

**To What Extend Complex Interdependence Theorists Challenge to Structural Realist  
School of International Relations?**

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In his survey of the discipline, Banks discusses the evolution of international relations theory in terms of three ‘great debates’.<sup>1</sup> The first debate referred to the dualism between idealism and realism and the second one referred to the behaviouralism-traditionalism debate. The third such debate - the inter-paradigm debate - involves realism, pluralism and structuralism. Therefore, one of the fundamental discussions of International Relations in theoretical terms at advanced level appeared as how does ‘pluralism’ possess a challenge to the realist school of international relations?

Within the pluralist school, especially Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye’s contributions to the development of the international relations theory were remarkable especially with their influential book ‘Power and Interdependence’ that introduced the conception of ‘complex interdependence’. If one assumes that the late Twentieth Century has brought considerable intellectual challenges to Realist understandings of International Relations, there is no or little doubt that Keohane and Nye play one of the dominant role in the early formation of this challenge.

One of the basic assumption of Keohane and Nye is, in the era of interdependence, the very nature of world politics is changing. Therefore, the task of Keohane and Nye as defined by themselves in 'Power and Interdependence' is "to provide a means of distilling and joining the positions in both modernist and traditionalist perspectives by developing a coherent and theoretical framework for the political analysis of interdependence".<sup>2</sup>

For the realist school, although it had weakened by variety of paradigms at different times, it still presumed as one of the dominant theories within the field of International Relations. Nevertheless, in this broad school there are too many realist theorists that differ on their assumptions and perceptions. Moreover, realist school offers very broad approach on understanding of International Relations Theory, which makes it very complicated and difficult to analyze. Eventually, for the sake of healthy examination, I preferred to focus on Kenneth Waltz's structural realist paradigm and his thoughts about international security in this compare and contrast required study. One of the principal reasons for this preference is Kenneth Waltz's reputation and challenge as being one of the dominant figures of structural realism especially after 1970s. Additionally, Waltz is generally accepted as the most systematic spokesmen for structural realism.

The scarcity of room and the parameters of this paper limit its' compare-based analysis not only between the theories and theorists but also on scope and conceptions. Stating in different words, the limited scope of this paper does not allow for very detailed comparison and contrast of structural realism and complex interdependence. In other words, since these two paradigms themselves constitute very broad scope in International Relations Theory, it is not possible to make detailed, acute and complete examination. Casually, my

analysis would not deal with broader debates between neoliberals and neorealist concerning anarchy, the limits of co-operation, international co-operation in economic and security affairs either absolute and relative gains problems in world politics.

From this departure point, this essay particularly centers on an analysis of complex interdependence and Waltz's international security concepts on answering to what extent complex interdependence challenge to the security conception of structural-realism? Since the compare and contrast of the each theory is not practically possible, my analysis would be limited with the security issues. Thus, my primarily analyses would be the definition and conceptualization of the security in structural realist paradigm along with concise assumptions of structural realism that security concepts derived from. This analyze would include both pre and post Cold War periods.

Counter definition and conceptualization of complex interdependence, its normative priorities, ordering principles and areas of analysis would follow in the next section. In this section, specifically, the discussion would address how Keohane and Nye had assessed the 'complex interdependence' and contributed to the explanation of shift in security concerns of the states.

After the conceptualization and concise analysis of both paradigms, in the light of the arguments that would carried from the earlier sections, in section four I would highlight four sources of challenge on security issues that advanced by complex interdependence against structural realism. Specifically, I would focus on challenge to structural realism with its own terms, the shift in state's security agenda in the post Cold War Era, changing motives in the

foreign policy orientations of the states, and increasing role of the international institutions and influence of communication for mutual cultural ground.

To epitomize, this research designed to provide the critique of structural realism with the aiming of to fill a gap in the theory based studies of International Relations on comparing and contrast structural realism *versus* interdependence theories. Stating differently, this study aimed to contribute to one of the classical debates in international relations leaving apart the speculation and policy oriented analyzes in the post September 11, 2001 period. Arguably, without having a solid grounding in basic but significant debates of international relations theory, a range of advanced and specialist discussions would be rootless.

For this purpose, if I shall summarize the main argument of my study, it would be shown that once power ceases to be fungible, the international system is composed of multiple structures, each corresponding to a different issue-area. By challenging this fungibility assumption, complex interdependence provides a better understanding of changing security concerns of the states. There have been numerous changes in post Cold War era through increased multiple of communications and increase role of international institutions. Therefore, Keohane and Nye do successfully challenge to structural-realism security understandings simply because they successfully anticipate and demonstrated these transformations in world politics.

As a last word, arguably, in order to understand the contemporary security concerns of the states, one needs to analyze both *change* and *continuity* rather than just continuity in international relations. Casually, in this new rhetoric at the international relations debate,

structural realism felt behind interdependence theories with its' *status quo* oriented establishment.

### **Structural Realism and Its' Security Concerns**

In this section, I would focus on Waltz's structural realism in order to conceptualize its' security concerns. As have noted earlier, structural-realism developed by Waltz has been chosen because of its widespread acceptance within the discipline and because Waltz regarded as the most systemic spokesmen for contemporary structural realism.<sup>3</sup> The assumptions of Waltz mainly derived from his influential book of "Theory of International Politics".

Among the key assumptions of the realist paradigm, state is the most important actor and state power, in terms of military force, is the primary dynamic.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, one other fundamental assumption of the realist understanding of international relations is utilization of the balance of power and according to the realist tradition, the purpose of such a balance is to achieve order. Finally, realist school suggests that there is anarchy in international relations with no ultimate authority over the states.

Waltz uses these assumptions to develop a systemic theory where the internal attributes of actors are given by assumption rather than treated as variables. Outcomes are therefore determined by changes in the attributes of the system; the system being structure plus units. It is the concept of 'structure' that is central to structural-realism. The structure has three components:

Firstly, the ordering principle; Waltz argues that the international system is anarchic, in the sense of no common government. In other words, Waltz contends that anarchy

represents an ordering principle of the international system<sup>5</sup> that he defines as “the enduring anarchic character of international millennia”<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, Waltz, see anarchy as an unchangeable, ‘enduring’ force. Secondly, the functional character of the units; under anarchy states are functionally undifferentiated and their unique the aim is to survive. Finally, the relative distribution of capabilities; while states must perform the same tasks some is better able to do so than others. However, this superiority (of one state over another) could vary over time.

Waltz contends that anarchy and capabilities both constrain and influence states and other actors to act in certain ways. That is to argue that the actions of all the agents, agencies and institutions are affected by the international structure composed by states necessarily shall understand the dynamics of the international system in order to explain the security concerns and behaviors of the states. Within structural-realism, the powerful states are able to force weaker states into compliance, and thus determine international regimes in such a manner that they maintain their dominant position. In other words, states as unitary actors drive for universal domination as an ultimate objective after they had guaranteed the preservation and confirmation of their power.

Since Waltz assumes that power is fungible there is no differentiation by issue-area; instead the theory predicts a congruence of outcomes among issue areas<sup>7</sup>. Discrepancies between states that are dominant on one issue but weaker on others would be eliminated by linkages drawn by powerful states through the use or threat of force. The most powerful states are the most capable states of the system. All international regimes, therefore, directly reflect the politico-military pattern of capability. Moreover, Waltz suggests that political

integration among states is not easy and would be possible if only it serves the interests of the most powerful states. Therefore, transnational actors, corporations or institutions are politically unimportant comparative to states. It is the exercise of military power, threat and force that let the states to survive and achieving their ultimate objectives since the military force is ultimately necessary for states survival.

Finally, it is the well-functioning balance of power theory that keeps the system stable. Waltz is critical of existing notions of balance of power theory. By examining the characteristics of the anarchic system, the expectations and outcomes associated with anarchic realms, Waltz able to posit a theory of balance of power that explains the systemic constraints, which influence unitary state actors to strive for balance of power. Casually, Waltz is able to conclude that 'Balance of Power' politics would prevail wherever two, and only two requirements are met: The international order should be anarchic and it should be populated by units that wishing to survive.

Eventually, Waltz reaches to the conclusion that as the ordering principle remains constant, (anarchic) systemic change achieved through changes in the capabilities of the great powers. Having demonstrated this, Waltz concludes that small number systems are more stable than multipolar systems. Specifically, the most stable balance of power system is bi-polar system. To epitomize, in the light of these assumptions, Waltz appeared to limit the security concerns of the states only by military means. In other words, all states would seek military security that they focus at the first instance in the self-help system. As such, Waltz commented that:

“To achieve their objectives and maintain their security, units in a condition of anarchy must rely on the means they can generate and the arrangements that they can make for themselves...Self-help are necessarily the principle of action in an anarchic order”.<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, according to Waltz, states could seek their security only through accumulation of military power in self-help environment. Furthermore, this security concern is valid for *all* states regardless their domestic power or establishments. In other words, since the ordering principle of the international system is anarchic, all states face the security dilemma and this would force them to perform exactly the same primary function. This function is to seek security through the accumulation of military power. Furthermore, by treating to all states as if the international relations goals were all the same, structural realism paradigm predicted that all international regimes directly reflect the politico-military pattern of capability. Accordingly, this is to suggest that states cannot broaden their security agenda beyond military security threats and national security is their foremost priority that would not questioned for any expense.

Then, what about the post-Cold War era? After the brief summarize of structural realism and conceptualization of its security concerns, now it is the time to probe in greater detail structural realism in the post Cold War Era. With the re-unification of Germany, the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and disintegration of the Soviet Union, the traditional bi-polar military structure in the world Europe was brought to an end. Casually, Kenneth Waltz has been strictly criticized in the post-Cold War era by failing to follow contemporary trends in world politics. However, in contrast, Waltz suggests that post Cold War era is the changes **of** the structural system rather than the changes **in** the system.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, in this era that is



defined as 'nuclear era' by Waltz, international politics remains a self-help arena. There is no shift on the security concerns of the states but tools have been changed.

According to Waltz, competition in multipolar systems is more complicated than competition in bipolar ones because "uncertainties about the comparative capabilities of states multiply as numbers grow, and because estimates of the cohesiveness and strength of coalitions are hard to make".<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, he suggests that interdependence and any co-operation within 'modern states' is much closer than it is 'across states'. Waltz concludes his comments about the post Cold War Era by arguing that since the unipolar world would constitute the danger for the rest of the world, there would be a balance of power in anarchic world order. The candidates for this balance that becoming the next great powers are the "European Union or Germany leading coalition, China, Japan, and in a more distant future, Russia".<sup>11</sup>

To sum up, Waltz still believes that structural realism retains its explanatory power even after the Cold War. Even in the post Cold War Era the war could be caused by 'anything' and 'suddenly'. For the survival of the peace in democratic countries, it is required to have 'balance of power' within the outside world (structure) that circles democratic sphere. Therefore, military conception of security would like to prevail as the dominant source of security even after the Cold War era.

### **Complex Interdependence**

After the conceptualization of the security in structural realism account by referring to Kenneth Waltz, in this section briefly I would define and conceptualize 'complex interdependence'. Initially, however, it is essential to once more remind to the reader that for

the purposes of this analysis, paradigm would be defined as a set of fundamental assumptions. Theories are then derived from these assumptions. The initial assumption of Keohane and Nye is in era of interdependence the very nature of international relations is changing.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the world has become more interdependent in economics, communications and human aspirations. The main actors of this era are ‘non-territorial’ actors such as multinational corporations, international organizations and trans-national social movements.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, there are multiple of issues with no hierarchy and military concerns play relatively less importance.<sup>14</sup>

Keohane and Nye discuss interdependence in the context of these assumptions. They begin by defining interdependence as a situation of mutual dependence where the loss of autonomy creates reciprocal costly effects. Therefore, complex interdependence does not just refer to situations of mutual benefit. Since postwar period was inadequate in analyzing the politics of interdependence, and traditional explanations of change become questionable, Keohane and Nye aimed to develop a coherent theoretical framework that could explain the continuity and change in world politics in order to demonstrate the reality of interdependence in contemporary world politics. To summarize, basically Keohane and Nye defined complex interdependence according to three characteristics:<sup>15</sup>

1. The actors are states and non-state actors with multiple channels of communication; interstate, transgovernmental and transnational.

2. The agenda of interstate relationships consists of multiple issues that are not arranged in a clear or consistent hierarchy. In other words, there are multiple issues with no hierarchy; military security does not consistently dominate the agenda.

3. Military force that plays a relatively minor role in international relations mainly because “it is not used by governments toward other governments within the region, or on the issues, when complex interdependence prevails.”<sup>16</sup> As a result of these characteristics, distinctive political processes arise which translate power resources into power as control of the outcomes of the linkage strategies, agenda setting, trans-national and trans-governmental relations.

Keohane and Nye do not claim that military power is insignificant. They argue that military actions are costly and these costs have increased for a number of reasons. For example, nuclear weapons increase the costs associated with conflict. In addition, using force on one issue could have negative effects on other economic goals. Thus, *relative to cost* there is no guarantee that military means will be more effective than economic ones to achieve a certain goal. Keohane and Nye explained such a cost with four main explanations: There is a risk of nuclear escalation, negative effects on achievement of economic goals, domestic opposition to the human costs in the case of war and peoples resistance in weak countries. Also Keohane and Nye stresses that transnational actors would seek their own goals rather than a state based desire. Consequently, international organizations would play significant role on setting the security agendas as also be voice of the weaker states.

Since the complex interdependence has developed during the Cold War period, then how the complex interdependence respond to the changes in the post Cold War period? Accordingly, the success of complex interdependence on challenging the security understandings of structural realism further maintained by no major change within the complex interdependence discourse even in the post Cold War era.

In the post Cold War era, Keohane argued that military security still plays a dominant role in certain parts of the world where complex interdependence does not influence.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, complex interdependence further prevails in the democratic zone of peace. In this sphere, the information revolution increases the patterns of complex interdependence through increasing the number of channels of communication in world politics. Furthermore, as costs reducing every day, barriers of entry to markets, and the capability to define security agendas reduce the power of large states and enhance the power of small states and non-state actors. Eventually, the post-Cold War era is associated with institutionalization and cooperation along with decline in military security concerns in the world politics.

Thus, accordingly, complex interdependence defined international institutions as its means of accomplishment. It offers that international regimes and institutions induce cooperation, and this enable states to transcend the anarchical forces in the international system. Furthermore, Keohane and Nye suggested that powerful institutions with powerful norms could play a role to that similar to the states both domestically and internationally. This assumption is possible simply because NGO's and networks are particularly effective in penetrating states without regard to boundaries and using domestic constituencies to force political leaders to focus on their preferred agendas.

Especially after the Cold War, the information revolution has vastly increased the number of channels of contact between societies that was one of the three main dimensions of complex interdependence. This is to suggest that multi-centric world brought major changes to the security concerns of state centric world and this become possible and progressive through de-centralizing tendencies of the complex interdependence. Therefore, it

would not be wrong to argue that complex interdependence widened the boundaries of the security concerns of the states beyond military security concerns by including non-governmental organizations, multinational companies, ethnic groups and minorities. Therefore, the dynamics of the post-international politics along with security concerns cannot be simply explained by inter-state relationship or by the system that only states formed as main units. Instead, security concerns should taken into the consideration with multi-actors and different subsystems.

Finally, as a result of all these outcomes, complex interdependence assumed its major challenge to the structural realism by arguing that the military power of strong states would not be that much influential in the post Cold War Era since military force would not be necessarily effective on pursuing neither economic nor political interests of the states. By this way, states have to consider the institutions, non-territorial actors, along with multi-dimensional and multinatural threats rather than and the state itself.

### **Complex Interdependence Challenge to Structural Realist Conceptions of Security**

After focusing and conceptualizing structural realism and complex interdependence, now the discussion turns to the complex interdependence challenge to structural realist understandings of security. In this section, I would advance four points on demonstrating this challenge. The challenges that would be highlighted: Challenge to structural realism with its own terms, the shift in state's security agenda in the post Cold War Era, changing motives in the foreign policy orientations of the states, and increasing role of the international institutions and influence of communication for mutual cultural ground.

### **Challenge to Structural Realism with its' Own Terms**

Accordingly, most apparent challenge of complex interdependence to structural-realism could be named as the challenge *on the latter's terms*. In order to prove this claim, it is necessary to return to the earlier notions of sensitivity and vulnerability of complex interdependence and assess whether these concepts can be used in challenging structural-realism. Keohane and Nye expand their earlier 'overall-structure' model of international regime change to an 'issue-structure model. In this model they assume that different issue-areas have different political structures that may or may not be related to the overall distribution of economic and military capabilities. Strong states in each issue-area make the rules. However, in this model, although states may want to link issues in which they dominate to those in which they are weak, such attempts will be unsuccessful. Resources in one issue-area lose some or all of their effectiveness when applied to others. Then, there would be no congruence of power across issues, unlike their previous overall-structure model. In other words, since the rules are questioned, sensitivity interdependence no longer confers power benefits on the actor that benefited by them mainly because pressures for change will reflect the different power structure.<sup>18</sup>

As I have emphasized earlier, in Waltz's structural realism model, it is assumed that military power is fungible and military power dominates the hierarchy. Therefore, since the military force is effective and can be used for variety of purposes, then each international system has one structure. However, in the issue-structure model since power is not fungible and states are dependent on the issue-area. This implies that the international system has

several structures that differ according to each issue-area and the distribution of resources could be used to affect outcomes. Therefore, degree to which the fungibility assumption is accepted affects the incidence of anomalies. If power is assumed to be perfectly fungible, when issues arise between great powers and smaller ones, the great powers should prevail. The United States of America's experience of Vietnam and the Soviet Union's experience in Afghanistan and in Chechnya, however, is obvious testimony to the failure of this prediction. By relaxing the fungibility assumption, explanatory power is increased. This is clearly explained by Keohane as:

“Failures of great powers to control smaller ones could be explained on the basis of independent evidence that in the relevant issue-areas, the states that are weaker on an overall basis have more power resources than their stronger partners, and that the use of power derived from one area of activity to affect outcomes in other areas (through ‘linkages’) is difficult”.<sup>19</sup>

Consequently, relaxing the fungibility assumption is sensible and given the rising costs associated with military force; it is arguable that the issue-structure model and therefore complex interdependence provides a better understanding of international relations on security concerns. What is more significant however, this explanatory power is obtained within Waltz's own framework and therefore poses a challenge to structural realism with its own terms. In addition, by restricting the analysis to Waltz's framework, many of the insights provided by complex interdependence theory have to be included, which reinforce the points that this paper suggests.

Nevertheless, it should be added that complex interdependence does not reject the realist assumptions but expands upon them. The issue-structure model does not suggest that structure is insignificant but that the international system is comprised of more than one structure. Therefore, Keohane and Nye's ability to transform themselves on security issues and analyses, gave them a comparative advantage against Kenneth Waltz's structural realism.

### **Shift in Security Agenda of the States in the post Cold War Era**

It was the preoccupation of the military security concerns that dominated political thinking, foreign policy orientations and even the co-operation in world politics till the end of the Cold War. This paper believes that historical 'discontinuities' introduced and open the way for new conflicts, new tensions along with new actors in the political scene in addition to states. G. W. Rees provides a very useful definition for this situation by proposing that "The Cold War period was so dominated by the issue of military security that other important issues were relatively neglected".<sup>20</sup>

With the termination of the Cold War the dimension of the security issues has been shifted to cover wide variety of issues including individual human right, the economic security of individuals and societies, unemployment, immigration, international terrorism, illicit arms and drugs trafficking, AIDS, cultural/identity issues and environmental problems.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, one should not surprise from the division of power in international politics as a result of increased independence and technology and new emerged problems.

All these weakened the role of the states and the systems that they relied upon. Thus, since the new security threats in the post Cold War Era are partially military but mainly



socio-economic and cultural, the realist assumption of each state is ready to use of force when they perceive a security threat has been weakened.

Not surprisingly, Waltz and structural realism mostly criticized by their failure to respond the changing nature of security. However, one could witness the respond to the changing nature of security in Keohane and Nye's approach. As emphasized earlier, this transformation was from the overall-structure model to the issue-structure model that both distinguish between activity taking place within a regime and activity designed to change the regime. This distinction and transformation is important because Keohane and Nye able to change the power resource for security concerns from the military power to the non-fungibility of military power according to the issue areas. Thus, they successfully demonstrate the changing nature of the security and changes within the importance relate with issues and geography.

However, accordingly, this change should not be uniquely attributed to the end of the Cold War. There were signs of such a transformation from the earlier periods. The establishment of North Atlantic Treaty Organization-NATO could be demonstrated as an example at this point. The NATO established as military alliance, however even it was established for military security concerns, one of the principal objectives of the NATO was to create an atmosphere for economic development of the European countries. By this way, European countries gave their priorities to economic development and able to develop their powers not in military terms but in socio-economic terms. Eventually, rather than military power, European states concerned with their security by some other kind of politics or perhaps by no politics at all in realist sense.

Lastly, it is worth to mention that in new security agenda the capability of states and governments to provide satisfactory solutions to the major security issues is restricted mainly because new issues are not wholly within their jurisdiction. Therefore solution of the security problems requires collaborative actions and any attempt to solve these problems independently is bound to fail. This dynamic and valid synthesis regarding to the post Cold War Era once more fits well and confirm with Keohane and Nye principles advocated in the 'Power and Interdependence'.

### **Changing Motives in the Foreign Policy Orientations of the States**

As stressed and demonstrated earlier, structural realism predicted that all international regimes directly reflect the politico-military pattern of capability that constitutes the main security concern of the states according to structural realism. However, this 'static' prediction of structural-realism presents an anomaly on their security considerations. Keohane and Nye introduction of the dynamic change in the distribution of state's capabilities explains this anomaly.

In the 'overall-structure' model Keohane and Nye stated that the international regime maintained by the hegemon allows other states to become more powerful. In other words, as the economic and military power of secondary states increases they become more assertive. Consequently, the hegemonic equilibrium is broken and a new power structure leads to the creation of a new international regime.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, Keohane and Nye assert that states are not determined to be hegemon till the end of the history even if they had such a power. This contrasts with Kenneth Waltz argument that states would do everything in order to maximize their powers in expense of the

others. Complex interdependence ease this objective through arguing that states would concern with their own benefits and would not opposed other states to maximizing their powers. Alternatively, states would not try to maximize their power when they are not in danger. Thus, in an atmosphere where states would not need to deal with security concerns, they could search for further co-operation and mutual economic and political gains. Furthermore, in an opposite scenario, it is doubtful how the states could ‘maximize’ their power in an international environment where they would use all their efforts and resources to defend, stabilize or preserve their foundations.

Therefore, under these conditions, there would be shift within the security understandings of the states that is emphasized by Keohane and Nye in complex interdependence. This change is defined as the changing nature of the preferences and dominant norms through time along with shifts in security perceptions and satisfactions. Eventually, it would not wrong to suggest that socio-economics parameters have displaced military power as an indicator of the state power. Casually, states would prefer to be dominant or hegemon in socio-economic terms rather than military terms.

At this specific point, one may suggest that realism still embedded the foreign actions of the main actors as such Waltz argues that assumptions should not be evaluated in terms of whether they are true or false, but whether they are sensible and useful. Usefulness is in turn dependent on the theory that uses the assumption.<sup>23</sup> By commenting on this principle to the Kenneth Waltz’s structural realism, arguably, one could catch the main failure of structural realism behind conceptualizing international security in the post Cold War Era.

Waltz, in writing 'Theory of International Politics' primarily concerned with explaining the consistently repeating patterns of behaviors of states throughout the centuries. He simply argued that behaviors of states and outcomes of their interactions had been repeated again and again despite profound changes within the nature of the states. Therefore, it was not the 'change' but 'continuity' that backed up by historical empirical evidences motivated structural realists on their assumptions. Furthermore, structural realist believed that their theory is the main source of foreign policy orientations simply because it bridges the past to the future and therefore attain 'continuity' in world politics and security concerns.

Accordingly, the key failure behind structural realism initiated at this point. If this assumption is correct than it is not hard to find adequate supportive 'evidences' within the pages of the history. The history is full of wars, military security based foreign policies and practices and even the strategic miscalculations made due to the ignorance of military capabilities of other states. However, the new era in world politics initiated with the post Cold War Era brought brand new implications at systemic level. Casually, the examples of the past bound to erode within the history. Nowadays, one can not encounter with religious or colonial wars among the powerful Western states.

Needless to say that this transformation had not happened suddenly. All these developments and shifts in security concerns was a result of painful experiences of the past, particularly two World Wars and their socio-economic traumas. These developments cultivated a new culture and new political understandings that lead transformation not only in economic and political life but also in social life and foreign policy practices. Stating in different words, the rationality and cultural cultivation of democratic countries make it clear

that 'winning' in military terms by no means refers to the gain, by considering the human factor, whose value is all time high through the history.

However, this is not to suggest that these assumptions are still valid for all parts of the world. In less developed, anti-democratic or military backed up regimes that the decision-making mechanisms are not transparent and distinct from the society, such wars and military conflicts are still possible. Thus, it would not wrong to suggest that structural realism lost its most formidable strength that is 'usefulness' and 'applicability' of the developed European states foreign policy orientations. Structural realism, with the exception of the United States, is no longer the main source of foreign policy orientations of the powerful, western, democratic countries but being inspiration of authoritarian, weak and cruel regimes outside the influence of complex interdependence.

### **Increasing Role of International Institutions and Influence of Communication for Mutual Cultural Ground**

According to Waltz, units of an anarchic system are distinguished by their capabilities for performing similar tasks and it is the distribution of these capabilities that differentiates one structure from another. Relatively, Waltz ignored the importance of the international organizations, institutions and regimes along with the influence of these actors on shaping the security concerns of the states. Furthermore, although Kenneth Waltz in "Theory of International Politics" discusses economic issues, he assigns secondary importance to the subject, which is overshadowed by military and security concerns. This is mainly due to the tremendous considerations over military security concerns that subordinated economic and political issues among states. Therefore, by treating to the

structural units as natural units, defining the interest of the states as constant and structured, Waltz limited the scope of the international relations. Moreover, Waltz stay untouched to the very nature of the *change* in world politics along with role of the non-territorial actors. Eventually, Waltz failed to vision ‘other’ subjects of the international security that is shadowed by the state based military concerns.

Contrary to Waltz, Keohane and Nye argued that technological change and increases in economic interdependence will make existing international regimes obsolete. By this principle, Keohane and Nye mainly referred to the increasing communications between the states which costs is reducing every day. In the previous times, states were uncertain about other states motivations and their sensible security concerns due to the lack of communication. However in the era of interdependence this uncertainty vanished. The contacts between the people, society along with higher government officials helps on decreasing the uncertainty of the other side through the development of mutual cultural understandings. These cultural congruities could rebuild same norms, rules, expectations and values that would reflect to the security understandings in the form of reducing mutually perceived security threats.

Furthermore, since it would be too costly to use, powerful states would prefer to use other instruments (as defined by linkage instruments by Keohane and Nye) that is also fully available to the not influential or militarily weak states. Therefore, international organizations and transnational actors would be used more frequently and widely in dealing with international relations problems. That shows that international organizations and

transnational actors would be significant independent actors and instruments. I would re-call this point in the coming section.

Additionally, as have noted earlier, Waltz focus is over emphasized on states and casually Waltz suggested that only symmetric relations could be interdependent. In contrast, complex interdependence highlighted the mutual relations of both symmetric and asymmetric actors. Accordingly, it is not necessary mean that states are giving up from their sovereignty neither they are under security threat by influencing and being influenced by the other actors. Since the communications between two states in many areas would conduct and promote the mutual understandings between them, this relationship could reflect as ramification in other areas. Eventually, common political culture, norms and practices between two countries would decrease the potential for any sort of conflict. Therefore, Waltz is inadequate in explaining the recent and developing patterns of interactions among states along with changes in political economy. In contrast, Keohane and Nye, by giving the special emphasize to the co-operation among the states and non-state actors, filled this gap by arguing that co-operation among these actors is both possible and preferable.

There is no doubt that the increasing role of the international institutions also contributed to this process. As emphasized by Keohane and Nye existence of powerful transnational actors would play role on re-shaping of the security concerns since the global issues requires “systematic policy co-ordination”.<sup>24</sup> Hence, all states weather weak or strong would seek to use international institutions for their objectives. If actors can persuade others to adopt similar values and policies, the importance of the military power would inevitably decline. Soft power and free information can, if sufficiently persuasive, change perceptions

of self-interest and thereby alter the role of the hard power. In different words, if a state can make its power legitimate in the eyes of others and establish international institutions that encourage others to define their interests in compatible ways, it may not need to expend as many costly traditional economic or military resources. Consequently, international institutions would provide opportunities for negotiations that would reduce uncertainty of other states and influence the expectations of the leaders on their security perceptions.

To epitomize, this paper belief is that complex interdependence poses a formidable challenge to structural realism conception of security by its extensive areas and issues of analysis: Inter-state, trans-governmental, trans-national relations and a multitude of world issues. Needless to say that, such an undertaking would be virtually impossible in the structural realism with its heavy concentration on military security issues along with anarchical world system.

### **Concluding Comments**

This analysis had begun with its assertion that Keohane and Nye's '*Power and Interdependence*' contributed to the international relations theory especially through the introduction of complex interdependence, as such it was chosen as the primary focus of analysis in this paper.

Through this analysis it was asserted that the ordering principle in complex interdependence was international regimes that had a mitigating effect on the anarchical forces in the international system. Therefore, I have argued that this stance had extensively challenged to the structural realism understandings of security concerns that support of unchangeable 'enduring' anarchy along with untenable security concerns; military force and



issues. It was shown that complex interdependence posed solid challenges to the structural realists security understandings with its acknowledgment of a multitude of actors and issues in international relations, shifts in states security concerns and their motivations. These arguments perfectly stated by Keohane as: “Since international institutions, rules, and patterns of co-operation can effect calculations of interest, and can also be affected incrementally by contemporary political action, (therefore) they provide a natural focus for scholarly attention as well as security policy concerns”.<sup>25</sup>

Waltz’s assumptions and tone related to the anarchical and hierarchical world order has been seriously challenged through states efforts to limit the conflicts and search for the further collaboration in all areas including military and economic organizations. Moreover, most of the recent conflicts were ethnic origin rather than the wars between states that is further indicates the decline in importance of the states as the unitary actors. The world politics is dynamically changing and this fact cannot be reversed or explained by the ex-political understandings, styles, concerns and practices. Stating in different words, it is impossible to explain continuities in world politics without living through and casually the ‘continuities’ of the past may not be valid in the future.

As a last word, it is important to stress that Keohane and Nye foresee all these changes in the world politics (along with increasing importance of the international organizations and interdependence among countries) during 1970s that was the decade, which most political and economic considerations were shaped by the Cold War politics and mentality. Therefore, since Keohane and Nye’s assumptions successfully reflect both change

and continuity in world politics, accordingly, they possess a successful challenge to the structural realism school of international relations.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Banks, M. (1985). "The Inter-Paradigm Debate." In M. Light and A.J.R. Groom (eds). International Relations: A Handbook of Current Theory. P. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Keohane, R. and Nye, J. (1977). Power and Interdependence. Boston: Little, Brown and Company (Inc.). P.4.

<sup>3</sup> Waltz, K. (1979). Theory of International Politics. London: Addison-Wesley.

<sup>4</sup> Banks, (1985:12).

<sup>5</sup> Waltz, (1979: 88-93).

<sup>6</sup> Waltz, (1979: 66).

<sup>7</sup> Waltz, K. (1986). "Reflections on Theory of International Politics: A Response to My Critics." In R. Keohane (ed). Neorealism and its critics. New York: Columbia University Press. P.333.

<sup>8</sup> Waltz, (1979:111).

<sup>9</sup> Waltz, K. (2000). "Structural Realism after the Cold War." *International Security*. Summer. 25 (1). Pp. 3-42.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> This section will follow Keohane and Nye (J. (1977), Power and Interdependence largely for reasons of simplicity, but also because this book represents the most developed application of complex interdependence ideas.

<sup>13</sup> Keohane, R. and Nye, J. (1977:24-25).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Keohane and Nye, (1977:25).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Keohane, R. O., Nye Jr., J. S. (1998). Power and Interdependence in the information age. *Foreign Affairs*. September-October. 77 (5). Pp.81-95.

<sup>18</sup> Power and Interdependence *passim*.

<sup>19</sup> Keohane and Nye, (1977:187).

<sup>20</sup> Rees, G. W.(1993). International politics in Europe: The new Agenda. London: Routledge. P.8.

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<sup>21</sup> McInnes, C. (1993). 'The military security agenda' In Wyn Rees, G. (ed.) (1993). The international politics of Europe. London: Routledge. P.71.

<sup>22</sup> Keohane and Nye, (1977:42-49).

<sup>23</sup> Waltz, (1979:91).

<sup>24</sup> For details *see* Keohane and Nye, (1977:49-52).

<sup>25</sup> Keohane and Nye, (1977:187).