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1-1-1991

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J. Martin Rochester  
rochester@umsl.edu

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### Recommended Citation

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Occasional Paper No. 9101  
February, 1991

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The Production and Transmission  
of Knowledge About International  
Relations: The Disheveled Discipline

J. Martin Rochester

**THE PRODUCTION AND TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: THE DISHEVELED DISCIPLINE**

by

**J. Martin Rochester  
University of Missouri-St. Louis**

**Prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies  
Association, Vancouver, March 23, 1991. NOT FOR QUOTATION WITHOUT  
PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR.**

*THE PRODUCTION AND TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: THE DISHEVELED DISCIPLINE*

I. The Nexus Between the Production and Transmission of Knowledge

The two main functions associated with the academic profession are (1) the production of knowledge, i.e. research and scholarship, and (2) the transmission of knowledge, i.e. communication of the latter to a variety of clienteles for purposes of general enlightenment and specific problem-solving applications. Regarding the second function, transmission targets include other scholars and academics, policymakers, the public at large, and academia's most immediate and primary consumers (who most directly support the higher education establishment) -- students. This essay focuses on the production and transmission of knowledge as it relates to students, particularly undergraduates, and particularly in the international relations field, which today is being challenged as few disciplines are to keep pace outside and inside the classroom with what appear to be rapidly changing developments in the "real world." The observations are based primarily on the American experience, although there is reason to believe they have broader relevance.

The relationship between knowledge production and transmission rarely has been the subject of serious scholarship itself, since the research and teaching missions have tended to be treated as rather separate enterprises, each occupying its own particular domain, calling for distinctive skills on the part of their practitioners, and exhibiting "a tension on most campuses over their [relative] priorities."<sup>1</sup> The fact is that (except for schools of education) pedagogy tends to be viewed as an unworthy subject of scholarly inquiry by faculty at "research universities," while faculty at "teaching-oriented" institutions tend not to engage in research, pedagogical or otherwise. Hence, there is little professional discussion of the connection between the production and consumption of knowledge.

Yet in a fundamental way, of course, teaching and research are inseparable. As Kenneth Boulding once remarked, "When one prepares to walk into a classroom and asks 'what shall I *teach*?', one must first ask 'what do I *know*?'"<sup>2</sup> Solid teaching is premised on solid scholarship, at least keeping up with the latest theoretical and empirical advances reported in the literature if not publishing those reports oneself. Solid scholarship is defined by the capacity to raise and answer important new questions in a manner that

adds to the reliability of our knowledge -- that is, to have something worth conveying ("teaching") to fellow academics and their students and other clientele. Ernest Boyer has written about "the new American scholar," calling for a breaking down of the dichotomy between research and teaching and a new commitment to linking the two activities as much as possible --imparting a seriousness of purpose to both as parts of a common endeavor -- within the institutional constraints typically found at colleges and universities.<sup>3</sup> One would hope that as the frontiers of knowledge expand, those cutting-edge ideas would find their way expeditiously into textbooks and other educational materials.

These caveats apply to international relations as much as any field of study. In the 1980s the international relations field was characterized as a "dividing discipline," with "hegemony" competing with "diversity."<sup>4</sup> In the 1990s, in the wake of a series of events which one political scientist-turned-media pundit termed "the second Reformation," the discipline might be characterized as almost "disheveled." In the words of George Will:

One thing is certain: we have never seen a year like 1989. Only the Reformation is remotely comparable to today's gale-force intellectual winds and loud cracking of institutional foundations. No year, even in the 16th century, ever swept so many people or such complex societies into a vortex of change. Nineteen eighty-nine has been the most startling, interesting, promising and consequential year, *ever*.<sup>5</sup>

Were Will still wearing his scholarly hat, he would no doubt be compelled to speak in far more measured tones. Still, allowing for more than a bit of hyperbole, the above comments state in popular form what many scholars are having to come to grips with in their theoretical formulations and what many instructors are contending with in their lesson plans; more than one manuscript and one lecture has been impacted by the recent swirl of happenings. What is one to make of these changes as scholars, and as teachers? What do we *know* today about international relations, and what then do we *teach*? There seems to be considerable uncertainty surrounding both questions.

## II. Uncertainty Over What We Know About International Relations: The Ghost of Morgenthau

Clearly, world politics historically has constantly been in flux, including during the post-World War II period. Indeed, developments at various intervals throughout the postwar era have prompted any number of scholars to comment on what appeared at the time to be major change processes occurring in

international relations. Writing in the 1970s, Ernst Haas referred to growing "turbulence."<sup>6</sup> Around the same time, James Caporaso opened a monograph by noting that "since the end of World War II there have been some profound changes in the structure of the international system."<sup>7</sup> Likewise, the editors of a volume on "change" at the outset of the 1980s opened their book with the statement that "the international system has undergone profound changes since World War II."<sup>8</sup> Change, then, has been a familiar theme and commonplace observation in the study of postwar international relations. And yet, for all the attention given to the volatility of the international system in the atomic age, there were certain categories one could safely rely on year after year to anchor one's analysis of world affairs (and to organize one's lectures around) -- "the East-West axis of conflict," the "nonaligned nations" and "Third World," and other constructs associated with a predominantly "bipolar" order -- or so it seemed. True, some pointed to "discontinuities" and "subsystems" below the surface of a bipolar world,<sup>9</sup> but for the global system as a whole the established categories retained their currency for the most part over the course of decades. These categories arguably have now been rendered almost useless by the events of 1989 and their aftermath, developments whose timing few if any members of the scholarly community can claim to have predicted in the mid-eighties.

The changes set in motion during the late 1980s seemed to many to be seismic in character. In the words of a former American president, they were cause for "shaking the head in wonder."<sup>10</sup> Echoing Will's comment, Colin Gray noted in 1990 that "the past year already has registered a strong claim to be one of history's very special twelve-month periods."<sup>11</sup> In two months alone (November and December), 1989 saw: the dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the most Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe; the first visit by an East bloc minister to NATO headquarters in Brussels (by Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, who used his trip also as an occasion to sign a commercial accord with the European Community and to proclaim Moscow's desire to become part "of a common European house"); the Red Army Band and Chorus appearing at an official gala in Washington and leading President Bush and other dignitaries in a stirring rendition of "God Bless America" as a grand finale; and other anecdotal as well as empirical evidences of change. In addition to the movement toward German reunification and the movement of Eastern European states out of the Soviet orbit and toward more open, market-oriented

societies, 1989 also witnessed a more general worldwide trend toward democratization (the Tiananmen Square massacre in China aside) and a "breaking out of peace," reflected in the winding down of several regional conflicts in Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa along with a leveling off of global military spending.<sup>12</sup> The Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff spoke for many when he remarked in late 1989 that "the future just ain't what it used to be."<sup>13</sup>

No sooner, though, were such comments uttered than the budding euphoria over a new, more hopeful post-Cold War world order was shattered within a year by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. Although this event invited the cynical observation that the more things change the more they stay the same, those in the know were generally no more prepared for the "first post-Cold War crisis" than they had been for the end of the Cold War. The crisis itself was hardly business as usual, insofar as Iraq's attempt to annex Kuwait marked the first time since the end of World War II that one state had sought to absorb completely another sovereign entity in the international community and fellow UN member through the use of armed force. Precisely at the moment when global institution-building appeared to hold such promise, the most elemental norm of international conduct which had emerged in the postwar period and had managed to survive the Cold War intact as practically a "given" was being flouted.

In the span of a decade, we have gone from a U.S. Secretary of Defense (Caspar Weinberger in the early eighties) warning that "we are no longer in the postwar era but a prewar era," to awe over the suddenness with which longstanding blocs collapsed and a new order appeared, to renewed concern over a reversal of trends and even more heightened possibilities for global cataclysm (relating not only to the Middle East situation but also mounting signs of chaos in the Soviet Union). If it is unrealistic to expect international relationists to develop the capacity to predict specific occurrences -- say, "to foretell exactly what events will take place in China [in 1997]" -- at the very least one would expect them "to develop skill in showing 'which way the wind is blowing'."<sup>14</sup> While many self-described veteran observers warned of the fragility of the developments auguring a new world order as the 1990s dawned, few realized just how ephemeral that order might be. For much of the international relations discipline, it has been less a case of anticipating "which way the wind is blowing" than being buffeted back and forth, jerking and reeling from the latest happenings, and trying to get one's intellectual bearings.

Although recent developments in world politics have exuded a tumultuous, topsy-turvy quality, these convulsions can be understood in retrospect as the culmination of a longer-term pattern of steady erosion of the postwar international order traceable almost back to its beginnings. The neat, tidy bipolar imagery of an international system organized around two competing superpowers leading two relatively cohesive ideologically-grounded blocs rested on a flimsy foundation from the start. Fissures became apparent as early as the 1950s -- with the beginnings of nuclear proliferation, the emergence of a third "bloc," the loosening of the Western and Eastern alliances fractured by the twin Suez and Hungarian crises of 1956, and assorted other fault-lines. Fissures widened into cracks during the 1960s and 1970s - - with the North-South axis of conflict competing for attention with East-West issues, the Communist Chinese experiencing mounting hostility with their Soviet brethren and Greece warring against NATO ally Turkey, and American superpower credentials called into question both in Vietnam (where an American president could not understand how "the greatest power in the world" was unable to defeat a "band of night-riders in black pajamas")<sup>15</sup> and in the Middle East (where a group of underdeveloped countries, many of which were tiny "statelets" and all of which were devoid of the assets traditionally associated with power, managed momentarily to bring the Western world to its knees and, with other OPEC countries, to quadruple the price of oil).<sup>16</sup> Cracks turned into gaping holes during the 1980s, well before the end of the decade -- with the international pecking order further upset by the Soviet Union's Vietnam-style failure in Afghanistan and America's ascendancy as the chief debtor nation in the world (at the same time that West Germany and Japan flirted with being the leading exporter and foreign aid donor respectively), and with the alignment structure of the international system rendered practically unintelligible by the strange coalitions which materialized during the U.S.-led boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics on the heels of the Soviet Afghan invasion (as several American allies and even Puerto Rico found themselves bedfellows with the USSR in joining the games despite Jimmy Carter's call to respond to "the greatest threat to world peace since World War II") and by a natural gas pipeline built between Siberia and the heart of Western Europe despite Ronald Reagan's warnings about "the evil empire."

Although some scholars along the way were more perceptive than others in seeing where trends were leading -- the author has noted that the forces of change in the postwar era did not go unnoticed by



students of international relations (for example, Kaplan distinguished between "loose" and "tight" bipolarity,<sup>17</sup> Rosecrance discerned "bimultipolarity,"<sup>18</sup> and Hoffmann found "polycentrism" and multiple "game boards"<sup>19</sup>) -- there was still a general sense that the "postwar system" seemed to be persisting in many of its essential elements and would do so into the next century. That is, until the fall of the Berlin Wall and the accompanying phenomena could no longer be fitted even remotely into a bipolar (or, for that matter, bimultipolar) model.

As the new "post-Cold War" order haltingly takes shape, certain elements are coming more clearly into focus. Previous trends in the direction of a more complex international system are becoming more pronounced and accelerated: (1) *the growing diffusion and ambiguity of power*, including the decline of the United States as a hegemon, the internal and external problems of the "other" superpower, the continued rise of Japan, the challenge posed by a strengthened European Community readying for "Europe 1992" while adjusting to a newly reunited German state, the proliferation of "mini-states" capable at times of frustrating the will of major actors, and the shifting relationships between military, economic and technological bases of power; (2) *the growing fluidity of alignments*, including the depolarization of the East-West conflict as East bloc states move ideologically toward the West while West-West economic competition threatens to become almost as volatile an axis of conflict, the North-South conflict losing its defining character also as increasing diversity among NICs, OPEC states, Fourth World countries and other LDCs makes Southern solidarity harder to sustain,<sup>20</sup> and greater localization and regionalization of politics related to ethnicity and other issues beneath the global level; (3) *ever more intricate patterns of interdependence*, associated with an expanding agenda of concerns (economics, ecology, technology, etc.) and a broadening conception of "national security" beyond traditional military considerations; and (4) *the growing role of nonstate actors and the increasing linkages between subnational, transnational and intergovernmental levels of activity*, even as the size of national governmental budgets and state apparatuses resist shrinkage.

The key question remains, however, whether we are witnessing merely the end of the postwar era and the transformation of the international system back to the more normal historical pattern of full-blown multipolarity, in which case we can continue to rely on the state-centric paradigm and its focus on

national interests, sovereignty and power and international anarchy, or whether we are in the midst of a more fundamental and epic transformation, namely the unraveling of the very fabric of the Westphalian state system itself that most observers have taken to be the main basis of human organization for over 300 years. Some, notably those belonging to the "neorealist" school, seize upon the first two systemic elements cited above (the fragmentation of the postwar power and alignment structure) and suggest the *déjà vu* scenario is the correct one, i.e. the international system is returning to an earlier condition, particularly bearing some resemblance to the early twentieth century, complete with the absence of any hegemonic stability, mounting Balkan ethnic conflict, and other familiar features.<sup>21</sup> Others, notably "neoliberals," seize upon the other two systemic elements (relating to interdependence, transnationalism and intergovernmentalism) and suggest otherwise, i.e. the international system is already experiencing unprecedented complexity and heading toward more -- as one writer puts it, a "bifurcated global politics" torn between state-centrism and "multi-centrism" -- calling for a wholly new "post-international politics" paradigm.<sup>22</sup>

Both schools of thought have merit in their alternative readings of the workings of the international system. At the risk of being temporocentric -- every generation tends to view itself as living at a (or even *the*) pivotal point in human history -- one can be forgiven for believing that the late twentieth century is a time of special ferment, with important dramas being played out between the forces of regionalism and globalism, nationalism and transnationalism, security and welfare, and order and change. While these have been ongoing historical dramas, the curtain appears to be rising on a new act. That there is a particularly schizophrenic aspect to contemporary world politics is clear. How, or if, these various tensions will be resolved is less certain.

There are countervailing trends in the direction of both integration and disintegration. The former is evidenced by German unification, the Europe 1992 phenomenon, the continued proliferation of NGOs and IGOs at both the regional and global levels (over 4000 NGOs and 300 IGOs today, compared to a handful of each a century ago) in addition to the spread of multinational corporations,<sup>23</sup> and the signing of more international agreements since 1945 than in the previous 2000 years (including the conclusion of a single treaty signed by virtually every state governing virtually every human activity on 70 percent of the earth's

surface).<sup>24</sup> Disintegration is manifested not only by the fragmentation of the postwar power and bloc structure but also by the continued proliferation of "micro" and other states as an extension of the postwar decolonialization process (which only partly accounts for the proliferation of international organizations and agreements), with disintegrative tendencies expected to be fueled further by the subnational ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe and the USSR.<sup>25</sup> Overlaying all of this is the puzzling paradox that the need for coordinated problem-solving on a global scale (in matters ranging from security to ecology) is arguably greater than ever before as a function of technology, yet universal and formal organizational approaches to international governance have been increasingly called into question as central guidance mechanisms in some respects seem less feasible than in previous eras (manifested by recent cuts in the UN budget and staff).<sup>26</sup>

There are, of course, more than two schools of thought surrounding the current debate over the essence of international relations. As noted at the outset, the discipline has been characterized in many respects by growing "diversity," represented not only by neorealism and neoliberalism but also different strains of Marxism, post-modernist feminism, and other camps. However, the latter voices remain fringe elements far from the mainstream, "speaking the language of exile dissidence in international studies."<sup>27</sup> Indeed, even neoliberals risk being dismissed as radicals, even though they have studiously managed to avoid the label of neoidealism and their ranks include "structural realists" such as Keohane and Nye.

Neorealism is likely to prevail presently in the paradigmatic struggle with neoliberalism and other challengers, not merely because it provides a compelling enough framework for grappling with the facts of international life. It also meshes comfortably with the conservative bent of the IR establishment -- the definers of the discipline -- which tends to see the world through the lenses of the larger societal establishment upon which it depends for its sustenance. While it may be true at times that "academic pens . . . leave marks in the minds of statesmen with profound results for policy"<sup>28</sup> -- in Keynes' words, "practical men who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences" often are subtly infected by "some academic scribbler of a few years back"<sup>29</sup> -- the relationship is more commonly reversed. That is, the scholarly community tends to take its cues from the policymaking community. It is the latter, in concert with other elites outside academia, whose worldview or "relevant universe" generally

dictates governmental and foundation funding programs, which in turn shape major research agendas at prestigious universities, whose faculty set the standards for what is publishable and take the lead in recruiting and training the next generation of the professoriate. Though at any moment we in academe may be leaving an imprint on young minds belonging in some cases perhaps to future policymakers, the images of the world they leave the classroom with are likely to owe their origins to board rooms or state rooms and other such bastions of learning. To the extent that American scholarship has dominated the development of international relations as a field of study since World War II, it has been particularly through the eyes of the U.S. establishment -- through the eyes of "a great power"-- that much of what has passed for international reality has been captured.<sup>30</sup> Although what constitutes "the establishment" within and between nations may now be undergoing alteration, it remains to be seen whether those in positions of authority (in a position to make things happen) will see the world in any vastly new light.

The conservatism of the international relationist fraternity that stems from external pressures driving scholars to pursue research programs consistent with established political values is reinforced by other pressures operating within the discipline itself. In fact, conservative leanings may be more a function of the latter pressures, having to do with the sociology of the profession, than it is a function of politics and ideology. Kuhn's well-known arguments about the structure of scientific revolutions and the forces of inertia which inhibit paradigmatic change apply very clearly to the international relations field. One can argue that the staying power of realism (a.k.a. neorealism) is attributable to "the ghost of Morgenthau" -- the strong empiricist-positivist tradition spawned by *Politics Among Nations*, with its emphasis on studying the world as it *is* (or at least as it is thought to be) rather than as it *might* be or *ought* to be. Since Morgenthau (through whom international relations scholars rediscovered Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Carr), the dominant professional norm has been to avoid anything that could give the appearance of idle speculation or wishful thinking overtaking serious, objective analysis. To command peer respect, one must have a reputation for sobriety. To be sure, there have been notable exceptions, a few mavericks such as Boulding and Galtung, who have managed to acquire and maintain great stature despite thinking revolutionary, intemperate thoughts. Generally speaking, the most commonly trodden path to success in the international relations field has been through following the signposts of the realist paradigm.

Morgenthau's work has "colored" much of the scholarly discourse in the field throughout the postwar period, behavioral and otherwise, and continues to do so over the cries of the "post-positivist" movement.<sup>31</sup>

In short, the scholar-entrepreneur has a felt need not to be too much ahead of one's time, not to be too far out in front of trends. Yet there is also a felt need to do more than jump on the bandwagon; there is a push to be on the leading edge and at the frontiers of knowledge, since one succeeds by being new and different. The result is a "revisionist" imperative operating within the parameters of the established paradigm, whereby it seems we are forever producing new wine in old bottles. One day's prevailing orthodoxy becomes the next day's revisionist scholarship; as with the tortuous debate over the relationship between a balance or preponderance of power and the onset of war, popular theses (once profound observations that have become mundane) are reexamined and refuted by one set of researchers only to be reconfirmed by another.

Notwithstanding long-cycle theory and other excursions into history, theoretical insights develop in response to the ebb and flow of events around us while reality-testing occurs against the backdrop of the latest news headlines. Again, science is more the captive than handmaiden of policy. One can see this vividly, for example, in the evolution of the international organization subfield since World War II. In successive decades, the field shifted (one might say drifted) from a focus on the United Nations and formal-legal aspects of global intergovernmental organizations (following the birth of the UN in 1945) to a spate of writings on regional integration (following the birth of the European Economic Community in 1957) to a virtual abandonment of the study of IGOs altogether in favor of "regimes" (following the seeming failure of both regional and global approaches to international institution-building by the 1970s).<sup>32</sup> Major scholarly figures pronounced both regionalism and globalism dead as formal-legal experiments. Ernst Haas wrote in the mid-1970s that "theorizing about regional integration as such is no longer profitable."<sup>33</sup> By the mid-1980s, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye were writing that "only rarely are universal international organizations likely to provide the world with instruments for collective action."<sup>34</sup> One reason why regime analysis became so attractive to neorealists and neoliberals alike was that, after being burned frequently in the past, scholars could resort to the "regime framework as a fairly

safe one to bet one's scholarly credentials on insofar as it [was] . . . sufficiently amorphous to apprehend any number of eventualities within the parameters of the state system."<sup>35</sup>

With the current revival of the EEC and UN, one senses the study of such IGOs once again may become a growth industry at least for a time. Witness the new funding program on "International Organization and Law" announced by the Ford Foundation, with "the following topics emphasized in the 1990-91 biennium: the United Nations system; international organizations and agreements generally; international peacekeeping and peacemaking; sustainable development and the management of the global commons; and institutional and legal aspects of regional integration and cooperation."<sup>36</sup>

The shifting intellectual currents in the international organization area over the course of the postwar era have been paralleled by similar movements in the international relations field as a whole. Whatever momentum the "cobweb" paradigm (with its focus on new actors and issues) had accumulated on the heels of the 1973 oil embargo was summarily arrested by the arrival of Ronald Reagan, whose return to Cold War rhetoric coincided with the rise of neorealism, which reminded observers of the "billiard ball" nature of the universe.<sup>37</sup> It now appears that, if some international relationists exaggerated the importance of transnationalism and multinationalism during the 1970s, others may have exaggerated its insignificance during the 1980s.

It is understandable why scholars should want to keep pace with happenings in the real world. To do otherwise is to invite charges of irrelevance. However, there is always a danger of overreacting to events of the moment and losing sight of deeper structures and processes the understanding of which is supposed to separate scholars from journalists and other non-experts. One cannot help recalling Hegel's dictum that "the owl of Minerva always rises at night,"<sup>38</sup> i.e. we are good at predicting the past, at uncovering truths associated with the tail-end of some epiphenomenon. There is a possibility that we will overreact as well to the recent upheavals in world affairs and attribute larger importance to them than they deserve, especially coming as they have at a time when cosmic visions are being stirred by the impending arrival of a new century and millennium. One would have to be blind, though, not to recognize that something of importance has happened, if not of millennial proportions at least of a magnitude that marks the end of a half-century of history.

We are still too close to the developments of the past few years to make informed judgments regarding just how "seismic" they may prove to be. After all, it took centuries for students of world affairs to recognize the full implications of events transpiring around 1648, for an "international relations" discipline to be born and for a "Westphalian state system" to be theorized about. Morgenthau toward the end of his life suggested that our knowledge of this state system was about to become obsolete as the Westphalian order was at odds with a new reality and was on the brink of going the way of feudalism.<sup>39</sup> In most circles these were considered only the ruminations of an elder statesman of the discipline, although it was nonetheless jarring for the apostle of realism to accuse his followers of missing much of reality.

The discussion thusfar has attempted to demonstrate that the knowledge production process in the international relations field has failed generally to produce much knowledge of a cumulative, reliable, and usable nature, certainly not nearly as much as is commonly claimed. That the biggest events in memory largely caught the entire scholarly community off guard has been humbling. To say the discipline is now "disheveled" is to acknowledge that neorealists, neoliberals and others are all trying to sort out the various trends and counter-trends and make sense out of an environment that is not as familiar-looking as it used to be. Meanwhile, as we try to ascertain what we know, we also are necessarily faced with questions regarding what to teach.

### III. Uncertainty Over What to Teach: The Ghost of Morgenthau Again

The realist tradition inherited from Morgenthau has exerted a powerful influence on pedagogy in some obvious and not-so-obvious ways. The author confesses that the generalizations which follow are not based on any systematic data-based analysis. Rather they derive from participant observation, in an American setting, by one who perhaps can claim to have given more serious attention than the average scholar to the pedagogical dimension of the profession over the years, particularly in regard to undergraduate education.<sup>40</sup>

Even though in reality research has overtaken teaching as the preeminent activity at many institutions of higher learning, academic departments everywhere still must normally justify their existence by demonstrating where they fit into the curriculum and why they are essential to the educational mission.

The very structure of the standard political science department, at least in American universities of any size, is based on assumptions about the integrity and distinctiveness of specific subfields commonly labeled "comparative politics," "international relations," and so forth.<sup>41</sup> Whole curricula are built around these subfields, whose viability more or less requires acceptance of a state-centric view of the world. Although state-centrism did not originate with the realist school -- idealists in the interwar period also saw the universe in such terms even if they reached different conclusions from their analyses -- realism enshrined state-centrism as the core of its paradigm. To question the latter -- to adopt some sort of "post-international politics" paradigm -- is to threaten the entire academic edifice, going beyond merely revising courses and entailing wholesale changes in curricula, rethinking and renaming subfields, and challenging the departmental way of life.

Yet another source of conservatism not yet mentioned, then, is the reluctance to unleash forces that could upset departmental bureaucratic-organizational routines and culture. To those for whom even the preparation or rewriting of lectures can be a chore, macro-level changes causing the dislocation of one's academic identity and home promise to be all the more painful. If it is true, as Samuel Huntington says, that "command economies have no use for economists, nor authoritarian . . . [polities] for political science,"<sup>42</sup> a "post-international politics" world system would have no use for international relationists.

The path of least resistance is to keep teaching mostly the same old courses in the same old way. This is not to say that change is unheard of in the international relations curriculum. In response to the shifting scholarly fashions the author has alluded to, many colleges and universities have added an international political economy course here, dropped a United Nations course there, and made other curricular innovations. Rarely, though, is any thought given to the basic premises that underlie the curriculum as a whole, and any major redesign undertaken. Within individual courses, the typical instructor dutifully redoes his or her syllabus, updates lecture material, inserts another module, and assigns the latest editions of textbooks and other readings. But where much effort has been invested in developing a course, there is a certain aversion to undoing one's handiwork in more than a piecemeal way.

The best single barometer of the state of pedagogy in the international relations field is the manner in which the introductory IR course is taught. Insofar as international relations undergraduate textbooks



set the content and tone of the introductory IR course and the upper level courses that follow, Morgenthau continues to haunt the field. That *Politics Among Nations* continues to be a best seller among comprehensive IR textbooks is itself ample testimony to the durability of Morgenthau's approach to world politics. Other texts have come along over the years which have incorporated fresh perspectives on "new actors" (NGOS, MNCs, and others) and "new issues" (with notably heavier doses of economics offered), but these generally have been careful not to stray too far from the Morgenthau model. Those texts which have dared to be different have not lasted long (for example, Finlay and Hovet's *7304: International Relations on the Planet Earth* or Sterling's *Macropolitics*, both of which appeared in the heady "globalist" days of the 1970s only to disappear quickly, probably because they projected too iconoclastic an image especially as the arrival of the 1980s seemed to mark a return to yesteryear). In comparison with, say, the American politics field, where there are at least a few clearly "radical" or at least unconventional treatments of the subject to be found currently in beginning texts (e.g. Parenti's *Democracy for the Few*, Judd and Hellinger's *The Democratic Facade*, and Dye and Ziegler's *The Irony of Democracy*), one is struck by the virtual absence of any such texts in the IR field (unless one counts works not quite in the text genre, such as Miller's *Global Order*). Holsti, Russett and Starr, Kegley and Wittkopf, Jones, Ray, and others (including, yes, Pearson and Rochester), for all their many differences, share a common perspective.

Morgenthau's influence extends even to stylistic aspects of textbooks. One is hard pressed to think of another field in which a single work has been at once both the leading text used for beginning freshmen and sophomores as well as a preeminent scholarly tome, a treatise cited regularly in Ph.D. dissertations and professional convention papers for its state of the art insights. Ever since *Politics Among Nations*, there has been a strong disposition to produce IR texts which have the air of "serious" scholarship, lest they be compared unfavorably with the standard in the field. Organski and others have followed this tradition, one that is almost unique to international relations,<sup>43</sup> i.e., rather than texts reporting and summarizing the latest advances in knowledge in the field, they often have been looked to as the source of those advances. It is as if the functional relationship between research and teaching has

been stood on its head. Although few text-tomes have appeared of late, there has been a tendency still to write books for the introductory IR course aimed more at professorial peers than students.

Again, one is struck by the different educational norms that exist in the American politics field. In the latter field, even the most widely respected, "serious" scholars who have authored beginning texts have not been above including photos, cartoons, vignettes, trivia charts, timeline chronologies, profiles of famous personages, and other ancillary materials to enliven and illuminate. (For example, see the latest editions of *American Government: Freedom and Power* and *American Government: Institutions and Policies*, written respectively by the American Political Science Association's current President and President-Elect.)<sup>44</sup> Something more than market factors is operating here. Should IR texts adopt this style of presentation -- and some have begun to go beyond statistical tables and graphs-- they risk being dismissed as academically fluffy and pandering or talking down to students. There seemingly is a different set of pedagogical assumptions informing the transmission of knowledge to the uninitiated student of American politics than is the case with the international relations novitiate. In IR one must pass a stiffer sobriety test, although there does appear to be growing tolerance for new modes of stimulating student thought about international phenomena, judging from the latest wave of textbooks that are gaining acceptance.

International relations texts, also compared to their American politics counterparts, tend to be heavy on conceptual and theoretical concerns and give relatively less space to discussion of basic facts (descriptive information on history, geography, and institutions), values, and policy issues. This is perhaps partly due to the "text-tome" syndrome noted above and partly due to the sweeping nature of the subject. Professors want to teach higher-level skills than merely memorization of idiographic details, moral pontification, and debate over current events. In any case, it is hard to fit a history and geography of the world, a discussion of cultural perspectives of over 200 ethnic groups, and a review of contemporary policy issues affecting over 150 states and 5 billion people into a single volume. While comprehension, analysis and synthesis are the noblest of educational objectives, the problem is that students too often enter, and then leave, the international relations curriculum without an adequate foundation for absorbing the sophisticated knowledge that faculty wish to impart.

Facts, values, and policy concerns are part of a larger knowledge creation-transmission-utilization process. I do not wish to add to the "fact-value distinction" debate. Suffice it to say, some see the distinction as meaningful. Exemplifying this position is Huntington's statement that "Political scientists want to do good. They want to expand knowledge about political life, but also they wish to use knowledge for political reform. . . . Political science, in short, is not just an intellectual discipline; it is also a moral one."<sup>45</sup> Others argue the distinction is moot, that facts and connections between them are themselves dependent on the personal biases or value orientations of the observer: "The apparatus used to view the world must be created by the viewer, and there is no way to be certain that one particular way of looking at things shows 'the real world.' The selection actually made depends, analytically at least, on a normative judgment or commitment. . . . Every human knowledge system is founded on the bedrock of normative premises and no *defensible* knowledge system can be created without prior agreement on the content of that base."<sup>46</sup>

Realism no less than idealism has ultimately been grounded in the pursuit of physical security among human societies, or world order. There is general agreement on the desirability of peace. Disagreements arise regarding under what circumstances the latter is best achieved and how it relates to other values. Allowing for differences, Harold Jacobson sees "a much broader consensus than there ever has been on the normative goals of international public policy and on the characteristics of a desirable world order."<sup>47</sup> Better knowledge production and knowledge transmission are needed to attain such an order. As J. David Singer has written, in an essay found in a recent issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, "the deadly connection between poor research and inadequate teaching at one end, and the devastating consequences of frequently inept foreign policy decisions at the other end, lies not in our stars . . . but in our academic community."<sup>48</sup>

Although Singer was lamenting specifically the misuse or disuse of scientific methods in the international relations field, the argument is valid in more general terms. In our teaching we must be careful to convey to students both the cultural/value diversity which exists in the world and the complexity of international relations which exists apart from that. For all our epistemological failings and uncertainty over what is likely to happen next in world affairs, we probably know more than we are

conveying properly to students. The dominant paradigm, simplistic as it is, is still a useful guide to current reality, even if it misses a good deal of "everyday human experience"<sup>49</sup> and together with other factors makes us ill-equipped to recognize and point out major change if and when it occurs. We need to impress upon students the importance of not just studying international relations but also reflecting about it and how the human condition can be changed, preferably improved. We should not be shy about calling attention to the values at stake and defining international relations in the plainest of terms -- as Deutsch puts it, "the art and science of the survival of mankind."<sup>50</sup>

Thinking, writing, and teaching routines no doubt have been shaken to some extent by the period of history we have just passed through since the late 1980s. Whether manuscripts and lecture notes require merely a little tinkering or much more onerous revision will depend on how events continue to unfold as the millennium approaches. One would hope at a minimum that members of the international relations profession meanwhile would use the moment to take a more self-conscious look at themselves as both scholars *and* educators.

## NOTES

1. Ernest Boyer, *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), p. 120.
2. Comment by Kenneth Boulding addressing the Consortium for International Studies Education at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, St. Louis, March 1974.
3. See Boyer, *op. cit.*; and Boyer and R. Eugene Rice, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).
4. K. J. Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline: Hegemony and Diversity in International Theory* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1985).
5. George F. Will, "Europe's Second Reformation," column in *Newsweek*, November 20, 1989, p. 90.
6. Ernst B. Haas, "Turbulent Fields and the Theory of Regional Integration," *International Organization*, 30 (Spring 1976).
7. James Caporaso, *Functionalism and Regional Integration: A Logical and Empirical Assessment* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1972), p. 5.
8. Ole R. Holsti, Randolph M. Siverson and Alexander L. George, eds., *Change in the International System* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980), p. xvii.
9. On discontinuities and subsystems, see Oran R. Young, "Political Discontinuities in the International System," *World Politics*, 20 (April 1968), pp. 369-392; Leonard Binder, "The Middle East as a Subordinate International System," *World Politics*, 10 (April 1958), pp. 408-429; and Louis J. Cantori and Steven L. Spiegel,

*The International Politics of Regions* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970).

10. Ronald Reagan, addressing the United Nations General Assembly on September 26, 1988, commenting on the relaxation of American-Soviet tensions and the subsiding of regional conflicts, stated that "a change that is cause for shaking the head in wonder is upon us." *U.S. Department of State Bulletin*, 88 (November 1988), p. 1.
11. Colin Gray, "Tomorrow's Forecast: Warmer/Still Cloudy," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* (May 1990), p. 38.
12. On the leveling off of global military expenditures, see U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1989* (Washington, D.C.: ACDA, 1990), p. 1. On the "breaking out of peacekeeping," particularly under United Nations auspices, see Donald J. Puchala and Roger A. Coate, *The Challenge of Relevance: The United Nations in a Changing World Environment* (Hanover, NH: Academic Council on the UN, 1989), pp. 10-14.
13. General Colin Powell, remarks delivered in Landon lectures, Kansas State University, November 8, 1989; cited in "Is the Future What it Used to Be?" *Defense '90* (January-February 1990), p. 2.
14. Charles A. McClelland, "International Relations: Wisdom or Science?" in James N. Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, rev. ed. (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 4.
15. "I still believe he [President Lyndon Johnson] found it viscerally inconceivable that what Walt Rostow kept telling him was 'the greatest power in the world' could not dispose of a collection of

night-riders in black pajamas." Quoted from Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "The Quagmire Papers," *New York Review of Books*, December 16, 1971, p. 41.

16. The oil crisis of 1973, focusing on the role of various state and nonstate actors, is discussed in Raymond Vernon, ed., *The Oil Crisis* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976).
17. Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics* (New York: John Wiley, 1957).
18. Richard N. Rosecrance, "Bipolarity, Multipolarity, and the Future," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 10 (September 1966), pp. 314-327.
19. Stanley Hoffmann, *Gulliver's Troubles, or the Setting of American Foreign Policy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968); and "Choices," *Foreign Policy* (Fall 1973).
20. By 1989, such a wide range of differences existed among "developing countries" that the World Bank indicated it would no longer use that designation as a specific category in its data reports. See *World Development Report 1989* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. x-xi.
21. Typical of this view is John J. Mearsheimer, "Why We Will Soon Miss the Cold War," *The Atlantic* (August 1990).
22. James N. Rosenau goes further than many neoliberals in calling for such a paradigm. See his *Turbulence in World Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); and "Global Changes and Theoretical Challenges: Towards a Postinternational Politics for the 1990s," in Rosenau and Ernst-Otto Czempiel, eds., *Global*

- Changes and Theoretical Challenges* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1990), pp. 1-20.
23. For trends on NGO and IGO growth, see Harold K. Jacobson, *Networks of Interdependence*, 2nd ed. (New York: Knopf, 1984), ch. 3. On the latest statistics, see *Yearbook of International Organizations, 1988/1989*, 25th ed. (Brussels: Union of International Associations, 1988), Table 1 in Appendix 7 of vol. 1. On multinational corporation growth, see David H. Blake and Robert S. Walters, *The Politics of Global Economic Relations*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1987), ch. 4, and UN Center on Transnational Corporations, *Transnational Corporations in World Development* (New York: UN, 1983).
24. For trends in treaty-making, see Richard Bilder, *Managing the Risks of International Agreement* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981); and Mark W. Janis, *An Introduction to International Law* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988). The Law of the Sea treaty alluded to by the author was signed by 155 states during the 1980s. However, it has not yet received the sixty ratifications needed to come into force, primarily owing to the uncertainty created by the American objection to a relatively minor provision pertaining to deep seabed mining. See David L. Larson, "Will There Be An UNCLOS IV?" paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Washington D.C., April 1990.
25. The potential for added ethnic conflict and break-up of nation-states appears great, based on the fact that "data from 1986 on 166 countries show only a third to be ethnically homogenous (where



one group constituted at least 90 percent of the population)."

Bruce Russett and Harvey Starr, *World Politics: The Menu for Choice*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1989), p. 54.

26. On UN budget and staff cuts surrounding the UN "financial crisis," see Puchala and Coate, *op. cit.*, chapter 5. The author discusses later in the essay the movement of international relations scholars away from the examination of formal international organizations such as the UN in favor of studying "regimes."
27. This is the title of a recent special volume of *International Studies Quarterly*, 34 (September 1990).
28. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977), p. 4.
29. John Maynard Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (London: Macmillan, 1957), p. 383; cited in *ibid.*
30. On this point, see Susan Strange, "Cave! Hic Dragones: A Critique of Regime Analysis," *International Organization*, 36 (Spring 1982), pp. 479-496.
31. On the dominance of the realist paradigm in shaping behavioral research in the postwar period, see John Handelman et al., "Color It Morgenthau: A Data-Based Assessment of Quantitative International Relations Research" (Syracuse University International Relations Program, 1973). This paper was frequently cited in a roundtable discussion at the 1974 annual meeting of the International Studies Association entitled "International Relations and the World Society: A Trans-Atlantic Dialogue." That Morgenthau continues to shape the contours of the field was evidenced at the 1989 annual ISA meeting, where a fifteenth

anniversary "Trans-Atlantic Dialogue Renewed" roundtable was held. Also see the organization of the International Relations sections at the 1991 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association. Challenges to the empiricist-positivist tradition and the rumblings of "post-positivism" are discussed in a special volume of *International Studies Quarterly*, 33 (September 1989).

32. This pattern is discussed in J. Martin Rochester, "The Rise and Fall of International Organization as a Field of Study," *International Organization*, 40 (Autumn 1986), pp. 77-813.
33. Ernst Haas, "Turbulent Fields and the Theory of Regional Integration," *International Organization*, 30 (Spring 1976), p. 174.
34. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, "Two Cheers for Multilateralism," *Foreign Policy*, no. 60 (Fall 1985), pp. 148-167.
35. Rochester, *op. cit.*, p. 803. Strange, *op. cit.*, p. 479, dismissed regime analysis as "a fad, one of those shifts of fashion not too difficult to explain as a temporary reaction to events in the real world."
36. *International Organizations and Law: A Program Paper of the Ford Foundation* (New York: Ford Foundation, September 1990), pp. 14-15.
37. It should be noted, though, that Robert Cox had coined the term "neorealism" prior to Reagan's arrival on the scene in 1980, and that Kenneth Waltz's neorealist treatise *Theory of International Politics* appeared in 1979. Still, the 1980s witnessed a retreat by many who earlier had been associated with the study of "ecopolitics," "nonstate actors," and other new elements of world

politics. Theorizing about "hegemonic stability" tended to overshadow theorizing about "complex interdependence." Compare Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence, op. cit.*, with Keohane's *After Hegemony* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

38. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, translated by T.M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).
39. Hans J. Morgenthau, "The New Diplomacy of Movement," *Encounter*, 43 (August 1974), p. 57.
40. Between 1972 and 1976, the author was director of the Consortium for International Studies Education, established by the International Studies Association to facilitate the development and dissemination of innovative educational ideas in the international studies field. As part of this effort, I directed the National Science Foundation Learning Package project which brought together well-known scholars with educational innovators in an attempt to translate the latest research into novel modular, multi-media undergraduate teaching materials.
41. The International Studies Association is unusual in its commitment to relaxing traditional disciplinary and subdisciplinary boundaries under the rubric of "international studies," although it has had mixed success in doing so.
42. Samuel P. Huntington, "One Soul At A Time: Political Science and Political Reform," *American Political Science Review*, 82 (March 1988), p. 6.
43. Frederic S. Pearson, "The Educational Objectives of International Relations Texts," *Teaching Political Science*, 1 (April 1974), p.

169, notes how international relations seems "unique" in the degree to which the line between a scholarly treatise and a textbook has been blurred, evidenced by A.F.K. Organski's *World Politics* and other works.

44. The former (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990) is written by Theodore J. Lowi (co-authored with Benjamin Ginsberg); the latter (Lexington: D. C. Heath, 1989) is written by James Q. Wilson.
45. Huntington, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
46. Eugene J. Meehan, "Science-Schmience," unpublished paper (1990), pp. 6 and 13.
47. Harold K. Jacobson, "The Global System and the Realization of Human Dignity and Justice," *International Studies Quarterly*, 26 (September 1982), p. 320.
48. J. David Singer, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 14, 1990, p. A52.
49. Chadwick F. Alger, "The World Relations of Cities: Closing the Gap Between Social Science Paradigms and Everyday Human Experience," *International Studies Quarterly*, 34 (December 1990), pp. 493-518.
50. Karl W. Deutsch, The Analysis of International Relations, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1988), p.ix.