

The Changing? Face of Power in International Relations, 1979-2019

Giulio M. Gallarotti¹

Abstract: This article traces how the major paradigms in international relations have viewed power over the past 40 years. It argues that theorizing in the 1970s began a bifurcation that served to split the vision of power between two extremes: a hard-power pole on one side (Realism) and a soft-power pole on the other (Neoliberalism and Constructivism). It further argues that scholars who have studied international power have merely been engaged in hovering around the mean, and have always embraced the belief that power was not a binary concept. In fact, a close reading of the inspirational texts for both extremes suggests as much. The Realists have been much softer than is portrayed in theory, and similarly the alternatives to Realism have actually been harder than is portrayed. Rather than looking to the theoretical poles for the true face of international power, scholars are best off embracing a smarter middle or Cosmopolitan view of power.

Key Words: Soft Power, Realism, Neoliberalism, Cosmopolitan Power, Smart Power

I. Power from a Scholarly Perspective

A. Bifurcation of Power

Paradigmatically, Realism has been king in the study of international relations over the past century, only recently being overtaken by Constructivism in the last decades. Yet it is still a close second among international relations (IR) scholars in their research, and it remains an essential subject in their introductory courses at universities (Maliniak, et. al. 2014). The principal challenge to Realism came in 1970s with the advent of Neoliberalism, to be joined in subsequent years by Constructivism.² In terms of the prevailing visions of power one can say that Realism and its challengers entered in what has played out after the 1970s as a binary debate. Realism's emphasis on hard power (military and physical resources necessary to wage war) was counterpoised by softer alternatives (the influence of factors that were not oriented around force, but respect for international norms, cooperation and image).³

¹ The author is grateful to the insightful comments received from the participants at the IPSA RC 36 40th Anniversary Interim Conference in Moscow, May of 2019, as well as Mark Haugaard.

² My focus on contestation of power relations will be in the context of the three major paradigms in IR: Realism, Neoliberalism and Constructivism. While power analysis is much more varied than a tripartite paradigmatic organization, there are important lessons to be learned in looking at the IR debate over power within its three main theoretical visions. In fact, in what is an authoritative book on power analysis in IR, Baldwin (2016) organizes his study of power according to the three paradigms.

³ I have chosen to approach the contestation of power from a soft versus hard-power perspective. This is just one way of analyzing power in international relations, but it is an important one given

It is not surprising that the paradigmatic contestation over power has played out in a bifurcated playing field given that the main challenges to Realism, during the 1970s and beyond, came in a period that pushed scientific inquiry toward the boundaries. First, the advent of the scientific method in the social sciences elevated pure theory: i.e., logical frameworks that are uncompromisingly consistent in its nature. Even below the draconian threshold of Karl Popper's falsification, in Kuhn's somewhat more forgiving approach to science, which tolerates some anomalies, the emphasis on coherence and paradigmatic phases still drove researchers toward a pure logic of power. The scientific method was more about pure theory construction, theory challenge and theory replacement; than about mixing and matching (Baldwin 2016). While interfacing was always possible, neither the scientific method nor the professional incentives of scientists to advance in their fields were amenable to chop-shop theorizing: it was about revolutions, discovery and nuance. This tendency was reinforced in the social sciences by economists who pursued economic reasoning within an assumed universe of rational action.⁴ Hence it was difficult for proponents of a particular vision of power to create some ambiguous *mélange* of the sources of influence in international relations, even though all theorists in reality were in fact aware that power was non-binary. A testament to this epistemological lumpiness is that it is quite uncommon for academics in IR to classify themselves as paradigmatically mixed (e.g., a Realistic Constructivist). It is much like in American politics, Liberal-Conservative is an oxymoron. In fact, the TRIPs survey has no category for mixed paradigmatic affiliations (Maliniak, et. al. 2014).

Human psychology has reinforced this propensity against ambiguity or diversity in visions of power. According to cognitive consistency theory, people tend to organize knowledge and beliefs within a coherent cognitive framework of congruent beliefs. There can certainly be ambiguity within belief systems, as Jervis (2017) notes, but this ambiguity tends to be filtered through perceptual screens that reduce salient inconsistencies. This is one important reason paradigms have been so insular. Integrating one paradigm with another would often lead to contradictory narratives that violate canons of pure logic.⁵ And a number of psychological forces reinforce this, as with time scholars become more entrenched in their paradigms and are more resistant to challenges, as well as becoming more convinced that their paradigm is better than another. This latter point would be called spreading effects and confirmation bias in

that much of the current debate on power in IR centers on just this issue. However, the debate has not as fully embraced the relevance of the deeper logic of the paradigms of IR. This article does. Moreover, we will leave the definition of these two types of power (not to be confused with the more conventional faces of power identified by Barnett and Duval 2005) within a simple continuum that runs from the pole of hard power to the pole of soft power, so as not to distract from the main narrative of this article, which is to evaluate visions of power in IR scholarship. On definitions of hard and soft power, see Gallarotti (2011).

⁴ Of course this idea of building theory within an assumed universe was also prevalent in the natural sciences, where theories were developed in environments such as vacuums and simulations.

⁵ This tendency toward binary scholarship has also manifested itself over the past several decades in the form of a methodological schism which has pitted political scientists who do more textual and institutional work against other practitioners who do quantitative studies and formal modeling.

psychology theory. As one gets more entrenched in her vision of the world, they continually tend to discount the relative value of alternative visions. But this also works through altering cognitive impacts and even perceptions. Hence evidence supporting one's position weighs more heavily in one's belief systems than evidence which contradicts those belief systems. Moreover, contradictory evidence could be perceived as actually less inconsistent than it really is (e.g., it is an exception rather than a norm). This goes a long way in explaining how scholars can hold so firmly to pure paradigms of power when the world around us continues to give signals that the world is both hard and soft in terms of outcomes. And of course, this also explains how scholars of different theoretical perspectives can go on forever debating the significance of particular historical events.

This scientific revolution in social science promoted a reinforcing effect through academia. As individual researchers that were bred on a scientific approach to the field developed their theories and embraced very specific paradigms in a purely theoretical fashion, they exported these binary visions to their graduate students. It is a basic fact of academic life that graduate students tend to adopt both methods and epistemologies of their mentors or advisors. And so on and so forth, hence there has developed of a chain gang effect that drives scholars to embrace pure logics in the application of their trades. And of course, given cognitive consistency effects, scholars have tended to fit outcomes in the international system into their theories, rather than be amenable to conforming their theories to outcomes. But as noted, the ambiguity of outcomes can be filtered through cognitively conformist perceptions.

Morgenthau and Carr (the fathers of modern realism in IR) laid down the gantlet of a pure science of international relations before the onslaught that would later follow with the advent of the science of competing paradigms in the 1970s. Carr ([1939] 1964) actually begins the first great modern canon of Realism with a chapter entitled "The Beginnings of a Science." Not only has it served as a taproot to modern Realist theory, but it also represents one of the first attempts to introduce a political science of international relations (Wilson 2000). In Carr's first chapter, he extols the virtues of rigorously analyzing the state of affairs in politics, a call that mirrors a reaction to a heretofore dominant tendency among students and practitioners of politics toward "Utopianism" – the propensity to place aspirations and wishful thinking above systematic analysis of how politics actually unfolds in reality (Carr [1939]1964, 8). The book begins as a vindication of the superiority of careful analysis of the "way things are" in response to the "naive" expectations of deluded Utopians. Regarding the latter, Carr states, "The course of events after 1931 clearly revealed the inadequacy of pure aspiration as a basis [for understanding the post-war world]" (Carr [1939]1964, 9). The natural response to this misguided optimism, for Carr, was an appreciation of the role of hard power in shaping international outcomes. As Utopian prescriptions for a lasting and stable international political order failed, the world was confronted with a harsh reality. Carr notes that "the point is soon reached where the initial stage of wishing must be succeeded by a stage of hard and ruthless analysis" (Carr 1964, 9). It is through such analysis that people will discern the importance of hard power politics and that the interwar period needed to bring people back to a reasonable understanding of the problems that beset them. With that understanding, they would be better able to navigate the rough waters to peace and prosperity.

Although Morgenthau barely cites Carr in his book; his *Politics among Nations* in structure, spirit, and logic, could be called a true progeny of Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis*. Like Carr, Morgenthau begins with an emphatic quest for a more positivist approach to international relations. His famous six principles represent a set of logically consistent propositions that are purported to capture the objective nature of relations among nations. In the first of his famous six principles of Realism, he identifies "objective laws" that will produce a more "scientific" as opposed to a legalistic or humanistic understanding of the subject (Morgenthau [1948]1978, 4, 14). In fact, his Chapter 2 is entitled "The Science of International Politics." Like Carr there is a certain reactionary tone against Utopians, but even more derision is cast against a journalistic or cavalier historical approach to the world. Morgenthau searches for objective laws by which international relations are ordered. His own definition of national interest is uncompromisingly unambiguous and theoretically elegant. He notes at the very beginning of Chapter 3 in a quote that has become quite famous that "International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power." In the narrative on this point there is no exception. All manifestations of politics carried on in the international stage are for the purpose of enhancing national power. Appearances to the contrary, all actions by statesmen (whether they were aware of it or not) in the international arena are in his opinion geared toward power accumulation in one way or another.

The scientific onslaught of the post-1970s took up that challenge and pitched a systematic vision of competing paradigms. The three competing paradigms of IR launched more formal and systematic crusades for theoretical primacy. Of course Waltz (1979), Gilpin (1981) and Mearsheimer (2001) carried on a scientific legacy of Realism left by Carr and Morgenthau; Keohane and Nye (1977) and Keohane (1984) introduced a systematic vision of Neoliberalism inspired by concepts of game theory; and Onuf (1989) and Wendt (1999) introduced a conceptually rigorous paradigm (Constructivism) that was built upon more formal categories of a post-modern philosophy.

The principal debate over power in IR over the past four decades has centered around the primacy of military power as a source of influence in world politics. Realists ruled the roost until the 1970s when Neoliberalism appeared to question the centrality of military power in IR, this was reinforced by Constructivists in the 1990s that added to the Neoliberal onslaught. Both challengers to Realism embraced the importance of softer resources in the national lexicon of power. In a related vein, the arguments questioned the role of anarchy in driving state actions. Neoliberals diminished the utility of hard power resources like force and confrontation, while Constructivists redefined the nature of anarchy itself in a way that allowed for greater relief from its most violent manifestations. Given that visions of the utility of military power and accompanying strategies were the very locus of the challenges to Realism, we can model disagreement over the nature of power among competing paradigms along a hard-soft power continuum. The defining testament to the bifurcation of power between soft and hard is manifest in Baldwin's (2016) compendium of the study of power in international relations in the postwar period. He posits a clear distinction along paradigmatic lines in his organization of the approaches to power: Realism, Neoliberalism, and Constructivism. While the analysis is more complex than a simple unidimensional depiction along a hard-soft continuum, it demonstrates quite strongly that each paradigm is fairly consistent across its practitioners in their vision of power. There is a canon that each carry, and that canon suggests either a pronounced soft vision

of the sources of influence in world politics (Neoliberalism and Constructivism) or a hard vision (Realism).

B. Re-Visiting the Paradigmatic Foundations

In this section we look at the founding fathers in terms of their visions. The intent is to see if their more parochial and scientifically hardened neophytes learned the right lessons from these inspirational predecessors. Hence we look at the classic works generally cited as modern foundations or major canons of the three paradigms: Morgenthau (Realists), Keohane and Nye (Neoliberals), and Wendt (Constructivists). Methodologically, this constitutes a crucial-case textual analysis of the great canons of the three man paradigms of IR: Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations* (1978), Keohane and Nye's *Power and Interdependence* (1977), and Wendt's *Social Theory of International Politics* (1999).⁶ As the bibles or principal canons for each paradigm, we would expect them to be less-likely places to find strong and systemic support for competing paradigms regarding visions of what constitutes power in international politics. We would certainly not expect Morgenthau to offer such support for soft-power approaches to foreign policy, but neither would we expect Keohane and Nye nor Wendt to offer such support for hard-power approaches. As with conventional crucial-case studies, statements of strong and systematic (as opposed to scanty or exiguous) support for competing visions in less-likely texts would be considered significantly compelling evidence for the validity of such arguments.⁷

B1. Realism

Of course Hans Morgenthau's entire body of work would not stand as a far-less-likely target for crucial-cases textual evaluations of the merits of hard power. Few would be surprised by claims that he embraced the role of ethics within the relations among nations. His *Scientific Man Versus Power Politics* (1967) exhibits strong elements of post-positivism and theology. In many ways, his indictment of secularity, rationalism, and science cuts at the epistemological foundations of Realpolitik. He writes that the exaggerated hope in the social healing powers of modern reason and science "has left man the poorer and made the burden of life harder to bear" (125). Modernity has repressed the emotional and religious side of humanity, leaving it in an inferior state. Developing the logical implications of this book could easily make a case for Morgenthau as a Constructivist or Postmodernist.

Yet as Lynch (1994, 592, 593) notes, although Morgenthau affirmed the possibilities of ethical actions, he is still an unlikely supporter of a Constructivist or Neoliberal vision of world politics. In large part, his magnum opus *Politics Among Nations* still stands as an indictment of

⁶ In Baldwin's (2016) analysis of the concept of power in IR, he treats these three works as prominent manifestations of the three paradigmatic visions of power.

⁷ On conventional approaches to crucial case analysis, see Eckstein (1975); Gerring (2004, 347); and King, Keohane, and Verba (1994, 209–12).

the categories of action embraced by these paradigms. Like Carr ([1939]1964) before him, it was precisely his intention that this book stand as a warning to Utopians and the like that the world was a much harder place than they contemplated.

Along with Carr and Thucydides, Gilpin (1986, 306) cites Morgenthau as one of the “three great realist writers.” Mearsheimer (2001, 14) hails *Politics among Nations* as one of the three most influential Realist texts of the twentieth century. Lebow (2003, 216) calls Morgenthau “the intellectual father of postwar realism.”⁸ A number of the passages in *Politics among Nations* have become legend among students of international relations. International relations can best be understood as being based on the belief that nations act in their “interest defined in terms of power” (Morgenthau 1978, 5). Also celebrated in the Realist catechism of international relations is the famous quote “International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power. Whatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim” (Morgenthau 1978, 29). Power, then, in a system of sovereign states void of an overarching power (like force and fraud in common visions of Hobbesian anarchy) becomes the ultimate source of influence and must be raised above all other means of statecraft. This power, of course, has been traditionally equated with “hard” power.

A look at Morgenthau’s precise definition of national power reveals that the list of factors certainly reflects a poignant veneration of hard power. Morgenthau cites geography, natural resources, industrial capacity, military preparedness, and population as principal components of influence. These five sources closely parallel Measheimer’s (2001, 55) and Waltz’s (1979, 131) visions of power as tangible assets. Yet as we proceed through the list of factors comprising national power, we see a deviation from an exclusively hard power focus, and one that brings in soft power as crucial to foreign policy. For Morgenthau, the manifestations of power themselves can feature effective soft elements, because he has a very elastic vision of how power can be used. He notes that although his mantra about power (national interest being always defined as power) is “universally valid,” its meaning is not “fixed once and for all” (Morgenthau 1978, 8). This variability exists because power is ultimately contextual: “Its context and its use are determined by the political and cultural environment” (Morgenthau 1978, 9). Hence, effective power can manifest itself across a spectrum that is bounded by the pole of morality on one end and the pole of force on the other (Morgenthau 1978, 9).

Politics among Nations unfolds as a compelling testament to a Cosmopolitan or smart vision of power. The fire-breathing prescriptions for hard power politics are balanced and integrated with extensive references to the utility of soft power. Above and beyond diplomacy, Morgenthau is generous in hailing the contributions of these soft elements to national influence throughout the book.⁹ For Morgenthau, these softer elements are pervasive, and their importance should be apparent to national leaders (Morgenthau 1978, 7).

⁸ The fifth edition (1978) of the book was used for this textual analysis, as it was the last revision completed by Morgenthau as the sole author.

⁹ Morgenthau reflects a moral vision of politics that manifests itself throughout his lifelong body of work, sometimes more starkly in some works (e.g., *Scientific Man*, 1967) than in others. Revisionist scholarship on his theory of politics highlights the vigorous ethical orientation that permeates his body of work. Although national interest is compelling, it must always be

In chapter 3, “Political Power,” he identifies three sources of political power: expected benefits, fear of punishment, and respect or love for men and institutions (Morgenthau 1978, 30, 31). The latter strongly manifests a conception of soft power in that cultivating an endearing image as a result of respect and esteem generates influence in the international system.¹⁰ He goes on to consider the force of “legitimate power,” a source of influence that draws its strength from being “legally and morally justified” (Morgenthau 1978, 32).

In chapters 4 through 6, he discusses three ways in which nations manifest their power (through the status quo, imperialism, and prestige). Each manifestation illuminates the significance of soft power. Status quo empowerment is manifest to a large extent in existing regimes. These are legitimate sources of power in that they comprise institutions that are legally and morally justified (Morgenthau 1978, 42–44). Although imperialism has a strongly hard power element, Morgenthau nonetheless warns against the unmitigated use of such means of power. He notes that influence over other nations cannot be founded on military domination alone. All such attempts in history (he cites Hitler, Napoleon, and British India) have led to unfortunate outcomes for the perpetrators in the form of hard disempowerment (i.e., have been counterproductive). In a later discussion of great-power politics, he reaffirms this risk of hard disempowerment, noting the deleterious consequences of attempts at “unlimited conquest” and “overtaxing” national resources (Morgenthau 1978, 150). Yet possibilities for significant weakening effects of negative feedback are abundant in environments where overindulgence in hard power resources may lead other nations to perceive that rising nations are on an imperialistic path, even if they are not. In this respect, he recalls a security dilemma logic in talking about the possibility of counterproductive power dynamics emanating from such outcomes (Morgenthau 1978, 71–73).

With respect to prestige, he notes a propensity of nations to seek recognition for the hard power they possess. However, prestige also has a compelling soft element in that restraint in asymmetrical power relations can garner an image that enhances influence on the part of the moderating powers. This links up nicely to Carr’s idea of a self-effacing hegemony (Morgenthau 1978, 87, 88). Ultimately, in each of Morgenthau’s principal vehicles through which power is manifest, an essential precondition of influence is that nations use strategies that legitimate themselves to other nations.

Surprisingly, one of the most salient acknowledgements of soft power emerges in his evaluation of the old (pre-1914) balance of power system. For Morgenthau, the old balance of power worked well because it was founded on a “moral consensus.” This consensus was the result of “shared values and universal standards of actions” that created an “international community” (Morgenthau 1978, 221, 228). Outcomes derived from the activation of this consensus on the part of leaders and diplomats, and did not simply from automatic processes inherent in structures or systems. Stability and peace were the results of leaders and diplomats following clear and universally respected norms of international relations: a quest for peace, independence, sovereignty, moderation in foreign policy aspirations, and the reintegration of

accountable to “strict moral limitations” (Murray 1996, 81). On Morgenthau’s moral vision of politics, see especially Murray (1996) and Lebow (2003).

¹⁰ This logic is further developed in chapter 9 (Morgenthau 1978, 154, 155).

defeated foes (Morgenthau 1978, 224–227).¹¹ In this respect, it was the existence of an international moral community that allowed the balance of power mechanism to effectively serve the purposes of peace and stability. Without such a community, Morgenthau will later state in his book, the prospects for lasting peace among nations are slim.¹²

However, after spending the first half of the book (chapters 1–14) developing a vision that embraces this community in international relations, he returns with Realpolitik vengeance in the next nine chapters (15–23). In these chapters, he revives the Carrian hammer used to bash the visions of Utopians in the first part of *Twenty Years' Crisis*. He goes on to argue that fundamental changes in international politics have served to weaken this community and thus have undermined erstwhile constraints against pure hard power seeking, these constraints being international morality, international law and institutions, and public opinion.¹³ The most conspicuous and powerful of these forces of change is the rise of nationalism. Although nationalism existed before the nineteenth century, according to Morgenthau, it was not of a kind that undermined the existence of the moral community that nurtured the factors that abated the tendency toward pure power seeking, so it maintained peace and stability. The present nationalism, for Morgenthau, has weakened the “moral consensus” and replaced it with a quest to transform national ideologies into international ideologies. Morgenthau refers to this as “universal nationalism” (Morgenthau 1978, 337–40).¹⁴ Because of this new and Messianic nationalism, continues Morgenthau, “the international morality that in past centuries kept the aspirations for power of the individual nations within certain bounds has...given way to the morality of [the nation-state]” (Morgenthau 1978, 337). Morgenthau also highlights two other changes that have weakened the communitarian limits on the struggle for power: the advent of total war and the new balance of power. Morgenthau’s greatest concern with respect to these developments is their impact on prospects for peace and stability in the present world.¹⁵ The old balance of power functioned well and delivered satisfactory results. But the changes in international politics have challenged it and its underlying foundations.

According to Morgenthau, both nationalism and total war have undermined the normative foundations of the moral consensus undergirding the old balance of power. The norms of protecting human life and condemnation of war have depreciated because of the advent of total war and nationalism. Nationalism has undermined what he calls the “cosmopolitan” attitudes of

¹¹ Deviations from the peace norm were legitimate to the extent that they countered illegitimate uses of force (responses to imperialism or expansionism). In this context, Morgenthau notes that European states generally approved of the Balkan and Belgian revolts, as well as the Prussian and Sardinian aggression to unite Germany and Italy, respectively. Here, he refers to the legitimacy of force in the service of self-determination (Morgenthau 1978, 226, 227).

¹² It is with this concept of moral community of nations as a necessary condition for lasting peace that Morgenthau comes closest to Carr’s own Utopianism.

¹³ In these chapters, however, he does nothing to undermine his arguments that soft power factors are crucial elements in the nexus of national power.

¹⁴ This is one of the many poignant manifestations of the specter of the Cold War on Morgenthau’s thinking. His idea of universal nationalism reflects the evangelical battle between liberalism and communism.

¹⁵ This fear is the driving force behind the book itself. The specter of all-out war between two superpowers in a nuclear world is the very challenge inspiring Morgenthau, as both a social scientist and a human being.

old diplomats and leaders, attitudes that were instrumental in forging and sustaining peace, and replaced them with more rigid and particularistic goals. Total war has legitimated all-out conflict (i.e., involving all facets of society) and the exorbitant casualties of war. The restraints of the old balance of power norms on national actions have consequently weakened (Morgenthau 1978, 244–56). Moreover, in addition to the normative changes, the balance of power itself has changed in ways that have rendered it less stable. Morgenthau contends that the present balance is less flexible because of the existence of fewer great powers (a bipolar configuration), the absence of a balancer, and the disappearance of the colonial frontier – that is, there is no outlet for competition (Morgenthau 1978, 348–55).

However, in subsequent chapters, when Morgenthau discusses this new balance of bipolarity, which has been proclaimed deficient, he more vigorously embraces some of its stabilizing elements. In doing so, he proclaims its soft power elements and underscores the dangers of hard disempowerment. He notes that bipolarity carries potential for “enormous good” and that it is “the ideal system of the balance of power” (Morgenthau 1978, 550, 551). Much of his argument anticipates Waltz’s (1979, 170–176) arguments about the stability of a bipolar world. Morgenthau quotes the French philosopher Fenelon on competition among few nations: that it encourages “wise moderation [in] maintaining the equilibrium and the common security.” Morgenthau sees the bipolar structure as producing “moderate competition” (Morgenthau 1978, 364). The moderation emanates from shared convictions and objectives that generate normative constraints.¹⁶ In this respect, notwithstanding Morgenthau’s previous statements about the depreciation of balance of power norms under bipolarity, he ascribes to bipolarity an integrated set of norms similar to those undergirding the old balance of power (Speer 1968, 209). It appears that for Morgenthau, the quest for stability and peace is compelling in bipolarity as well. Morgenthau is adamant throughout the book about the fact that “war has always been abhorred as a scourge”; hence, the predisposition for peace is overriding even among superpowers in a bipolar world (Morgenthau 1978, 391).¹⁷ The status quo, and hence stability, is reinforced by shared convictions about dangers of reckless expansionism and adventurism, and in this respect Morgenthau ascribes mutual vigilance among superpowers about avoiding excessively provocative foreign policies. For Morgenthau, superpowers are aware of the dangers of hard disempowerment in both of these respects: the adverse reaction to attempts at “pronounced superiority” (negative feedback) and to the “short lived empires...and the ravages they cause” (i.e., overstretch) (Morgenthau 1978, 364). Wise leaders therefore are pushed to seek “a kind of equality” with erstwhile competitors. In the end, Morgenthau affirms an even more robust moral consensus undergirding the new balance of power in that he underscores the continuing power of the “old norms” (peace, independence, stability, and moderation) in conjunction with a more stabilizing structure of power (the stability of bipolarity) and greater deterrent threats against

¹⁶ Murray (1990, 104) identifies a pervasive view in Morgenthau’s works that suggests that national interest incorporates “an obligation to self-limitation and tolerance.” Lebow (2003, 233) argues that Morgenthau always believed that influence and power ultimately depended on wisdom and ethical sensibility.

¹⁷ The norms promoting peace and stability are raised to a far greater extent under the new balance, according to Morgenthau, because of new “technological developments” that have enhanced the destructiveness of war (nuclear weapons) and also have enhanced the need for cooperation among states to solve national problems (he cites the environment, food security, natural resources, and population control) (Morgenthau 1978, 541).

adventurism (nuclear weapons). Consequently, his previous assault on international morality as a weakened constraint against power seeking is significantly revised with these arguments.¹⁸ In the final analysis, the bipolar balance of power is also capable of generating a constellation of relations that promotes a moral community in the international system.

Rather than view such contradictory arguments as inconsistencies in the work of a great thinker, one can see that Morgenthau's caveats put such disjuncture into perspective. It is a perspective that often reflects the compelling influence of the idea of a Cosmopolitan mean in Morgenthauian logic. In each chapter in which he wields his Carrian hammer (15–18) to assault the viability of constraining or soft elements in international politics (morality, law, and public opinion), he underscores a “warning against extremes.” He emphasizes that it is just as dangerous to “underestimate” the influence of these elements as it is to “overrate” them (Morgenthau 1978, 236, 264, 279). Thus, his own attack on these soft elements of power gravitates toward Carr's treatment of these same issues in *Twenty Years' Crisis*. Both thinkers are wielding a didactic hammer against the excesses of Utopian thinking in these arguments. That they often flip-flop among extremes reflects their passion against dangers of such immoderate behavior as well as a didactic quest to make an impression on the reader about avoiding excesses.¹⁹

In the chapters comprising the final three sections of the book, Morgenthau concludes with a search for the means through which world peace may be forged. After lukewarm praise of arms limitation as such a means, he fixes on what is for him the only viable foundation for a lasting peace in a nuclear world: supranational organization. Yet such a “transformation” can only be built on the pillars of a more extensive international community that is not as vigorously manifest as of yet. The only way to build that community, as noted, is to develop closer webs of cooperation among nations through diplomacy. He therefore ends with diplomacy (peace through accommodation) as something that can deliver peace directly in the short run, but is the only way to forge the conditions of a lasting peace in the long run – a strong international community.

B2. Neoliberalism

Continuing the crucial-case textual assessment of the canons of the three principal paradigms of IR, attention is now turned to the bible of Neoliberalism: Keohane and Nye's *Power and Interdependence*.

The publication of Keohane and Nye's (K & N) *Power and Interdependence* was a defining moment in the challenge to the Realist vision of power politics. Up until then few challenged the canon of power politics, proffered on the “great books” of Carr's *The Twenty Years Crisis* and

¹⁸ As a counterweight to the destabilizing effects of nationalism and total war, Morgenthau cites the rise of liberalism and the enlightenment as new developments that have generated an enhanced “intellectual and moral energy [that has sustained the] search for alternatives to war and international anarchy” (Morgenthau 1978, 393). Post enlightenment society has shown an “increased humaneness and a civilized disposition toward human relations” (Morgenthau 1978, 392).

¹⁹ Murray (1990, 96) sees this vacillation as an “expedient to clarify the issues.”

Morgethau's Politics Among Nations. Carr ([1939]1964) was a wake-up call to all the misguided thinkers whose soft approach to tyranny allowed Hitler to rise to power and perpetrated the most destructive war in history. Keohane and Nye's book gave challengers a new focal point: the diminishing primacy of military power relative to other aspects of foreign policy. In a world interpenetrated economically, statesman could leave the paranoia over anarchy behind and pursue other goals of importance to their nations. Of course the narrative of Neoliberalism was not new. Sir Ralph Norman Angell made the central argument as early as 1909 in *The Great Illusion*: economic integration had brought advanced economic powers (in this case Europe) to a point where military force was no longer a viable means of statecraft. Just a decade previously to K & N's magnum opus, Richard Cooper's *The Economics of Interdependence* (1968) and Raymond Vernon's *Sovereignty at Bay* (1971) explicated the precise ways in which nations were tied together and hence made social scientists aware of just how costly military force could be if employed. But the vision of the Neoliberals gained its greatest attention in IR circles after Neoliberal thinking had crystalized in the next decade. It is interesting how certain voices rise above a cacophony of similar sounds. It is certain that the outcomes of the 1970s and military power failures (quagmires of Vietnam and Afghanistan, widespread perceptions of hegemonic decline in the superpowers, the rise of regional integration) made people more receptive to challenges to the vision of hard power politics, and Keohane and Nye were very visible scholars who had the academic swag to spread the canons among graduate students, and their graduate students spread the word in the greater profession.

Within this text, the very locus of the argument is quite nicely focused within the theoretical chapter 2. Unlike Morgenthau whose text is a more expansive contemplation of his theoretical thinking, K & N succinctly expound a systematic narrative in chapter 2 and it is there we will focus our attention. Their entire assault on a Realist vision of power comes from their idea that *Complex Interdependence* (CI) has created a new world where the use of force has been significantly diminished. In this respect, their argument impeaches the principal components of hard power in world politics.²⁰ They assault the Realist vision of structural power, i.e., power measured by the balance of military resources. In this new world of CI, power has changed and been diverted to softer avenues: statesmen have to resort to diplomatic bargaining, and in that context try and generate influence through strategies such as agenda setting and linkage. Much of this takes place in a new playing field of regimes, hence the locus of competition has shifted from battlefields to multilateral venues (K&N, 224-226). Their theory is founded on three assumptions of CI: 1) Multiple Channels, 2) Hierarchy of Issues and 3) Minor Role of Military Force; and the operation of four processes that characterize CI 1) Linkage, 2) Agenda Setting, Transnational Actors, and 4) International Organization. The theory specification is a bit convoluted in that the assumptions and processes could be classified as one fundamental logical framework given that they function symbiotically. In effect, all but the limited use of military force could be independent variables which determine the usefulness of force (i.e., the dependent

²⁰ Of course, they would not impeach other forms of hard power, such as economic power. Nor would they formally embrace certain components of soft power such as attraction. But their emphasis on cooperation and the limits of confrontation overlaps extensively with a fuller vision of soft power. See Gallarotti (2010 and 2011).

variable in K&N's narrative). Furthermore, the independent variable categories all overlap in some way leading to a declining use of military force. Be that as it may, the intention here is to shed light on the implications this theory has for K&N's vision of power rather evaluate theory specification. And while K&N preach a theory of soft power, the logic strongly supports the utility of a harder foreign policy: one built on the central importance of force and military might.²¹ The logic of the theory betrays the authors' propositions that CI "is the opposite of realism," and that CI renders force as an "ineffective instrument of foreign policy" (K&N 1977, 23,24).²² First and foremost there are numerous statements in chapter 2 suggesting that force is quite useful, and that the influence of CI is conditional at best. CI functions most effectively in limiting the usefulness of hard power in a number of scenarios: where nations are allies, where nations are highly interdependent, in cases void of terrorist threats, and in matters that do not involve life and death (K&N, 23-35). If you consider the possible dyadic relations among pairs of nations that would show the existence all four properties simultaneously (i.e., where CI holds most strongly), it would likely be a limited subset of the total number of possible unique dyadic pairs in a world of over 180 nations. And of course the first three of these properties in themselves are fairly limited, hence even weaker cases of CI would be less than preponderant: there are a limited number of alliances in the world with little overlap and extensive interdependence is really prevalent only among OECD nations which do not number more than 30. While the absence of matters of life and death to states may be prevalent, the threat of terrorism is much more widespread.

The structure of the theory of CI essentially proclaims the limited use of the most glaring form of hard power: military force. Assumption One, "Multiple Channels," demonstrates that domestic issues may impinge on foreign policy goals, so as to dilute security goals that rely on threats or the use of force. Lobbies or special interests for domestic policies may certainly detract from foreign policy goals, but it is not clear that there is an overwhelming bias portending against the use of hard power. Very often domestic actors can actually use multiple channels into legislatures to encourage military solutions for their respective goals. Hardline groups in a myriad of nations push for very aggressive foreign policies toward nations or ethnic groups they are hostile to. Certainly US security in the Near and Middle East has been colored to a large extent by the political influence of big oil companies as well as ethnic/religious lobbies, and this security posture has been largely based on a hard power approach to the protection of vital resources and allies. Moreover, domestic political exigencies have caused more than a few cases of the tail wagging the dog, where leaders pursue military campaigns to quell domestic discontent. In this regard multiple channels work both for soft and hard power policies.

²¹ That Neoliberals embrace a softer vision of power than Realists is hardly in question. While *Power and Interdependence* did not use the term "soft power," the book (as discussed below) has extensive references to sources of influence that accord with the concept of soft power. Baldwin (2016) in fact discusses the concept of soft power in the context of Neoliberalism

²² In fact, the authors (viii) state that the purpose of the book is to "put into a broader context the classic Realist analysis that Hans Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations*...had bequeathed to the current generation."

Assumption Two “The Decline of a Fixed Hierarchy of Issue” and Assumption Three “Minor Role of Military Force” suggest that hard power solutions bred by strictly security concerns have been challenged in the policy pecking order, and this has led to a decline in the usefulness of military force. They proclaim a new age in which domestic issues unrelated to the need for hard power now vie for primacy with traditional security issues. Yet the conditional nature of the influence of CI suggests that even with a different hierarchy, the use of military resources is still quite important. In fact, their discussion suggests that conditions can change quite significantly, hence this would mean a dynamic hierarchy. In fact, in their theoretical narrative, K&N (1977, 28,29) offer a number of scenarios in which the ultimate use or possession of hard power (military resources) are essential: deterrence scenarios, terrorism, in cases of direct military threats, where there is drastic social and political change, in linkage to economic issues with Germany, in the Cold War, and among superpowers in managing their regional relations. In cases such as these, K&N (1977, 27-29) state that “realist assumptions would again be reliable guides to events” and that “the use or threat of force could be decisive.” Even though CI has widened the “margin of safety,” the system still carries great risks for those that largely discard hard power resources. In fact, K&N (1977, 41) state quite clearly that increasing pressures of complex interdependence naturally generate “conflict.” One example they offer is the reaction of domestic groups that respond to damage caused by free trade, and hence rise up to push for protectionism. It is interesting that K&N (1977, 27) use the issue of energy in the US in the 1970s as an example of a domestic concern that clouded a policy space formerly defined by the primacy of security issues. In fact, the US foreign policy addressing energy security is a glaring testament to how domestic economic interests can lead to strong military solutions abroad. Since the 1970s a focal point of American military strategy and interventions have been directed toward protecting access to oil in the Middle East.

The arguments supporting the usefulness of hard power solutions continue when K&N proceed with their theoretical discussion of CI under the heading of the components of CI. With the first component, Linkage, the authors continue the logic of hierarchy in that linkages among issues can now be more diverse under CI, which means non-security issues can intrude on purely security concerns. Economic issues such as trade and domestic welfare can be used as levers of influence that are as potent as traditional hard power strategies of threat and force. The landscape of influence has become far more crowded with non-military means of gaining foreign policy objectives. Yet here again, there are caveats about the conditional nature of influence even in a CI world. Linkage can go through multiple channels that support hard power. The discussion of how superpowers manage their spheres of influence and of how allies can interact suggest that linkages can make use of many military strategies as well. Needless to say, the fact that more issues of a non-security nature can be used as levers of influence, does not make harder security-based levers of power obsolete. In fact, there are so many more issues in which security or hard levers can now be linked to. Security agreements, alliances, and deterrence umbrellas can be viable linkage tools to obtain all sorts of other non-security goals (K&N 1977, 27-29)

The second component, Agenda Setting, also contemplates a policy space in which softer power strategies can push military options off the table. The basic logic is that diplomatic agendas can be captured in ways that allow problems to be resolved without resort to

confrontation and violence. This is founded on the premise that in a CI world, many issues have to filter through non-military mechanisms of power. Moreover, the idea of the rise of domestic issues in the foreign policy hierarchy is very apparent in this component. The greater prominence of domestic concerns leads to greater possibilities for these issues to displace security solutions in international agendas, thus softening the interactions among nations. Again, as with the first component, the possibility of agenda setting can divert security policy solutions off the table, but it also provides actors interested in pushing harder solutions with a lever to determine policies. As noted, many domestic groups have a vested interest in security policies (economic or ethnic lobbies pushing military approaches). Hence there is still much room for capture in foreign policy agendas. But the bureaucratic politics literature in IR resoundingly suggests that military groups and actors have a multitude of ways of competing against other domestic groups in the process of political agenda setting. Beyond the agenda, this literature suggests that even after decisions are made and disputes among competing interests resolved, implementation can still take military paths to policy that was originally intended to take a softer path. Force and threat are never excluded when the actors implementing policy are themselves invested in the use of such hard solutions (K&N 1977, 32,33 and Halperin 2002).

The third component of Transnational Actors suggests a blurring of the foundations of influence over the making of foreign policy. The access to domestic decision making structures that such actors enjoy in a CI world is seen as interrupting the primacy of security issues and the use of force to solve problems. These cross-cutting influences on foreign policy give foreign actors agency within political systems, and that agency can be used to facilitate the rise of non-military policy solutions. This of course was a major issue with Neoliberal predecessors to K&N like Cooper (1968) and Vernon (1971) who fixed upon multinational actors as diluting the hard-power space of Realists and challenging state sovereignty with factors that undermined the use of force. Indeed, many such actors can pacify international relations in a myriad of ways: from multinationals that break down political barriers between nations to religious groups that inveigh against large scale violence. But then again many transnational actors also militarize and subvert peace in international relations. Terrorists are transnational actors, as are groups that push states to support their causes with bellicose solutions: Kurds, Sunnis, Shiites, ethnic Russians, as well as other separatist groups and foreign lobbies that function in all nations. While one would have to admit that the pacification effects of transnational actors probably outweigh the bellicose effects, there is no doubt that the latter are substantial. K&N (35) would argue that this component serves to enhance “the ambiguity of national interest,” but ambiguity can work both ways: to enhance both peace and conflict (K&N 1977, 33-35).

The final component International Organizations is a potent force for the rise of soft power and concomitantly the abatement of military solutions. The other components work demonstrably through international organizations. Nations can resort to agenda setting and exploit linkages among issues as levers of influence, these in turn help build coalitions leading to cooperative approaches to multilateral problems. And of course all of these sets of relations take place far from the battle field, and hence are a strong pacifying force that raise the utility of softer policy solutions. There is no doubt that a world pervaded by supranational governance and regimes would raise the relative importance of soft power to that of hard power, but multilateral

fora can also serve as a breeder and intensifier of disputes and confrontation. Scholars and diplomats have long highlighted the myriad ways in which multilateral fora have intensified conflict among nations. Nations have used such fora to carry on war “by other means.” IOs have provided a platform for verbal aggression and embarrassment, as well as venues for hostile coalitions to form and strengthen. In the post-war period the Cold War shed an ominous cloud over the workings of the UN in particular. The battle lines were quite clear, and confrontations across those lines was an ongoing characteristic of multilateral interactions within that organization. In many cases, such fora did not abate disputes, but rather provided another field for nations in which to compete against one another. In these cases rhetoric and diplomacy themselves became weaponized. In this respect, disputes could develop into greater conflagration rather than abate (Gallarotti 1991, 204-209).²³

In the final analysis, the fundamental lesson offered by this monumental work is that CI, notwithstanding its impact on the essence of power, also generates tensions and conflicts, which is precisely why nations require regimes. In effect, the importance of the rise of regimes, which the book is principally concerned with, is a manifestation of the darker side of politics. While K&N (1977, 224-226) aver a new hazy power space under CI, they do posit that “Knowledge of the [traditional Realist] power structure is the simplest and thus best starting point for policy analysis” (K&N 1977, 225).

B3. Constructivists

As with *Politics Among Nations* for Realism and *Power and Interdependence* for Neoliberalism, the bible or principal canon of Constructivism is widely acknowledged to be Alexander Wendt’s *Social Theory of International Politics*.²⁴ Wendt’s epistemological hammer is directed toward the structural materialism of Realism. More precisely, he disputes the overwhelming role of material capabilities as determining outcomes in international relations. In this respect he impeaches the primacy of hard power as an explanatory factor in international relations. Rather than seeing state interests as merely a mirror reflection of the prevailing structure of hard power, Wendt (and Constructivists in general) see state interests as socially constructed.²⁵ Rather than structural

²³ Gallarotti (1991) surveys the scholarship on these points. Rather than reproduce a lengthy list, the reader is referred there.

²⁴ As with the other canons, Wendt has predecessors. Onuf in *World of Our Making* (1989) basically introduced Constructivism into the field of IR. Nonetheless, Wendt’s work, because it gets closer to a mainstream IR epistemology seems to have become the standard reference for the paradigm. Onuf comes from a more Wittgensteinian tradition of the role of linguistics as sources of socialized ideation. Surveys support this pecking order (Maliniak, et. al. 2014).

²⁵ Baldwin (2016, 143,153) questions the extent to which power is important in Constructivism at all, the nuance of Constructivism’s culturally constructed vision of power, and the clarity of the use of “materialism” as a source of power. But according to Baldwin it does reaffirm Wendt’s attempt to constitute a vision that departs from “brute material forces” and embraces the

materialism, this approach avers a theory of “structural idealism.” Both international power and state interests will be defined by “ideas and cultural contexts.” There are pervasive interactions among nations in the world polity from which nations learn and are socialized. This socialization often results in rules, norms, and procedures around which expectations converge; and hence create regimes that mediate state relations. This process, then, brings us to some Neoliberal categories, and these categories evince pervasive elements of soft power (i.e., they are framed as antitheses of hard power in the narratives of these paradigms). In this sense, both Neoliberalism and Constructivism begin with an impeachment of a vision that hard power shapes international relations. But Constructivism goes well beyond Neoliberalism in its emphasis on endogenous state interests: Neoliberalism like Realism posit exogenous interests (Wendt 1999, 4-24, 97).

Interestingly, in differentiating himself from more extreme strands of postmodern Constructivism that give no credence to the influence of material forces or hard power, Wendt opens up a window to the utility of such sources of power within his vision of global society. In this respect, he introduces language that recalls Hedley Bull’s *Anarchical Society*: that socialization creating a softer landscape in international politics coexists with imperatives driven by material structures. This harder side of Wendt’s vision is developed under the rubric of “rump materialism.” Noting that ideas as stimulants of international outcomes are not monopolistic, he avers that outcomes can be configured by “physical realities.” He cites three types of such realities: distribution of material conditions (i.e., Realism’s configuration of power), the composition of material capabilities (i.e., who has the superior weapons technology), and geography and natural resources. While socialization can influence how these are perceived and used, he is adamant in stating that such hard resources and material conditions have significant “constraining and enabling effects.” He states, “...at some level material forces are independent of society, and affect society in a *causal* way” (Wendt 1999, 110,111—italics in original).

In fact, Wendt contemplates material force and ideational factors occupying the same space and in a co-influential relationship. Nations can be socialized into determining the usefulness of material capabilities. For example, convergent beliefs about the primacy of diplomacy may lead to shared ideas about the prospects for peace among nations. Similarly, beliefs in the constraining powers of economic interdependence may lead nations to forsake threats of force in favor of linkage on trade issues. Both would be cases of socialization leading to a softer world. However, material capabilities (aside from enabling and constraining) may lead to convergent ideas that promote a harder world. For example, the stability-instability paradox (where nuclear deterrence can embolden escalation at lower levels of military engagement) suggests that shared beliefs that nations will not escalate to nuclear war may encourage greater incentives to undertake small or conventional warfare. The security dilemma would be another example of material conditions influencing ideas. If geographic location allows the possibility of a devastating military assault, then the weapons of a neighbor would be considered a potential

influence of “norms, values, institutions, ideas, identities, and cultural contexts.” And hence, any concept of power derived from Constructivist logic would embrace soft power as an alternative to the hard power posited by Realists. While Berenskoetter (2007) argues that Wendt fails to provide a clear conceptualization of power, it is indeed clear from the narrative about influence in the book that Wendt sets himself squarely into a vision of soft power, and proceeds to define this vision in contradistinction to Realist visions of military (hard) power.

danger, one which might illicit a response in the form of increased armament. If this is reciprocated, then you would be left with an arms race. In these cases, shared or convergent ideas about the potential danger inhering in military force would lead to destabilizing self-fulfilling prophecies that would raise the utility of hard power (Wendt 1999, 110).

Game theory has demonstrated that shared perceptions about appropriate responses in strategic situations cut both ways in terms of possible power-spectrum outcomes. Games can lead to outcomes which are mutually beneficial, or mutually pernicious. In this respect strategic interactions, just like less competitive interactions, can socialize actors. But it is not clear that the socialization necessarily leads to mutually cooperative equilibria that discourage the use of military force or threat. The socialization can become dysfunctional, leading to greater confrontation, which in turn could lead to outright conflict. In the iterated Prisoner's Dilemma game, a clear process of socialization goes on. Even in cases of tacit communication, signals can socialize actors to realize that leaving oneself vulnerable to a sucker's payoff in the short run can engender a situation of ongoing reciprocity of cooperative moves in the long run. This would be the result of socialization through signals sent through a bilateral tit for tat strategy of cooperative moves. On the other hand, one might see the emergence of pernicious echo effects of defection. In this case, if a player starts with an exploitation move, the other actor (s) will likely reciprocate in kind. If nothing emerges to break this dysfunctional echo process, the interaction can social actors into an increasingly acrimonious posture. Looking at ongoing conflicts in the world, especially the Middle East, we observe cycles of retaliation rather than cooperative reciprocity. In fact, momentum effects are stronger in the former, given the greater psychological salience of repeated aggression relative to the salience of repeated cooperation. Constructivists stress the importance of convergent ideation, but we can see that in the case of dysfunctional strategic cycles, perfect agreement in terms of expectations can lead to a most pernicious world. Mutual agreement that expansion on the European Continent was necessary for security, for example, led to centuries of warfare (Axelrod 1984).²⁶

Specifically, Wendt's analysis of anarchy leaves much room for the utility of hard power. He posits three types of anarchic structures, which he envisions as cultures because they are socially constructed: Hobbesian, Lockian and Kantian. The behavioral manifestations on the part of states are in the form of socialized roles. These roles are of course the products of the "distribution of ideas" and "stocks of knowledge." His vision of what constitutes power in each culture runs from the high utility of hard power relative to soft power in Hobbesian anarchy, to a lesser utility of hard power (and concomitantly a rising utility of soft power) in a Lockean culture, and finally in Kantian culture to a world in which the soft power achieves its highest level of relative utility *vis a vis* hard power. The roles which are acculturated into states reflect this diminishing role of hard power as we move from a Hobbesian culture to a Lockean culture to a Kantian culture (i.e., enemy, rival, friend). One of the salient characteristics that changes as we move from Hobbesian to Lockean anarchy is the level of violence in the system. In this respect Wendt's prevailing power inventory moves away from resources that produce violence to resources that pacify, hence the progression from a hard-power world to a soft-power world. Empirically Wendt suggests that the world has moved away from a strictly Hobbesian culture toward a Kantian

²⁶ Axelrod (1984) has carefully analyzed the differing cycles that can emerge in strategic interaction in game theoretic contexts. Socialization can cut both ways in a strategic context.

culture due to a growing aversion toward warfare and violence, and hence the world has become a softer one. But he also states that there is no guaranteed of a continued progression toward such a state. He notes that “the passage of time may simply deepen bad norms, not create good ones.” Although, he does strongly affirm that he does not believe in backsliding toward a Hobbesian state (Wendt 1999, 249,250, 311-313).

Given that world structure is socially constructed, naturally it is then determined by “what states make it” (Wendt 1999, 310). But if in fact it is socially constructed, then surely the prevalence of particular kinds of structure will be determined by pervasive ideas of what anarchy actually is. In this respect, Wendt (1999, 309) himself admits that such “cultures are self-fulfilling prophecies.” This in turn begs the question, how will actors perceive the world around them? Or even more relevantly stated, what type of anarchy will actors perceive around them? Since states can neither think nor act, we must then address how leaders and decisionmakers are likely to perceive anarchy. In other words, in which way will the balance of perceptions tend on the part of decisionmakers? Will they tend toward a Hobbesian perception or a Kantian perception? Furthermore, to bring in power, how will decisionmakers perceive the value of hard power relative to soft power.

There is strong evidence in the literature in political psychology on threat perception that decisionmakers have a strong tendency to overestimate threat in the international system, which in turn leads toward a disposition to embrace significant elements of Hobbesian anarchy, and hence have a concomitant tendency to highly value hard power. Historical studies have shown that most leaders across different nations and time are not sanguine about the ability to make and enforce binding agreements among their peers. Overestimating threat arises from a plethora of sources: cognitive, psychological, and structural. Some of these effects arise from asymmetries in perceptions. For example, leaders are more likely to see their intentions as more transparent than those of peer leaders. Concomitantly, leaders are more likely to see actions of neighbors as more menacing than their own. Again, the security dilemma is driven by these asymmetries. For example, leaders believe in the transparency of their intentions to defend themselves by increasing their military arsenals, while peer leaders are likely to over-estimate the threat that emanates from such weapons. A significant number of cognitive and psychological tendencies on the part of leaders (as human beings) drive leaders toward greater uncertainty about the likely behavior of nations in the system. Such uncertainty drives decisionmakers toward the pole of Hobbesian anarchy. Biases in the processing information and the formulation of policy are principal catalysts of this uncertainty: cognitive consistency, theory driven behavior, incomplete information, rigid perceptions, bias in availability of information, bias in learning from history (representativeness), and path dependency in policy (anchoring). Prospect theory is an especially important driver of excessive threat perception. Prospect theory suggests that people frame alternatives for policy in ways that minimize losses. When probabilities are especially ambiguous due to uncertainty, leaders will be even more likely to prepare for a Hobbesian scenario given the possible losses from military assaults. Since the losses from over-caution in the use of hard power will be significantly less than the possible losses from under-caution which economizes on hard power resources (i.e., conquest, devastation), leaders will overindulge in hard power relative to soft power. Essentially the literature on threat perception specifically, and

of political psychology in general, strongly avers that decisionmakers face biases and factors that make Hobbesian environments salient in framing their decisions.²⁷

II. Looking at Trends in World Affairs

It is clear that the bifurcation of scholarship on the subject of power was an unfortunate simplification of a much more complex message on the part of the main inspirational texts for the three competing paradigms of IR. In all these great texts, the authors did indeed push the traditional paradigmatic view of power hard, but in all these cases the authors also showed far greater balance in their conceptualizations of power. They all professed the importance of both hard and soft power in the ultimate lexicon of international influence. We could say they all embraced a smart or Cosmopolitan vision of power. In looking at actual trends in the manifestations of power in world affairs in this period, we also see various dynamics at play. Structurally speaking, we can see a number of developments in world affairs that have delivered a softer world. But in the shadow of these structural changes, a very menacing and violent world was always manifest. We discuss these outcomes below.

A. Structural Changes in World Politics 1979-2019: Toward a Softer World Order

Greater attention to soft power itself reflects the changing landscape of international relations. It is no coincidence that such sources of power have been hailed by proponents of Neoliberalism and Constructivism, paradigms that have underscored the changing nature of world politics. In this case, theory has been influenced by real events. Although history has shown soft power always to have been an important source of national influence, changes in modern world politics have raised its utility all the more (Gallarotti 2010).²⁸ It has become and is continuing to become a “softer world.” In this transformed international system, soft power will be a crucial element in enhancing influence over international outcomes because it has become more difficult to compel nations and non-state actors through the principal levers of hard power (i.e., threats and force). The world stage has become less amenable to Hobbesian brutes and more amenable to actors well aware of the soft opportunities and constraints imposed by the new global system. Nations that comport themselves in a manner that disregards the growing importance of soft power risk much. Even gargantuan efforts to increase influence may be rendered self-defeating if they rely exclusively on hard power. In such cases, the strength or influence a nation is acquiring through hard initiatives may be illusory (Gallarotti 2010a). The changes in world politics that have raised the importance of soft power relative to hard power have been pervasive and compelling.

²⁷ The literature on threat perception and decisionmaking in IR is extensive. Some especially illuminating readings in both these areas are Jervis (1976 and 2017) and Stein (2013).

²⁸ In case studies on power seeking that span history and issue-areas, Gallarotti (2010a) demonstrates that soft power could have significantly enhanced the influence of nations whose leaders were predominantly swayed by the allure of hard power (i.e., victims of a power curse in the context of a hard-soft power nexus).

First, with the advent of nuclear weapons, the costs of using or even threatening force have skyrocketed. Keohane and Nye (1977) have called attention to the diminished utility of coercion in a world where force can impose far greater costs on societies than they are willing to bear. The Neoliberal catechism has concluded that such diminution has destroyed the former hierarchy of issues that traditionally preserved the status of security atop the list of national interests. Jervis (1993, 1988, 2002) has proclaimed the advent of a “security community,” in which war between major powers is almost unthinkable because the costs of war have become too high. The nuclear threat is certainly compelling in this regard, but attitudes regarding war have also changed. Mueller (1988, 2004) reinforces the role of changing attitudes and modifies the nuclear deterrent argument by introducing the independent deterrent of even conventional war in an age of advanced technology. That conventional war can devastate nations is another reason for the diminishing utility of force in the modern age. Moreover, greater governmental control over war, as opposed to the more idiosyncratic “criminal” sources of war, has reduced the incidence of war. In short, a synthesis of this logic suggests that warfare is on the decline and possibly on the road to “disappearing” (Mueller 2004, 1). In the light of this logic, the importance of respect, admiration, and cooperation (i.e., soft power) have increased relative to that of coercion among the instruments of statecraft. Moreover, the dangers that the hard resources of military technology have produced require an ever-increasing commitment to the instruments of soft power for humans to achieve sustainable security.

Second, hard power also functions within a specific political, social, and economic context marshaled by modernization – the context of interdependence (Osgood and Tucker 1967 and Keohane and Nye 1977). Using “sticks” and threats generates considerable costs among interdependent actors. As social and economic interpenetration increases, punishing or threatening other nations is to some extent self-punishment. Given nations’ increasing economic and social stakes across each other’s borders, surely some part of the perpetrating nations’ interests will be compromised, e.g., their companies and citizens may suffer from punitive acts intended to harm the target nation. In such an environment, strategies for optimizing national wealth and power have shifted from war and competition to cooperation. Yet even more elusive than the quest to contain damage within the target nation in such an environment is the quest to impose some specific outcomes on target nations and actors. In an interpenetrated world, targeted nations and actors have much room to maneuver and many avenues of escape. Transnational actors can avoid being compelled because of their access to the international political economy. They can escape coercion merely by taking refuge in their many international havens. This modern-day “economic feudalism” is shifting the nexus of power from the territorial state to transnational networks (Belmonte and Cerny 2021 and Nye 2002, 75). In such an environment, transnational actors are ever more elusive (multinational corporations [MNCs]) and ever more dangerous (terrorists). The ineffectiveness of sanctions is also a testament to how targeted regimes can avoid the deleterious consequences of punitive actions by taking advantage of the international marketplace, both above and below ground. In such an environment, neither economic nor military strength will guarantee the capacity to compel or deter. Instead, favorable outcomes can often be delivered more effectively through soft power instruments.

Compounding the increasing utility of soft power relative to hard power generated by military technology and interdependence are four other factors: democratization, globalization, the rise of the guardian state, and the growth of international organizations and regimes. The growth and consolidation of democracy compounds the disutility of coercion as the actors bearing the greatest burden of such coercion (the people) acquire political power over decision

makers. This democratic peace phenomenon has shifted the power equation considerably (Doyle 1997). As people become more empowered, they consolidate stronger political impediments to the use of force and threat. Furthermore, democratic culture naturally drives national leaders toward the cannons of soft power, which are grounded in respect for the democratic process at both the national and international levels. Thus, national leaders are much more constrained to work within acceptable policy boundaries – boundaries that increasingly discourage force and threat. The advent of social media has strengthened the democratic-peace effect given that a traditional limitation of the theory in the pre-digital age was the problem of collective action. As has become evident in the Arab Spring and other mass protest initiatives, the Twitter effects of this technology can coordinate large scale collective action as was never before possible.

Globalization has compounded the effects of interdependence by enhancing the process of social and economic interpenetration among nations. The information age has given civil societies the capacity to receive and transmit information across nations in a manifold and speedy way. Better links enhance networking among transnational actors. As the international stakes of these actors grow, so do their incentives to expend political capital within their own domestic political systems to reinforce the economic ties among nations. Other technological manifestations of globalization magnify and solidify these links, so that transnational networks become pervasive forces in world politics. Nye (2004, 31) states that these networks “...will have soft power of their own as they attract citizens into coalitions that cut across national boundaries. Politics in part then becomes a competition for attractiveness, legitimacy, and credibility.” This access to foreign governments and citizens also compounds the effects of democratization in creating political impediments to the use of hard power. These forces have both diminished possibilities of political conflict and shifted the nexus of competition away from force and threat.

The rise and consolidation of the guardian state in the twentieth century have worked through the political vehicle of democracy to further diminish the utility of hard power relative to soft power. Social and political changes have made modern populations more sensitive to their economic fates and less enamored of a “warrior ethic” (Jervis 2002; Nye 2004, 19). With the rise of this welfare/economic orientation and the consolidation of democracy, political leaders have been driven more by the economic imperative and less by foreign adventurism as a source of political survival (Gallarotti 2000; Ruggie 1983). This has shifted not only domestic but also foreign policy orientations. The economic welfare concern has put a premium on cooperation that can deliver economic prosperity and stability, and has worked against hard power policies that might compromise these goals. The guardian mentality has served to socialize national leaders to a greater extent (more docile and respectful of legitimate means of statecraft) compared with their nineteenth century predecessors, and consequently has reduced incentives to extract compliance through force, threat, and bribery. For Jervis (2002), this diminution of the warrior ethic represents a fundamental change in values that has consolidated the new security community. Moreover, Jervis underscores how these new economic imperatives have augmented the benefits of peace, another crucial factor contributing to the rise of the security community.

Finally, the growth of international organizations and regimes since 1945 has essentially cast nations more firmly within networks of cooperation, a fundamental component of soft power (Krasner 1983 and Keohane and Nye 1977). There are over 250 International Governmental Organizations and over 38,000 International Non-Governmental Organizations in the world (*Yearbook of International Organizations*, 2019). As the size and stature of these networks have

increased, so too have the power of the norms and laws they represent. More precisely, with the growth and consolidation of cooperative networks, unilateral actions that disregard such institutions are becoming costlier. In effect, cooperative networks have ratcheted up the minimum level of civil behavior in international politics and consequently raised the importance of soft power dramatically. Expectations have gravitated toward the sanctity of such institutions, and as a result actions that cut against these expectations generate greater fallout than they did in an environment in which no such institutional superstructure existed. To a large extent, the spread of networks of cooperation has somewhat civilized nations to a greater extent, which in turn has made them less likely to extract compliance in what are considered illegitimate ways (i.e., through coercion). All sorts of institutional constraints that have diluted the political action space and produced hurdles to use force have arisen through the bureaucratization of security. These institutional constraints have also generated more outlets for channeling conflict. This was the principal idea behind security organizations from the time of the Concert of Europe. They have provided non-violent venues for resolving conflicts of interest. But beyond the role of international regimes and organizations as constraining agents, their growth and strength have made them desirable because of the opportunities they provide. As Keohane and Nye (1977) note, the possibility to select an organizational forum for an issue and to mobilize votes will be an important political resource in the modern world system.

B. Realism Strikes Back

Notwithstanding this structural shift away from Wendt's Hobbesian anarchy, salient events have demonstrated the pervasive dark side of world politics. These events strongly signaled that the use of hard power and the utility of force and coercion were ever present fixtures in the global system. Violence was ever widespread and constant. In the period in which Neoliberals and Constructivists were especially active in trying to displace Realist thinking from the academy, events in the world kept the latter paradigm continually relevant. The 1970s saw the protraction of the Vietnam conflict and its expansion to Cambodia, the world watched Israeli athletes being killed by terrorists during the Munich Olympics, the Yom Kippur War broke out in the Middle East, Pol Pot perpetrated a blood bath in Cambodia, Iranian militants seized the US embassy and took dozens of American hostages. In the 1980s Iraq invaded Iran, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, Anwar Sadat was assassinated in Egypt, Great Britain intervened militarily to secure the Falkland Islands, Israel invaded Lebanon, terrorists killed 237 marines in Beirut, the US invaded the island of Grenada, Reagan postured menacingly toward the Soviets and announced plans for Star Wars defense systems, Indira Gandhi was assassinated, and terrorists killed 259 air passengers over Lockerbie Scotland. In the 1990s Iraq invaded Kuwait, the US intervention brought about the Persian Gulf War, American soldiers were killed by terrorists in Somalia, the Rwandan genocide ended with one million deaths, genocide also broke out in Yugoslavia, Russia invaded Chechnya, war broke out between Bosnians and Croats, and Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated. In the 2000's terrorists destroyed the Twin Towers in New York, the US invaded Afghanistan, Israeli tanks and planes attacked West Bank towns, the US invaded Iraq, Israel killed top Hamas leaders in retaliation for terrorist acts, Spain was rocketed by terrorist strikes, London was hit by terrorist bombings, Bush announced a surge of 20,000 troops in Iraq, the Taliban and al-Qaeda resurged in Afghanistan, the Arab Spring broke out, and

a number of autocracies were toppled in the Middle East and North Africa. After 2010 violence and manifestations of hard power were again pervasive.: North Korea took a confrontational turn toward the West on the heels of a nuclear arms buildup; the Russians annexed Crimea and fueled war in the Dombas region of Ukraine, the South Sea dispute intensified, the Syrian civil war turned into a large- scale proxy war, so too the civil war in Yemen pulled in powerful Middle Eastern nations, militants attacked the US embassy in Pakistan, conflict broke out in central Africa, Western powers sanctioned Iran and North Korea, the Libyan civil war erupted, ethnic war took place in South Kyrgyzstan, Israeli commandos attacked cargo ships in the Gulf, and insurgencies intensified in Tajikistan and the Sinai.

While large-scale conventional wars have been absent, there are few patterns in the eruption of violence that suggest that Hobbesian anarchy has rolled back to the point that hard power has little use. It continues to be a major component of any nations' lexicon of influence. While structural changes in the world have moved the world closer to a non-Hobbesian environment, it has not moved it significantly enough to make hard power unimportant. In this sense, we must admit that while the face of power in international relations has a somewhat brighter gleam, it is basically still the same calicoed face that has manifested itself for ages.

III. The Calicoed Face of Power: Toward a Cosmopolitan or Synthetic Vision of Power

The bifurcation of power among scholars after 1979 is more attributable to epistemological parochialism, and not a reflection of the true manifestations of power in international politics. In this sense, theory has distorted visions of the real world. Rather than building upon a fractured set of theories of power, we should try and understand this one calicoed face of power, as distressing as it is for theoretical paradigms in IR. We can synthesize a number of tenets from the three principal paradigms to construct a singular vision of power among nations. We can call this a Cosmopolitan vision because it represents an evolution of thinking commensurate with the advent of a Cosmopolitan world.²⁹ It is clear from the crucial case evaluation of the great canons of the three paradigms of IR, that the arguments of the relevant scholars all painted a diverse face of international power, one that did not square with the purity of their epistemological progeny. If anything, their narratives presented a starkly diversified vision of what constitutes influence in the world system.³⁰ A number of the venerated tenets of Realism need not conflict with some of the fundamental tenets of Neoliberalism and Constructivism with respect to the concept of power. The Realist tenets about the optimization of power and the quest for security are consistent with objectives posited by Constructivists and Neoliberals. In interdependent and complex communities like the international system, especially in the contemporary period, truly

²⁹ See Gallarotti (2010) for an attempt to build such a vision.

³⁰ Gallarotti (2010) goes on to do a crucial case analysis of the great traditional canons of political Realism as well (Thucydides, Hobbes and Machiavelli), and shows a similar inclusive Cosmopolitan vision of power rather than a strictly Realist vision.

optimizing the goals underscored by Realists for individual nations can be accomplished only by conceptualizing individual actions within frameworks that embrace elements of Neoliberalism and Constructivism. Not doing so can lead to consequences that debilitate rather than empower nations. By embracing the recent structural changes in international politics, Realist visions of power can more easily interface with those of Neoliberalism and Constructivism.

In fact, soft and hard power have always and will always occupy the same space because the two sources themselves are intrinsically interconnected. The two are neither perfect substitutes nor are they rigid complements. In fact, they often reinforce one another. Indeed, it will often be the case that each set of power resources require at least some of the other for maximum effectiveness. Hence soft power resources can enhance hard power, and vice versa. Certainly, a strong positive image can garner many more allies, which in turn can bolster a nation's defenses. And of course, committing troops to defend a nation against invasion will certainly garner a better image for the protector state. Gilpin (1975) underscores the extent to which the global economic primacy enjoyed by America in the post-war period has been founded on the Pax Americana, which American military primacy has sustained. Furthermore, the possession of hard power itself can make a nation a role model in a variety of way. For example, Realists such as Waltz (1979) underscore the image generated by large military arsenals and successful military strategies. As a symbol of national success, this extensive hard power generates significant soft power by enhancing respect and admiration.³¹

It appears that the real face of power has never really changed its configuration since time immemorial. To the scholars that have written about power over the past 2 and ½ millennia from Thucydides to modern day Constructivists, there have been attributed starkly different perceptions of the face of power in international politics. But a closer reading of the major canons of power over these years suggests that the real face of power is much more calicoed than differing schools of thought have professed. Reality has always had a strong influence in shaping the narratives on power, even when scholars were intent on taking different paths. Eventually historical events have intruded even on their most boisterous attempts to promote a face of power that deviated significantly from the mean. Perhaps the mean is a good place to search for the face of power: a mean that is between the hard and soft poles of power, one that features a diversity of shades rather than a mono-colored façade. A number of scholars have more recently searched for some sort of synthesis or equilibrium in the face of power. Their work suggests a good place to search for future generations of students of power (e.g., Gallarotti 2010, 2011 and 2015; Nye 2011; Nossel 2004; Barkin 2003; Ikenberry and Kupchan 2004; and Geller and Travlos 2019).

IV. References

³¹ Gallarotti (2010) demonstrates a number of historical cases in which economic hard power was an important source of emulation.

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