**Statecraft Simulation International Security**

**Week 1: Thinking and Theorizing about Security**

**Security requirements**

Since the very beginning of human life security has been a vital concern. Security is a substantial term deeply impacting upon individual, society, state and international levels. In international relations, security emerges up as one of the basic principles. As Thomas Hobbs argues, human beings need an overarching body to assure security. This body is for sure the “state”. For assuring security to their lives, families, properties the individuals agree to hand over some of their natural freedom to the hands of a leviathan.

It is well known that, state, as the user of sovereignty power, and as the user of legitimate violence, provides order and peace within its regional territory. But, contrary to this reality, states are not capable to regulate or to contain the anarchic structure of international system. In that arena, it is a self-help situation; that each state must overcome by its own capabilities.

In this anarchic arena, security need supersedes every other option or interest for states. Security becomes an indispensable requirement to survive for states. Under such a solid reality, states follow certain paths. In short term, they may decide to strengthen their hard power capacity such as to increase the number of the army, or to buy powerful arms, or either to obtain NBC capacity as deterrence to possible hostile actors. Or, states may come together to form alliances and unite their defensive capabilities. Throughout history, such behaviors have been witnessed. The alliances of World wars are such solid examples.

**Theorizing Security**

Realists define IR as relations between states. Individuals, NGOs, IOs are less important. Interstate politics is a permanent bargaining game over the distribution of power, thus it describes world politics as a state of war, and a struggle for power and is generally pessimistic about war. Control over material resources in world politics lies at the core of realism. For them, material resources determine state behavior. (US invasion of Iraq in 2003-Oil as a material source???)

Realism is the most established theoretical perspective in International Relations (IR). It has so strongly dominated the IR, rather than being a strong perspective, it was understood to be a common sense against other perspectives for years. Security and state survival is the core topic in realism, since medieval ages.

The realist worldview was shaped by the ancient Greek historian Thucydides in the 5th century BC, Niccolo Machiavelli in the 16th century, Thomas Hobbes in the 17th century. They focused on national security and state survival and portrayed international politics as power politics: an arena of rivalry, conflict and war between states. Defending the national interest and ensuring the survival of the state repeat permanently.

Realist thinkers write about power, balance of power, formation of alliances, causes of conflicts. Their primary focus is on national security. Survival of the state is crucial. The main responsibility of the rulers is always to defend the interests of the state and ensure its survival. World is a dangerous place, and also full of opportunities. Every state should take necessary measures against dangers. If states want to enrich themselves, they should exploit opportunities and should calculate rationally state interests and power against rival states.

Realists have a pessimistic view of human nature. They emphasize the necessity of having a powerful, centralized political authority. They assume human beings live in a condition of war ‘every one against every one’. They argue in order to escape from this situation all power should be given to a sovereign state or Leviathan (a state authority or supreme ruler) that would maintain order and end anarchy. Without order, no economic development, art, knowledge is possible. Achievement of personal security and domestic security through the creation of a state leads to international insecurity that is rooted in the anarchy of the state system: security dilemma! No escape from the security dilemma as there is no possibility of forming a world government. They argue that there is no higher authority over states to impose order. The international system is a condition of anarchy. Without a global ruler distrust, conflict and war are inevitable between states.

States claim to be sovereign with a right to be independent and autonomous with respect to each other. Due to the survival concerns in anarchy, states are expected to act in balance of power logic. Due to the anarchy assumption, there is no fixed idea of good or bad. For realism, might is right and law or morality should not apply beyond nation’s boundaries. Realists claim that without a superior authority to legislate codes of conduct, no morality or justice can exist. Where there is no common power there is no law; if there is no law, there is no justice.

Realism is an image of international relations based on four principal assumptions. These four assumptions identified with realist perspective are useful as a general statement of the main lines of realist thought. These are the basis on which the realist perspective hypotheses and theories are developed.

**First assumption:** States are the principal actors and most important actors as the key unit of analysis. The study of IR is the study of relations among these units. Why? Because only the state, given its claim to sovereignty, possesses the monopoly of legitimate force to resolve conflicts between individuals and groups within its territory and also between itself and other states and international actors. Non-state actors like international organizations (UN), Multi-National Corporations, and transnational actors are acknowledged by realists, but they are of secondary importance. States are the dominant actors. Kenneth Waltz and Robert Gilpin argue that states are the ‘basic actors in the international system’ by arguing that ‘the behavior of other actors is conditioned and delimited by state decisions and state power.

**Second assumption:** State is viewed as a unitary actor. Political differences within the state are ultimately resolved, namely the government speaks with one voice for the state as a whole. State as a unitary actor has one policy. For instance, when a foreign ministry expresses policies different from ministry of defense, action is taken to bring them to a common position. If the issue is not so much important, alternative views can remain, but if it is important, higher authorities will intervene to prevent alternative views. States have sufficient autonomy from their national societies to recognize and pursue the interests of the nation as a whole. Decision-makers respond on behalf of the nation state to the opportunities and dangers engendered by the international system.

**Third assumption:** States are rational, goal oriented actors and their goals are consistent. Also, states are assumed to derive strategies to achieve their goals and they are cost sensitive. States make cost-benefit analysis of every alternative, they evaluate alternatives and select the ones that maximizes their benefits. Thus, states can change their strategies in the face of changes in external constraints and opportunities. As states are rational and define their interest in terms of their power, realists assume that all states behave in a standard manner. Based on the rationality assumption, international system is composed of states that have the same patterns of behavior.

**Fourth assumption:** Anarchy is the context of action. States coexist in a context of international anarchy which refers to the absence of a centralized authority to protect states from one another. Each state has to survive on its own. Thus, states are by definition self-help agents. They assume that within the hierarchy of IR issues, national security tops the list. For realists, military and related political issues dominate world politics.

**Power as basic concept of realism:**

For a more complete understanding of the realist image of international relations We need to discuss power thoroughly. There are diverse definitions from the literature; Sometimes power is ‘the capacity of an individual, group, or nation “to influence the behavior of others”, or power is “man’s control over the minds and actions of other men”; or power is “the ability to prevail in conflict and overcome obstacles.” No matter how we describe it power is the core concept for realists. But, it is ironic that even among realists, there is no clear consensus on how to define the term power. Some realists understand power to be the sum of military, economic, technological, diplomatic, and other capabilities at the disposal of the state. Others see power as capabilities relative/compare to the capabilities of other states. No matter how you define it, the principal aim of states is to gain power. Realists call military, security or strategic issues as ‘high politics’ whereas economic and social issues are viewed as less important or ‘low politics’. For them, high politics dominate and set the environment for low politics

**Balance of power mentality**

Alliances are created by the balance of power mentality. For realists, the tendency of states to balance against challengers through the formation of defensive alliances is a strong behavioral expectation about the effects of anarchy on states. All states, according to realists, are then obliged to pursue a balance of power strategy

For Morgenthau, IR is a discipline which is based on the concepts of national interest and power. Interests of states should be defined in terms of their power. Statesmen should determine and defend their interests in accordance with the power they have. For Morgenthau, politics is a skill of harmonizing endless needs (interests) and scarce resources (power). Realists think within the framework of the national interest defined in terms of power.

**System**

So, how is system understood by the IR theorists? Not all realists approach the relations among states in a systemic way, but some particularly neo- or structural realists do. When applied to international relations, the term system has relations within realism, liberalism, economic structuralism, and the English School. Since 1980s, neo-realists argue that, rather than counting the interactions among the states, taking system as a starting point is much more useful. System (uni-polar, bi-polar, multi-polar) distributes the power/capability to the states, and states play their roles within the system. Ok but how the system should be analyzed in terms of levels? Neo-realists have focused on this question with the hands of Kenneth Waltz. Waltz focuses on three levels of analysis. Individual level, Group/State Level, International Level. But which level of analysis is most important? The easy answer to the question of which level of analysis should be emphasized is that all levels of analysis should be considered. Such a response is not particularly useful, however, because it suggests that we have to study everything under the sun. Which level of analysis is important question is the core of neo-realist theory? For neo-realism international level is the answer.

**Anarchy**

International anarchy is seen by realists as the core of distrust and conflict among states. The word anarchy brings forth images of violence, destruction, and chaos. For realists, however, anarchy simply refers to the absence of any legitimate authority above states. States are sovereign. They claim a right externally to be independent or autonomous from other states, and they claim a right domestically to exercise complete authority over their own territories. Although states differ in terms of the power they possess, none may claim the right to dominate another sovereign state. When realists use the term anarchy, they are referring to the absence of any hierarchy of legitimate authority in the international system. There is hierarchy of power in international politics, but there is not a hierarchy of authority. Some states are clearly more powerful than others, but there is no recognized authority higher than that of any state. Anarchy, so understood, is the defining characteristic of the environment within which sovereign states interact. Violence and war may be evident, but so too are periods of relative peace and stability. This absence of any superordinate or central authority over states (such as a world government with authority to enforce rules and to maintain order) is fundamentally different from domestic societies, where an authority exists to maintain order and to act as an arbiter of disputes. Realists argue that the absence of a central and overriding authority helps to explain why states come to rely on power, seeking to maintain or increase their power positions relative to other states. Anarchy is usually accompanied by a lack of trust among states in this environment. Each state faces a self-help situation in which it is dangerous to place the security of one’s own country in the hands of another.

**Security dilemma**

Across international anarchy and the lack of trust states find themselves in a security dilemma. The more one state arms to protect itself from other states, the more threatened these states become and the more prone they are to resort to arming themselves to protect their own national security interests. The dilemma is that even if a state is sincerely arming only for defensive purposes, it is rational in a self-help system to assume the worst in an adversary’s intentions and keep pace in any arms buildup. How can one know for certain that a rival is arming strictly for defensive purposes? This is the reason for arms races. Realists begin with the security dilemma in an anarchic world. Where does order come from under such conditions? What keeps states from continually attacking one another? One answer offered by realists is that states band together and pool their power whenever one state or group of states appears to be gathering a disproportionate amount of power, thus threatening to dominate the world, or even a portion of it. On the other hand, influenced perhaps by the thought of Hugo Grotius, many classical realists (as well as constructivists and other scholars in the English School) observe some degree of order provided by the development and acceptance of international norms and practices, particularly those in international law.

**Balance of Power**

The need to maintain a balance of power to avoid the triumph of a dominant power is a realist concern dating back to the works of Thucydides. It is also found in a report of the British Foreign Office written before World War I: If a dominat power is threatening the whole or one part of the world, we «England» do not hesitate to establish Balance of Power for the sake of the weak side. A bipolar balance of power (two states of comparable or relatively equal great power) or a multipolar balance of power (three or more states engaging in checks and balances) are two realist categorizations of particular distributions of capabilities. Such power configurations have occurred in the aftermath of major European wars—the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 following the Thirty Years’ War, the Congress of Vienna in 1815 following the defeat of Napoleon, and the settlements following both twentieth-century world wars. Although the post–World War I arrangements bought only twenty years of peace, the Congress of Vienna was more successful in establishing a basis for maintaining a balance of power without general or major war for almost a century. How do states balance is a central argument. Some scholars such as Kissinger says voluntarily, some others such as Waltz argue determinately. The position of Turkey’s joining NATO in 19501 is a solid example to voluntary balancing in order to escape from the USSR threat upon her territorial integrity.

**Continuity and Change**

Continuity is the dominant theme of realism as the anarchy forces states to behave in a similar, rational, power maximizing ways, or fail and to be conquered. However, change is constant at the systemic level, as powerful hegemons rise and fall. Since 1500, 4 powers dominated the system. Portugal (1500-end of 16th century), Netherlands (17th century), Great Britain (18th and 19th century), and the United States (1945-). In each cycle, one nation state is ascending, while another one is descending. This is the dynamic view of IR system.Realism is critized for reducing change in the international system.

War has been the principal mechanism of change throughout history. Because wars determine which states will govern the system. It determines the new distribution of power. Britain descended as USA ascended. Germany descended as Russia ascended. Imagine two Great Wars of 20th Century and how the International system changed in following years.

**Buzan’s Approach to Contemporary Security**

The Cold War years (1945-1991) have functioned as a term through which security need has risen to the utmost level at individual, societal, state, system levels. Strong armies with powerful arms have been accepted as the sole factor to survive and to feel in confidence. But with the peaceful collapse of Soviet Union, and the melt down of cold war mentality, a new security perception has emerged.

The strong security pillars of realist perception started to be weakened by a much critical view. Security turned out to be understood throughout a wider, deeper, multi-functional, and peaceful conceptualization. Traditional, historically welcomed, systemically casted, hard power rooted security concept has been criticized by strong pens of academia no matter which theoretical tradition they belonged to. The ending of the Cold War has created a remarkable fluidity and openness in the whole pattern and quality of international relations. One of those scholars is Barry Buzan, who set the principles of a new conceptualization for security. In particular, he tried to identify the likely effects of changes in East-West relations on the security conditions

According to Buzan, the simple and cold description of security of Cold War years have evolved into a deeper and multi-dimentional structure. Lets have a closer look into these patterns;

**Military security** concerns the two-level interplay of the armed offensive and defensive capabilities of states. In addition to this, four more security variants emerged.

**Political security** concerns the organizational stability of states, systems of government, and the ideologies that give them legitimacy.

**Economic security** concerns access to the resources, finance and markets necessary to sustain acceptable levels of welfare and state power.

**Societal security** concerns the ability of societies to reproduce their traditional patterns of language, culture, association, and religious and national identity and custom within acceptable conditions for evolution.

**Environmental security** concerns the maintenance of the local and the planetary biosphere as the essential support system on which all other human enterprises depend.

These five sectors do not operate in isolation from each other. Each defines a focal point within the security problematique, and a way of ordering priorities, but all are woven together in a strong web of linkages.

**Concerns for Statecraft Simulation -Discussion Themes**

The Statecraft world fits the realist definition of anarchy and countries must grapple with anarchy’s effects: no world government/enforcer to protect one state from another, stop attacks on Sapphire Island, enforce compliance with treaties, etc.

**Discussion question 1**: in what ways has anarchy affected your behavior or made things

difficult in Statecraft? Have you been able to (at least partially) overcome the effects of anarchy? How?

**Discussion question 2**: which countries in Statecraft have acted most like realists in terms of their priorities and strategies? Give specific examples of this telling behavior/rhetoric.

**Discussion question 3**: which countries (if any) in Statecraft have emerged as rising powers due to growing economic and/or military capabilities? How have other countries responded? Balancing through alliances or military buildups? Bandwagoning for security or profit? Why have you chosen these strategies? Do you find yourself balancing more against power capabilities or the combination of power and perceived hostile intentions (threat)?

**Discussion question 4**: what messages have you received from the nationalists that articulate realist themes? What actions of your government were they praising or criticizing?

**Discussion question 5**: Have trade ties led to greater interdependence, cooperation and peace in your Statecraft world? Or have these ties produced asymmetric dependence and exploitation? Give specific examples and explain precisely HOW trade has produced these outcomes.

**Discussion question 6**: Have IGOs in your Statecraft world facilitated cooperation by increasing transparency, reducing transaction costs, etc.? Give specific examples. If not, explain why they haven’t been effective. Do the most powerful states dominate IGOs, as realists predict?

**Discussion question 7**: What norms have developed in your Statecraft world? How did they originate? Has anyone violated them?

**Discussion question 8**: which countries in Statecraft have acted most like idealists in terms of their priorities and strategies? Give specific examples of this telling behavior/rhetoric.