10

The Reality of Theory: Reflections and Reassessment

Nazli Choucri

The invitation to write an essay for this book startled me: it's a long way from Cairo to California—and longer still to Cambridge. A graduate education at Stanford shaped my intellectual development and challenged some basic beliefs about the nature of social and political organizations and processes. At MIT, a vibrant, challenging environment dominated by scientists and engineers, I experienced more intellectual leaps, adjustments, and turns. As time unfolds, my perspectives on politics, international relations, and approaches to research are continually influenced by the atmosphere of MIT, by the New York–Washington axis, and by the ease of access to Europe and points beyond.

Cairo–California–Cambridge

Reconstructing one's intellectual and personal history is seldom an easy task. Emotions are evoked, as are temptations for dwelling on salient experiences and turning points. Where does one start?

At nineteen I graduated from the American University at Cairo (AUC), with a concentration in the social sciences. Fluent in three languages, and having a passing knowledge of a fourth, I had an interest in how people in different environments perceived politics, defined their objectives and the obstacles encountered, and identified strategies for solutions. My own family had, for generations, been involved in politics and in leadership of the country. One grandfather was a judge, a king's personal banker, and a major philanthropist. My other grandfather served as cabinet minister in several governments before the Revolution (1952) and directed investments in infrastructure development and transportation. My father is a gentleman and a businessman; my mother, a gentlelady, is author of the only trilingual dictionary of Spanish, French, and Arabic. The Revolution transformed the social order, replacing the monarchy with a socialist regime. It changed our way of life, imposing new political myths and social priorities, but it did not change my family's involvement and interest in the country's politics and its future.

Graduating from AUC with "high honors" encouraged further academic inquiry and prompted interest in graduate study. Acceptance to the graduate school at Stanford seemed both timely and fortunate. (My mother wanted me to go to Bryn Mawr or to Radcliffe or some other sensible place—certainly much safer than the "Far West.") I had *no* idea when I left Cairo for California that at Stanford there would be the waging of intellectual struggle—a war for ideas—that prevailed in the field at the time. The behavioral revolution had erupted with a vengeance. The only aspect I even dimly understood involved an emphasis on, indeed acceptance of, interdisciplinary work. (The AUC education seemed relevant to that orientation.) But I had not been prepared for the mode of instruction—the battles in classrooms—nor the sense of an emerging orthodoxy. (Nor had I been prepared for the sentiments I encountered on numerous occasions: people had strong feelings about Egyptians, and mainly negative ones.)

The first year in graduate school was difficult; my intellectual directions were unclear. I did serious work in political theory but soon realized that I probably would not contribute much to the classicists, or to interpretation of Western political philosophy. My interests in relations among nations quickly shaped my search for a course of study on international politics. War, I knew, was very real. (I had lived through the events of 1956 when French, British, and Israeli troops attacked Egypt—each motivated by strategic moves and power calculations. And the whole experience was not very pleasant. I knew, absolutely, I did not like war.)

It is an accident of fate—or good fortune—that I had been offered the opportunity of joining a research group that Professor Robert C. North had been directing, the Stanford Studies in International Conflict and Integration. The group pursued a pioneering research strategy, contributed to a paradigm in the making, and generated enormous intellectual challenge and enthusiasm. There I learned about collaborative work with other graduate students and about exploration of ideas with faculty members. Ole Holsti, then at Stanford, was immensely articulate, helpful to students, and generally compensated for—what seemed at the time—Professor North's austere and distant demeanor. In retrospect, there is no doubt but that my intellectual development—the origins and the subsequent paths—took shape at that time. (My most humble contribution to the broader enterprise was twofold: working on coding documents for computer content analysis—to measure expressed perception and cognition of national leaders—and later being a "subject" in the development of the Internation Interaction Scale, designed to measure the behavior of nations.)

The most important intellectual mark of my graduate education at Stanford was instruction in, and appreciation for, an interdisciplinary perspective for social inquiry. Exposure to Harold Guetzkow's insistence on "islands of theory" and Karl Deutsch's recognition of nationalism as "social communication" touched a responsive chord for a graduate student working in an alien culture, in a foreign country, in a different language, and in a context that stood at variance with my own background. Cairo and California were worlds apart—literally as well as figuratively.

My Ph.D. dissertation, "The Perceptual Basis of Nonalignment," was a computer content analysis of attitude and expressed perceptions of three Afro-Asian leaders who were major designers of the policy of nonalignment in international relations—the declaration of independence from the cold war. Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union took that posture seriously, but at the time it was the major political movement in the Third World, the tail end of the decolonization process "rejecting" the dominance of the major power and asserting the identity and (hoped for) independence of the Third World. I sympathized and identified with the sentiments; my thesis committee believed the job well done, and the university conferred the degree. (Subsequently my efforts centered on determining the degree of *congruence* between expressed perception and actual behavior. At the time this issue was central to the agenda of the behavioral revolution.) At twenty-four I was now a full-fledged member of the political science profession.

The Initial Transition

During the last year at Stanford, struggling with computers, codings, speeches, leaders—and a demanding dissertation committee—Professor North invited me to help with "collecting population data." (The shift was intriguing; I respected Professor North; I agreed.) Then came the real challenge: Could I begin to analyze trends on population changes over long periods of time? What do we know about resource availability worldwide? And how can we get a "handle" on the concept, and impact, of differential rates of technological change? Such deceptively simple questions led to the collaboration that remains important to my own work some twenty years later.

The initial transition was intellectual, but it was also quite pragmatic: there were a few material things that I had not quite grasped. There was much about life in the United States that I had not yet fully appreciated. For years at Stanford I did not know about taxes (nor that my research assistant stipend was taxed, nor that it could be reclaimed from the IRS). Many things in the United States seemed rather peculiar; I liked Cairo better and there was always a large family, and many family friends, to rely upon. It soon became clear that the mundane need to cover ordinary and normal commitments (bills, groceries, and so on) pointed to the need for a job. (In Egypt that had never been an issue, and besides, it was clearly expected I would marry someone definitely pedigreed, most affluent, terribly famous, and undoubtedly distinguished.) Making the decision to become a professional political scientist was strongly

at variance with my own instincts, family pressures, and images of a "normal and happy future."

At this point, the sheer fascination with understanding the roots of war simply took over. And the rest followed: it was now a matter of intellectual discipline, systematic inquiry, and comparative analysis. Once this decision was made, then I was destined for a most ordinary and uneventful life—hard work, persistence, and intellectual effort driven by the passion of discovery and innovation in analysis. (By that time Professor North had pressured me to purge "Arabisms" from my written work, and I did not have the courage to tell him that in fact these peculiarities of expression were French idioms, not Arabic ones; but I purged them anyway and my writing became increasingly of the professional-cum-pedantic variety; it probably still is.)

The next major event of note was the Middle East war of 1967, when Egypt was badly defeated. Two days into the war, some big car crashed into my vehicle, totaling it. This led my classmates to appoint me as the perfect example of the "micro-macro linkage" in world politics: national disaster and individual catastrophe. (Egypt survived, and so did I.) As a professional, my first academic appointment was at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. The students were excellent, and conducting large classes was demanding. The real challenge, however, was learning to breathe in that cold weather. *Nothing* I had experienced before was as cold. The concept of *cold* took on whole new dimensions. I liked Cairo better.

Reality of Theory

In retrospect, it was natural for me to be interested in international relations and international conflict. The postwar decolonization process was an everyday occurrence when I was growing up; and conflicting nationalisms, competition among the major powers, and perpetual political volatility were the order of the day. Everything at the time seemed to converge on the Middle East, and it seemed to me then (as it does now) that the United States was unsure of its policy toward the region, and of the relevance of this area to global strategic priorities. I still recall vividly the unpleasantness and despair in the few wars I have personally experienced in the series of wars in the Middle East; and by today's accounting, those were relatively tranquil times. (Being at the receiving end of other people's bombs is not much fun; and I would like to understand better how and why one gets into that position.) This region is at the verge of yet more "deadly quarrels," generating more of the proverbial Richardson "casualties."

There are seven sets of *conflict systems* that converge to make that area one of the most volatile in the world: (1) the cold war of the superpowers; (2)

conflicts between Israel and the Arab states; (3) conflicts between Israel and the Palestinians; (4) conflicts among Arab states themselves, that is, a wide range of inter-Arab disputes; (5) conflicts between Persians and Arabs, threatening to erupt beyond the Iran-Iraq war; (6) conflicts converging around oil and power, when the oil crisis of 1973 set in motion the disputes between consumers and producers of oil; and (7) ethnic and religious conflicts, cutting across national allegiance and territorial boundaries. Any one of these may "erupt" at some point; and the "real" threat lies in the prospect that any single one will break out, that "spillover" will take place, and that the conduit of violence will not remain within the confines of conventional warfare. The transition from "normal" to nuclear warfare cannot be ruled out. And the "solution" to any one of these conflicts would not "solve" others. The theoretical and analytical issues at the core of my work are only too real in this region of the world.

"Why war?" remains central to my concerns. Waltz's query—Where are the causes of war to be found: in man, the state, or the international system?—was clearly well stated, but the evidence so inconclusive.[1] Two years of initial research work led to a set of testable hypotheses about the origin of war, then integrated in a model of simultaneous equations. Learning how to formulate, test, explore, and respecify was not easy. The early years at MIT were instrumental in gaining access to good technical instruction and advice on applied econometrics. And Hayward Alker, a senior colleague, generously spent long hours arguing the case for internal consistency, respecification, and never accepting "good" and "good enough." My contribution to the resulting study, *Nations in Conflict,* was the product of years of exploration and experimentation.[2] The propositions that emerged indicated that growth and expansion of activities outside national borders could (and sometimes did) lead to competition, alignments and counteralignments, escalation, prevention—and then all hell would break loose. From my dissertation I had learned about perceptions, misperceptions, and distortions of vision. Now I appreciated that, in high stress conditions, all these elements come into play, and their interactions can increase the probability of war.

For operational purposes, I soon realized that it is more parsimonious to focus on cognitions for some purposes, and on quantitative variables (metricized) for some others; quantitative tools were clearly more appropriate for some purposes than for others. Before joining the MIT faculty, I already had made the commitment to multimethod approaches to analysis and to theory development and testing. MIT was a rich environment for learning, for formulating ideas, and testing out contending notions of state behavior.

In the course of the years I have been taking ballet classes and consider myself a serious student of classical dance. (With a different career choice, I would have become a professional ballerina.) Ballet is precision, fluidity of

motion, accuracy of count, and utter concentration—the perfect complement for serious scholarship.

Intellectual Style

My interest in the question of congruence between perceptions and behavior led directly to the role of *capabilities* in allowing or impeding behavior. And concurrently Bob North's own agenda led him to "step back" from cognition and perception and address the issue of capabilities from another aspect, namely those engendered by underlying populations generating *demand* for resources, values, and other "assets." In the early 1970s the field was moving rapidly into exploring alternative methodologies, quantitative techniques, and theoretical developments in the other social sciences. For us it was use of then new, even innovative, techniques in econometrics.

The data-based orthodoxy of the early "behavioral" revolution was highly constraining, limiting the exploration of interesting and theoretically provocative ideas. (It continues to pain me that there remain critics of the World War I study who still comment on a particular correlation coefficient, quite overlooking the essential message, namely that *complex dynamic* relationships cannot well be captured by bivariate measures predicated on assumption of independence and linearity.) The methods used in the World War I study are, by today's standards, rather straightforward. The challenge still remained to articulate "theory" to the level appropriate for the "method" available as chosen by the analyst. The core of the initial "theory" of state behavior rested on the importance of "master variables" in shaping the parameters and possibilities of state behavior: people, their resources, and their knowledge and skills.

For me personally several intellectual interests were crystallizing during my first years at MIT. First was an awareness of the importance of *growth* of nations and *change* for their relations and for the international system. The controversy over *Limits to Growth* by Dennis Meadows and colleagues furthering Jay Forrester's work on the dynamics of systems reinforced my view that the dynamics of *growth* could indeed be critical in shaping relations among nations, and that alternative theoretical specifications of growth, in different contexts and with different constraints, could be important for shaping theories of conflict and international interactions.

In the late 1970s, I collaborated with Dennis Meadows on a study of international energy resources. He did coal, and I did oil. My interest in conflict and problems of resource access eventually led to the development of a complex simulation model of the world oil market and the actors in it.[3]

An important professional transition occurred as I became interested in

issues of *policy*. In particular, speculating on the implications of theory for action became important to my intellectual development. Increasingly, I was invited to help formulate the resource policy of select national governments and on different occasions to work with various agencies on population policies, particularly with reference to population growth and to migration across national boundaries. Bringing "theory," findings, and experience to bear on current, immediate, and sometimes critical policy concern was a major challenge. This type of work continues to intrigue me, as it interjects an element of immediacy in the otherwise deliberate pace imposed by the requisites of rigor and thoroughness.

One distinct intellectual benefit of policy-related work is that it presents opportunities for theory improvement, by providing new empirical circumstances and new evidence, as well as the possibility of discussions with individuals whose behavior and decisions influence these "master variables" and state behavior. As a consultant to U.S. agencies, U.N. agencies, international corporations, and governments of select developing countries, I soon recognized the immense gulf between the idiom of scholarship and the translations required to make knowledge relevant to specific policy problems. My own commitments remain to scholarship and to research, yet bringing research to bear on the imperatives of short-term dilemmas entails a major adjustment in ways of thinking and articulation while preserving the integrity of thought. In this vein, I accepted the invitation of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities to edit a volume on the relationship between population and conflict, evaluating existing theories and evidence.[4]

I became interested in interstate migration as a variant in the "driving" role of population factors. And over the subsequent decade I began to write about international migration in the Middle East, and its implications for sending and receiving countries and for the region as a whole. In this region population movements had taken place—and continued to take place—*among* countries that are developing, and not, as is conventionally the case, through the "brain drain" from less developed countries to developed countries or "guest workers" from LDCs to the economies of industrial states. Looking at the Middle East as a research laboratory, this research experience led to a clear proposition, namely, that the population characteristics of a state—even its territorial boundaries and overall profile of the state—can be *substantially altered* as a function of the movement of people across boundaries.

The role of migrations in shaping the state may be obvious in the U.S. case, where historically immigration created the formal polity, but it is significantly absent in the scholarly study of relations among nations. This insight was something of a revelation, as I reflected on my own situation: I was born in a country where the population has maintained its national identity and territorial integrity for over five thousand years, despite an extensive history

of colonization and conquests by other powers. I began to appreciate that integrity of national identity may well be an exception rather than a rule in the experience of nations. And, a survey of eighteen textbooks in international relations revealed that the term "international migration" does not appear in the index or the table of contents in any one of these. The field simply does not recognize international migration as a "reality" worthy of note. I find this omission rather peculiar.

Population is only part of a story—the resource base and technological capabilities together provide the essential contexts of societies. Resources are essential for survival—and sometimes even perceived as essential. The events of 1973—one more war in the Middle East, supply interruptions, and oil price increases—amply demonstrated the connection of resources availability and national security. In 1976 I completed a study[5] that had its origins in a joint research project with my colleagues at MIT, Hayward R. Alker and Lincoln P. Bloomfield, and provided the political analysis of a changing world oil market. Vincent Ferraro, then a graduate student, played an important role as a collaborator in this project. This "story" was essentially rewritten into the nascent computer simulation model of the world oil market where framework was being set in place. The objective was to simulate interaction among buyers, sellers, and international oil companies, embedding these interactions in analytical representations of the process of oil production (from investments in exploration to generation of revenues, building of capacity, and utilizing capacity for actual production). The results, reported in *International Energy Futures: Petroleum Power, Process, Payments*,[6] helped me understand the *interactions* (and reflected the influence of earlier collaborative work with Dennis Meadows, then a colleague at the Sloan School of Management).

During the course of this work I learned more about the crucial role of technology and of technological change. At MIT I was exposed to both the social sciences and the analytical and applied approach to "hard" technological concerns in a way that is not common in political science. And, more importantly, I recognized that concepts as basic as "technology" were understood quite differently and given different interpretation and analytical representation by engineers and by economists. Serving as associate director of the Technology and Development Program (motivated by responsibilities of citizenship within MIT) led me to better appreciate problems related to technology and development and to look closely at issues of population and resource changes. In this connection, for ten years, I traveled overseas on the average of once every six weeks. Invariably, changes in international "realities" impressed themselves on my mind. My research gradually evolved along two broad tracks: "micro" or technical studies focusing on a specific problem or issue in a specific context; and "macro" level focusing on the broader theoretical level of integration of ideas and articulation of linkages—generally known as theory "development."

Theoretical Core

Over the years my work has developed as a contributor to, and as affected by, the "behavioral revolution," the postbehavioral "crisis of relevance," and the contemporary concern for international political economy. The search for "regularities" directs my work, reinforced by the intellectual environment at MIT, observing this search in a wide variety of fields considered "more" scientific than the social sciences. The core ideas in my research can be summed as follows:

1. In the analysis of international relations, nations can be characterized in terms of their essential attributes. The "essentials"—the population, resource availability and access, and level of technological capabilities—are core or "master variables," or "endowments" whose characteristics define the basic attributes of a state and serve as the major determinant of national priorities. Power differentials in the Middle East seemed to me a ready-made textbook case of the importance of master variables in shaping and constraining behavior. And there, as elsewhere, these elementary relationships are fundamentally *empirical* in that they reflect observable phenomena that themselves can be subjected to a variety of "contending" interpretations. They are also *analytical* in that they reflect a view of underlying explanation and minimal inputs for theoretical parsimony. In the Middle East, the creation and dissolution of states were near-common occurrences and illustrated these changes.

2. Growth drives state behavior; and uneven growth interjects volatility and accounts for structural change regionally and internationally. Unevenness among the "master variables" of a single state or between a state and other states (rivals and competitors) is particularly volatile. My work on the World War I study and subsequently on development processes convinced me of the importance of the growth factor.

3. Competition among states takes shape to the extent that behavior spaces intersect and spheres of influence collide. Early in my work I realized that U.S.-Soviet competition in the Middle East is a clear example of "collision," or intersecting activities and interests. The history of major power competition in the region during the 1950s and 1960s impressed me then, as a teenager who could not fully understand the basis for such extension of activities, certainly on a geographical basis. When competition intensifies and each party seeks to augment its own capabilities and expand its influence on others, the basic logic and rationale for alignments and counteralignments takes shape. And I had been exposed to the politics of alignments early on when Egyptian youngsters were exposed to the various regional and global options and as debates about "good guys" and "bad guys" took shape. Intersections are behaviorally predictable, as are the "modes" of state behavior internationally. Again, during the late 1950s and early 1960s when I was growing up, major powers' alignments and counteralignments, as seen from the perspective of

those in the region, looked suspiciously like major power maneuverings for control and domination of the area.

4. Investments in the military (and the phenomenon of armament competition) appear to be driven by two sets of factors—domestic sources and external ones. To the extent that internal capabilities are increased, military investments (and attendant institutional arrangements) take on a logic of their own, reflected in what is now known as "bureaucratic inertia." Even in the small world of the Middle East, I could see connections between the dynamics of growth and the process of interstate competition (the driving mechanisms and the interactive outcomes).

5. Overt violence, conflict, or warfare did not simply "break out." When Nasser announced mining of the Straits in 1967, Israel took this as an act of war—irrespective of the empirical or factual basis for this announcement—and launched a preemptive attack that devastated the Egyptian air force and dramatically transformed power relations in the region. Surely 1914 was not "unique." Even at the time, I appreciated that war can be traced back to sets of factors: domestic growth issues and external competition.

Political Economy of State Behavior

A test of plausibility, and an intellectual challenge, lay in determining how *differences* in patterns of behavior can be observed from *differences* in "endowments" or activities of states. I continue to believe we can help explain "modes" of behavior on the basis of differences in "master variables," and the illustrative types are easily discernible. The continued collaboration with Bob North on analysis of growth, expansion, and conflict examines the characteristic features of state behavior as a function of national profile, *changes* in profile over time, and the implications for interstate relations.

Research at the international as well as regional levels pointed to some obvious factors. One somewhat "extreme" is the case where access to external resources is absolutely essential for survival, given paucity of domestic sources, an expanding population with attendant "demands," and technological capabilities facilitating outward strategy. Perhaps Israel could be thought of in those terms. And Japan remains an excellent example of a case where access to resources (and markets) is the prime determinant of behavior; the mode chosen (such as territorial expansion before World War II to foreign investments, financial investments, and the like after the war) is a function of the actions and policies of other states and opportunities and constraints (such as defeat in war and reduction of investments in the military).

Another illustrative "extreme" is the case where domestic resources in the ground are ample, where populations are "small," and the prevailing level of technology lagging international standards. There the problem is to convert

resources from one form into a wider range of assets—subject to technological constraints and population levels. The oil-rich countries of the Gulf in the Middle East are of this type, as their "modes" of international behavior are almost exclusively confined to marketing oil and limited investing in international financial markets, an inevitable consequence according to international trade theory. Recently I have been working on the political economy of the Middle East, analyzing how "master variables" shape the strategies and policies of states seeking to reduce the constraints of their profiles and augmenting their capabilities. I worked at two levels; field research in one region and "theory" development in a broader, more generic framework.

In cases where the "abundant" endowment, or master variable, is technology and the lagging, or scarce factors are resources and population, an outward strategy is based on the use of technology-intensive goods and services. Again the Middle East serves as a good textbook case (in some instances even with answers in the back). Imagine an Israel with the level of technology of Chad or the resources of Saudi Arabia; or a Saudi Arabia with the level of technology of the United States; or an Egypt with the resources of Saudi Arabia; or a Libya with Israel's technology. The behavioral possibilities would be different, as would priorities for domestic and foreign policy.

To me, these examples suggested that types of behavior outside territorial boundaries are shaped by the level and growth of the master variables and the "excess" or "deficit" contingent on their interactive effects. The political economy of international relations, in effect, is shaped and driven by the essential endowments of states and strategies for management of their political economy. These somewhat transparent patterns seemed to go a long way in explaining interstate behavior in the Middle East, and provide a "logic" for seemingly unreasonable behavior in the region. But the Middle East is not "unique." My work on Latin America exposed me to comparisons of national profiles and implications for international behavior. I had served as consultant to the United Nations Center for Human Settlement on problems of infrastructure development (involving field work in Mexico, Honduras, Venezuela, and Colombia), and my book on *Energy and Development in Latin America* made me sensitive to the importance of cross*regional* comparisons.[7] Everything I "sensed" about the Middle East was helpful in appreciating the developmental context in Latin America (and my mother's trilingual dictionary served as an added prod).

For the purposes of this essay, I can summarize three illustrations of new dimensions in international political economy based on my recent work.

First is evidence for the prevalence of a *hidden economy* transcending the parameters of the formal economy as recorded by conventional statistical accounting procedures.[8] Evidence for the hidden economy comes from analysis of financial flows and capital markets (in the Middle East, although I suspect the same holds for Latin America). It is predicated on the use of informal

financial intermediaries rather than formal institutions, and, because large-scale volumes of capital are involved in these "hidden" exchanges, their magnitude reduces the importance of formal accounting procedure in representing international economic transactions.[9]

Second is the salience of structural characteristics underlying this hidden economy, namely, large-scale flows of labor across national boundaries. The *migration cycle*, initially observed in the case of unskilled workers from Mediterranean countries to Western Europe, appears to be a broader feature of international economic transactions. The cycle began with demand for labor in industrial economies, pulling workers of relatively lower skills to meet this demand; with economic growth and structural change the demand for foreigners declines, and governments are faced with prospects of managing return migration. The fact that the dynamics of birth and death underlie demographic shifts among the migrant population, augmented by settlement patterns, makes it nearly impossible to "reverse" the flows.

Third is new evidence regarding the phenomena of *cartel and collusions*. OPEC has been the key textbook case of collusion. Yet the behavior of national governments cannot simply be inferred from theories of the behavior of firms. The fact of national sovereignty influences articulation of priorities in economic transactions; collusion becomes a political strategy despite economic costs.[10]

Contending Paradigms versus Generic Processes

I have come to believe that the behaviors of states and the influence of endowment or attributes of nations are not idiosyncratic to a particular paradigm in international relations or in international political economy. The centrality of the process of growth (as distinct from its particular analytical specification or representation) "driving" the system is based on factors that shape that growth (as population change, claims on resource availability, or prevailing technological capabilities). Unevenness (or differentials) in rates of change further compound the overall assessment of growth. This process can be "written" in Marxist, mercantilist, or realist "paradigms." But for me it remains a theoretical stance that the underlying processes of growth, expansion, intersection, and international consequences are *generic* despite the reality that the manifestations of these processes, the underlying data, must certainly be temporally and empirically bound. In the region I knew best, the Middle East, there was a clear case of large-scale population movements (then into Palestine), violent conflict, and exodus (of Palestinians from the new state of Israel). The most compelling factor in determining outcomes seemed to be the large differential in technology—level of knowledge and skills—between the in-migrants and the out-migrants. Those who "won" the 1948 war were the more technologically advanced; those who "lost" and remained within the boundaries of the state (and its subsequent occupation of adjacent territory), being less skilled, became engaged in economic activities and participated in the labor force at lower levels of skill, essentially, it seemed, "serving" the victors.

The extension of behavior outside territorial boundaries, termed *lateral pressure* in the course of developing the research design for the study of World War I, seemed amply demonstrated time and again in the Middle East. I have not done any systematic work on lateral pressure in that region, but our work on conflict, beyond the 1914 case, clearly showed the importance of differentiating among *sources* of lateral pressure, the *disposition* (or propensity or "desire") for action, the actual *behavior*, and the set of *consequences*. To the extent that different *internal* profiles can generate different *external* behavior, then obviously greater specification contributes to some understanding of the pattern of behavior "permissible" under a different set of initial (endowment or attribute) conditions. This type of thinking involves "unbundling," an important process, yet retaining its connections and constituent parts.

In recent years I have especially appreciated the contributions of Robert Gilpin, a "neorealist," whose work in international political economy drew attention further to the importance of uneven growth and development. There is a convergence between Gilpin's view of structural change and that embedded in the theory of lateral pressure which argued that uneven growth and differential capabilities lead to changes in power relations. The discussions at the joint Harvard-MIT seminar on international institutions helped me think out some puzzles of power and purpose. And Ernie Haas's observations at a session of the joint seminar—that lateral pressure seemed to confound Rousseau: national happiness leading to international unhappiness—pinpointed the central dilemma encapsulated by lateral pressure (and the point of convergence with neorealism).

Analysis of growth and expansion over the years led to theoretical respecification of lateral pressure. The production of a decade of research and collaboration with Bob North is now in a study of Japan from the Meiji Restoration to the present. This study is a systematic comparison of the *same* case across three time periods, and attempts to understand *changes* in national profile and in patterns of expansion and international behavior. *National Growth, Expansion, and International Conflict: Dilemmas of Japan* is particularly relevant to current international conditions.

As a major economic challenge to the dominant hegemon, the United States, Japan today represents a revealing type of state profile, one that has successfully compensated for the very real constraints on domestic resource endowments, positioned itself effectively in the international system, and used economic modes of expansion and lateral pressure in a seemingly optimal way. The problem for the system as a whole is that the "hegemon" is not likely to accept economic dominance by another power, especially an ally whose recon-

struction after the war was designed by the United States; so what are the probable outcomes? Furthermore, other powers might find Japan's economic success conflicting with their own objectives and targets. From the ascending power's perspective, what are the strategies to avoid conflict with the dominant power? It remains difficult to conceive of an international economic system where every state's balance of payments is positive, where everyone's productivity is at its optimum, where recession is avoided everywhere (and so forth). There may be some very real constraints on a positive-sum solution to contemporary economic competition, and those constraints are generally conceived as necessitating "policy coordination" on the one hand, and fueling major-power competition in international economic interactions, on the other. That power and wealth are closely intertwined is a precept of the field, and that the pursuit of power involves the use of economic instruments is a corollary. The outcome, that erosion of power may involve the loss of economic dominance, is evident, the consequences of which remain to be more fully articulated. The theory of lateral pressure addresses these issues and attendant strains and trade-offs.

Next?

Contending perspectives on international relations and international political economy are likely to remain contentious. My sense, at this writing, is that we will begin to appreciate evidence for globalism and for a new transnationalism in world politics.[11] Among the factors defining this new transnationalism are: (1) an increased loss of control over national borders (in terms of the inability to regulate flows of goods, services, populations, resources or even of environmental "bads"); (2) the apparent restructuration of states' capabilities due to movement of the "master variables" across national borders or, as economists would say, factor mobility, resulting in transformed environments, in social, economic, and political terms; and (3) generation of new demand for state coordination and policy formation to avoid prospects for new conflicts resulting from loss of control. Globalism refers to a shift in perspective to recognize the system-wide bounds and environmental context *within which* states interact. These features of international realities are generic, in that they transcend a particular theoretical paradigm and may be elucidated through a variety of contending theoretical lenses.

What is certainly "new" is the scale, scope, and type of flows (of goods, services, and influence) and their impacts on the attributes of "master variables," and these flows invariably influence overall system-wide characteristics. In turn, these impacts influence subsequent behavior of states. The continuing puzzle for me is a very practical and pragmatic one: how best to think about, and articulate, the long-term consequences of these flows, and what are the implications of the long-term transformations of national profiles on patterns of state behavior.

Notes

1. Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954).

2. Choucri and Robert C. North, *Nations in Conflict: National Growth and International Violence* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1975).

3. The design was made in collaboration with Brian Pollins, who helped Scott Ross, both graduate students then, to track down alternative specifications of functional relations. (This model continues to be updated periodically in terms of improved specifications and continues to be used as a vehicle for understanding transformations in the world oil market and their implications for actors in the international systems, nations as well as oil companies.)

4. Choucri, ed., *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Population and Conflict* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1984). This book presented the results from different scholarly perspectives as put forward in different disciplines.

5. Choucri, with the collaboration of Vincent Ferraro, *International Politics of Energy Interdependence: The Case of Petroleum* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1976).

6. Choucri with David Scott Ross, *Energy Futures: Petroleum Prices, Power, and Payments* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981).

7. Choucri, *Energy Development in Latin America: Perspectives for Public Policy* (Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, 1982).

8. Choucri, and Supriya Lahiri, "Short-Run Energy–Economy Interactions in Egypt." *World Development* 12, no. 8 (1984):789–820.

9. Chourcri, "The Hidden Economy: A New View of Remittances in the Arab World," *World Development* 14, no. 6 (1986):977–9.

10. See Choucri, *The International Politics of Energy Interdependence.*

11. This view is shared by the AAAS Committee on Population, Resources, and Environment. At this writing the Subcommittee on Transnational Impacts of Population, Resources, and Environment is addressing the crossborder and global implications. Peter Haas's Ph.D. dissertation, "Dishonorable Discharges: International Collaboration for Mediterranean Pollution Control" (1986), is an important contribution to the committee's work and to recognition of collaborative responses to environmental degradation.

Journeys through World Politics

Series Editors' Foreword

As world affairs become ever more complex and dynamic, so have those in the field of international studies become increasingly innovative. There is no alternative. New approaches, methods, findings, and theories are needed just to keep up with the changing foci and concerns of international relations. The Issues in World Politics series, of which this volume is but one entry, is designed for serious students who are open to rethinking basic premises and pondering new insights.

Each volume in the series addresses a major dimension, problem, or dynamic of the expanding field of international studies. Each of them is also innovative in both content and method, thereby providing an opportunity to stay abreast of the changes in world politics and the changing modes of comprehension. At the same time, the series is not intended to advance a particular theoretical, methodological, or value perspective. Rather, its unity derives from the readiness of all its contributors to think afresh and creatively about the subject domain with which they are concerned.

James N. Rosenau
William C. Potter

Issues in World Politics Series

James N. Rosenau and *William C. Potter,* consulting editors

Other Publications in the Series

Global Changes and Theoretical Challenges
Approaches to World Politics for the 1990s (1989)
Ernst-Otto Czempiel and James N. Rosenau, editors

International/Intertextual Relations
Postmodern Readings of World Politics (1989)
James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro, editors

The Scientific Study of War (1990)
John A. Vasquez and Marie T. Henehan, editors

Public Opinion and Foreign Policy (1990)
Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro

The Arms Trade in World Politics (1990)
Edward J. Laurance

The Development of International Relations Theory (1990)
Mark V. Kauppi and Paul R. Viotti

The New Regionalism in Asia and the Pacific (1990)
Norman Palmer

Psychological Aspects of Foreign Policy (1991)
Patrick Morgan