

Bridging the Transatlantic Divide:

American and European Realism Reconsidered

ISA Catalytic Research Workshop Report

Time and place

The workshop took place at the Fairmont, Montreal, from 8:00 AM to approximately 5:30 PM on Tuesday, March 15, 2011.

Workshop Participants

Balkan Devlen, University of Economics, Turkey

Steven E. Lobell, University of Utah, USA

Hans Mouritzen, Danish Institute for International Studies, Denmark

Alexander Reichwein, Goethe-University, Frankfurt

Norrin M. Ripsman, Concordia University, Canada

Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, Tufts University, USA

Anders Wivel, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

In addition, Asle Toje, Norwegian Nobel Institute, Norway, was scheduled to participate but had to pull out due to a family emergency. However, he circulated his paper among the participants.

All participants presented paper circulated among them during the week prior to the conference.

Workshop Program

Bridging the Transatlantic Divide: European and American Realism Reconsidered

Workshop Co-Chairs: Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, Tufts University, Anders Wivel, University of Copenhagen, and Alexander Reichwein, Goethe University—Frankfurt am Main

8:00-8:30: Arrival and Registration

8:30-9:00: EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN REALISM RECONSIDERED: WHAT ARE THE ISSUES AT STAKE?

Informal opening remarks from the workshop co-chairs

9:00-10:30: POWER AND NEOCLASSICAL REALISM

Anders Wivel, University of Copenhagen (Denmark), "Learning from Waltz 1979: Neorealism and Neoclassical Realism"

Norrin M. Ripsman, Concordia University (Canada), "The Essence of Neoclassical Realism: Improving on External Determinism without Rejecting Realism"

10:30-10:45: Coffee

10:45-12:15: GEOPOLITICS AND REALISM: WHAT IS THE RELATION?

Hans Mouritzen, Danish Institute for International Studies (Denmark), "Realism and the Presence of the Past"

Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, Tufts University (USA), "Neoclassical Realism and Regional Stabilization: Hegemons, Pivotal States, and Pacts of Restraint"

12:15-1:15: LUNCH

1:15-2:45: STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY FROM A REALIST PERSPECTIVE

Steven E. Lobell, University of Utah (USA), "From a Permissive to a Restrictive International Environment: The Influence of Structural Imperatives and Domestic Politics on Grand Strategy"

Asle Toje, Norwegian Nobel Institute (Norway), "The Cluster Munitions Ban: A Neoclassical Realist Analysis" (not present at the conference due to a family emergency)

2:45-3:00: COFFEE

3:00: 4:30: GRAND STRATEGY, FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING AND REALISM

Alexander Reichwein, Goethe University—Frankfurt am Main (Germany), "Power Balancing or Hegemony Seeking in Europe? Explaining ESDP from a Realist Perspective" (Changed title)

Balkan Devlen, Izmir University of Economics (Turkey), "Grand Strategies of Regional Powers under Unipolarity"

4:30-5:00: CONCLUSIONS, PLANS, AND OUTPUT FROM THE WORKSHOP

Discussions and conclusions

The workshop began with introductory remarks by Taliaferro, Wivel and Reichwein specifying the aim of the workshop - to further the development of realist foreign policy analysis, in particular neoclassical realism – and its context: the increased need, felt at both sides of the Atlantic, to increase dialogue between European and North American scholars working on realism. A first step had been taken at a workshop in Copenhagen in November 2009, and this workshop had shown the need for a more careful specification and discussion of how realism was developing in Europe and North America.

The first section of the workshop focused on unpacking neoclassical realism's neorealist starting point (Wivel's paper) and discussing the central characteristics of

neoclassical realism (Ripsman's paper). This was followed by sections detailing the inclusion of different variables in neoclassical realism and discussions of the relevance of these variables and their fit with realist logic (the papers by Taliaferro, Mouritzen and Lobell). Finally, we discussed the issues of strategy in the context of the European Union (Reichwein's paper) and strategic culture (Devlen's paper).

Some central issues were recurring in our discussions throughout the day. These included:

- The inclusion of non-systemic variables in realist theory
- The interaction between materialist and idealist factors
- The importance of permissive/restrictive international environments (action space) for foreign policy-making
- The relation between explaining international relations and explaining foreign policy

It was concluded that

- The epistemological divide between North American and European scholars currently working in the realist tradition is not as wide as it had first appeared. Theoretical and methodological divisions do not necessarily follow national borders and there is no clear-cut US vs. Europe debate within realism. Rather, what we see is a conversation between realists from different places in Europe and North America. All speak the same language of modern realism influenced by the writings of Waltz and Morgenthau.
- There seemed to be consensus, though, that we might draw a useful distinction between *neoclassical realism*, on the one hand, and a return to *classical realism* or perhaps a new 'ideational realism' or 'Euro-realism', on the other. While neoclassical realism draws some insights from twentieth century classical realism of Morgenthau, Carr, Wolfers, Spykman, and others, it is also a research program that clearly builds upon the epistemology and methodology of structural realism or neorealism of Waltz, Gilpin, Grieco, and others. While we all recognized the important contributions of other approaches that returned to classical realism, it would be confusing to label them 'neoclassical realism', especially as Gideon Rose explicitly coined the

term in the late 1990s to refer to an approach that treated unit-level variables as imperfect transmission belts of systemic-level forces.

Follow-up Roundtable and Publications

The participants agreed on a symposium or special section of three co-authored articles to the editors of *The Review of International Studies (RIS)* that would advance the dialogue begun at the workshop. After the workshop, at the ISA convention, Steven Lobell and Norrin Ripsman contacted Jennifer Sterling-Folker from the *RIS* editorial team, who showed an interest in the section and it was agreed to submit the articles in April 2012.

The special section will include three articles. The first article, to be authored by Steven Lobell, Norrin Ripsman, and Jeffrey Taliaferro, will map the landscape of realist research programs, in particular the relationship between neoclassical realism and neorealism and identify the state of the art of realism today. The second article, to be authored by Anders Wivel and Hans Mouritzen, will focus on conceptual issues and examine how contemporary use different levels of analysis and concepts all originating in the realist tradition. In particular, this article seeks to unpack the challenges following from contemporary realist perspectives on agent/structure, region/system and top down/bottom up models of explanation. Finally, the third article, authored by Alexander Reichwein, Balkan Devlen (and possibly Asle Toje), sets forth a new research agenda.

The participants agreed to submit a roundtable proposal to the 2012 ISA convention in order to follow-up on the discussion of the workshop and build on the conclusions so far. Also, the participants would like to meet on at least one more occasion in Europe or North America within the next year, if possible, in order to discuss draft articles for the planned journal symposium.

Budget expenses

We budgeted for one night or two night hotel accommodations (inclusive of room taxes, Canadian VAT, and Quebec provincial taxes) and per diem of \$75 for eight workshop participants (four from North America and four from Europe). We budgeted for food and beverages for the eight workshop participants and four additional guests or observers. As noted above, seven scholars (Devlen, Lobell, Mouritzen, Reichwein, Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Wivel) participated in the workshop. There were no guests or observers in attendance. Professor Mouritzen and Professor Wivel decided to abstain from the per diem and the reimbursement for accommodation. Thus, we are \$1090.05 under budget. The rates for room rental, AV equipment, and food and beverages came from the Fairmount Queen Elizabeth and ISA HQ in summer 2010. Below we present the original proposed budget and the actual expenditures in U.S. dollars. According to the XE Universal Currency Converter (<http://www.xe.com/ucc/>) as of 15 April 2011, the official exchange rate was 1 CAD = \$1.04. The actual expenditures for accommodations and per diem have been calculated at that exchange rate.

Submitted Budget

Category	Number persons in the category	Anticipated Expense Per Unit/Person	Total Expenditure
ACCOMMODATIONS			
	4 North Americans participants	1 night @ \$198	\$792.00
	4 European participants	2 nights @ \$189	\$1,584.00
Accommodations Subtotal			\$2,376.00
FOOD & BEVERAGES			
Coffee, decaffeinated coffee, and tea	12	\$95.00 per gallon, assuming participants consume 3 gallons	\$95.00
Assorted pastries	12	\$46.00 per dozen, assuming each person consumes 2 pastries	\$92.00
Soft drinks and mineral water	12	\$6.04 per beverage and assuming each person consumes 2 beverages	\$144.96
Box lunches	12	\$33.34 per person	\$412.08
Food & Beverages Subtotal			\$744.04
Per Diem	4 North American participants	1 day @ \$75.00	\$225.00
	4 European participants	2 days @ \$75.00	\$450.00
Per Diem Subtotal			\$675.00
ROOM RENTAL		\$108.22	\$108.22
AV EQUIPMENT			
LCD projector and screen	NA	1 day rental	\$104.22
internet access	NA	1 day rental	\$208.42
AV Equipment Subtotal			\$312.64
TOTAL REQUESTED			\$4,215.90

Actual Budget

Category	Number persons in the category	Anticipated Expense Per Unit/Person	Actual Expenditure
ACCOMMODATIONS			
	3 North Americans participants	1 night @ \$189 per night	\$663.98
	2 European participants	2 nights @ \$189 per night	\$771.97
<i>Accommodations Subtotal</i>			\$1,435.95
FOOD & BEVERAGES			
Coffee, decaffeinated coffee, and tea	12	\$95.00 per gallon, assuming participants consume 3 gallons	\$95.00
Assorted pastries	12	\$46.00 per dozen, assuming each person consumes 2 pastries	\$92.00
Soft drinks and mineral water	12	\$6.04 per beverage and assuming each person consumes 2 beverages	\$144.96
Box lunches	12	\$33.34 per person	\$412.08
<i>Food & Beverages Subtotal</i>			\$744.04
<i>Per Diem</i>	3 North American participants	1 day @ \$75.00	\$225.00
	3 European participants	2 days @ \$75.00	\$300.00
<i>Per Diem Subtotal</i>			\$525.00
ROOM RENTAL		\$108.22	\$108.22
AV EQUIPMENT			
LCD projector and screen	NA	1 day rental	\$104.22
Internet access	NA	1 day rental	\$208.42
<i>AV Equipment Subtotal</i>			\$312.64
TOTAL EXPENDITURES			\$3,125.85