Foreign Policy Analysis

Classic and Contemporary Theory

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ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD PUBLISHERS, INC.
Lanham • Boulder • New York • Toronto • Plymouth, UK

6

The Levels of National Attributes and International System: Effects on Foreign Policy

To this point, we have examined what is considered to be the core of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA): explanations involving psychological factors, small and large group effects, culture and social discourse, and domestic politics. In a way, these could be described as micro-level theories of foreign policy decisionmaking. In this chapter, we examine forces at a higher level of abstraction, that is, more of a macro-level approach to understanding foreign policy.

Notice that in shifting to a more macro level of analysis, the analyst is also forced to shift from foreign policy *decisionmaking* (FPDM) to foreign *policy*. If we consider the metaphor of foreign policy as a drama, then the actual humans and human collectives involved in FPDM are the actors, and the core of Foreign Policy Analysis provides situational motivations, understandings, and processes. But this drama is taking place on a stage, and that stage sets some parameters to any drama enacted upon it. Certain types of actions by human actors become more or less likely depending upon the layout of the stage and its props. So while more proximate causes of foreign policy decisionmaking are to be found in FPA's core, there is no doubt that analysts must also look to less proximate causes that nevertheless "set the stage" for foreign policy decisions.

Moving to this more macro level of analysis also moves us closer to more conventional traditions of International Relations (IR) theory. Nevertheless, it is also true that theorists working at this level of abstraction are often not interested in creating theories of foreign policy. That is, a foreign policy analyst must often make the connection between, for example, system-level

theories of international relations and foreign policy, because the theorist in question may not make that connection himself or herself. Despite this requirement for additional labor, a foreign policy analyst would be remiss in dismissing these macro-level theories. To reach its potential, FPA must examine all levels of analysis for possible impact on foreign policy choice.

However, it is also true that many of the variables at these more macro-levels are fairly stable over the course of a particular foreign policy decision-making episode. The international system may not have changed at all over those two weeks in October 1962 during the Cuban missile crisis. Neither did the national attributes of either the United States or the Soviet Union. Neither did the United Nations system. So the primary explanatory mode of using macro-level variables in FPA is, generally speaking, not to posit how change in these variables led to changes in foreign policy direction. Rather, the mode of explanation is to show how the particular value of these macro-level variables leads to a probability distribution over certain types of foreign policy choices, and that this probability distribution does affect foreign policy decisionmaking in a particular context. It was not a viable option for Kennedy to acquiesce in the Soviet emplacement of intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) in Cuba, given the tight bipolar Cold War system of 1962, the military capabilities of the United States, the geographical proximity of Cuba to the United States, and the impotence of the United Nations system. None of those variables changed during the Cuban missile crisis, but their values affected decisionmaking during that crisis just as surely as did the personalities of the ExCom members. Those personalities were more proximate to the decisions made, to be sure, but the "stage" defined many of the parameters of choice.

NATIONAL ATTRIBUTES AND FOREIGN POLICY

We will first examine how attributes of the nation-state may affect foreign policy direction. National attributes often include elements of what we would consider to be the power of the nation-state: natural resources, geography, population characteristics, size, and so forth. Of course, national attributes are typically relative: France is a large nation in Europe, but it is not one of the largest nations in the world.

Size. Size may affect both nation-state goals as well as decisionmaking processes. For example, alignment with a neighboring large state may be an attractive foreign policy direction for a small state. Of course, if a small state happens to find itself between two large states that are in conflict, a position of neutrality might also appear desirable. Small states are usually unable to either reward or punish other states, and thus may find themselves honing diplomatic skills of persuasion or protest. Small states, particularly those

that are also relatively poor, may have a small bureaucracy and few embassies, which may hamper the scope of foreign policy. Before Baby Doc Duvalier was overthrown in Haiti, UN officials would have to fill out the paperwork on behalf of the Haitian bureaucracy so that Haiti could receive UN economic assistance.

Large states, on the other hand, are more likely to be active in foreign policy. Often, the foreign policy aims of a large state will increase as additional capabilities are developed. In fact, large nations have a tendency to become more assertive in foreign affairs as their capabilities grow. Large nations are harder to defeat in war, but may also be more difficult to unite. Larger nations also have a higher probability of possessing important natural resources, simply on the basis of landmass.

Natural Resources. Natural resources, or the lack thereof, may also play a role in foreign policy. For example, the burgeoning energy needs of China, whose major energy resource is inefficient coal, has led that nation to become the patron of countries whose oil is not already contracted to the West and Japan. This has recently led China to let it be known that it will veto any attempt to bring the Darfur crisis in the Sudan to a vote on action by the UN Security Council. Sudan has contracted its oil to the Chinese. It also led China into a bidding war with Japan over a new pipeline to bring Russian natural gas southward. India also has gigantic new energy needs, which has led it to court countries such as Iran and Turkmenistan. A new "Great Game" appears to be coalescing around Caspian Sea oil, turning otherwise weak nations such as Azerbaijan into international "players." The politics of oil, who has it and who doesn't, fuels quite a lot of what goes on in international relations today.

But oil is not the only natural resource that has affected foreign policy. One of the reasons that the United States was loathe to repudiate the white regime in South Africa during the Cold War was that South Africa possessed the only major holdings outside of the Soviet Union of several important minerals needed for advanced weapons technology. Likewise, the otherwise undesirable Western Sahara region has also been the subject of international dispute because of its extensive phosphate deposits. Natural uranium deposits can also affect foreign policy, as those with such natural deposits may either use them to develop their own indigenous nuclear weapons production, or may sell them on the market to countries that desire such a capability. Niger was approached by Saddam Hussein to sell Iraq "yellowcake," a processed form of uranium. Some analysts believe that Libya invaded and for a time occupied certain northern portions of Chad that contained natural uranium deposits.

Sometimes it is not only oil or minerals that constitute natural resources, but also arable land and agricultural capability. Certain nations have been given the nickname of "breadbasket," due to their abundant fertile land

and prosperous agriculture. Though complimentary, the designation of "breadbasket" may have unfortunate foreign policy consequences as aggressive nations without such bounty may be tempted to incorporate their territory by force. Ukraine was an agricultural prize for the Soviet Union (though it later did much to destroy the agriculture of that area), and Cambodia was an agricultural prize for Vietnam. Furthermore, soil erosion and desertification and other types of environmental degradation may become national security concerns for affected nations. For example, many nations bordering the Sahara are losing arable land to that encroaching desert. Other countries that are islands in the seas worry that their arable land—and perhaps their entire nation—will be swallowed by the sea as a result of global warming.

Water is becoming an increasingly important natural resource. Fresh water from major rivers and aquifers can be the lifeblood of many countries, especially those in desert and near-desert climes, and is becoming an issue to fight over. Peace between the Palestinians and Israelis depends as much upon their ability to come to an agreement over their shared aquifers as it does over issues of nationalism. Turkey has built the Ataturk Dam, which controls the downstream flow of many of the area's most important rivers. The Turks have even said that if their neighbors, such as Syria, give them any trouble, they will dam up the flow of water to those nations.

Geography. The particulars of geography can also drive foreign policy. Of course, geography plays a role in natural resources. If you occupy volcanic islands in the middle of an ocean, you are going to have energy problems in an economy based on fossil fuel. Basalt doesn't contain such fuel, and you will have to seek it elsewhere, as Japan must. But geography also has effects independent of natural resources.

Access to ports, waterways, and strategically important land features is an aspect of geography with great import for foreign affairs. Why do people keep invading Afghanistan? Afghanistan has very little worth coveting. But what it does have is a land pathway from the Middle East to Asia. Similarly, the Golan Heights and Kashmir are flashpoints because they are the high ground between countries that have traditionally been enemies. Who controls the high ground controls peace or war between the two nations. Highlands may also be important for their water resources. The Indus River, which is vital to the survival of Pakistan, flows through Kashmir, and two very important tributaries to the Indus (Chenab and Sutleg rivers) have their headwaters in Kashmir. Similarly, in the Golan Heights, the Jordan River flows along its border and two very important tributaries to the Jordan (Dan and Banyas rivers) are located directly in the heights. In fact, Syrians building a dam on the Dan River prompted an Israeli strike to destroy Syria's ability to control the water resources of this region.

Access to the sea is another important facet of geopolitics. Many land-

locked countries fall prey to their neighbors with coastline, who then may exert disproportionate influence over their economy. But even countries with abundant ports can have difficulties: Russia has also pushed outward in an effort to gain warm-water ports. Their natural ports are frozen six months out of the year. "Choke points" along the SLOCs (sea lines of communication) of the world's oceans and seas are often guarded by the navies of those countries dependent on globalized trade. One example is the Strait of Hormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, which provides such a natural choke point for stopping oil shipments that Jimmy Carter made protection of free passage through the strait a "vital" national interest, meaning the United States would defend free passage by force if necessary.

The borders of a nation may also have foreign policy implications. Some scholars have argued that nations with more borders tend to be involved in more regional wars than nations with few borders, arguing that proximity may become the catalyst for conflict. A cursory comparison of the borders of the United States and Russia do leave one with the impression that the geography of Russia's borders augurs for increased levels of cross-border and near-border conflicts compared to those of the United States. And, truly the travails of Russia's "near abroad," as the Russians term it, has been a long-standing security vulnerability both in contemporary times as well as historically. Borders drawn with more reference to a map than to realities on the ground may also have profound foreign policy effects. It is difficult to imagine how the East and West Pakistan of 1948 could ever have survived as a single country, despite a common religious heritage. Many borders drawn by colonial powers in Africa are similarly troublesome; tribes were divided by these borders; long-standing enemies were placed within the same borders; accessibility to ports was dependent on the outcome of struggles between colonial powers; borders crossed linguistic lines, and so forth. A striking example is the situation of Senegal and Gambia. Senegal completely surrounds small Gambia, and the people are of the same ethnic grouping. But Gambia's main port and the land inward from it was claimed by England, whereas Senegal and the ports on either side of Gambia's port were claimed by the French. For years the peoples of these two countries have been trying to merge into "Senegambia," but the legacy of the two different colonial languages, English and French, have stymied them. In the Middle East, the politics of the creation of Kuwait by the colonial powers has always irritated Iraqis, while the question of how a state called Palestine can be built from two noncontiguous areas of land, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, preoccupies the minds of those who yearn for a Palestinian homeland.

Demographics. The characteristics of a nation's population may also have foreign policy repercussions. Nazli Choucri and Robert North developed the concept of "lateral pressure," meaning that nations with high pop-

ulation growth rates become hard-pressed to satisfy the needs of their citizens without pressure to obtain these resources from abroad, through trade, migration, colonization, or conflict (1975). In the twenty-first century, one might also need to develop a theory concerning the inverse of lateral pressure; perhaps the "lateral vacuum." Many of the richest nations of the world now have birthrates significantly below replacement levels. These nations are depopulating, particularly in Europe (including both eastern and western Europe) and Japan. Issues of migration from high growth rate poor countries to negative growth rate rich countries are now beginning to dominate the domestic politics of many developed nations, with clear foreign policy consequences. Will Turkey be admitted to the European Union? Will the Russian Far East become ethnically Chinese? How will the balance of power in East Asia be affected as Japan dies out?

However, there is more to population than simply rates of growth or decline. Other variables come into play as well, including age distribution of the population, gender distribution of the population, wealth distribution within the population, ethnic/linguistic/religious fractionalization of the population, and education and health of the population, among many others. For example, both India and China have similar-sized populations. Nevertheless, China is considered more of a contender for superpower status, and part of that assessment is based on population characteristics. China's population, speaking in the aggregate, has a higher life expectancy and higher literacy rates (particularly among women) than India. It is also less fractionalized by ethnic and religious differences.

But China and India do share some population challenges that may affect their foreign policy: their gender distribution is extremely abnormal, as is Pakistan's. Because of entrenched son preference in these lands, coupled with other variables, such as the one-child policy pursued from 1978 on in China, in each successive birth cohort since the 1980s there have been increasingly more boy babies born than girl babies. China's birth sex ratio is now officially 118, though there are probably at least 121 boy babies born for every 100 girl babies born. India's birth sex ratio is officially about 113, but in some locales can reach over 150 boy babies born for every 100 girl babies. When these young men grow up, 12–15 percent of them will not be able to marry and form families of their own. Historically, the presence of a sizeable number of "bare branches" (young men, typically at the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum who are surplus to the number of females in society) has led to severe domestic instability (Hudson and Den Boer, 2004). Governments do become aware of the problem, and are tempted to co-opt these young men into the armed forces and send them away from population centers of their own country. Governments also may be forced into a more authoritarian mode to cope with the social disruption caused by the bare branches. In sum, abnormal gender distribution within a population may be an aggravating factor in international affairs, and in contemporary times may have ramifications for conflicts such as those involving Kashmir and Taiwan.

In the age of HIV/AIDs and drug-resistant tuberculosis and malaria, the overall disease burden of a population is another important national attribute. Approximately 40 percent of Botswana's population is infected with the HIV virus, predominantly among the young adult population whose labor typically supports both the elderly and the young of society. This heavy disease burden saps a nation of economic and social strength. International migration flows and human trafficking also profoundly affect both the nations from which people come and the nations to which people go. For example, the Philippine government has set a limit on how many nurses may take foreign employment. The government knows that if it lifted its cap, Filipino society would lose nearly all its nurses to employment in more developed nations, with disastrous consequences for the Philippines.

Political System. The type of political system governing the nation-state may also have consequences for foreign policy. One of the few regularities identified by International Relations is the "democratic peace." It has been observed that democracies typically do not fight other democracies. Of course, there are exceptions—the War of 1812, for instance. Furthermore, the political system must be a "true" democracy, not a "pseudo-democracy," such as Iraq under Saddam Hussein where in the final election before the invasion of 2003 Hussein garnered 97 percent of the popular vote (and the other 3 percent, if identified, probably met an ill fate). There are many explanations for why the democratic peace exists: some feel that the transparency of democracy leads to increased empathy between democratic nations; others feel that voters punish politicians who would wantonly enter conflict; still others believe there is a common cultural outlook among democratic peoples that prevents the emergence of much conflict; others feel that it is the relatively high status of women in democracy that causes the democratic peace phenomenon. Interestingly, researchers have found that there is no effect on the amount of conflict between democracies and nondemocracies. Democracies fight nondemocracies at least as much as other nondemocracies do (Bremer, 1993; Dixon, 1993; Merrit and Zinnes, 1991).

Military Capabilities. A nation-state's level of military capabilities is an important national attribute with obvious import on foreign policy. Superiority in arms can often lead to a foreign policy stance of "coercive diplomacy," where one can press for one's own advantage more aggressively than otherwise. Some have argued that the military superiority of the United States, which spends more on defense each year than the rest of the entire world combined, leads it to lean more heavily on military instruments of

power than necessary to achieve its aims. Military capabilities can also substitute for international support; the United States invaded Iraq without the support of the United Nations or the international community more broadly. Israel is able to ignore many United Nations resolutions condemning its actions because of its military capabilities (not to mention the support of militarily empowered allies, such as the United States).

Weapons of mass destruction belong in a category all their own. Though the capability to produce chemical weapons is no longer considered exceptional—pretty much any nation with industrial capability can produce them, and chemical weapons do not offer much strategic value if both parties have them (for example, in the Iran–Iraq War)—nuclear weapons and biological weapons are still hallmarks of military strength. Most biological agents are easy to produce, but weaponizing them requires a significant level of technology. However, biological weapons are considered a marker of "rogue" regimes, as most established powers have eliminated their Cold War stockpiles and signed the Biological Weapons Convention. Nuclear weapons, on the other hand, still confer cachet. Nations with nuclear weapons are nations to be reckoned with in a military and diplomatic sense, even if they are poor as dirt, as is North Korea. The possession of nuclear weapons can profoundly alter foreign policy situations. The 1998 detonations of thermonuclear weapons by India and Pakistan frames the Kashmir situation in a very new light, inviting the intervention of third parties to ensure that the world's first nuclear war does not take place on the Indian subcontinent. In the Middle East, if Iran succeeds in developing nuclear weapons, the politics of that region will be fundamentally altered.

Economic Capabilities. Students of international politics have long looked at the relative wealth of nations as a variable in understanding their behavior. In earlier years, scholars would speak of the First World (Western developed nations), the Second World (Eastern bloc command economies), the Third World (underdeveloped nations), and the Fourth World (nations at the lowest levels of development). In the globalized economy of the twenty-first century, patterns of economic dependence and interdependence must be traced to understand the effect that economic forces have on foreign policy.

Of course, there are some rather simplistic popular theories in this area that pin the ultimate motivation of all foreign policy to monetary gain. We have all heard theories that ultimately ascribe the U.S. invasion of Iraq to the pursuit of Halliburton's financial interests. But surely the motivation to invade Iraq was multifactorial, and if consideration of Halliburton's ledgers were an issue, it was but one issue among many others and likely not the most proximate. There are other theories that assert that rich countries get what they want in foreign affairs. But surely the United States is a case in point where that is not always the outcome. The United States fought the World Trade Organization (WTO) on steel tariffs, lost, and acquiesced in dismantling those tariffs. The United States did not receive backing from the UN Security Council to invade Iraq. It is fair to say that the whole premise of FPA is a fundamental rejection of more simplistic theories of economic determinism.

Nevertheless, foreign policy analysts would be remiss in overlooking economic capabilities and economic interactions as a source of foreign policy. And in the area of global economics, it is wise to remember that some of the most important actors are not nation-states, but also multinational corporations and intergovernmental bodies such as the WTO. Even subnational units, such as states and provinces within nation-state boundaries, can be impressive global economic actors. We will return to this subject when we explore the international system's effects on foreign policy.

How do economic capabilities affect foreign policy? One aspect to examine is dependence; that is, nonreciprocal needs for the economic inputs of others. Economic dependence is easily seen in the economies of certain less-developed countries. A dependent economy is usually characterized by reliance on the export of a single or a small set of commodities (as versus manufactured goods). Unless the export is a scarce resource possessed by few countries, it is likely such an economy will not become rich through such exports. Rather, the disadvantage of the relatively low price of commodities may be compounded by fluctuating prices, which make government financial planning for future years difficult. The one-sidedness of such an economy also makes it vulnerable to shortages of items needed for the society to function. For example, some West African nations heavily dependent on the export of cocoa have to import food to feed their people, even though their economy is geared toward agricultural production. Such vulnerable economies are also in a subservient position to nation-states that consume their goods; if relations sour, trade may be used as a weapon, which would be a hardship for the more dependent country. Trade dependence may create foreign policy compliance.

Even producers of relatively scarce goods, such as oil, have their own challenges. Both cartel members and nonmembers must cooperate in an intricate dance that allows them to sell their resource at a price that not only is beneficial for them and prevents price defections but also does not create incentives for their consumers to look elsewhere for oil or oil substitutes. If the United States were to invest in a type of intensive "Manhattan Project," as has been recently recommended to develop energy alternatives to fossil fuels, what would happen to nations such as Russia and Saudi Arabia, which are so dependent on oil income to keep their governments afloat?

One of the most interesting historical cases in which economics skewed international relations was that of Cabinda during the latter half of the

Cold War. Cabinda is an oil-rich province of Angola that is not completely contiguous with most of Angolan territory. Angola during this time period was ruled by a Marxist government allied with the USSR, and faced an anticommunist insurgency called UNITA that was predictably backed by the American government. However, Western oil companies, including Chevron, an American company, were invited by the Angolan government to set up refineries in Cabinda, which arrangement provided a nice source of hard currency for the communist government. These oil installations became an important target of attack for UNITA, meaning that American-backed insurgents were attacking the holdings of Western, even American, companies. But the plot thickens. The Angolan government asked for military troops from communist Cuba to help protect Chevron and the other companies from U.S.-backed UNITA insurgents! Castro's agreement to send troops became a major escalation of the Cold War during the 1980s.

The new globalized economy introduces its own wrinkles into the linkage between economic relations and foreign relations. For example, the United States is the largest debtor nation in the world, and copes with this debt by the issuance of Treasury bills. The largest holder of these Treasury bills is the People's Republic of China (PRC). This creates a situation in which the United States must be concerned about whether the PRC will continue to buy T-bills at the same rate, or whether at some point the PRC would "dump" these T-bills. Either way, this gives the PRC an abnormal degree of leverage in the U.S. economy and, by extension, has reverberations for broader Sino–U.S. relations (including issues such as support for Taiwan).

Another example is the "Asian flu" of 1997. Speculation in the Thai currency caused its stock market to collapse, triggering collapses and near-collapses not only in the Asian region, but also around the world. Though the U.S. stock market only experienced a serious downturn, Mexico's economy was so affected that the United States had to step in with economic assistance to avoid a crash there that would certainly have wreaked havoc in the American market. Still another example of the new wrinkles added by the global economy is the political controversy over the outsourcing of labor. American companies can become more profitable by hiring workers in India and other countries to do the work of their American employees at a fraction of the cost. Radiologists in India may read your X-rays, or answer your technical support questions concerning your computer, or take your order from a catalog. However, such outsourcing also places a burden on American society, as increasing amounts of social welfare funding is necessary to pick up the pieces for the American workers whose jobs have been outsourced. Political discourse in the United States teeters between the rhetoric of free trade and the rhetoric of fair trade, with enormous implications for foreign relations.

Globalization, then, has introduced new types of economic dependence, interdependence, and even capabilities. The new globalized economy has also introduced a spectrum of new players, but we will address that dimension as we turn to the effects of the international system on foreign policy.

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM AND FOREIGN POLICY

The international system is arguably the highest level of abstraction in the study of international politics. Rather than examine nation-states, or dyadic relationships between nation-states, the system level of analysis looks more abstractly at the nature of the system composed of all the nation-states.

One example could be the neorealist notion of anarchy in the international system. Briefly put, the system of states does not have a real governing body with the ability to enforce state compliance. This anarchy produces a variety of dysfunctional behaviors, such as the security dilemma in which my attempts to become more secure may actually lead me to become less secure over time as other nations react to my growing capabilities. Cooperation becomes very difficult, because there is no foundation of enforced law upon which trust may be granted. Powerful nations must always be balanced by other nations or coalitions of nations. Smaller powers must find a way to protect themselves, often by aligning with larger powers. Altruism in world affairs is, in essence, punished, as self-restraint upon the part of one nation in, for example, fishing so as not to deplete global stocks, may not be matched by self-restraint by other nations. Systems-level thinking is thus not focused on foreign policy per se, but rather on the context in which foreign policy is made. Yet it is quite possible to imagine how a particular system might have tangible effects on foreign policy, as we have just seen with the concept of international system anarchy.

In thinking about systems theory, it appears that some types of systems theory are more teleological in nature than others. That is, some types of systems theory speak to the question of how systems change over time, either in some sort of repeated cycle or on a linear path to a particular telos. Other, probably more conventional, types of systems theory posit system permutations, but do not necessarily address the issue of transition itself. We will begin with the latter.

System Attributes and Their Effect on Foreign Policy. Scholars have typologized systems according to a number of attributes. We could examine the number of actors in a system, the distribution of power across those actors, the number of major powers or poles within a system, the degree of adherence to these poles through formal or informal alliance mechanisms, the

presence/absence and strength of supranational organizations, the number of contested issues in the system, and so forth. It would be possible to take each attribute in turn and hypothesize about the effect of its value on foreign policy. For example, Maurice East posits that the greater the number and type of issues contested in the international system, the greater the level of bargaining behavior in foreign policy and the lower the level of ideological intransigence (1978).

This manner of hypothesizing from system attributes to foreign policy is useful, but also noteworthy for what it cannot tell us. Will all nations in the system react similarly to the issue attribute? Or will nations react differentially according to the particular permutations of both system *and* national attributes? Is the hypothesis so general that no specific effects on, say, the foreign policy of Kenya can be derived from it? Or is it a starting point for analysts to factor in the particular circumstances, attributes, personalities, politics of Kenya? Despite the difficulty in pinning down exactly how the foreign policy analyst is to use system-level variables, it is also difficult to deny that the task must be attempted. Consider U.S. foreign policy in 1935 versus 1945. Or 1955 versus 1989. Or 1989 versus 1992. System clearly makes a difference in foreign policy. The trick is how to track it and use it.

One approach is to create the typology, as above, and then derive general principles of foreign policy behavior from it. One such exercise was performed by Morton Kaplan (1957 and 1972). Kaplan's typology included both real-world systems and hypothetical systems, the latter included to show that the derivation of behavioral generalizations from system-level variables could be posted counterfactually.

The two real-world systems emphasized in Kaplan's were the classic balance of power system in Europe from 1815 to 1914, and the loose bipolar system of the mid- to late Cold War period. Kaplan felt that the "equilibrium rules" that allowed this type of system, requiring a minimum of five actors, to persist were the following:

1) increase capabilities, but negotiate rather than fight;
2) fight rather than fail to increase capabilities;
3) stop fighting rather than eliminate an essential actor;
4) oppose any coalition or single actor that tends to assume a position of predominance within the system;
5) constrain actors who subscribe to supranational organizational principles;
6) permit defeated essential actors to reenter the system as acceptable role partners, or act to bring previously inessential actors within an essential actor classification; treat all essential actors as acceptable role partners.

Of course, if the rules changed, the system would change as well. However, assuming the rules are in the self-interest of the actors leads to continuation of the system for at least a while, and in this case almost a century.

Kaplan believed that several behavioral tendencies would emerge in a system with this structure and these rules. Alliances would tend to be specific and of short duration, shifting according to advantage (not ideology) even in the midst of conflict. Wars would be fairly limited in their objectives. International law would emphasize the rules of war, and such rules would have force over the actors in the system.

Contrast this with Kaplan's outline of the loose bipolar system. This system can have any number of actors, but among them are two actors whose power capabilities dwarf those of all other actors in the system. Two blocs developed, but unlike the "tight bipolar" variant of this system where all other system actors are aligned with one or the other pole, in the loose bipolar system there are bloc members, nonmembers, and intergovernmental and supranational organizations. Kaplan puts forth twelve rules for this type of system, but we will mention only an illustrative subset here:

1) all blocs subscribing to hierarchical or mixed hierarchical integrating principles are to eliminate the rival bloc;
2) all such blocs are to negotiate rather than fight; to fight minor wars rather than major wars, and to fight major wars rather than to fail to eliminate the rival bloc or allow the rival bloc to attain a position of preponderant strength;
3) all bloc actors are to increase their capabilities relative to those of the opposing bloc;
4) all bloc members are to subordinate the objectives of universal actors (i.e., supranational actors such as the United Nations) to the objectives of their bloc in the event of gross conflict between these objectives, but to subordinate the objectives of the rival bloc to those of the universal actor;
5) non-bloc member nations are to act to reduce the danger of war between the bloc actors, and are to refuse to support the policies of one bloc actor as against the other except in their roles as members of a universal actor;
6) bloc actors are to attempt to extend bloc membership to nonmembers, but are to tolerate nonmembership if the alternative is to force a nonmember into the rival bloc.

With these system rules, foreign policy behavior will have different tendencies compared to the classic balance of power system described above. Alliances are now long-term and based primarily on bloc ideology. If there were no nuclear weapons, war would probably be unlimited, but given pos-

session by both blocs of nuclear weapons, wars tend to be less frequent than in the balance of power system. International law is fairly impotent in this type of system, as the opposing blocs do whatever they feel they must to stop the ascension of the other bloc.

This contrast between the behavioral tendencies of a loose bipolar system and those of the classic balance of power system are an excellent way of demonstrating the profound effect of the system "backdrop" to foreign policy. At least with reference to three foreign policy behaviors—nature and duration of alliances, war frequency and aims, strength of international legal conventions—the behavioral tendencies are opposite in these two systems.

Kaplan also discusses several hypothetical systems, of which we will discuss three: the universal system, the hierarchical system, and the unit veto system. The universal system would be a system in which a body such as the United Nations did have the power to enforce the will of its members against recalcitrant nations. The universal system's primary actor would be a benign federation of the world's nations. Kaplan hypothesizes that after an initial period of testing the will and capabilities of the federation, war would pretty much cease to exist. The hypothetical hierarchical system is most likely a less benign version of the universal system, where a particular nation has achieved world dominance and rules through force. Kaplan posits that this could result in even greater stability than the federated system, depending upon the manner in which the ruling nation exercised its authority. A third type of system, the unit veto system, would be one in which a significant number of nations possess first-strike nuclear capabilities. There would be no need for alliances in such a system. The propensity for war would be significantly dampened as most nations pursued a hedgehog policy of relative isolationism, but if war did break out in such a system, nuclear-capable third-party involvement might escalate the war to global proportions.

One of the trickiest aspects of using system theory is that the most important changes to the system—that is, transition from a system with one set of attributes to a system with a different set of attributes—are not usually predictable on the basis of system-level variables alone. The foreign policy analyst understands this intuitively, because while some may tend to reify or anthropomorphize systems, systems are simply aggregations of international actors such as states, and these actors in turn are simply aggregations of humans. "Systems are us," and theories of system change at some point must find agents of system change—and those agents are ultimately human beings acting singly or in groups. Enter FPA.

Nevertheless, it is possible to find some systems theories that have a sort of teleological cast to them, in that the theory posits predictable system transition. We will examine two such theories.

Concepts of System Transition and Transition's Effect on Foreign Policy. In this section, we will examine the "long cycle" theory of George Modelski, who posits a regular and cyclical set of system transitions, and we will also look at classic Marxist theory that propounds more of a forward-moving spiral movement of the international system culminating in an end state with no further transition (Modelski, 1981, 63–83).

Modelski puts forth the idea that the international system goes through a 120-year cycle, with each cycle opening by the accession to a preponderance of power of a particular system actor, usually in the context of a major war involving all contenders to power. Since 1500, Modelski suggests that Portugal, the Netherlands, Great Britain (twice in succession), and the United States have held this position. According to Modelski, for a time the position of each seems strong and unassailable, and the great power acts in the common good. In the next phase, there begins to be a creeping decay and dispersion of power brought about by the erosion of this power monopoly by rising rivals. Finally, a multipolar system emerges as power is dispersed more and more to other poles within the system. But this multipolar system will gradually move toward open conflict, and once again through the mechanism of a great war, a new predominant power will emerge and the cycle will begin all over again.

The four phases of the cycle, then, are 1. Global War (and emergence of the new great power), 2. World Power, 3. Delegitimization of the World Power, and 4. Deconcentration of Power to Other Actors. Each of these stages lasts for approximately thirty years. Also, the wax and wane of world power is not only tied to military capabilities, but economic capabilities as well, as seen in the timeline in table 6.1:

Table 6.1 Modelski's Long Cycles (adapted from Modelski, 1981)

Years	*Phase*	*Military Buildups*	*World Economy*
1763–1792	Deconcentration	Rising	Expanding
1792–1815	Global War	Depleting	Scarcity
1815–1848	World Power	Rising	Expanding
1848–1873	Delegitimation	Depleting	Scarcity
1874–1913	Deconcentration	Rising	Expanding
1913–1946	Global War	Depleting	Scarcity
1946–1973	World Power	Rising	Expanding
1973–2001	Delegitimation	Depleting	Scarcity
2001–2030?	Deconcentration	Rising	Expanding
2030–2060?	Global War	Depleting	Scarcity

The long cycle theory posits, then, that the political, military, and economic processes of the international system are actually coordinated move-

ments of one underlying deep structure. Waves of political problems and innovations coincide with periods of economic scarcity and bring the reordering of political and military structures and the rise of powerful new system actors. Foreign policy predispositions may be derived from the phase of the cycle in which the world finds itself. As this textbook is written, according to long cycle theory we are in a dangerous period of deconcentration, where the world power of the United States will be increasingly challenged by rivals. The United States will react by attempting to hold onto its preponderance of power, but may have to face a crucial contest for world power in approximately the year 2030. Modelski provides not only phase-related system attributes, but a way to track and foresee system transitions that will alter foreign policy tendencies.

The classic Marxist view of the history of the international system differs somewhat from the long cycle theory in that instead of the cycles merely repeating themselves, history is more of a forward-moving spiral, in which cycles of the dialectic, though similar in form, propel us toward an "end of history," a final transition that will end the dialectic itself.

The engine of history, including what we now call the international system, is the force of dialectical materialism. Since we are not philosophers, suffice it to say that the "materialism" part of this phrase refers to the fact that Marx felt that all social phenomena were ultimately rooted in the material. That is to say, land, natural resources, labor, and the means by which these things were organized to produce the goods and services of society were the underpinning of all else that occurred socially. So philosophy, the arts, religion, the form of government, and everything else would be derivative of the forces of material production. For example, in the developed world the social science we call economics tells us that capitalism is the most efficient type of organization of production, and that the self-interest of individualism is the foundation of all good within a society. Marxists would explain this materially; scholarly economics is merely an apologist for the forces of production that underlie it and make it possible.

The forces of materialism work dialectically—at least until the end of history. All history, according to Marx, is the history of class struggle. In every epoch of history there are haves and have-nots whose interests are opposed. This struggle of thesis and antithesis will give rise to new social forms and structures. Thus perhaps in earlier epochs the struggle was between masters and slaves, but in the Middle Ages this dialectic morphed into a struggle between lords and serfs, and in the modern era of capitalism we have a struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The players and structures and modes of production may change, but the dialectic repeats itself over the course of history.

However, the era of capitalism is different than all preceding eras, according to Marx. Under "ripe" capitalism, the disparity between the rich and the poor is so great, and the percentage of the population that is the proletariat is so large, that a possibility comes into being that did not exist before. If the proletariat does revolt (due to misery under the bourgeoisie, consciousness-raising by Marxists, and the inherent self-contradictions of capitalism), given that they are 99 percent or so of the population of the world, it is possible that what will result is not a new class struggle, but instead the abolition of class itself. There would no longer be haves and have-nots. As a result, the dialectic would end, and history would end since history is but the tale of dialectical class struggle. As the proletariat rose in rebellion in certain parts of the world, they would establish a classless dictatorship of the proletariat. As workers in other parts of the world began to rise up, first socialism and then finally the end state of communism would be brought about. In the final state of communism, which would be global, there would be no rich and no poor. There would be no nation-states. It would be "from each according to his abilities and to each according to his needs." There could only be peace at the end of history.

This interesting view of history had a few problems. Marx wrote *The Communist Manifesto* in the mid-1800s and felt the global proletarian revolution would be imminent. It wasn't, of course, and not only that, the large capitalist nation-states seemed to grow ever stronger while the proletariat not only failed to rise up, they also were patriotic and fought for their nation-states in what Marx viewed as capitalist conflicts. One of the contributions of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin was to posit the means by which capitalism was staving off its self-destruction. This contribution was viewed as so valuable by Marxists that communist theory became known as Marxism-Leninism. And it is Lenin's theory of imperialism that gives us the most pertinent link to foreign policy behavior.

Lenin's *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* was written while he was still in exile in Zurich in 1916. The following year, of course, the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, aided by Kaiser Wilhelm returning Lenin to his homeland to weaken one of his World War I opponents, was the communists' first important victory. This victory would produce a worldwide communist movement, insurgencies in noncommunist nation-states, and a large bloc of communist nations, and lead to a protracted and very expensive Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States.

Lenin's thesis was that the self-contradictions of capitalism would have led to imminent revolution if capitalists had been confined to the resources, labor, and markets of their own finite states. However, powerful capitalist states could stave off those contradictions by going abroad in search of new territories. These new territories, which would be colonized, would provide the colonizer's capitalists with very cheap land, natural resources, and labor, and also offer new markets and consumers for their products. The

homeland's economy could be rationalized in this fashion and not succumb to the cancers of capitalism.

The mechanism by which this would come about would be the increasingly monopolistic nature of a nation's major businesses. These monopolies would produce companies with unheard-of levels of financial power. These large financial pools would enable companies to begin to take over the banks of the nation. Thus, the leadership of banks and industry would become intertwined. This new economic power would allow for gradual subsumption of the powers of government, as government leaders would be increasingly drawn from the ranks of this financial elite and also be increasingly beholden for revenue to this financial superstratum. The interests of the government then begin to mimic the interests of the financial elite. This allows the financial elite to use the government and its capabilities as a tool to achieve their objectives.

And, as noted, one of their prime objectives becomes colonization of new territories. Thus the capabilities of the government are put to good use fielding soldiers, bureaucrats, engineers, and administrators to go out and subdue and make useful these new lands.

Unfortunately, there is not one colonizing nation. Several advanced capitalist nations are vying for new territories. When colonization first begins, there is plenty and enough to go around. As colonization reaches a saturation point, the only way to obtain new territories is to obtain them from others by force of arms. Lenin postulated that several recent wars, including the Spanish–American War of 1898, the Anglo–Boer War of 1899–1902, and World War I (1914–1917), were actually wars of imperialism. The interests of the nation were superseded by the interests of the financial elite, to a devastating loss of life by the proletariat, but to impressive financial gains by the capitalists.

However, Lenin felt that the era of imperialism would bring with it the eventual downfall of capitalism in these advanced countries through overreach and depletion of the nations' wealth and manpower in these interminable wars. Furthermore, the monopoly stage of capitalism itself is stagnant, preferring to squash new technologies rather than adapt and progress. Monopoly capitalism creates a class of what Lenin called "coupon clippers," who were incredibly wealthy but utterly idle and incapable human beings. He felt that émigrés from colonized nations would become the vital force of these advanced capitalist nations, and that over time the oppressed would become much stronger in a military sense than the idle rich. If this happened, the dictatorship of the proletariat was only a Marxist away.

When imperialism did not destroy capitalism on time and colonies were freed by their colonizers, other Marxist philosophers stepped in with neoimperialist theories. Imperialism is redefined as structural violence, and not necessarily actual violence as perpetrated by government military forces.

Thus, we can see a transnational class struggle evolve, where in rich nations there are haves and have-nots, but in poor nations there are also haves and have-nots. The haves of the developed world and the haves of the underdeveloped world collude to keep the poorer nations in thrall to the richer ones. In fact, it is much cheaper to "economically colonize" a nation than it is to militarily colonize a nation. Economic imperialism would denote all the many ways and means that richer nations possess to keep poorer nations dependent upon them. For example, American fruit companies so dominated the economies of several Central American nations that these became known as "banana republics," basically appendages to the United States. The terms of trade problem, where commodities are generally less valuable on the world market than manufactured goods, would be another example of structural violence against poorer nations. Agricultural subsidies by rich nations to their farmers would be a third example of the means by which the system is stacked against poorer nations.

Some have argued that there is also a more "hands-off" type of imperialism that is even more effective and less costly than military or economic imperialism (Galtung, 1971). This would be cultural imperialism, where a nation's people are seduced into developing preferences for goods and services that the rich producers wish to sell them. So even in the poorest slums of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, residents want to watch movies made in rich countries, drink the soda pop that people in rich nations do, wear the jeans that people in rich nations wear, and so forth. If people in poor nations are acculturated to want what the corporations of the rich nations sell, there is no need for strong-armed physical or economic imperialism. The structure of desire itself will ensure dependence, as it does for the working class in rich nations.

Behavioral tendencies in foreign policy can be derived from Marxist-Leninist theory, as it can with any systems theory. As we have seen, this will be fairly broad-brush derivations. Elites in rich nations will collude with those in colonized (or neocolonized) countries. The international economy will be structured so as to favor the interests of the rich nations. Advanced countries will primarily not wage war against one another (at least not yet), but rather within the territories of less developed nations, especially those with valuable natural resources.

In sum, then, system attributes and transitions should not be overlooked by the foreign policy analyst. There are discernible predispositions, general tendencies, and parameters of foreign policy behavior that can be derived from system-level theory. Nevertheless, variables at lower levels of abstraction are likely to be more proximate causes of foreign policy behavior. The analyst must decide if a particular nation, with its own set of decisionmaking idiosyncrasies, is likely to follow these behavioral derivations or be an

exception. And, in the final analysis, the ultimate source of persistence or transition of an international system lies with human decisionmakers.

Wendt gives an excellent example of this (1999). Given a system attribute of "anarchy," where there is no supranatural authority, what will transpire in an international system? One could imagine an anarchic system where there is absolutely no trust and state parties take advantage of one another to the extent possible, even involving the use of force. But one could also imagine an anarchic system where similar values and priorities lead nations to cooperate, and the use of force virtually disappears. Simply consider the difference between the Europe of 1914 and the Europe of 2005. As Wendt puts it, "anarchy is what states make of it." The same can be said of any other conceivable system attribute. The final result of any system attribute is, in the end, whatever the human beings that make foreign policy decisions decide it will be. True, system attributes tend to create a web of incentives and disincentives, but psychological experiments show us that any such web can be circumvented by actors who have higher priorities than the values addressed by that web. The same could also be said of national attributes. Consider how the Dutch dealt with an unfortunate geography: they created a way to clear land below the level of the sea adjacent to that land, and became one of the world's greatest maritime powers in an earlier century. In the final analysis, though both national and systemic attributes are important to consider in FPA, there is a stronger force to be reckoned with—the force of human ideas, creativity, and will.

III

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER, OR NOT