, aggressive by nature.

Even though he was differentiating between core areas of US involvement and unnecessary areas, his status quo oriented motivations would require taking preventive actions in the

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implementation. Despite the general defensive tone in the containment strategy, the implementation process was quite offensive. Even in principle it was offering taking necessary steps before it was too late. In addition to rebuilding the German and Japanese economies the US started the process of militarizing the Atlantic and Pacific. Starting with the Marshall fund which would mean the institutionalization of US hegemony in economic terms, the US moved towards the establishment of Western Germany and by militarizing it made Germany the central front of the Cold War in the European theater.

In addition to its preventive nature in principle even in Europe, it was also used as a preventive strategy all around the world in practice. Instead of building strong points just in the significant regions with their military industrial capabilities as offered by Kennan, the subsequent US administrations followed a path of dealing with any problem area on the globe by directly or indirectly intervening. With the Truman Doctrine, the US responsibilities covered Turkey and Greece and even Iran by building the southern flank in the name of containment. With the Korean War, the US once more followed an offensive policy to protect the status quo again in the name of containment. The desire to protect the status quo combined with the self-confidence in the US capabilities produced a strange amalgam of rhetoric and policy that became increasingly offensive in action by spreading the US responsibilities to all regions. The final stage of those offensive behaviors produced by defensive intentions and a strange concern that culminated in the belief of domino theories, which belongs only to the powerful side, was reached in the Vietnam War. Despite the arguments to limit the strategy of containment to the defense of strong points, the US administrations either as the initiator or the respondent party repeatedly intervened in the perimeter. According to Glantz:

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251 Revisionists generally try to highlight this argument.
Containment, in the view, typified Western political efforts to restore the global status quo by the restoration of the economic, political, and ultimately the military power of West Germany and Japan. Containment also entailed creation of anti-communist political-military alliances, such as NATO, CENTO, and SEATO, and the provision of direct military and political assistance in the form of the Truman Doctrine to states threatened by communism, such as Turkey and Greece. The economic corollary of these political programs was the Marshall Plan.  

The entire history of the containment policy is a paradigm case to illustrate the defensively motivated offensivism that on every stage increased US responsibilities and commitments. Despite the belief in the US support for the status quo, in the implementation process the policies of containment were in form of offensive foreign policy behaviors. Kennan repeatedly criticized the US governments for the lack of a fine tuning in the process of implementation. However, it is also clear that even Kennan himself was having the difficulty of drawing the line between offensivism and defensivism. He never provided that clear distinction. He raised these arguments in policy papers rather than a comprehensive study. Therefore it is not surprising that the US intervention even in Vietnam was considered to be part of containment strategy.

Kennan’s proposal was embraced because it was reflecting US orientations but on the behavioral level most of its limitations were disregarded by all US governments because not US motivations but the concentrated power structure shaped foreign policy behaviors. One can speculatively argue that it was used to show US aggression as a part of a defensive strategy. We do not know and we will never know whether the US governments consciously used the term containment in order to justify their aggressive polices or they really believed that they were acting defensively. What is observable is that there was a clear gap between the motivations presented and adopted

253 Gaddis, John Lewis, *Strategies of Containment*. 
by the US governments and the actions taken by the same governments. The following cases serve to illustrate status quo-oriented offensive behaviors in Europe.

**Marshall Plan, 1947: Economic Commitment**

Marshall Plan was an economic recovery program proposed by US Secretary of State George Marshall in June 1947. The program was based on growing US concern about the economic situation in Europe that deteriorated during the Second World War and was viewed as open to local and external Communist propaganda and manipulation in some European countries. Additionally, the program also indicated the concern to revive the economies of US trade partners. Because of the increasing “dollar gap,” which was an outcome of the export/import imbalance at the expense of European countries, West European economy would remain in decline. The US Senate approved to provide financial assistance in order to restore the economic structure. According to the logic of the Marshall Plan, European economies would be able to cooperate with the US on economic grounds and the risks of communist influence would be diminished. The Plan was not limited to Western Europe on the initial stages. It was offered to the Soviet Union and its area of influence, too. However, Stalin promptly rejected the offer and put pressure on the states under his influence since “the Soviets saw them [Marshall Plan and West German currency reform] creating a pole of economic attraction to lure away their East European clients.”

An assessment of the aims of Marshall Plan clearly illustrates the US intention to protect the status quo in the system. It aimed a rebuilding of the liberal open trade and cooperative order. Its aims were consistent with the more general strategies of early US Cold War thinking that

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254 Especially, Italy, France, and Greece.
focused on the protection of the system. However, on the implication stage it was clearly an aggressive strategy to increase US economic responsibilities and autonomy. “The aim of the Marshall Plan was the ultimate restoration of balance in Europe by quickly getting the weakened nations of Western Europe to their feet again; but its purposes were broader politically and even more generous economically, since Marshall Plan Aid was offered to Eastern Europe, including Russia, too.”\textsuperscript{256} It started the direct US influence on economic affairs of Europe and became an early building block of the Cold War division. It increased and institutionalized the integration of European and American economies which would require further American engagement on all European affairs. Increased economic integrity would mean increased interdependency which would require political and military engagement too because of the spillover effect of increased economic integration.\textsuperscript{257} As part of that political and military engagement, it paved the way for the establishment of NATO which was the peak level of US aggressive behaviors in Europe in form of commitment rather than containment.

Most importantly, the US was taking over the British responsibility of sustaining the liberal open trade policies which would have interventionist implications in the long run as was clear from the British example.\textsuperscript{258} The US was no more an isolationist economic giant standing apart the Eurasian mainland. Rather it would be the new regulator and protector of liberal international order. So whatever the US motivation was, its implications would require increased US involvement.

Marshall Plan represents the first example of the status quo-oriented offensive action of the US. Describing an economic plan of reconstruction as an offensive foreign policy might appear as an

\textsuperscript{257} For the functionalist theory of economic integration, see: Haas, Ernst, \textit{The Obsolescence of Regional Integration Theory} (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1975).
exaggeration, but this criticism misses the circumstances of the time. Although it might seem quite familiar and ordinary in these days, it was a highly aggressive foreign policy behavior in spreading the US influence in a time when isolationist views were still dominating American society. Also, this was the first stage of US activism that justified further American action in the long-run for a society that, in the end, would support open trade and engagement.

The First Berlin Crisis, 1948-49: Political Commitment

Berlin was the most significant flashpoint in Europe in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. It was divided into four occupation zones among the invading partners. With the development of the Cold War division it represented the European central front and became the battleground of superpower politics. Berlin was a consequence of trying to settle the more general German question but at the same time became a prominent complication in contributing to the general impasse of the Cold War. As a significant symbol, the city that fell under the Soviet dominated East German territories was cut off from direct Western influence but was also the Achilles’ heel for the communist camp. Berlin was an asset for the US while it was a liability for the Soviet Union in the concentrated power structure of the early Cold War, even if it would be a liability for the US and an asset for the Soviet Union in the distributed power structure of sixties. For the maintenance of the status quo, both sides would like to protect their position in Berlin without another favorable solution, like for instance the full control of Berlin.

The first Berlin crisis cannot be understood by focusing on Stalin’s motivations and actions as a defensive or offensive leader. The roots of the issue should be traced back to the early positioning of the invaders in Berlin. Taking Stalin as the initiator of the crisis is illusory since it takes the days before the Berlin Blockade as a normal situation. However, the situation in Berlin
was already abnormal. The Western powers were actually in search of that abnormality. They were trying to maintain an independent island that was threatening the geopolitical integrity of the other side. Stalin’s aggressive action of starting the blockade was in search of territorial integrity. Even before the blockade, Berlin was a battleground and in crisis.

It seems that Stalin viewed Berlin as a liability that could serve as a stepping stone for any form of US aggression in political or military terms. If Soviet Union did not want an unfavorable US aggression in any form a preventive action was necessary. The capitalist presence in West Berlin was already quite aggressive for Stalin. He might have considered responding in a covert aggression. He tried to kick the capitalists out of Berlin on the level of action in order to prevent any unfavorable US aggression targeting the already gained Soviet privileges in Europe. “In short, the security dilemma caused by a fluid status quo plausibly explains Stalin’s overaggressive, counterproductive policies in Europe in the late 1940.”

On the other side, it seems that the US thought Berlin as an important asset in controlling Soviet aggression or operating against it. In addition to its symbolic value as the capital of Third Reich, Berlin could serve as a Western leverage point against the communist East. Despite being a headache in the coming years it was considered to be an important asset at the early phases of the Cold War. Therefore, US behavior in Berlin was already a continuing aggression in spreading US autonomy and responsibilities in search of the maintenance of a US-dominated world. Berlin was the foremost garrison of the US dominance in Europe. Through the airlift and counter-blockade consisting of trade sanctions, the US reconfirmed its firm stand that shows it would not leave Berlin, which seemed as an important asset at that time. It was a beachhead in the unsettled

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communist territory. It would turn into being the main weak spot of the US position in Europe in the sixties.

The first Berlin crisis despite its seriousness and despite its capacity to transform the superpower behavior in the early Cold War was not a major crisis. It seems more like as a test of the firmness of both sides. When it was understood that both superpowers were determined to maintain their position in Berlin the crisis then was frozen to be started in a new phase with a different power structure, so with completely different aims and forms of behaviors. Therefore, a comparison of the first and second Berlin crises in the next section helps to develop a better understanding of the difference between concentrated and distributed power structures.

NATO, 1949: Institutionalized Military Commitment

NATO became the final stage of deepening US commitments in Europe. It formalized and institutionalized United States’ continued military presence. Initiated by the activities of European countries, NATO was presented as a military alliance in defense of Europe. Based on this presentation to some extent and equally because of the extensity of balance of power understanding in alliance formation literature and its defensive bias,260 there is a common tendency in the literature to treat NATO as a defensive military alliance at the surface level. Surely alliances are formed “against, and only derivatively for, someone or something.”261 NATO was clearly targeting any Soviet threat to Western Europe. Therefore, it can be admitted

as a defensive organization but, in fact, it was a result of status quo-motivated offensive behaviors.

It is clear that NATO served to defend Western Europe from Soviet power. It can be argued that it was a production of survival needs of European countries but for the US it was not an alignment serving its survival needs. Not US motivation to survive, but the orientation to sustain the international order was the main reason behind the US action. Establishment of a military alliance in Europe could not be motivated by any US concern about survival, which was surely under protection already. Even if NATO can be characterized as a defensive alliance, it was not because of a wish to survive, but because of a wish to defend a favorable order.

As a consequence, US motivation did not arise from an immediate threat. Therefore, the action taken can be characterized as a preventive behavior for a far away concern. It was an aggressive institutionalized commitment that exchanged nothing in response. European countries assured US security umbrella without significantly contributing to the aggregation of power.262 Alliances are by nature tradeoff relations in which state autonomies are shared with partners for the sake of power aggregation. States are expected to form alliances only when they have to combine their capabilities, otherwise an alliance would be an unnecessary commitment.

According to Acheson “NATO, backed by the destructive power of the United States, would sustain the military division – and thus the stability – of Europe with a vengeance, it would not do more.”263 But it did more. The US behavior in establishing NATO neither contributed to


power aggregation significantly, nor provided security. In contrast, it increased the possibility of US involvement by institutionalizing its commitments to European security. Therefore, such a behavior cannot be explained by solely referring to US survival motivation. US desire to protect the status quo and its capabilities, which caused to the luxury of producing exaggerated fears and making preventive commitments. Some other reasons for US commitment to NATO can be addressed like taking the full control of European affairs and legitimizing the presence of US military forces in Europe. But in any case American behavior was clearly an aggressive action to take any necessary preventive measures. NATO was more about cementing US engagement in the world, than defending Europe. It was power aggregation at the distribution of power level (not military level) in that the US cemented itself as an active world power.

It is common to refer to NATO as a part of the general containment strategy and therefore defining it as a defensive alignment behavior. However, its implications were clearly far from the aims provided by the containment strategy. As Lukacs convincingly put it at an early time “there was an important difference between NATO and Containment that has remained obscured and unresolved until the present day. The original purpose of Containment – at least in Kennan’s concept – was to build up Western Europe and commit the United States in her defense so that after a while Russia’s rulers would see how their aggressive behavior was leading them to nowhere.”

Lukacs clarifies another distinction this time between the aims and outcomes of NATO. “Where the original purpose had been the ultimate dissolution of the division of Europe and Germany, NATO was to contribute to the hardening of that division into permanence.”

Warsaw Pact, 1955: Institutionalized Military Involvement

Similarly, the Warsaw Pact did not contribute to the unit level survival of Soviet Union directly. In fact, the Soviets were already controlling the Eastern Europe before the Warsaw Pact Treaty was signed among communist states. Although there is an image that the Warsaw Pact was created as a defensive organization in response to NATO, this is not the most salient description. NATO was formed in 1949 and was already a mature organization when the Warsaw Pact was signed in 1955. “It was not formed in response to the creation of NATO, which had already been in existence for six years, nor was its establishment warranted by any increased military threat that Moscow may have perceived at the time.”

Although it was signed just a week after the West German entry into NATO and that appears to be the immediate cause, it does not seem as a proper cause to explain the origins of Warsaw Pact. “The primary objective was to create conditions that would allow for trading the dissolution of the nascent Warsaw Pact for dissolution of the mature NATO. The text of the Warsaw Pact treaty, therefore, mirrored in important ways the provisions of NATO’s founding document. That such a bad bargain had no chance of being entertained by the West did not mean that Khrushchev, with the faith of a true believer in the irresistible advance of Communism, did not think that it could be, provided the capitalists could be compelled to see they had no chance.”

It seems that Soviet leaders’ main concern was not about any threat to their survival but was mostly related to what they liked to call, the general “correlation of forces.” The Pact was expected to serve political rather than military aims. Whatever the main idea behind it was, the Pact was on the behavioral level “preventive consolidation of the Soviet hold on Eastern

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Europe.”269 It can be presented as legitimizing Soviet involvement in Eastern Europe since it was mainly used as a justification for Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 under the concept of “fraternal mutual aid.” However, in reality the Soviet Union would not need the cover of the Warsaw Pact to intervene to the intra-communist bloc affairs. In short, Soviet leaders held a stability oriented aim in establishing the Pact but on the operations level it was an aggressive foreign policy act that institutionalized Soviet activism, responsibility, and commitment in Eastern Europe.

2.2. From Central Europe to the Southern Flank: From Truman to Eisenhower Doctrine

By the end of the Second World War, Europe was already divided between the US and Soviet spheres of influences. Actions taken or motivations held by both superpowers were in accordance with the general impasse reached by the end of the War. Despite efforts from both sides to loosen the other side’s strict borders of influence, because of the already occupied territories of Europe and deployed troops of both superpowers, which fixed and reinforced the division, any effort of finding niches in Europe for the promotion of autonomy would be limited.

US overt and covert actions of providing support for the anti-communist forces in Soviet occupied lands was mostly temporary and far from any chance of success. The Soviet behavior was similar. Soviet administration produced a rhetoric of supporting communist groups in the Western part of Europe like in Italy and France.270 But these areas were already too far from Soviet influence. For these general reasons the main issue areas in Europe in the early Cold War was on some moot areas like the status of Berlin. Both sides tried to reinforce their spheres while

loosely trying to interfere to the other’s area. Despite the repeated search for offensive behaviors in different issue areas it was difficult to find new maneuvering spaces.

However, stability oriented aggressive behaviors were not limited to Europe. It became a process working simultaneously in different regions. At the very early stages of the Cold War, stability oriented aggressive behaviors reached to the southern flank of Europe. It emerged like a consequence of a power vacuum. Any area that has a power vacuum became the target of superpowers that wished to sustain systemic stability. The southern flank of European central front was composed of three minor states that were experiencing either internal disturbance or external pressure or both. Iran was already under the joint occupation of British and Soviet forces. In Greece, the internal chaos was under close Soviet and British surveillance as both were the supporters of competing groups. Turkey as a country that felt Russian threat for centuries was now facing a prepared Russian empire that emerged as the predominant power of its region because of the British weakness to form a balance in the centuries long confrontation.271

For the Soviet Union, which was concerned with its systemic position in an environment that was turning more and more hostile against its interests, all these three areas would be weak spots in the systemic competition. As the European theatre was being set or were already fixed in some areas, the southern flank seemed as an area of enlarging the Soviet space for operation. In all these three issue areas Stalin tempted to act aggressively because he was able to find room for aggression in these areas. Because of the possible costs of a direct confrontation with the US in Europe on central issues, Stalin’s changing the target to different areas made sense. Stalin might have thought that the US would not stand firmly against his search in these areas that might be

seen as marginal for the US or he might have wanted to test the US firmness\(^\text{272}\) or by any fait accompli he might have considered the possibility of gaining a leverage. These kinds of considerations were in line with Stalin’s general search for new areas of influence to protect Soviet position in the system.

Stalin’s motivations have been an area of controversial issue. Ranging from his psychological status to the impact of communist ideology on his foreign policy behavior and from Russian foreign policy tradition to his realist foreign policy behavior, there are multiple premises about his real intentions. Different premises might be used to find out Stalin’s real intentions for different cases. For instance one can argue that Stalin was following the traditional Russian policy of finding an access to the open seas in the cases of Iran and/or Turkey.\(^\text{273}\) One can argue that Stalin was a chronic expansionist as orthodox historians depicted. Another argument might be based on an assumption over the impact of communist ideology on Stalin that was motivating him to expand.\(^\text{274}\) Or as it is the case in most Cold War histories, a bunch of these premises can be presented as the factors shaping Stalin’s intentions. In any case these kinds of explanations do not produce consistent explanations.

If Stalin was a chronic expansionist why did he follow extremely cautious policies when he confronted with the US pressure? If he was following the traditional Russian policy of finding an access to the open seas why the same man did not do it 5 years previously, for instance? There might be some other explanations of Stalin’s motivation which is a combination of the all above mentioned premises. This is indeed the mainstream explanation for Stalin’s foreign policy. He is

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defined as the combination of different foreign policy motivations and one of them is applied in one case and another of them is applied in another case. This is hardly an explanation of Stalin’s foreign policy behavior. This just shows the inability of historians to find a consistent explanation for Stalin.

It seems that in order to understand what Stalin really wanted, an analysis has to start with the specific power structure and Soviet position in that structure. Stalin was the leader of a state with huge capabilities that was comparable to only a remote superpower. By 1945 Soviet Union was holding a favorable position in its region but was still open to the US threat on weak spots. So any change in the system that would draw the US attention would cause an undesired transformation. Therefore the Soviet Union was highly restricted. Only available actions could be taken on the margins by fait accompli and/or in subtle ways. Those actions should have been taken before the US involvement and circling. Whatever Stalin’s motivations were, his actions were aggressive and subtle. He acted aggressively because he was afraid of an undesired change in the system and also he was able to act aggressively on the margins. This was not a balancing behavior which would require targeting the United States by definition.

On the other side, the United States’ response to Stalin’s aggression in the southern flank was “firm and determined,” although any US intervention in the Near East was an unthinkable foreign policy behavior a few years ago, as clarified in Kuniholm’s classical study:

As late as 21 February 1946 the Joint Chiefs of Staff argued that the United States should avoid a military commitment to American interests in the Near East, other than through the United Nations, because of geographic distances and the impracticability of assured lines of communication. In March 1946, however, a major crisis in Iran forced the Truman administration to recognize that the United Nations had serious

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limitations, and taught the State Department that bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the Northern Tier [that was the southern flank of European central front] countries were not practicable means of preventing the Soviets from encroaching upon their Near Eastern neighbors. The administration, in light of its interests in the Middle East, recognized the necessity of dealing firmly with the Soviets and responded the Soviet maneuvering over Turkey in the fall of 1946 by reformulating American policies toward the Northern Tier and the Eastern Mediterranean. Greece, Turkey and Iran were seen in their historical geographical role of dividing East and West, and the territorial integrity of the region was defined in terms of the strategic security interests of the United States.\textsuperscript{276}

Truman Doctrine in response to Soviet aggression reinforced the newly emerging US identity as an overseas superpower which included Near East into its strategic security interests. The new superpower position motivated the US to take British responsibilities in caring events taking place not only in its immediate region or prior regions like Europe, but also in the Near Eastern countries. The concentrated power structure in favor of the US shaped its identity and orientations. Persian Gulf first, then with the Truman Doctrine Turkey and Greece and lastly with the Eisenhower Doctrine the entire Middle East would be defined as part of prior security interests of the United States.

Although both superpowers rapidly acted offensively by spreading their areas of influence into the Middle East in the early stages of the Cold War, this increased competition in the Middle East did not produce any systemic confrontation. Stalin promptly stepped back in cases of Iran, Turkey and Greece and Khrushchev’s involvement in the Suez Crisis and his later alignment with Egypt remained as parts of competition in the perimeter without any major crisis.

\textsuperscript{276} Kuniholm, Bruce R., \textit{The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece}, p: 212.
Iran

Iran crisis of 1946 was one of the first examples of stability oriented offensive policies out of Europe. Iran was jointly occupied by Soviet and British forces during the Second World War in order to use it as a route of supplies. According to war time agreements among British, American, and Soviet authorities, both British and Soviet forces would withdraw their forces six months after the war. However Stalin followed an opportunist policy of fait accompli by creating an independent Azeri state on the North.

The US response to this Soviet expansionist move was to send *Missouri* to the Eastern Mediterranean. It was an early sign of US involvement not only in Europe but also in other regions like the Persian Gulf. Since then the US became a major player of Iranian politics, including the coup to depose nationalist Prime Minister Mossadegh and modernization of Iran under the US control to create a loyal ally. On the other side, despite his offensive act of spreading the Soviet area of influence Stalin stepped back since he was aware of the possible costs of a confrontation with the US. Therefore, Iran crisis did not produce any minor or major conflict.

Iran crises illustrates that both sides were concerned with the protection of the status quo emerged after the War. The possibility of a fait accompli served as a source of Stalin’s aggression. Stalin acted aggressively but not for the sake of an evil master plan.277 He was aware of the Soviet potential and US government was comfortable with its favorable situation in the system. Both superpowers would not want to shake the roots of the international stability and especially “the Soviet Union seemed reluctant to confront the West militarily even along its

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Iranian and Turkish borders where its strategic advantage was profound.”

Therefore the crises over Iran did not cause a confrontation between the superpowers.

**Turkey and Greece**

Just a few months after a new crisis over Turkey erupted and it was handled by the US together with an ongoing crisis in Greece. Soviet administration demanded Kars and Ardahan, two Eastern provinces of Turkey, and the right of maintaining a military base and access to the open seas through the Dardanelles and Bosporus. Despite the presence of an agreement reached between Turkey, Britain, and France in 1939, which provided a territorial guarantee for Turkey and Straights, Soviet leaders put pressure on Turkey by threatening to use force if required. On the other side, Greek Civil War was another area of crisis. The US officials were concerned about the possibility of a communist victory in the Civil War and the fall of Greece to the communist camp seemed as an important threat for the allies’ position in the Middle East.

Because of the weakness of Britain and France to counter Soviet acts, the US, encouraged by Britain, added a new area of responsibility into its portfolio with the Truman Doctrine by declaring that: “it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.”

The US government decided and the Congress ratified 400 million dollars of foreign aid in support of Turkey and Greece. Additionally, the US symbolic act of carrying the dead body of Turkish ambassador Munir Ertegun to Istanbul was a sign of US involvement and guarantee for Turkish Straits. The Soviet response to this American involvement was again easing the tension.

One more crisis was again solved by the US power with no minor or major war.

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It seems that Soviet leaders had just a small amount of chance to open a space for maneuvering in Europe beyond the already controlled territories. The European theater was already divided between two spheres of influences. Despite some minor overt and covert actions from both sides, the relations in Europe, left Berlin aside, reached on an impasse. This was the main cause of expansionist policies followed in the immediate borders of the central front. The most important three cases were Iran, Turkey, and Greece. While the Soviet Union followed opportunistic policies in all these three cases, which were not under direct US control, the United States also acted offensively by committing itself to the security of the Near East.

The US behavior in the Near East was not based on the search for security or power it was because of US power. Paranoid domino theories would arise not from fear but from a luxury of power. If the US was not powerful enough to fight all around the globe it would not care about a revolution or an invasion in south Asia or Africa. However, because of its capabilities the US felt free to be more and more concerned and more and more fearful. Not only European theatre but also southern flank was important. It was important because the US had that capability of feeling its importance.

Roosevelt’s disregard of the Near East is a well-known fact. For Roosevelt and also for early Truman government Near East was not a prior security area since the responsibility of regulating it fell to Britain. However, for the late Truman government, Near East was defined as an area of “free peoples” in search of US support. “The United States, unwilling to provide a guarantee to Iran and Turkey in 1945, was now giving all three Northern Tier countries “positive” encouragement and assistance, and in the event that the United Nations was unsuccessful in

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stopping Soviet aggression, the United States was prepared to meet armed aggression by the force of arms.”²⁸¹

Whatever its motivation was, even protecting the stability in the system in general and in the Middle East and Southeastern Europe privately, the Truman Doctrine and its implications meant the spread of a European Cold War to other regions. Stalin was concerned with further US and Western expansion in his immediate borders because of excessive US power. For this reason he was in search of gaining key areas to promote Soviet autonomy. Soviet Union displayed offensive behaviors in Iran, Turkey and Greece. US response came in an institutionalized offensive form. With Truman doctrine first and Baghdad Pact attempt secondly, the US increased the level and broadened the scope of envelopment of the Soviet Union. European Cold War became a multi-regional phenomenon. In all these three cases of Southern Flank events despite the Soviet involvement and opportunistic and expansionist behaviors at the early stages in covert and overt forms, because of the excessive US power Soviet Union stepped back and avoided from a direct confrontation with the US. Increased number of minor crisis and increased level of offensive behaviors in the system did not cause a major crisis.

**Truman Doctrine**

Truman Doctrine is generally considered to be a part of containment strategy since it aimed to contain Soviet expansion. It was indeed the first offensive violation of limited containment strategies generated by Kennan. Kennan was originally talking about supporting the strong points and reviving their economies and military capabilities to serve as a balance against a possible Soviet expansion. Kennan’s view can be summarized as building a world system in

which the responsibility of standing against Soviet Union would be transformed to regional actors which would be supported by the US. But Truman Doctrine pledged full support to even to minor states by enlarging the front and setting a flank in the war. The US was committing itself by providing security umbrellas rather than containing the Soviet Union by building strong points of defense. US foreign policy became aggressive in terms of form by commitments and also in terms of scope by enlargements.

Truman government by enlarging the containment strategy and interpreting it as a commitment policy showed that the US was determined to act aggressively against any act of change. Later with the Eisenhower Doctrine the US pledge would be enlarged to include entire Middle East which shows that the US entered into an irreversible process of aggressively intervening in all issue areas for the sake of protecting the given system. That process would be further formalized and institutionalized when Turkey and Greece was admitted to NATO after the Korean War. By doing this US would ultimately remove any difference between the strong points of containment and the areas of unnecessary engagement. Truman Doctrine, later NSC 68 and also Eisenhower Doctrine all would mistakenly be considered as part of containment strategy, even though the original conception of containment was more restrictive than these later blurred interpretations of containment.

Despite the repeatedly announced intentions of protecting the international system, the US, with the process of Truman Doctrine, entered into a circle of foreign policy that made no differentiation among the issue areas. Truman Doctrine would not remain as the only example of this blurred view of defensive containment strategy. Rather it would contribute to the further confusion as a success story of limiting Soviet aggressions and would be used repeatedly by successive US administrations to present, either consciously or unconsciously, their offensive
actions as defensive behaviors. Even for Kuniholm who confirms the “success” of Truman Doctrine “The trouble with it was its conception. If one were to find fault; it would have to be in its rationalization, in the legacy of that rationalization, and in analogies engendered by the policy’s success in the Near East. Subsequent to the Truman Doctrine, the apparent success to American policies in Iran, Turkey, and Greece let the Truman and later administrations to look to those policies as models of how to deal with the Soviet Union and its apparent satellites, not just in Korea, but in Vietnam as well. The public rationalization of American policies in the Near East also created serious impediments to the perceptions of postwar administration.”282

Suez Crisis, Eisenhower Doctrine and Soviet Egyptian Relations

Suez Crisis is the last case of early Cold War crises in the Middle East that were characterized by the combination of stability oriented motivations and offensive behaviors. Left aside, the British, French, Israeli and Egyptian fait accompli efforts in form of offensive behavior, despite the high amounts of stability orientation on the side of superpowers, both Soviet Union and the United States acted offensively by spreading the Cold War into the Middle East more broadly and deeply as a consequence of the Crisis which triggered the fears of an unexpected change. It seems that both superpowers were holding status quo oriented motivations and for that reason they were both against any act of aggression in the Middle East. However, once the Crisis over Suez erupted as a consequence of multiple aggressive strategies of secondary states, superpowers also adopted status quo oriented aggressive policies. While Soviets entered into the region by forming an alliance with Egypt, the US with Eisenhower Doctrine formalized its aggressive stand.

For the Soviet Union, imagining a favorable change which would increase its influence in the Middle East was a remote possibility because of the effective US containment policies that circled the area and obstructed the Soviet involvement. Any Soviet act would require overcoming effective US control in the region. Despite the existence of some minor contacts between the Soviet Union and the Arab countries, which were in their early stages of state building processes, the Soviet influence in the Middle East was highly restricted. Under these conditions, it seems that the Soviet Union never felt ready to shake the grounds of the order in the Middle East. Any transformation process in the region would turn against the Soviet Union by increasing the US hegemony in the Middle East. Status quo was better than an unmanageable change. It was better than the worst case scenario.

On the other side, the US as the successor of the British colonialism was the de facto ruler of a loose control. The core US involvement in the region was limited to its economic interests. The US firms was the number one trade partner for most of the new Arab regimes, especially in the fields of oil. However, the US involvement in the region had not been broadened to include political and military presence yet. The US would support the order in the Middle East with some minor improvements because it was the main beneficiary of the order in the region. Any major change attempt would create a new condition and direct the US attention and resources to an already beneficial situation from the regions that were more significant and troubling.

On the behavioral level it was probably the first case in which the US and the Soviet Union were not the major participants at the initial stage. In this case the initiators of aggression were not superpowers or some minor states supported by the superpowers. In this first example of aggression, which was initiated independently from the superpowers, they both followed the same track of mitigating the tension and rejecting the autonomy for other states even if three of
the four fighting parties were formal allies of the United States, Egypt set aside, despite its
deteriorating close ties to the US. Both the Soviet Union and the United States favored the status
quo but once it was disturbed both superpowers entered into the process of aggressively
spreading their autonomies in the region.

United States formalized its aggressive foreign policy in the Middle East in form of Eisenhower
Doctrine which declared the commitment of US forces including “the employment of the armed
forces of the United States to secure and protect the territorial integrity and political
independence of such nations, requesting such aid, against overt armed aggression from any
nation controlled by International Communism.”

On the other side Soviet Union also started to act aggressively by concluding formal agreements
or providing informal support to some Arab regimes. Especially Soviet involvement was
institutionalized by the political and military agreements signed with Egypt. Large volumes of
Soviet weapons were sold and increasing number of Soviet military advisors was sent to Egypt
to sustain Nasser’s alignment.

However it seems that there was not even a minor confrontation between the Soviet Union and
the United States in the Middle East. It actually erupted in a time which signified the
transformation within the system from a concentrated to a distributed power structure. When the
positions were fixed in the Suez Crisis and its immediate aftermath the Cold War entered into a
new phase. In this power structure despite their involvements, superpowers would not be
interested in increasing the level of tension in the minor issue areas at the margins. They were
more concerned on the main issues and central fronts. For this reason despite the continuity of

283 Available at: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=11007&st=&st1=#axzz1MgWsRqRX
the presence of the both sides it seems that neither side took an important aggressive step to increase its area of influence. In the following years both side only maintained their autonomy in already established areas.

2.3. From the Southern Flank to the Far East and NSC 68

The final area of stability oriented offensive behaviors was the Far East which would mean the globalization of the Cold War as early as 1950. With the start of the Korean War superpower aggressivsm reached to the Far East in conjunction with the more aggressive NSC 68 which would increase the size of US army “from ten under-strength divisions to eighteen full-strength divisions, with air and sea-power increased proportionally. As a result the total number of US military personnel rose from 1,460,000 to 3,555,000 between June 1950 and June 1954. The strength of US forces stationed in foreign countries also increased during this period, from 280,000 to 963,000 personnel.”

Korean War

Korean War was started by the opportunistic search of Northern Korea and opportunistic support of Stalin. On the intentional level, we know that Stalin was highly concerned about any US involvement around Soviets’ immediate borders. As in the cases of Berlin, Turkey and Iran in the early years of the Cold War, Stalin was in a harsh situation to take sharp steps. He was the leader of a victorious state and the most powerful actor in Eurasia mainland but was still vulnerable to any US change oriented behavior because of a belief in the lack of enough capabilities to counter any US aggression. Therefore Stalin viewed the status quo as an important asset of international reality.

However, on the behavioral level Stalin would not follow a bandwagoning approach since it would increase the Soviet vulnerability. In accordance with his efforts to test US stand and gaining a more solid ground with subtle policies in form of fait accompli was highly tempting. “By 1950, the Korean peninsula was on the brink of war. Stalin decided to provoke a crisis to preserve Soviet strategic interests in the Far East and to thwart U.S. influence in the region… To retain Soviet control of warm-water ports, Stalin approved Kim’s military plans in early 1950 and thus condoned a large-scale war on the Korean peninsula.”

He cautiously and covertly decided finally to support the North Korean decision to start the invasion of the South. Stalin continued to fear the American response to a North Korean attack. He made it clear to Kim that, if he ran into difficulty with the United States, he would have to depend on China, not to Soviet Union, to bail him out.”

He was already aware of his inability to start a confrontation with the US but he was trying to find new spaces of maneuvering by thinking the possibility of the lack of US action.

On the other side, US response was again in form of a renewed aggressive stand. The US, which did not avoid committing itself to world affairs in Europe and Near East, once more showed to Stalin that Washington would not let him to take the advantage of territorial or ideological expansion even in his backyard. Truman administration decided to take action with all necessary means to defend a Far Eastern country. Once again the main intention of the US government was not increasing its power or security but it was based on the search for international stability. It seems that US officials were so concerned about any Soviet expansion in any part of the world that their action reflected a tough standing that would not let even a breathing space for the

communists. Dean Acheson, clarifying the considerations in the administrative circle, writes that “There was quite general uniformity of view that the occasion called for prompt and vigorous action as it became clearer. The president discussed with the soldiers the likelihood of the Soviet Union’s pushing the crisis to general war. The consensus was to the contrary, since the military balance was more favorable to the United States and unfavorable to the Soviet Union than it was likely to continue in the longer run. They were not in favor of using ground forces under conditions then existing.”

It seems that the concentrated power structure in favor of the US created a US orientation to defend it but the same power concentration provided luxury of caring and defending it on the entire globe. It was not the Soviet power but the US power itself that produced US officials’ exaggerated beliefs in domino theories. A superpower would not have that luxury in a distributed power structure. The US cared so much about the entire globe because it had to capability to care about it. It had the capability to believe in the necessity of tough standing even on the perimeters.

The final outcome of Korean War was not a major systemic crisis. It was limited to the Korean Peninsula and North Korea was covertly supported by Soviets even by Chinese that sent “People’s Volunteer Army” to prevent an official confrontation with the United States. Chinese behavior to enter into the War was also a preventive action to fight the war in the Korean Peninsula because of a general concern about a possible US deployment in China. During their meeting Peng Dehuai as the commander of Chinese People’s Volunteers’ Army explained to Mao the strategy of “active defense by putting that “if we allow the enemy [the United States] to occupy the entire Korean Peninsula the threat to our country is very great. In the past when the

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Japanese invaded China they used Korea as a springboard.” 288 All sides, despite their preventive stands were sufficiently cautious in limiting the War into the Peninsula. Therefore the Korean War did not produce a systemic confrontation. “In the end, Korea was important enough to generate a lengthy, bitter, and destructive war but not so important as to produce the ultimate tragedy of another global bloodletting.” 289

NSC 68

Korean War and NSC 68 walked hand in hand. 290 Both were extremely enlarged forms of containment strategy in scope. They indeed mutually constituted each other. Korean Crisis helped the adoption of NSC 68 while NSC 68 finally institutionalized any US preventive action for any part of the entire world. 291 After the adoption of NSC 68, Cold War was no more a European affair or just related to the survival of rival units.

Although it was clearly a more aggressive foreign policy proposal in both language and policy formulations, it was still presented as a continuation of containment strategy. On later stages, it would justify US involvement in any area like Vietnam by eventually removing the line between the prior and secondary interests or regions. It was also the decisive document in the origins of US armament. It was finally formalized by the establishment of SEATO as the illustrative case of the limitlessness of American foreign policy that aimed to sustain the international structure.

Earlier this document was described as a defensively motivated strategy. But later arguments emerged claiming that it was actually an offensive minded strategy. Trachtenberg for instance put that “the most important point to be made about NSC 68 is that this was not a defensive-minded, status-quo oriented document…To support such a policy, it was important to go beyond merely balancing Soviet power and build up.” Melvin Leffler, holder of multiple academic awards mainly because of his invaluable contributions on Truman period, also seems confused on US orientations, as illustrated by the two following statements. He first writes that “Despite its hyperbolic rhetoric, NSC 68 essentially reaffirmed the assumptions that had been driving US foreign policy during the Truman administration.” This sentence depicts the US on defense. However, in the next sentence, Leffler states that “US aims however were not limited to deterring war, containing Soviet expansion, and thwarting internal subversion.” This statement depicts an aggressive US. Which one is the correct interpretation? It seems that this confusion was the product of the consequentialist assumption on the continuity between motivations and actions. Without recognizing the gap between these two elements the nature of NSC 68 cannot be grasped. NSC 68 was status quo oriented on the motivation level as was the case for other policy documents in the early Cold War. However, on the level of behavior, it was sharper to recognize the US luxury to counter any Soviet aggression and was also in agreement with increasing aggressivism both in time and space.

NSC 68 compared to other foreign policy proposal was the definitive one which captured both orientation and behavioral levels of US foreign policy. Containment strategy was embraced

295 Leffler, Melvyn, A Preponderance of Power, p: 356.
because it reflected US orientations but could not predict what would happen as an outcome of that motivation. On the other side, NSC 68 reflected the same orientation of protecting the status quo however offered a more aggressive stand both in scope and form by formalizing the implications of Containment strategy or Truman Doctrine.

Whether it was a correct strategy or not is another question because of its prescriptive nature which is not the aim of the structural theoretical framework provided here. The argument presented is that units in a concentrated power structure act offensively while holding status quo orientation. Therefore NSC 68 is a good case to illustrate that there was an inevitable gap between the orientations and actions on foreign policy. Concentrated power structure which granted a strange combination of self-confidence in the possibility of taking preventive actions and the luxury of exaggerated concerns was the fundamental cause of the gap between US orientation and actions and its increasing trend.296

3. The Second Era: the Real Cold War (1957-1979)

In literature these two decades of the Cold War are generally introduced under two distinct titles as the times of brinkmanship in the sixties and the years of détente in the seventies.297 This division is a consequentialist one based on the systemic outcomes without any theoretical relevance. While the 1960s are characterized by the conventional wisdom as dominated by offensive behaviors on the both sides, 1970s are characterized as dominated by defensive

297 See, for instance: McCauley, Martin, Russia, America and the Cold War (Harlow: Longman, 2004).
behaviors. This general classification of the era is not inspired by a theoretical framework. The lack of that theoretical understanding is compensated by including different factors into the analyses like the personalities of successive leaders in both sides and their approach to the foreign policy and the process of learning that created a new consciousness about the unfruitfulness of the conflict.

If we are going to find the explanation in the personalities of the leaders then one has to explain why did Nixon, who was known as one of the most aggressive political personality in US politics, achieved détente. On the other side, why did the most serious confrontations of the Cold War happen during the time of Kennedy who was known by his cautious approach? Another explanation for the increased systemic tension of sixties is found in the studies focusing on the personality of Khrushchev as a gambler and inconsistent leader shaped by an expansionist ideology.298

In contrast, this section groups the sixties and seventies into the same time interval. The underlining characteristic of that period was the distributed power structure. So what made Nixon a reconciliatory person was the new distribution of power. Kennedy who was ruling the US in a distributed power structure had to follow the general trends in the system whatever his personality or motivations were. Khrushchev is repeatedly depicted as failing to do what he wanted and named as an inconsistent leader when analysts fails to understand the gap between his desires and actions. Khrushchev was also the man of his time, shaped by the a distributed power structure which forced him to hold an orientation for change but also to act in accordance with the power structure.

298 Most studies consistently define him as the man of inconsistency.
The second era of the Cold War starting from the late fifties can be characterized as a distributed power structure. Most of the components of power show that the power in the system was less concentrated compared to the first era. According to the Correlates of War project dataset, by 1957 while the US was holding the twenty five percent of world power the Soviet Union was commanding to seventeen percent of it.\textsuperscript{299} Compared to the figures of early Cold War like 38:11 in 1945 or 28:18 in 1950, these new figures represent a more distributed power structure.

On economic terms, the US hegemonic position was already in decline by the late fifties. “The America that commanded over half the world’s economic production when it forged the international hierarchy in the immediate postwar years now accounted for less than a third.”\textsuperscript{300} Series of five years plans employed in the Soviet Union was building an apparently stable economic progress. In form of a normalization process, the war devastated economies of Europe were starting to stand by decreasing the abnormal US share of economic production.

Left aside the economic developments of the new era, the most significant power indicator of the Cold War would become the nuclear weapons. Most experts on nuclear weapons, in these days claim that in overall terms the US was clearly superior on nuclear weapons until the end of the sixties. “For four years (1945-1949), America held a nuclear monopoly. For the next fifteen years (1950-65), she had a decisive superiority. For five of those fifteen years (1961-65), she may even have had a first strike capability vis-a-vis Russia.”\textsuperscript{301} These figures show that even until the mid-sixties the US nuclear power was superior to Soviet power. However, counting the number of nuclear warheads should not constrain us from seeing a simple fact. When Russian’s rocket system proved its success with Sputnik in eventually in 1957, it became clear that the US

\textsuperscript{299} Available at: \url{http://www.correlatesofwar.org/}
\textsuperscript{301} Art, Robert, \textit{America’s Grand Strategy and World Politics} (New York: Routledge, 2009), p: 127.
territories were vulnerable to Soviet ICBMs (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles) attacks. That Soviet capability created a rough power in the distribution of power. Additionally, “even during the years of its strategic nuclear inferiority, the Soviet Union, with its intermediate range missiles and bombers was able to check America’s strategic superiority by holding Western European cities hostage to nuclear threat. And ever since then the late 1960s the Soviet Union, with its extensive, intercontinental missile capability has been able to hold American cities hostage too.”302 Whatever the situation in other power terms was, the nuclear parity in this new era of the Cold War was the most important indicator of the distributed power structure. As Khrushchev proudly responded to the doubts on power parity, “whether the balance of power was exact, but no matter; each side had enough power to destroy the other.”303 Soviets had finally overcome the problem of US superiority, by promising the US vulnerability at least, on the most significant power component of the time. The parity was roughly reached so a new international power structure emerged.

In conjunction with that fact, this section argues that both the US and the Soviet Union because of the rough parity in their power positions and a more distributed power structure found themselves in an uncomfortable environment. For the Soviet Union (admittedly Soviet rocket technology was the best in the world), despite increased power over the years, its autonomy in any region of the world was strictly limited by the US autonomy. On the other side, the US leaders also felt a similar uneasiness with the new distribution of power. If they had an opportunity to change the structure they would exactly follow that road.

But because of the intersection of autonomies and the lack of a power gap in favor of one side, both superpowers had to follow only defensive policies to protect their autonomies in already established areas rather than expanding. In such a power structure, there can still be minor conflicts. But the distinguishing property of this power structure is the occurrence of major crises in form of direct confrontation that are not limited to minor crises. So was the case in the Cold War. Despite the ongoing minor crises all around the world, which were mostly an outcome of the first era, this period of Cold War was an era of bilateral, direct, and serious confrontation. The most serious two events of the Cold War, maybe, of human history surfaced in this era. In Berlin and Cuban crises the world came to the edges of abyss.

Both crises were the outcomes of change oriented defensive actions. Khrushchev, who wanted a change in the system, viewed Berlin as a tool of shaking the roots of the status quo. However on the level of action, he displayed a series of defensive behaviors which were supported with defensive announcements and finally ended with a symbolically defensive act of building the Berlin Wall. On the other side, the US response was also in defensive nature. Both Eisenhower and Kennedy governments repeatedly pretended to neglect the crisis against Khrushchev’s non-offensive behaviors but provocative rhetoric. Despite the defensive tones embedded in these series of actions, the crisis increasingly grew into a stage of direct confrontation which was characterized by mutual nuclear threats and the only case of conventional confrontation of the Cold War between the superpowers face to face. The world was on the brink of the abyss. For the first time survival of the both sides was genuinely under threat. Therefore the second Berlin Crisis was a systemic major confrontation short of hot war only because of nuclear weapons.

Cuban Missile Crises followed a similar path. It seems that the main objective of Soviet Union was to build a new world order that was more in line with their new power position. Khrushchev
demanded a change in the system. But what he did was actually a defensive behavior. Soviet forces did not invade a new territory or support a revolution to build a communist regime in a newly independent country to promote Soviet area of influence. Soviet Union, by sending nuclear weapons to an already Communist regime, took a defensive action. There was no autonomy promotion. The foreign policy act displayed in Cuba was just about to maintain the given situation. Nuclear weapons, deployed by Russians in Cuba, by their nature are offensively weak tools of change. But because of their deterrence effect they serve to defend the area in which they are located. Despite this defensive nature of Soviet activism in Cuba it produced the possibility of the greatest catastrophe in the world history. The US response to the Cuban Missile Crisis was also similar to the Soviet defensive behavior. Instead of an air attack or invasion of Cuba, Kennedy government employed the policy of Blockade that was again a defensive action by nature in contrast to an air strike or invasion of Cuba alternatives.

The only reason for the absence of a hot major war as an outcome of Berlin and Cuba crises can be found in the nature of power during the Cold War. If there was a similar crisis in a non-nuclear world the outcome would obviously be a major war. Nuclear weapons “helped to prevent the world wars that plagued the planet in the first half of the twentieth century.”

The distributed power structure especially on nuclear terms was again the main motive behind détente which was again a process of change oriented defensive behavior. Nuclear parity, which produced an inevitable stalemate, was the driving force behind the limited autonomy of both superpowers. Despite their increased nuclear capability in the succeeding years, both superpowers kept restricting each other’s room for action. The stalemate produced the discomfort. Only the agents who feel such a discomfort would look for a change in the system.

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304 Art, Robert, America’s Grand Strategy and World Politics, p: 129.
However, aware of the impossibility of bringing a change with offensive means both superpowers followed defensive strategies of foreign policy and opened the path of diplomacy with détente. They saw the period of détente as a time of reconstructing their power bases on different fields, instead of building nuclear weapons that reinforce the uneasy structure. However, the only significant fruit of this process was SALT I. Beyond that there were unproductive diplomatic visits which served to decrease the tension apparently until the disapproval of SALT II by the US Congress in a time when the power gap once more started to increase in favor of the US.

However, there is an interesting case which will be dealt in this era of the Cold War and does not fit into any classification neatly because of its prolonged duration. The Vietnam War which escalated in the 1960s and ended up in the 1970s at first glance seems to be limited with the second era of the Cold War. However, its roots can be traced back into the 1950 when the first US military advisors arrived to the South Vietnam. It was indeed a war started in a different power structure but continued and significantly shaped in a new one. So the US motives and forms of behavior belonged to the early stages so they were shaped by a concentrated power structure but the actual war was mainly fought in a distributed power structure. It was a wrong war in a wrong era on a wrong place against a wrong enemy. The US fought the Vietnam War in a distributed power structure with the motives and behaviors of a concentrated power structure because of the prolonged duration of the war.

This is not to say that the US administrations involved in this long war could not read the new power structure. This is to say that a war once started in a different power structure and goals and strategies defined according to that structure can be kept in such a long crisis. The argument developed in this study is not about decision making processes during wars. It is only about the
decisions to go to war. It says that this war would not be in that shape if it started and ended in the same power structure. The main strategies which were shaped by different kinds of fears employed in an entirely different structure. This was not necessarily a mistake done by US leaders but was about the changing conditions. The US started the war offensively to promote its autonomy in the first era but had to act defensively to maintain it in the second one. This is not to say that American officials were unaware of the new international realities or misinterpreted those realities. However in the midst of an already started war with already set goals, it was not an easy task to perform. Successive leaders repeatedly considered the possibility of a withdrawal. Even Nixon administration was concerned about the possible consequences of an unsuccessful withdrawal. Therefore adjusting the aims of the Vietnam War to the forces of new structure was a difficult task which required a new formula of honorable withdrawal like for instance gaining China while losing Vietnam.305

The Second Berlin Crisis

The Second Berlin Crisis was the first and is a good example of change motivated defensive behaviors. The distributed power structure was clearly annoying for both sides, because of their limited autonomies. Under these circumstances the desire for change was not irrelevant. But offensive behavior was highly unimaginable for both sides. Even though it was provoked by Khrushchev his behaviors during the crises years over Berlin were mainly defensive. He did not initiate an offensive strategy. Instead he made threatening declarations during the crises and finalized the entire crisis with a symbolically defensive act of building the Wall. Although he wanted change, he had to institutionalize the status quo.

The status quo in Berlin was not satisfactory for both sides. However, the nature of change desired for Berlin was different. Soviet Union was expecting to confirm its position in the system by removing the foremost trouble to its sphere of influence. Berlin was the most fundamental constraint for the integrity and autonomy of the Communist world. From the perspective of Soviet leaders, without a change in the status of Berlin, the Soviet Union would be strictly restricted. Compared to the first Berlin crisis, Soviet Union was not only concerned with maintaining its autonomy in Berlin or East Germany but viewing it as a stepping stone to change the status quo. A solution in favor of Moscow would create a totally new international reality.

A comparison of Stalin’s motivations in the first Berlin Crisis and Khrushchev’s aspirations in the second one can help to understand the difference produced by the changing power structure. Stalin did not hold the luxury of calculating any possible long-term consequences of removing allied forces from Berlin for the distribution of power. He was afraid of an unfavorable change in Berlin. But for Khrushchev Berlin was a tool of changing the international system. Surely, one can still argue that there was a clear Western threat for Berlin and Communist world. But as repeatedly cited, unlike Stalin, Khrushchev viewed Berlin as an opportunity of putting pressure on the US. He liked to use his famous testicle analogy on Berlin. He was considering Berlin as West’s testicles and saying that “every time I want to make the West scream, I squeeze on Berlin.”

For Stalin, Berlin was Communist world’s testicles which could be squeezed anytime. “Khrushchev believed he had a chance to shift the status quo in his favor through Berlin. Soviet leaders therefore exerted pressure on the Kennedy administration, a mistaken strategy that only

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promoted international tension and the arms race.”

Soviet leaders’ concerns about a US counteroffensive were sharply decreased because of the acquired power parity. Against Dean Rusk’s threatening tone during a negotiation Soviet Ambassador to Washington Anatoly Dobrynin told to Rusk that “Soviet leadership was not worried about a surprise attack although it was really concerned about the arms race pursued by the United States and the explosive situation in Berlin.”

Soviet leaders knew that they were less vulnerable to American power in the new international environment. That was reflected in the new Soviet view over Berlin. It was no more considered as a threat but was taken as an asset in their desire for a preferable change. It seems that Khrushchev was motivated to bring a change in the system.

The most well-known explanation on the causes of the Second Berlin Crisis is related to Khrushchev’s ambitious personality which was described as “the most provocative, the most daring, and, ironically, the most desirous of a lasting agreement with the American people of any man or woman in the Kremlin.”

There is a common sense in most of the analyses on Khrushchev’s foreign policy that his behaviors were strongly motivated by his brinkmanship identity. His personal identity might be considered as a factor in shaping his thinking about and handling foreign policy. However, this would be an incomplete explanation without contextualizing him into the power structure in which he operated. He could not evaluate Berlin as a tool of change if he was commanding to the Soviet Union during Stalin’s times. For instance, the same Khrushchev did not take the Suez Crisis as an opportunity of change as discussed in the previous section. He was highly concerned about possible consequences of an

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unexpected change in the Middle East. He seemed no less cautious on Middle East than Stalin was on Far East for instance. Both Stalin’s and Khrushchev’s aspirations and concerns were products of their power positions.

On the behavioral level, what Khrushchev did was not an offensive strategy despite his ambitions. He repeatedly made threatening declarations by repeatedly putting new deadlines. His ultimatums were followed by diplomatic proposals like summit meetings, by repeatedly moderating his demands. The most serious threat used in these declarations was about the possibility of leaving the fate of East Berlin to the East German state. There was no operational action taken consistently. While Stalin tried to offensively kick the allied forces out of Berlin, Khrushchev built the Wall as the symbolic indicator of his defensive behavior.

On the other side, it seems that the US was in a similar position. Eisenhower’s early response to Khrushchev’s threats was to test Khrushchev’s firmness. Dulles’ warned that the US would use force if necessary to ensure its access to Berlin. Khrushchev replied with a threat of the possibility of the nuclear war. Then the general trend of Eisenhower government’s response was generally shaped by the strategy of omission against Soviet ultimatums and rejection of summit proposals.

When Kennedy was elected as the new president he was expected to bring dynamism to the US foreign policy. Kennedy repeatedly stated his discomfort with the stalemate and was a strong supporter of taking determined actions in foreign affairs. His thesis *Why England Slept* which was written in his senior year at Harvard as a critic of appeasement policies is an indicator of his personal belief in taking firm stance. His “inaugural address itself which was aimed at a world...
as well as a domestic audience, was a political and moral call to arms designed to wrest the high
ground from the Soviet Union. Conciliatory gestures were wrapped up in crusading rhetoric.”

If someone needs to assign a foreign policy orientation for Kennedy it would require recognizing
this young president’s search for change and dynamism.

However, his main response to Khrushchev’s provocations was generally in line of defensive
behaviors. Khrushchev continued to make threats in the summer of 1961 over Berlin. “On 25
July Kennedy made a belligerent speech, almost threatening nuclear war – but he referred to
West Berlin, rather than to Berlin itself. He seemed to imply that there would be no reaction as
long as West Berlin was left undisturbed.” The construction of the Wall was surprising for
Kennedy government but nothing was done in response since “it was already divided in
Kennedy’s mind.” It seems that whatever his personal theory of foreign policy was and
whatever his government wanted to do, Kennedy and his associates followed defensive policies
during the Berlin Crisis since they were aware of the distributed power structure.

The Second Berlin Crisis was the first major confrontation of the Cold War. For the first time
conventional forces of superpowers faced each other in a threatening fashion. “A prolonged and
much-photographed stand-off took place with the tanks literally a stone’s throw apart, the most
publicly direct confrontation of the Cold War.” Soviet Union in this second Berlin Crisis was
not following only a covert strategy designed to deal subtly with a superior rival but directly
challenging and defending its position as an equal one. During the first Berlin crisis Stalin

despite his aggressive behavior was always cautious enough to limit Soviet involvement to step back but Khrushchev was sufficiently daring to face US power. Both sides did not break their defensive lines which would produce a systemic war if there were no nuclear weapons.

**Cuban Missile Crisis**

If there was any event more serious than the Berlin Crisis in the Cold War, that was the Cuban Missile Crisis in which the US and Soviet Union directly confronted each other with horrific nuclear threats. It was the consequence of a series of defensive behaviors although the main actors of the Crisis were in search of a change. Khrushchev who wanted a change in the system deployed nuclear weapons – defensive weapons by nature – and his policy served to defend Cuba, while Kennedy government which was also uncomfortable with the situation followed a defensive track in responding Soviet behavior. Despite the defensive nature of behaviors, they produced the most dangerous major confrontation in the Cold War. Thanks to the nuclear parity the confrontation did not turn into a hot war.

Cuban Missile Crisis is generally used as a case to falsify the realist theories specifically and any rationalist theory in general. It seems that there were multiple difficulties unpredicted by rationalist theories in explaining what happened during the thirteen days of crisis. Most controversial issues are gathered around the problem of leaders’ motivations on the initiation or management stages. There are several conflicting arguments in explaining the causes and consequences of the nuclear missile deployment in Cuba. All these studies try to find out what were the real motivations of the leaders and to relate those motivations to the actions taken.  

Whatever the level of analysis used and whatever the motivations assigned to these levels of

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analysis, it seems that because of a common point in most studies over the Cuban Missile Crisis – that is the assumption on the direct and positive relation between motivations and actions – they face core difficulties in explaining the gaps between articulated aims and performed actions.

As argued in this study the correlation between motivations and actions are rarely positive because of an inherent gap between motivations and actions which are products of structural shaping. The structural logic tells that states want what they do not have but act in accordance with their possessions. Without taking that gap into account, any analysis experiences the same problem of understanding the relation between motivations and actions. Changing the level of analysis or increasing the number of independent factors does not solve the problem as long as the consequentialist logic is held.

As an example, on Khrushchev’s motivations for the initiation of the crisis Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow pose the question on Soviet Union’s motivation and after a persuasive evaluation they eliminate commonly used four rationalist explanations. They argue that Soviet placement of nuclear weapons cannot be explained solely by the hypotheses of Cuban defense, Cold War politics, missile power, and Berlin trade off. Those hypotheses assume a rationalist Soviet motivation which was in search of a favorable consequence. But as Allison and Zelikow show the eventual Soviet placement of nuclear weapons cannot be explained by that rationalist motivation mainly because there were better alternative ways of attaining that goal. In line with the argument presented in this study, Allison and Zelikow show the gap between motivations and actions.

As alternative explanations they provide bureaucratic and governmental politics models. According to these models Soviet and US behaviors can be explained referring either to the dynamics of organizational behaviors which might work against the overall state behavior because of the distinctive motivations of bureaucratic organizations or self-interested confirmative behaviors of political elites. Despite the recognized merits of these alternative models of decision making, it seems that even Allison’s alternative models are based on the consequentialist logic of classical rational choice theory. On the one side, bureaucratic organizations attain their own distinctive identity and interest and tend to act according to different goals under the guidance of standard operating procedures. So it seems that there is a conflict between the goals of any bureaucratic organization and state. Allison’s bureaucratic organizations also focus on what they want and they are considered to be able to act in accordance with their goals. On the other side, for the governmental model it seems that individuals serving in the decision making committees are also rational actors confirming their superiors or associates in order to secure what they want. Agents, both on the elite and bureaucratic levels, are described mainly as consequence oriented rather than capability. These alternatives serve to highlight the possible conflicts among different motivations but do not consistently clarify the explanation of any specific action.

In order to understand the supposed inconsistency of motivation and action in Cuban Missile crisis, one has to start from the structure of power in that time. The distributed power structure of international politics in the sixties created a stalemate that was indeed strictly limiting the autonomies of both superpowers. Despite their increased capabilities in unit level on a relative term, from a structural perspective, both superpowers were stuck in a position of inactiveness. This was creating a tension that increased the desire to change that structure. For any reason,
both for offensive and defensive, superpowers were uncomfortable with that situation. However, the leaders in both United States and Soviet Union also knew that any major change in a system in one side’s clear advantage was far from reality. So the situation was a desperate desire for change, even though they were aware of the impossibility of a desired outcome through offensive strategies. Therefore both superpowers instead of taking offensive actions were employing strategies of reinforcing the lines that was already in their own possession. Cuban Missile Crises was not an exception and can be explained consistently using this general framework.

The conflicting interpretations of state motivation and action are based on the belief that agents do what they want. Different groups in the government just try to employ their own policies because those different groups have different desires. Elites in the government circles want to have good relations with the president so they almost always confirm each other’s arguments especially those presented by the president. Despite their critic of rationalist thinking and its consequentialist logic all these explanations of the Cuban Missile Crisis are also based on a consequentialist logic on a different level. It is not the state who acts because of its motivation but political elites and bureaucrats. If all explanations were exhausted then they turn to the ambivalent and inconsistent characteristics of decision makers. In the case of Khrushchev’s motivation, for example, it is a commonly used approach. In explaining why Khrushchev appears to be acting indecisively or despite his brinkmanship why he was acting fearfully and was retreating, these studies generally refer to Khrushchev’s puzzling personality. The answer to the question of why he acted not in accordance with his motivation is found in his personality. Arguing that he did not acted in accordance with his motivations because he was such a kind of person is of course not an explanation. One has to tell why he was such a kind of person.
Khrushchev who desperately wanted to bring a change tried to secretly install nuclear weapons in an area that was already under a communist rule rather than openly challenging the system and deploying conventional offensive forces in a grey zone or US dominated area. Cuba, ninety miles from Florida, would serve as a convenient platform in putting an end to American opportunity of unilateral nuclear blackmailing. The following lines clearly illustrate Khrushchev’s motivations:

We must deliver and deploy the missiles quietly, taking all precautions so as to present the Americans with an accomplished fact. It is imperative to see that no information is leaked before the end of the campaign for the American [congressional] elections on November 4 if we were to avoid aggravating the situation there. Once the elections are over and electoral tensions have eased, the Americans will have no choice but to swallow this bitter pill. Aren’t we compelled to put up with the American missiles in Turkey?317

What Khrushchev wanted was a change in the system but what he did was a defensive foreign policy behavior by providing security for Cuba. In explaining his behavior, Khrushchev repeatedly declared that one of his aims was defending the communist Cuba. It seems that this is a post factum legitimization rather than a genuine explanation for his failed attempt of change. Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin doubts that Khrushchev’s decision prompted only by his desire to defend Cuba. “The move was part of a broader geopolitical strategy to achieve greater parity with the United States that would be useful not only in the dispute over Berlin but in negotiations on other issues.”318 A defensive behavior to provide security for Cuba instead of an offensive behavior was started by Khrushchev as if he really wanted to defend Cuba. His main concern

318 Anatoly Dobrynin, In Confidence: Moscow’s Ambassador to America’s Six Cold War Presidents (1962-1986), p: 73.
was to change the distribution of power but his behavior was not an offensive one to perform that task. It can in reality be codified just as the defense of Cuba.

In response to Khrushchev’s change motivated defensive behavior, Kennedy government responded in exactly the same measures. The US that intervened in all global issues by putting pressure on Soviet Union and its allies in the first phase of the Cold War was now only using the threat of war and building a defensive blockade instead of invading Cuba or using air force to bomb missiles already deployed in Cuba. In ExCom meetings all possible alternative forms of behaviors like doing nothing, putting diplomatic pressures, a secret approach to Castro, invading Cuba, air strike and blockade were seriously considered.319 These alternatives can be divided into defensive and offensive forms of behaviors. Only air strike and invasion of Cuba were two offensive strategies. These two alternatives were seriously considered during the ExCom meetings but finally a defensive one was chosen initially to blockade Soviet ships by transferring the responsibility to the Soviet Union.

After the Bay of Pigs scandal it seems that Kennedy was well aware of the impact of international power structure. In a statement made during a meeting with Khrushchev, Kennedy clearly revealed the gap between his original intentions and the possible actions that he could take. He put that “I wish I were able to get rid of Castro’s Cuba under our nose, but I have to put up with its existence, as both sides have to put up with the existence of other things they don’t like.”320 This is a good contradiction that shows why the US, which had not refrained from fighting wars even in the far places of the world in the first phase of the Cold War, was now “unable to get rid of Castro’s Cuba under our nose.”

Whatever the discussions in the ExCom or motivations of the agents in that circle were, the final US response was a fine-tuned defensive behavior. “A quarantine was imposed to prevent any more missiles being shipped to Cuba – in reality they were already all in place. The word quarantine was chosen instead of blockade which was regarded as a word of war.”\textsuperscript{321} Rather than taking a preventive aggressive action, the US behavior was in form of limiting Soviet behavior and forcing it to make the decision. “The USA made it clear it would attack before the missile sites became operational. Plans for an air strike on 29 or 30 October were in full swing.”\textsuperscript{322}

However, in a distributed power structure, the US administration could not dare to take that action in a time of nuclear parity. Instead back-channels of diplomacy were opened between Robert Kennedy and Anatoly Dobrynin to negotiate a peaceful solution.

The final outcome of this confrontation was the most significant major crisis of the Cold War. The world was brought to the brink of extinction by some series of change oriented defensive behaviors. Fortunately, the crisis did not deteriorate into a major hot war. That crisis ended up in accordance with the nature of power in the Cold War. If such a crisis, which was based on defensive actions, had taken place in a different time interval without nuclear weapons this would be the third world war. The main cause of the absence of a hot war as in the case of Peloponnesian War for instance was related to the distributed structure of nuclear parity which is also an element of broader power structure.

Détente

Both crisis of Berlin and Cuba served to reinforce an obvious understanding that the stalemate in the superpower competition was far from being transformed easily especially when the stalemate


\textsuperscript{322} McCauley, Martin, \textit{Russia America and the Cold War, 1949-1991}, p: 57.
created by the existence of nuclear weapons are also taken into account. Even if both sides felt
the restriction of their fields of maneuvering, it appears that both superpowers gave up the idea
of transforming the international structure through use of force or threat of force. Any stalemate
reached at that level would probably lead to a major war in the system but because of the specific
nature of distribution of power which was mainly measured by the numbers of nuclear weapons
the idea of a transformation through the use or threat of violence seemed impossible. These
weapons by their nature are not useful tools of compellence\textsuperscript{323} despite their utility as a means of
deterrence. The combination of a distributed power structure and the existence of nuclear
weapons produced not war but reapproachment. Therefore détente was the eventual outcome of
that magical combination rather than a bipolar stability. Without the distribution of nuclear
weapons defensive behaviors would produce a major war rather than détente.

The aggressive behaviors were substituted by the defensive ones. For instance, Nixon Doctrine
clarified the restriction put on the aggressive deployment of the US forces. It was declared that
the US would transfer the responsibility of military defense to US allies rather than committing
US forces for the defense of entire world. Instead of violence, diplomacy became the main
currency in this period. However this does not mean that defensive diplomatic behaviors were
motivated by defensive goals. We know that many American analysts, officials, and politicians
repeatedly criticized détente as a period which was abused by the Soviet Union. For instance,
“Reagan and his backers were convinced that America had grown weak and had allowed the
USSR far too free a run against US interests.”\textsuperscript{324}

\textsuperscript{324} Hughes-Wilson, John, \textit{The Cold War: The Hidden Truth about How Close We Came to Nuclear Conflict} (New
This analysis was correct but incomplete. Surely Soviets were using this diplomatic era as a time interval to find a better chance of transforming the stalemate. Soviet Union lost nothing from its change oriented intentions. However, the picture was not different for the United States. Washington also wanted to find opportunities of transforming that stalemate. Henry Kissinger for instance while explaining the reasons for détente points out the necessity to break the stalemate reached in a distributed power structure rather than a US dominated one. “Nixon found himself in the position having to guide America through the transition from dominance to leadership.”

Both sides considered détente as a diplomatic tool of breaking out with the status quo to find a more favorable system and position.

However, the process of détente and the superpower behaviors which produced and maintained it were in form of defensive foreign policy actions. SALT negotiations to decrease the number of nuclear weapons were clearly motivated by the feeling of a discomfort with the power structure. The United States’ diplomatic relations with China and creating a triangle was also a defensive behavior to break the tie. These new diplomatic relations were not in form of a superpower commitment to defend some other state. The US Chinese relations were for instance different from the US commitment to defend Turkey or Iran or Korea against any aggression. It meant just a means of defensive policy of gaining China while losing Vietnam. It maintained the US autonomy in Asia by exchanging it for Vietnam.

The final outcome of détente would be the renewed tension between the superpowers in the eighties. As it will be discussed in the next section on the decline of détente and the increasing superpower competition on the margins were the final outcomes of defensive détente which did

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not produce significant improvements in superpower relations but was a freezing period of the fierce competition.

**Vietnam**

Vietnam War was a product of the first phase of Cold War but mostly fought in the second phase of it. Therefore the motivations of this war lie in a concentrated power structure but the greater proportion of action was taken in a distributed power structure. The early US involvement was related to the stability oriented offensive behavior at first. As in all other examples of concentrated power structures, the US was mainly concerned about the maintenance of the international order in general and aggressively preventing the fall of dominoes. Based on its huge power and because of the luxury that power provided, the US felt free to act offensively in Vietnam.

However, the war itself took a prolonged duration that spread over a new period. The US did not have that luxury of fighting unnecessary wars. It was not a time of aggressive behaviors on the minor issues. It was now the time for defensive actions on the major issues. Not the number of casualties in Vietnam but its timing was the main reason for a desire to change the course of action in Vietnam. However, already deeply involved into the conflict, the withdrawal of the US forces from Vietnam seemed impossible. It locked US governments “into a strategy in which the only conceivable alternative to pulling out was to increase commitment of troops.”

Consecutive US presidents repeatedly felt the requirement of adapting new international realities, but the circumstances of an already started involvement prevented the US withdrawal since it

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would mean an abandonment of a defensive line.\textsuperscript{327} Kennedy once noted his discomfort by declaring that “Our problems are critical. The tide is unfavorable. The news will be worse before it is better.”\textsuperscript{328} As far as finding the possibility of exchanging that line with a new one the US withdrawal seemed unimaginable. Until that time all US actions in Vietnam even the escalation efforts can be interpreted as aiming an honorable withdrawal which would not jeopardize US defensive determination. From this perspective, despite escalation of aggressive US behavior in Vietnam in the sixties it was indeed a change oriented defensive behavior. US leaders wanted to bring a final solution to the problem by escalation but overall what they did was the defense of the Cold War borders.

This interpretation of Vietnam War might seem unpersuasive to some readers because it requires tracing the roots of US involvement to the fifties when France was the fighting party from the capitalist camp. Although we know that US military advisors were already involved with the conflict between the South and the North, the war was between the French and Northern Vietnamese in the fifties. The United States involvement was only in form of active support. The real US involvement escalated in the sixties. Therefore, one can still argue that in contrast to the expectations presented by this study, the United States acted aggressively to protect the status quo in a distributed power structure.

Even if we adopt that interpretation, it does not disconfirm the arguments presented about great power motivations and behaviors mainly because of two reasons. First the argument made is about the causes of war not about the strategies performed and decisions made during the war. Second the theoretical framework advocated here does not exclude limited aggressive behaviors

in a distributed power structure even though it argues that major crises are produced by defensive
behaviors which take place in distributed power structures.

Firstly, in assaying the validity of the theory presented a distinction between the origins of
conflicts and their managements should be made. The scholars of international relations
generally avoid from applying their arguments to the continuation of wars, since, it is believed
that once they are started wars take an unpredictable nature.\textsuperscript{329} For this reason, theories of
international relations mainly deal with the origins of the wars rather than their continuation. It is
generally recognized that during wars too many factors might play significant roles to shape
leaders behaviors. State leaders that actually want to withdraw from a war can easily escalate it
without considering their power positions.

Secondly, the theoretical framework of this study does not claim that there will be no aggressive
behaviors on the margins in a distributed power structure. The distinctive feature of the argument
is that major conflicts are less likely in concentrated power structures. Minor conflicts can still
exist in distributed power structures although their main characteristic is the increased possibility
of major conflicts. Therefore the existence of minor conflicts in distributed power structures does
not necessarily falsify the argument but the existence of a major confrontation in a concentrated
power structure would be an important anomaly.

Overall, there was a general tendency in the second phase of the Cold War to turn on central
issues and direct confrontation between the superpowers on cases like Berlin, Cuba and nuclear
negotiations. However, this does not mean that superpower competition during the second era
was limited to major issues. Surely, there were multiple examples of overt or covert superpower

\textsuperscript{329} Beyerchen, Alan, “Clausewitz, Nonlinearity, and the Unpredictability of War,” \textit{International Security}, 17(3),
interventions in the Third World ranging from Guatemala to Laos.\textsuperscript{330} However, this is not the distinctive feature of this era. Its distinctiveness lies in the possibility of major crises. Unlike the concentrated power structure which was limited to minor issue areas, in this distributed power structure change oriented superpowers acted defensively on major issue areas and produced direct confrontation with the possibility of a systemic war.

The preceding analyses on the second phase of the Cold War provides strong support for the argument that in distributed power structures superpowers want a change in the structure but perform defensive actions which tend to produce major crises. The predictions on motivations and actions of states and international outcomes are generally confirmed despite some ambiguity in the case of Vietnam War. It appears that further in-depth studies that will focus on this case might be developed to understand how it fits to the theoretical framework. But, for now, in accordance with the structural nature and aims of this study, the general trend of a distributed power structure with multiple cases is discussed and in general it produced results sufficient to claim empirical validity.

4. The Third Era: the Decline and the End of the Cold War

The third era of the Cold War is discussed in the literature on two main topics: the end of détente and the end of the Cold War. The first topic covers the discussions over the start of the rearmament and growing tension between the superpowers. In this period, the Cold War once

more entered into a harsh rivalry. During the Reagan administration and late Carter administration, the United States aggravated the competition on both rhetorical and behavioral levels. While Carter declared the end of détente, Reagan and his supporters wanted more and when Reagan came into power increased the US efforts to confront the Soviet threat. This era is termed as the second Cold War in contrast to the years of détente.

The second major topic for this period is related to the end of the Cold War. There are multiple arguments focusing on different levels of analysis and causes mainly inspired by the unexpected end of the Cold War and theoretical failure, especially neo-realist failure, to predict it. The main attack to the neo-realist theory about its inability to predict the end of the Cold War and its aftermath has come from theoretical approaches emphasizing the role of ideas in international politics. This group of authors is composed of different theoretical approaches including constructivists and liberals. They generally claim that neo-realism failed to predict the sudden end of the Cold War and the international system emerged after it because of the materialist ontology of neo-realism which focused on power politics at the expense of the ideas.

This section offers explanations for both the end of détente and the end of the Cold War by referring to the power structure variable. For the former, it argues that détente declined and the tension once more increased on the margins because of the changing power structure from a distributed to a concentrated one. On the US side, it ended because the new power position of the US enabled it to act offensively. Starting during the late Carter and accelerating during the Reagan administration, the US leaders found themselves in a comfortable position of increasing the tension which would put more burdens on the disrupting Soviet economy and power. “The new administration was thus optimistic on at least two counts: that the American economy could carry the increased burden that would result from a more assertive US strategy; and that Soviet
power was in such poor shape that it would be unable to withstand a renewed American offensive.”

However, this does not mean that the US leaders were consciously in search of ending the Cold War by overthrowing the Soviet Union with a master plan in mind. We know that for the first two years Reagan administration could not develop a consistent understanding for their position. Surely, there were multiple declarations of such an intention especially in Reagan’s vehement talks but it seems that they were on the rhetorical level and neither Reagan nor his associates in fact expected such a sudden decline and unprecedented international transformation. It seems that the main orientation behind Reagan government’s increasing aggressivism was related to the United State’s ability to make things worse for the Soviets and keep them busy with a renewed aggressivism which focused on minor issue areas. Not the final collapse of the Soviet Union but hurting it for the long term by raising new difficulties was the imaginable position for the US. By taking offense, Washington was aiming to prevent the Soviets from taking offensive actions which would destabilize the international system.

On Moscow’s side, the increasing power gap in favor the US was producing the belief about the possibility of US offensive actions which could further demolish already deteriorating Soviet power source. Action was necessary to take, if Soviets did not want to be caught unprepared. A declining power position can easily trigger and nurture a belief in the necessity of taking immediate actions. These can appear as stability oriented motivations but on the action level it seems that they triggered offensive behaviors. While the US was giving China the most privileged nation status that would enlarge the cleavage in the communist bloc by opening a new

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front against the Soviets, Soviets were responding for instance by opening a new area of responsibility, in Afghanistan and further increasing the common aggresivism on minor issue areas. “The final line of Soviet defense against the United States was drawn in the Third World. Again, this did not take the form of a renewed militant offensive, but of a careful diplomatic and propaganda campaign whose purpose was to show that Reaganism represented a direct threat to the economic and political integrity of the less developed countries.”

Overall, the new power structure of the late seventies and early eighties created new orientations and actions that would bring the end of détente and the renewal of the tension. However, it is clear that this renewed tension was on minor issue areas once again and did not produce systemic confrontation as in the cases of Second Berlin Crisis or Cuban Missile Crisis. Instead the competition was limited to the areas like Afghanistan and covert operations like the US support for Afghan mujahids and East European liberals.

For the latter (the end of the Cold War and its aftermath) the section argues that the increasing power gap was the main determinant of the end of the Cold War and the absence of a competitor with enough capabilities to challenge the US power is the main reason for the international system that emerged after Soviet collapse and has remained the same up until now. The Cold War came to an end not because of changing common understandings of international politics from a Hobbessian world view to a Lockean one, or a transformation in Soviet leaders’ appreciation of Marxist-Leninist ideology in favor of liberalism and capitalism, or Gorbachev’s peace loving high personality. It was over because one of the superpowers just disappeared and lost the capability which identified it and sharpened its ideology. Similarly, the continuation

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of the US dominated unipolar structure and the new world order after the end of Cold War cannot be explained solely using the ideational factors like benevolent US hegemony and liberal security community or ideological defensive realist foreign policy strategies of offshore balancing. The Cold War was over because one of the competitors collapsed and it remains unipolar because no new competitor has emerged yet. This does not necessarily mean that all other units in the system jumped on the US bandwagon or alternatively they are using soft balancing tactics against it. As in the case of any concentrated power structure, in this extremely concentrated power structure of unipolarity, units are holding stability oriented motivations but acting aggressively. While the unipole acts offensively to sustain the stability, others also act offensively on minor issue areas to find new spaces without directly challenging the unipole.

In short, this section argues that both the end of détente and the end of Cold War can be explained by referring to the power structure variable that was once more concentrated. Détente ended because the US based on its power position developed the belief of the possibility of defeating the Soviet Union. The increasing power gap between the US and the Soviet Union tempted the US administration to try to win the Cold War by increasing the burdens of competition for the Soviet Union which had to deal with deepening economic crises.


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By the late seventies international power structure once more turned into a concentrated one because of declining Soviet power. In accordance with that increasing power gap, the superpowers rearranged their orientations and actions which produced a different international outcome with increasing competition on the periphery but decreased possibility of a major systemic conflict. In this regard, the first and third phases of the Cold War were closely similar. The new structure of power produced stability oriented motivations and aggressive behaviors which brought the end of détente and the renewed tension on minor issue areas.

The gap between the superpowers started to widen by the late 1970s on most of the conventional terms. On the economical dimension, we now know that the Soviet economy was in an inevitable decline. However it is controversial whether decision makers especially on the side of US were aware of that Soviet economic stagnation. The general trend of US leaders’ rhetorical declarations on exaggerated Soviet power contributes to the belief that in fact US leaders were unable to see that decline so could not arrange US strategy according to the new fact. Against these claims, Robert Gates advocates that through the information provided by CIA, US leaders had in fact developed an understanding of Soviet decline. He puts that the CIA “report, presented by Harry Rowen, chairman of the National Intelligence Council, advised that the Soviet economy’s performance during the preceding two years – 1979-1980 – was even worse than we anticipated. He observed that the shortfalls in industrial production and back-to-back harvest failures had reduced Soviet GNP growth to the lowest level since World War II and that there were few signs of a rebound in 1981. The Soviet economy didn’t get any better over the next
By the late seventies Soviet Union was experiencing harsh times and the US leaders were at least partly aware of it.

The power structure of the final stage of the Cold War was a concentrated one and represented the first era of the Cold War, but with two main differences. The first one is related to the enduring parity in nuclear weapons while the second one is about the general trend of decline in Soviet power unlike the growing trend of the early Cold War years.

Firstly, the Soviet Union still held a large nuclear capability which created a distributed power structure on nuclear terms despite the increasing power gap on other terms. Whatever the economic situation in the Soviet Union was, it was still a great threat with a capability of destroying the ‘free world’ multiple times. This nuclear parity, differently from the first era of the Cold War, restricted offensive US behaviors to some extent. In the first phase, the US was able to confront the USSR on any ground and did not refrain from doing so. However, in this second period the USSR was secure from a direct use of force. This was the main cause of two different tracks of Reagan administration. On the one side, Reagan tried to find the ways of winning the Cold War as the commander of the powerful side and acted offensively. On the other side, he followed a détente type foreign policy when he confronted with the discussions over the nuclear weapons. So the presidency of Reagan was an amalgam of nuclear détente based on nuclear parity and conventional aggressivism based on conventional power concentration.

Secondly, while the Soviet Power was in trend of growth in the first era, it was in a trend of decline in the third one. For this reason, Soviet leaders were not optimistic about the coming

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future. If they had failed to do something for improving Soviet economy, the future would become gloomy. “The late 1980s Soviet Union was not a declining hegemon but a declining challenger.”³³⁹ Because of this difference Soviet leaders were more concerned about saving the Soviet Union. They wanted to decrease the money invested to arms and revive the Soviet state. “In 1986, for example, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev asserted that a preeminent foreign policy objective of his administration was to achieve far reaching arms control agreements with Americans. If the Soviets were unsuccessful in realizing this goal, Gorbachev told the Politburo that the country would be pulled into an arms race that is beyond our capabilities, and we will lose it because we are at the limit of our capabilities.”³⁴⁰

Stalin was capable of and more optimistic about the outcomes of operations on the margins while the leaders of late Soviet Union were less capable and more pessimistic about the success of operations on the margins. However, because of the parity in the nuclear distribution of power and Soviet pessimism, Soviet policies were also a combination of stability and change oriented offensive and defensive behaviors. The only case of Soviet aggressiveness was Afghanistan because of the lack of capabilities to deal with more marginal issue areas. And Soviet behavior on nuclear weapons also shows that Moscow was concerned with decreasing the number of nuclear weapons and the money invested in it by alleviating the nuclear tension by making concessions in order to change the situation which was increasingly hurting Soviet position.

Therefore as a consequence of the interesting power structure which was composed of and distinguished between two groups of components of power, superpower orientations and actions were also a combination of these two groups of power components. It seems that during this last

stage of the Cold War both Washington and Moscow made a clear distinction between these two
groups of power components and evaluated their positions according to their power in both on
these distinguished issue areas. They acted offensively because of the search for stability on
conventional terms, while they acted defensively because of the search for change on nuclear
issues. 341

There is a general tendency to relate the start of the Second Cold War and the start of the
rearmament to the term of Reagan in office. However, it seems that Carter with his doctrine on
increasing US support on the Persian Gulf and increasing the US aid to Pakistan signified the
start of the increased tension on the periphery. It was not Reagan’s coming to power but the
changing power structure was the main force behind the renewed tension. Even Ford gave up the
use of the term détente by 1976. After Ford, Carter, as a harsh critic of Ford’s reliance on détente
in his early term of presidency, signaled the increasing US aggressive behaviors.

During the Carter administration an agreement was reached in the 1977 NATO summit to
increase defense spending, by 3 percent annually. In the same year Carter asked the Congress to
fund development of a neutron bomb. Carter’s National Security Advisor Brzezinski accelerated
the momentum of US Chinese relations which would develop into a diplomatic recognition. US
Chinese relations were condemned by the Soviets since the tone of this new Chinese relations
were in form of a more aggressive foreign policy engagement than the one built by Kissinger.
“Kissinger avoided aligning the United States with either the Soviet Union or China against the
other and secured a balancing position in triangular diplomacy…After 1978 the United States
shifted to a relationship with China designed to place pressure on the Soviet Union by aligning

341 For a thematic review of the increased tensions on the margins and diplomacy on the centre, see the
comprehensive edited volume: Guderzo, Max and Bruna Bagnato, The Globalization of the Cold War: Diplomacy
China with the United States in a coalition the latter would dominate." Chinese refusal of the renewal of 1950 friendship agreement with USSR followed by the US courtesy to give the “most favored nation” status to China in the new trade deal. Again it was Carter administration that took the measures including trade restrictions, boycotting Moscow Olympic Games, suspension of SALT II ratification and greater aid to Pakistan in response to Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

These records testify the reality that even before the Reagan administration the power structure was already in change and it was affecting the US approach to the Cold War. Hesitant attitudes of Carter administration can be related to his specific term in the office. Carter served as the president of a transition period. He was, for instance, offering choices to Soviet leaders to make a decision whether they were supporting détente or a renewed Cold War. In this time of uncertainty, however, Carter administration did not refrain from seeding the US offensive behavior trend.

However, it was the Reagan administration that symbolized the start of the renewed tension between the superpowers in form of aggressive policies. However, this renewed tension was taking place on minor issues and issue areas. “Conflict, violence, and international tensions had increased in nearly every region of the world, with 45 of the world’s 164 nations involved in forty conventional and guerilla wars in 1983, according to a study by the US Center for Defense information, a private think-tank led by former senior military officers. The United States supplied arms to twenty of the nations at war and the Soviet Union supplied arms to thirteen.”

On central issues like nuclear weapons and Europe, which would require direct confrontation between the superpowers, both superpowers followed defensive policies because of the nuclear

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parity. Therefore Reagan’s foreign policy cannot be characterized easily with a single indicator. His approach was indeed shaped by a combination of nuclear parity and conventional concentration of power. So the Reagan’s orientations and behaviors ranged from defensivism to offensivism on nuclear and conventional terms respectively.

On nuclear weapons, Reagan administration was defensively negotiating with Soviet leaders to break the nuclear stalemate as in the case of détente period because of the continuing nuclear parity. Despite the change in other components of power the Soviet nuclear power was still equally threatening for the capitalist world. Nuclear weapons by their nature were such a threat difficult to ignore even it comes from a declining superpower. In search of breaking out the nuclear parity, which was Reagan’s long-term dream, he developed the idea of building an omnipotent nuclear defensive system. Even if it took some time, eventually Regan himself also understood the difficulty of overcoming nuclear power parity. “To Reagan, this Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program would make real a large part of his “dream” to eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons. But as Secretary of State Shultz and others reminded him, even if “Star Wars” proved technologically feasible and then worked perfectly despite Soviet countermeasures – two very big ifs – the Soviets still could use bombers and submarines posted close to America’s shores to carry out a nuclear attack.”

Although Reagan administration believed firmly in “negotiation from strength” strategy and Reagan for some reason never lost his desire to build an insurmountable nuclear shield which he believed would change the status quo, his administration maintained a good record of defensive diplomatic negotiation series which started as early as 1981 when Gromyko and Haig agreed to

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begin talks on intermediate-range nuclear (INF) weapons. “Zero option” for the first time was articulated by Reagan’s offer for a new disarmament agenda including the complete elimination of INF weapons in the same year. The next year START talks started in Geneva after Reagan promised that the United States would adhere to SALT II as long as the Soviet Union did. In 1985 Gromyko and Shultz agreed in Geneva on START, INF, and defensive systems, including the “Star Wars” project. His policy “could be best summarized as: ‘Carry a big stick, but be prepared to talk. And let’s try and win the Cold War, because we can!’”345

All these negotiations were taking place in a time when Reagan was describing the Soviet Union as the “evil empire” and was not hiding his aggressive intentions to overcome that nuclear parity. Based on this rhetorical aggressivism Cold War historians tend to neglect US defensive policies on nuclear issues and by comparing Reagan’s first and second terms in office they judge that his first term was more aggressive than the second one. This is an illusory view on Reagan’s foreign policy. Jack Matlock, in his biographical study, tries to overcome the myth that Reagan’s approach was always an aggressive and clear stand by specifying some of Reagan’s conciliatory declarations.346 Reagan said “And I have to believe that our greatest goal must be peace” in June 1981, while in December of the same year he declared that “I’ve always recognized that ultimately there’s got to be a settlement, a solution.” Reagan’s intentions and action would be shaped in accordance with the power structure.

The combination of nuclear and conventional power structures was the main reason behind the confusion over the Reagan’s term in power. Reagan, while using a vehement rhetoric against Soviet Union, was also the man who met most with Soviet leaders on nuclear weapons. While he

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was increasing the tension in minor issue areas he was following a track of defensive diplomatic policy. He was holding both stability and change oriented motivations and also acting defensively and offensively. He was reacting to both concentrated and distributed power structures. It seems that Reagan and his administration were no more certain on their intentions and actions then their biographers are. He first tried to overcome the nuclear stalemate with a change oriented motivation and a defensive policy proposal. “Instead of relying on US forces to deter Soviet leaders from launching their weapons, Reagan proposed a space-based missile shield – called the strategic defense initiative (SDI) – in subsequent years. The vision offered “hope,” according to the president, in place of continued Cold War stalemate. It would allow Americans to rely on “the very strengths in technology that spawned our great industrial base and that have given us the quality of life we enjoy today.” The proposal offered to change the stalemate was building a defensive shield. When it became clear that the “Star Wars” project was not feasible Reagan would follow another defensive policy of opening the way for diplomatic negotiations.

On the other side, the US under Reagan government was sharply increasing US involvement in minor issue areas with a renewed aggressivism. Nicaragua, Lebanon, Grenada, Libya are generally used as examples of Reagan’s firm stance in international affairs. Whatever his motivations were, whatever kind of speeches he made, at the end of the day, Reagan’s foreign policy was quite assertive on the margins especially in his second term. In addition to his efforts on the margins he did not refrain from using covert action even on the central front. “The CIA

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embarked on a vigorous funding campaign to destabilize the satellites of Eastern Europe.”

Reagan doctrine promised US support for anti-communist “freedom-fighters” in Afghanistan, Nicaragua, and elsewhere. Reagan’s foreign policy behavior on this area reflected the early Cold War actions taken by the US. Because of the increasing power gap in favor of the US, Reagan’s policies were assertive, daring, and bold.

On the other side, during the late Cold War, Soviet behaviors were also in line with American behaviors. They followed defensive policies on nuclear weapons while acting aggressively on conventional issues in the perimeters. Generally speaking, it seems that Soviet behavior was motivated with the aim of stopping the decline in Soviet power; therefore it was a status quo oriented motivation. As the best illustrative case of Soviet behavior in the third era of the Cold War, the invasion of Afghanistan shows that Moscow was planning to prevent a possible transformation on its close borders. Accordingly Soviet Union took the offense by invading Afghanistan, as, with some minor differences, it did before in the case of Korean War for instance.

Notice that, this time Soviet behavior was direct invasion of Afghanistan instead of covertly supporting another unit in the War. This was again directly related to the power structure which was different from the first era of the Cold War on nuclear weapons. Despite the decline of Soviet power on conventional terms, Soviet Union was still protected and able to challenge the system because of the nuclear weapons’ deterrence effect. In the case of Korean War, Soviet Union was more vulnerable to any direct confrontation with the US than was the case in Afghanistan. Once more, what the Soviet Union had in the power structure shaped its intentions.

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and actions. The outcome of the combination of nuclear parity and conventional inequality was an aggressive foreign policy behavior on the margins.

By the late 1978 Afghan government attempted to carry out Marxist reforms in Afghanistan. At the same time there was a clear increase in the number of USSR “advisers” from 350 to 4000. It seems that these kinds of internal events produced discontent that increased the tension. By relying on its treaty commitments to Afghanistan and in line with the Brezhnev Doctrine the Soviet forces moved to Afghanistan in order to maintain a pro-Soviet regime in power. The intervention was condemned by the vast majority of international society. This was the formal end of détente and produced certain counter actions of the US including the suspension of SALT II ratification, the boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics and as expectedly rearmament. In response to this Soviet aggression, the US could not directly intervene to the affairs in Afghanistan differently from the cases in the first era of the Cold War. In this case, the USSR was still a nuclear giant and any direct confrontation could cause a centralized major competition. Instead the US followed the track of the proxy wars by providing support for any group fighting against the Soviet Union.

As an outcome, despite the increased number of aggressive superpower behaviors in the system of late Cold War, they had not turned into a systemic conflict. It seems that there is no clear example of direct confrontation between the superpowers. The wars were fought in long-distances in forms of interventions separately. Washington fought in Grenada but not against the Soviets. Soviets fought in Afghanistan but not against the US. While the US was supporting “freedom-fighters” in Afghanistan, Soviets were also covering up their actions in support of communist guerillas. In consequence, aggressive superpower behaviors did not cause to any possibility of systemic confrontation.
4.2. Evaluating the end of the Cold War:

The end of the Cold War and the endurance of a unipolar structure served as an indicator of the failure of “structural” theories of international relations. Since the early 1990s scholars of international relations debated the causes of the end of the Cold War with a central focus on the inability of the neorealist theory to predict the Soviet collapse and the end of the Cold War that meant a turn from a bipolar structure to a unipolar one. Despite some merits to those critics it seems that most of them conflate the Realist failure to explain the endurance of unipolar structure with the collapse of the one side of the Cold War competition. It is clear that neither theorists nor historians of the Cold War were expecting such a sudden change within the system. In a few years Soviet Union collapsed and the international structure turned to a unipolar structure. Since then the international system has been structured by an extreme power concentration of unipolarity.

It seems that neo-realist theory of international relations has a difficulty in explaining the endurance of unipolarity since it was based on the claim of balancing behavior of others in the system against to any potential hegemon. However the failure to predict the Soviet collapse and the endurance of unipolarity are two different things and should be treated separately in criticizing neo-realist theory. The failure of neo-realism to explain the endurance of unipolar structure does not mean that transition to the unipolarity is because of some ideational factors. Quite the contrary, neo-realists failed to explain the endurance of unipolarity and relatedly the end of the Cold War because of the neglect of productive role of power in shaping state identities, intentions, and behaviors.

For the former, Cold War was over not because of ideological transformation but because of the collapse of one of the superpowers. For the latter, current unipolar structure is enduring because of the extremely concentrated power structure of unipolarity which is defined by the absence of a major power to stand against the unipole or the difficulty of forming a counterbalancing coalition. Secondary states in this structure do not directly struggle with the only superpower despite their stability oriented motivations they act offensively because of the increased costs of a direct confrontation as in any other concentrated power structures as discussed in the first and third eras of the Cold War. Asymmetry between the two sides in the early Cold War was the cause of the end of it. The USSR in search of military equilibrium had to sacrifice other fields of power. That created the gap in USSR economy which widened the gap in each day. Eventually it brought the end of the Soviet state. Weakness plus long cycles of competition brought the end of the Cold War.

The End of the Cold War

On the end of the Cold War, claiming that neo-realist theory failed to understand the transformations taking place in the Soviet Union because of its materialist ontology that neglects the significance of ideas in shaping those transformations is an irrelevant and inaccurate claim because the disappearance of the Soviet Union whatever its causes were does not necessarily falsify neo-realist theory which does not make any prediction about when a state’s identity will be transformed or will fail. The only prediction made by neo-realist theory was about the expected balancing behavior. But one still can argue that neo-realism actually failed to see the transformation of communist identity. This failure however, does not falsify the core neo-realist arguments; it just shows the void in neo-realism to relate the state power to state identity. Since neo-realism was in fact an hybrid theory which was composed of structural and unit level
assumptions which fixed state identity to security maximization rather than a structural one which would derive state identity from state capabilities, neo-realists do not consider the possibility of the transformation of state identity in case of changing power status.

Critics of neo-realism try to explain the end of the Cold War by referring different sets of variables on different analytical levels. One of the commonly used arguments about the end of the Cold War is related to the ideological change caused by Gorbachev’s and his associates’ new thinking. According to this claim Cold War ended because the Soviet identity was transformed. In finding an explanation for that transformation in the ideological positions of the Soviet elites, these scholars generally refer to Gorbachev as a personality who transformed it. This argument is hardly sustainable when one thinks about the international power structure of that period. Gorbachev appeared as the leader of an empire that was losing its power in each day. It seems that in the early phases of his office he was actually trying to save the Soviet Union not to demolish it. “According to one of his close assistants Georgii Shakhnazarov, Gorbachev initially thought that reform could be limited to the economic sector, keeping the political system intact; he changed his mind only 1987.” Glasnost Perestroika and New Thinking were not the causes of Soviet transformation but were the outcomes of the inevitable decline in Soviet power. Gorbachev tried to revive the Soviet Union by implementing new political tools. Not the identity of the new Soviet elites transformed the Soviet identity and so the international structure but the international structure in which Soviet Union was no more a superpower assigned a new identity for the Soviet Union. “While some domestic critics and Western policy makers might have

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thought he was following peaceful coexistence or breathing spell strategies, in fact,…he was doing something quite different and arguably far less coherent and calculated.”

The most central Soviet identity was its superpower situation rather than anything else. The inevitable economic crises and a transformation in the Soviet identity and thinking were not coincidental. The identity was shaped by the distribution of power. Soviet Union was no more an able competitor of the United States. There might be certain differences between the personalities of Gorbachev and Stalin for instance but Gorbachev was a man of his time as was Stalin. Stalin or Khrushchev was leaders of a superpower but Gorbachev was the leader of collapsing empire. Even if he was a stubborn communist who would follow some certain steps which brought the end of the Cold War which was a competition between two superpowers not a rivalry between two ideological positions. It was over because of the same reason which constituted it. There were no two superpowers anymore, so the Cold War was over.

Another controversial issue is related to the ideational argument about the peaceful end of the Cold War. According to this logic, the Cold War ended peacefully because of a cultural transformation rather than the requirements of power politics. The peaceful transformation is admitted as the indicator of how ideas matter. This argument assumes that peacefulness of any transformation is necessarily related to ideational transformation. If the causes were related to capabilities then transformation would not be peaceful. This view fails to understand the requirements of the Cold War power structure. Cold War ended peacefully because it was fought peacefully due to the nature of power structure that is the nature of nuclear weapons. In a distinctively nuclear confrontation, both superpowers had sustained the rivalry for fifty years on

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every issue and in every form short of hot wars. So the power structure was not transformed with the open victory of one side over the other, but it was decided by the dynamics of the long-term competition. One of the superpowers that is the Soviet Union which was less advantageous at the beginning of the competition had to over-expand for long durations of two concentrated power structures. Simply because of this unequal nature of the race Soviet Union just disappeared peacefully from a soft-war. As decisively summarized by Powaski:

Simply put, the Soviet economic system had failed to support to Soviet empire. The economic failure, in turn, undermined popular support for communism, not only in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe but also in Marxist client states in the Third World, making it that much more difficult for the Soviets to compete with the United States in the underdeveloped world.

Mikhail Gorbachev tried to make changes in Soviet domestic and foreign policies, and even abandoned long-held Marxist principles, in an attempt to reverse the economic and social decline of the Soviet Union. He initiated economic reforms, perestroika, and permitted greater freedom of expression, glasnost; to try to overcome hard-line opposition. He also tried to end the exorbitantly expensive arms race with the United States. He proposed meaningful arms reductions and pressured Reagan and Bush to accept them. The INF treaty was one result. A START treaty was another.354

But this does not mean that superpowers shaped the power structure. There is a general argument which was at the roots of earlier development of containment strategy that offered to win the Cold War by containing the Soviet Union as for instance in the case of isolation of Napoleon. However, it was not the manipulation of power structure by changing its distribution but the continuity of the power structure was the main cause of the international outcome. The US did not win the Cold War by increasing its share of power while decreasing the Soviet share by manipulating the structure but won it because it was always on a more advantageous position

from the start of the Cold War. It seems that Soviet need to invest large amounts of money to
armament caused the long-term deterioration of Soviet economy. It was always in an unfavorable
position compared to the US. Despite this fact, similar amount of money invested to the military
increased the gap. The power gap was given, the US or Soviets did not manipulate it. Contrary, it
manipulated superpower identities and politics.

In fact the discussions over the end of the Cold War reached to an impasse because of the
irreconcilable positions between ideational and materialist ontologies. Analysts will surely keep
discussing the relevant significance of these two groups of factors. That ontological controversy
cannot be decided on a single case without an opportunity of making meaningful comparisons. In
order to understand the causes of structural transformations different examples has to be
compared. Further evidence must be provided by working on further cases of structural
transformations. However, it was important to show the applicability of a capability oriented
structural model to consistently explain the end of the Cold War. It is discussed to show that the
failure of neo-realist theory to explain the endurance of the unipolar structure does not
necessarily mean that structural theories are unable to explain the end of the Cold War.

The Endurance of Unipolarity

On the endurance of unipolar structure, it is exactly true that neo-realism failed to explain it.
According to neo-realists, unipolar structure is the least stable structure because a rising
hegemon in the system would be balanced automatically by other units wishing to survive.355
Therefore the system would not remain unipolar which would mean the absence of balancing
behavior that is the central claim neo-realist theory. However, as recognized even by most neo-

realists, the demise of the Soviet Union “transformed the international system from bipolarity to unipolarity”\textsuperscript{356}

That unexpected transformation used as the source of harsh criticisms directed against neorealism.\textsuperscript{357} Neo-realists responded to these criticisms following two general tracks. On the one side, some, like Huntington, rejected to define the system as unipolar. Instead, he argued that the current system of international relations represents a “uni-multipolar” structure with single superpower and several regional powers.\textsuperscript{358} On the other side, some other neo-realists, with a greater majority, even though recognize the unipolarity,\textsuperscript{359} they argue that it is a temporary period and will not last long. While Krauthammer named the system as a “unipolar moment,”\textsuperscript{360} Layne preferred to use the term of “unipolar illusion”\textsuperscript{361} Waltz, as the founder of neorealist theory, naturally sharing the same claim, wrote that neorealist theory predicts that “balancing of power by some states against others recurs… [So it] is better at saying what will happen than in saying when it will happen”\textsuperscript{362} However, some neo-realists did not hesitate to make estimations even though they proved wrong. Christopher Layne predicted that this “geopolitical interlude will give way to multipolarity between 2000 and 2010.”\textsuperscript{363}

Despite the renewed attempts of neo-realism, it seems that history keeps disconfirming their central argument about the inevitable balancing behavior which is the product of fixed defensive


\textsuperscript{363} Layne Christopher, “The Unipolar Illusion,” p: 7.
state motivation for security maximization. The strongest explanation for the endurance of unipolarity came from hegemonic stability theory. William Wohlforth argued that unipolarity is the most stable structure and may endure for a long period.\textsuperscript{364} Wohlforth draws attention to the role of power variable in shaping state behavior rather than deriving it from a fixed state motivation. Accordingly states do not balance against the unipole because of the costs of doing so. Wohlforth tries to show that the main dynamic of international system of bandwagoning because of the power calculation. However, Wohlforth neglects the role of anarchy which requires states to rely on their power. Therefore the concentrated power structure of unipolarity is not a hegemonic but an anarchic system.\textsuperscript{365} In anarchic environment, units, struggling for autonomy, act offensively to protect the stability rather than bandwagoning or balancing to secure a fixed motivation.

It seems that balance of power theory was so indispensable for some that supporters of the balancing behavior even when balancing is not an appropriate option because of the extreme power gap, neo-realists have insistently tried to harmonize the empirical anomaly to the indispensable theory. The final outcome of this determined advocacy for balancing behavior is the soft balancing argument.\textsuperscript{366} According to this view, there were certain examples of balancing behavior even if they were formalized in subtle ways because of the calculated consequences of directly challenging the unipole.

In response to this view, critics of balance of power theory argue that any armament behavior or declaration of a state leader in support of a multipolar world does not necessarily mean that these

states are balancing against the United States.\textsuperscript{367} Instead they claim that the common state behavior in the unipolar structure is bandwagoning so secondary states in the system are not actually targeting the unipolar structure.

It seems that both sides have some merits, although both have some shortcomings. Critics of balance of power theory can explain the lack of balancing behavior but cannot explain increased aggressive behaviors presented by supporters of balance of power theory. On the other side, advocates of soft balancing, despite their diagnosis regarding the existence of aggressive behaviors in the system, it seems that they are improperly putting all aggressive behaviors into the balancing basket which refers to an indemonstrable common motivation directed against the United States.

The reality lies on somewhere between these two traditionalist views. The international system remains unipolar because of the absence of a major competitor or the difficulty of an organized alignment that can challenge the only superpower. Therefore secondary states do not act as balancers. On the other side, rather than jumping on the bandwagon, in line with the general argument developed in this study about the concentrated power structure, they act aggressively to prevent any unmanageable transformation which will probably produce a less favorable structure.

In a nutshell, there might be multiple intervening factors on several levels of analysis, for the specific events of the late Cold War and the end of the Cold War. But what was fundamental in these long processes was the changing power structure. It underlined all other developments. The power gap between the superpowers increased the tension in the late Cold War, while

deterioration of the gap produced the eventual end of it. Because of the continued lack of a capable actor to directly confront the US, the system remains extremely concentrated and will remain so whatever states’ preferred identities or motivation are.

5. Conclusion

The above analysis helps to explain three things: superpower intentions, actions, and international outcomes for three different periods of the Cold War. By highlighting the gaps between intentions and actions and between actions and international outcomes, it argued that the first and third eras of the Cold War were times of stability oriented superpower aggression while the second era was a time of change oriented superpower defensivism. It was further argued that defensive superpower behaviors produced major crises of the Cold War in the second era while aggressive superpower behaviors produced only minor events.

The analysis tried to show that during the Cold War, superpowers did not hold permanent motivations like increasing power or security; rather they arranged their goals according to the structures of power. When the power in the system was concentrated both superpowers wanted to protect international stability. While the US wanted to maintain the order that was working in its benefit, the USSR was also unwilling an unmanageable change in the system which would catch it unprepared against a more powerful US. In the distributed power structure of second Cold War era, both superpowers were motivated to change the distributed power structure.
On the behavioral level, in concentrated power structures of first and third phases of the Cold War, both superpowers followed aggressive policies on the margins. Crises in Europe were followed by crises in the Near East, Middle East, and Far East. Despite the aggressive nature of superpower behaviors in this era they did not degenerate into major systemic confrontation. They were stuck into the regions where they took place. In contrast defensive behaviors of the second era produced systemic confrontations in Berlin and Cuba.

This test of Cold War is a long-term single case which includes multiple sub-cases. It tried to give the general tendency in the superpower competition for the entire Cold War history and also for the significant sub-cases in it. Further studies can focus on these sub-cases in order to test the great power behavior predictions developed in this study. Based on these single case studies further arguments can be provided to discuss the relative relevancy of structural and non-structural factors. For instance, a case study focusing on Vietnam War can find that personality of Johnson played a significant role in escalating the War. However, such studies cannot overrule the arguments provided in this study since they are not operating on the same level. Because of the structural nature of the argument provided in this study, the test used to measure the validity of the arguments tried to highlight a general tendency only in which other levels of factors can be meaningfully used.

Despite the good fit between the theory and cases there are two cases which need further study. On the one side, it seems that the distinctive feature of the Cold War was the existence of nuclear weapons. Unlike other eras of international history it seems that nuclear weapons played a major system-wide role that was the main cause of the absence of a hot war. In order to understand the role played by the existence of nuclear weapons comparative studies of other distributed power structures can be developed. For instance, the distribute power structures of the first and second
World Wars and the concentrated power structure of the nineteenth century in conjunction with the Cold War can provide rigorous evidence for the direct impact of nuclear evidence for the lack of hot wars in the Cold War.

On the other side the case of Vietnam as a prolonged Cold War conflict appears to be in need of further explanation. It seems that because of that prolonged nature Vietnam War started as a stability oriented offensive behavior but mainly fought in a time of change oriented defensive behavior. Secondly, it turned to be a war against Vietnam rather than a war against the communist bloc. Therefore US behavior in Vietnam was a combination concentrated and distributed power structure in terms of both time and space. It was fought with the aims and strategies of an earlier period against a wrong enemy. It seems that the case on Vietnam requires an in-depth case study.

This study of the Cold War history remained on the surface level for each sub-cases discussed in it. Because of its structural aims it wanted to show the general trends by facilitating from the connections and order of events taking place in the Cold War. Further studies of these events which provide more in-depth analysis can also be conducted to measure the validity of the argument for each sub-case. However, what is important for now is to show the general fit between this structural theoretical framework and the Cold War. This general surface level evaluation shows that the history of the Cold War provides a strong support in general terms for the theoretical framework developed which serves as a consistent structural interpretation.
Chapter V

Conclusion

This study aimed to build a structural realist framework with an emphasis on pure structuralism, which promises to reflect international reality. Instead of combining structural factors with unit level motivations or identities, it tried to derive state identities, motivations, and behaviors from the nature of the international structure itself, which is defined by a distribution of power and anarchy. It argued that the distribution of power is the organizing principle of all forms of politics. It is the productive factor behind the construction of anarchy and identities, motivations, and behaviors of units populating international anarchy.

In such a structure, without assuming any state level motivation like survival or struggle for power, the study claimed that international politics is a struggle for autonomy. States struggling for autonomy arrange their motivations and behaviors in accordance with specific distributions of power. Therefore, concentrated power structures motivate states in favor of status quo while distributed power structures motivate in favor of change. However, on the behavioral level states have to rearrange their policies. They act offensively in concentrated power structures, while they act defensively in distributed power structures. However, defensive behaviors in distributed power structures produce major systemic wars, while offensive behaviors in concentrated power structures produce not systemic wars but minor confrontations.
These predictions were measured in the fifty years of Cold War history which is composed of three different periods-- the first and third ones were characterized by concentrated power structures while the second one was characterized by a distributed power structure. The empirical study of the Cold War strongly supports the predictions of the theoretical framework advocated in this study. While the second period of the Cold War was characterized by major systemic confrontations as outcomes of change-oriented defensive behaviors, the first and second periods were characterized by minor conflicts in the periphery as outcomes of status quo-oriented offensive behaviors.

Overall, the general tendencies in these three different eras of the Cold War fit quite well to the theoretical framework, which presents a new interpretation of the Cold War history. However, it seems that some specific Cold War confrontations require further and detailed case studies. The Vietnam War as a prolonged conflict that had started in the concentrated power structure of the first era of the Cold War but was mainly fought in the distributed power structure of second era requires in-depth case study to master the transformation of US motivations and foreign policy behavior.

There might also be some other cases in the fifty years of Cold War history that may require further detailed case studies. However, this study from a structural perspective tried to provide an overview of the tendency common in the entire Cold War history. It found strong support that the general tendencies in three different periods of the Cold War history validate the main theoretical arguments introduced.

Beyond the specific case studies to test the arguments made, this study leads to two main lines of further study - one is on the theoretical level the other is on the empirical level. On the
theoretical level, further studies are required to apply the general theoretical framework to specific research programs common in international relations. On the empirical level, comparative cases of different historical time periods with different power structures may be conducted to measure the validity of the theoretical framework.

On the theoretical level, studies focusing on specific research programs like alliance formation, international cooperation, and deterrence should be developed. The theoretical framework advocated here just limited itself to the broader framework of state behavior and its causes and consequences generally. The arguments are yet too broad to apply into the established research programs of international politics. Further elaboration in each research programs to provide the extensions of these general arguments are required to provide pure structural understandings of these specific research programs.

On the empirical level, comparative or single case studies can be conducted to measure how distributed and concentrated power structures of different historical time periods affected international politics, in order to test and/or provide further empirical support for the arguments of this theoretical framework. These studies can be conducted on established fields of great power behavior like the 19th century concentrated power structure in favor of the United Kingdom, early 20th century distributed power structure in Europe, or the post-Cold War concentrated power structure of the current unipolarity.

For the 19th century, this study would argue that concentrated power structure, not any concert among European powers was the fundamental factor behind the European peace. Huge concentration of power in favor of the United Kingdom, understood as a British hegemony, forced states to be concerned with the status quo. The status quo-oriented states in the system
acted aggressively like the rise of Prussia under Bismarck’s control represents. He tried to fill all niches in European politics anxiously. His status quo-orientation was combined with his offensive alignment behaviors in form of conducting complex relations with all European powers in which Prussia would be the indispensible part of any combination. However, this period was characterized with the lack of major wars among the European great powers. The competition was centrifugally spread to minor issue areas like colonialism or “the great game” between Russia and United Kingdom played in Central Asia.

The early 20th century represents the direct opposite example of the 19th century. In this distributed power structure the world experienced two major wars. Not personal differences between Bismarck and Kaiser Wilhelm but the changing distribution of power brought the First World War. The Kaiser was motivated by the distribution of power to change the system in search of a place under the sun, but was indeed acting defensively. All other major powers were also in the same position of change-oriented defensive behaviors. The final outcome was the First World War, which would be followed by the second in a similar distribution of power.

Another case would be the post-Cold War world order. Generally referred as the unipolar structure this new world order represents a good case for the study of concentrated power structures. The unipolar structure is dominated by status quo-oriented states including the only superpower and others. But on the behavioral level, one can easily argue that the two decades period of unipolar structure was characterized by increased number of minor confrontations all around the world, rather than directly challenging the system all units in it display their offensive behaviors in the periphery.
Additionally, other empirical studies can also be conducted on the regional levels. By building a matrix for the axes of two forms of global power structures and two forms of regional power structures this study can be extended both on the theoretical level and on the empirical level. The four types of power structures derived from such a matrix would extend the theoretical framework and enable it to apply to the regional levels interactively with the global level. For instance concentrated global power structure can be combined with concentrated or distributed power structures of the Middle East can offer further knowledge how the regional dynamics interact with the global dynamics by providing new areas of empirical research.

Overall, this study offered to revive a pure structuralist realist framework for international politics. It argued against the common tendency of assuming specific intentions for units in the system. Instead, for the sake of theoretical consistency and international reality, it advocated deriving the fundamental state motivation from international structure with its two elements of anarchy and distribution of power. Some might find this emphasis on the structure somewhat exaggerated especially in a time of eclecticism in social sciences. The author of this dissertation is also aware of the difficulties of explaining social reality with a mono-causal and single level analysis. But he also believes that the way of increasing our knowledge about the reality requires speculative therefore theoretical power rather than descriptive accuracy. Instead of un-testable combinations of inherently different levels and factors, this study aimed to offer a bold claim which can be tested and falsified without “auxiliary belts.” In order to increase our knowledge on the social world parsimonious theorizing is not only preferable but also necessary.
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