

Analyzing Foreign Policy Crises in Turkey

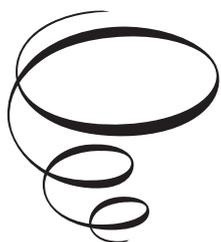
Analyzing Foreign Policy Crises in Turkey:

*Conceptual, Theoretical
and Practical Discussions*

Edited by

Fuat Aksu and Helin Sarı Ertem

Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing



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This book first published 2017

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-5025-X

ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-5025-4

This book is dedicated to:

NURETTİN AKSU,

missing you, your curious questions and encouraging comments...

and

MELİH MURAT ERTEM,

thank you for your inspiring ideas and generous support...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables.....	ix
List of Figures.....	x
Contributors.....	xi
Preface.....	xii
List of Abbreviations.....	xiv
Introduction.....	1
Assessing the Turkish Foreign Policy Crises and Crisis Management in the Republican Era Fuat Aksu and Helin Sarı Ertem	
Chapter One.....	17
An Integrated Model Proposal for Analysing Turkish Foreign Policy Crises <i>Aydın Şihmantepe</i>	
Chapter Two.....	38
Neoclassical Realism, the Limits of Analysis and International Relations Theory <i>Ümran Gürses</i>	
Chapter Three.....	58
Turkey's Protracted Foreign Policy Conflicts: Cyprus and Aegean Crises <i>Fuat Aksu and Süleyman Güder</i>	
Chapter Four.....	83
Insights of the Mavi Marmara Confrontation: Analysing the Turkish Crisis Management Process <i>Tuğçe Kafdağlı Koru</i>	

Chapter Five	112
Reflections of Beliefs and Worldviews of the Turkish Ruling Elite on the Syria Crisis <i>Helin Sarı Ertem</i>	
Chapter Six	143
A Humanitarian Foreign Policy Crisis: The 1989 Migration of the Bulgarian Turks <i>Zehra Gürsoy</i>	
Chapter Seven.....	158
Border Security in Turkish Foreign Policy Crises <i>Laçin Idil Öztığ</i>	
Chapter Eight.....	178
If the Crisis is What We Make of It: Turkey and the Uprisings in Syria <i>Gencer Özcan</i>	
Chapter Nine.....	199
Non-State Actors in Turkish Foreign Policy Crises <i>Ayşe Küçük</i>	
Bibliography	224
Index.....	253

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Turkey's Crises in ICB Project and TFPC Project	14
Table 1.1. Turkish Foreign Policy Crises (1923-2015)	28
Table 1.2. Decision-Making Structure and Government Types	31
Table 1.3. Triggers in the Crises.....	32
Table 1.4. Characteristics of Crisis and Crisis Management	33
Table 1.5. Third Party Involvement in Crises.....	34
Table 1.6. Outcome of the Crisis	34
Table 3.1. Turkey-Greece Foreign Policy Crises (1923-2014).....	74
Table 3.2. Protracted Conflicts, Crises and Triggers	76
Table 4.1. Freedom Flotilla of Gaza	90
Table 5.1. Conceptual Analysis of FM Davutoğlu's 84 speeches btw. 2009-2014	137
Table 5.2. Conceptual Analysis of PM Davutoğlu's 10 Speeches Containing "Syria" btw. 2014-2016	139
Table 7.1. The Dynamics of Border-Related Turkish Foreign Policy Crises	175
Table 7.2. The Outcome of Border-Related Turkish Foreign Policy Crises	176

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1. Dispute, Conflict and Crisis Flow	29
Figure 2.1. Variables and Decision Making Process in Neoclassical Realist Model.....	54
Figure 3.1. Turkey-Greece Foreign Policy Crises in Protracted Conflicts (1923-2014).....	62
Figure 3.2. Turkey-Greece Foreign Policy Crises (1923-2014)	65

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In alphabetical order.

PREFACE

This book resulted from a three-year long TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) Project, examining the Turkish foreign policy crises and crisis management strategies in the Republican Era. The project, which received remarkable interest in Turkish academia, allowed us to examine 34 foreign policy crises in the last 92 years since the foundation of the Republic of Turkey. It is worth underlining here that the brainstorming in our “Coercive Diplomacy and Crisis Management in Turkish Foreign Policy” course made a valuable contribution to the embodiment of this project. Colleagues and students, who encouraged us for a much comprehensive study of this critical issue, believed in the necessity of making it a book and gave their kind support by writing the chapters of it.

This book requires us to thank not only these esteemed contributors, but many other names and institutions. Among them, TÜBİTAK and Yıldız Technical University, Scientific Research Projects Coordinatorship (YTU - BAPK), deserve our special thanks for the academic and financial assistance they gave to this project. We would also like to thank the participants/staff officers of the Turkish War Colleges, The Armed Forces Higher Command and Management College, which made eye-opening contributions during our discussions there especially on the military decision making processes of the Turkish crisis management.

Prof. Dr. Klaus Brummer, our Section Chair in the 2014 ECPR General Conference in Glasgow, where the first findings of this project were shared with the academia, and a leading name in crisis studies, Prof. Dr. Charles F. Hermann also deserve our thanks due to their comments and questions that improved our researches. We also have to thank the Deans of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Yıldız Technical University, Prof. Dr. Güler Aras and Prof. Dr. Kenan Aydın, and Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their kind support during the research and publishing processes of this book.

Finally, our special thanks goes to our family members, especially our spouses and children, without whose love and patience this book would not be finished. We would also like to commemorate dear Nurettin Aksu,

whom we lost during the preparation of this book. His loving-kindness and support for his children and grandchildren will never be forgotten.

We hope this book can inspire further academic studies in the area of foreign policy crises.

Fuat Aksu and Helin Sarı Ertem
Istanbul, November 2016

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DP	Democrat Party (<i>Demokrat Parti</i>)
FP	Felicity Party (<i>Saadet Partisi</i>)
FIR	Flight Information Region
EOKA	Ethniki Organosis Kyrion Agoniston or National Organization of Greek Cypriot Fighters
FSA	Free Syrian Army
GCA	Greek Cypriot Administration
GUP	Great Union Party
ICBP	International Crisis Behavior Project
IHH	The Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief
ISIS	Al-Dawla al-Islamiya al-Iraq al-Sham or Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JDP	Justice and Development Party (<i>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi</i>)
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MIT	Turkish National Intelligence (<i>Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı</i>)
MP	Motherland Party (<i>Anavatan Partisi</i>)
NMP	Nationalist Movement Party (<i>Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi</i>)
PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan or Kurdistan Workers' Party
PYD	Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat or Democratic Union Party
RPP	Republican People's Party (<i>Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi</i>)
SNC	Syrian National Council
TFPC	Turkish Foreign Policy Crises
THY	Turkish Airlines
TMT	Turkish Resistance Organization (<i>Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı</i>)
TPAO	Turkish Petroleum Corporation (<i>Türkiye Petrolleri Anonim Ortaklığı</i>)
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
TUBITAK	Technological Research Council of Turkey
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
YPG	Yekitina Parastine Gel or People's Protection Units

CHAPTER TWO

NEOCLASSICAL REALISM, THE LIMITS OF ANALYSIS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY*

ÜMRAN GÜRSES

Introduction

In this chapter I will assess the neoclassical realist research agenda by critically focusing on the promises and limits of its basic claims, insights and explanations. Before looking at its contributions to IR theory and specifically foreign policy analysis and its limits, I will briefly touch upon neorealism from which neoclassical realism draws its basic premises and on the basis of that it develops the conceptual framework for foreign policy analysis. Then I will elaborate on the basic assumptions, arguments and concepts through which neoclassical realism develops its theoretical and conceptual horizon regarding international politics, the state and foreign policy. The chapter will then go on to identify the limits and problems embedded in neoclassical realism by critically engaging with its basic premises and assumptions which to a large extent come from the realist tradition.

Neorealism, Neoclassical Realism, the Structure and the State

It is often claimed that the neorealist premises and assumptions of the international politics have dominated the theoretical, conceptual and methodological landscape of IR for the last few decades. By taking issues with the neorealist research program in their own peculiar ways, the

* This chapter was supported by the TUBITAK/SOBAG 1001 Project (Project No: 112K172) and Yıldız Technical University, Scientific Research Projects Coordinatorship, YTU Project 2014-02-03-DOP01.

critical interpretations/approaches of IR have demonstrated, in addition to other crucial dimension, this hegemonic position in the discipline. The critiques have targeted at the fundamental assumptions and underlying presuppositions of neorealism the most important of which are the anarchical nature of international system and struggle to survive and maintain state autonomy.¹

On the basis of these premises, neorealism develops an argument that the primary purpose of the state is to ensure its own survival in an anarchical and conflicting international system, using the resources available to it. Moreover, a state's national interest and capabilities are determined by the distribution of power and its position in international system.² Neorealism focuses on explaining common patterns of international behavior over time. Since neorealism is about explaining the overall outcomes of state interactions, it is a theory of international politics. It includes some general assumptions about actions of individual states but does not explain states' behavior in detail or in all cases.³

According to neorealists, then, in order to understand foreign policy of a state we need to look at system level by examining relative position of a state in that systemic level. In particular, neorealists present big and structural questions of international politics, such as: Why do wars occur? Why do states tend to balance against powerful states? Why is cooperation difficult between states? They accept the structure of the international system and its anarchic character as given, which compels states to follow similar behaviors in order to secure themselves. Neorealist scholars explain behaviors of great powers and systemic outcomes by utilizing the most important independent variable; distribution of capabilities and the balance of power.⁴ This theory focuses directly on the international system, its components and their interactions, as well as the continuities and the patterns in the system. Neorealism thus primarily focuses on the influence of the structure of the international system; that is why it is called "structural realism". It prioritizes structure over agency, which is why its main concern is to define outcomes in international politics and not specific state behavior. The structure or the international system has

¹ Derek Beach, *Analyzing Foreign Policy*, (Palgrave Macmillan 2012): 17-18.

² Beach, *Analyzing Foreign...*, 34-35

³ Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy", *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (1998): 145.

⁴ Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, "Introduction: Neoclassical Realism, the State and Foreign Policy", in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (Eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State and Foreign Policy*, (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009):16-17.

two distinctive concepts. First, the ordering principle of the international system is *anarchy*, which means that there is no higher authority above states, which are the main and rational actors of the international system. In the anarchical order, there is no world government to regulate order or solve conflicts. This condition creates a self-help system, which contains undifferentiated actors, who behave in the same way and are always prepared to fend for themselves.⁵ That is why states cannot trust each other. They are solely responsible for their own security. In this respect, neorealism emphasizes security as a distinctive element for a state, which it seeks to maximize.

Distribution of capabilities or power as a second concept of neorealism indicates how a state's behavior is shaped by its capabilities. A state faces structural constraints and motivations and its response is differentiated according to how much power it has.⁶ These capabilities consist of the size of territory and population, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence of a state.⁷ Therefore, in order to understand a state's foreign policy it is necessary to know the structural imperatives created by the relative power of the state and its position in the international system. Thus, it could be conducive to understand important elements, which determine a state's foreign policy by looking at the relative position of state in the system.

Waltz's most important contribution and the core argument of neorealism is the balance of power theory. He contends that "a balance-of-power theory begins with assumptions about states: They are unitary actors who, at minimum, seek their own preservation, and at maximum, drive for universal domination."⁸ He uses balance of power theory to explain recurrent patterns of international outcomes and anarchic international system across history. He establishes a single independent variable; the systemic distribution of power as measured by the number of great powers. The international system imposes constraints on all states disregarding the domestic characteristics.⁹ Each state is considered a "black box" and they behave similarly in the same international system. The regime type or domestic characteristics of states are not included in the analysis. Dismissing 'ideology, form of government, peacefulness,

⁵ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (Waveland Press, Long Grove, 1979): 88.

⁶ Waltz, *Theory of International...*, 96.

⁷ Waltz, *Theory of International...*, 113.

⁸ Waltz, *Theory of International...*, 118.

⁹ Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, "Introduction: Neoclassical Realism...", 17.

bellicosity or whatever’, what makes international relations tick is nothing more than the ‘distribution of capabilities’.¹⁰

Regardless of domestic differences, all states have to secure themselves and survive in an anarchical order. Thus they share the same motivation: to survive under the same pressures of the system which makes them similar. Balance of power theory makes two predictions; that across different international systems, a balance of power tends to form, and that states tend to emulate the successful practices of others.¹¹

Therefore neorealism, or balance of power theory argues that the international system compels states to adopt similar strategies. States generally balance against powerful states or coalitions by building alliances with weaker states or by arms racing. States will tend to emulate the military, technological, and governing practices of the most successful states in the system.¹² As a system level theory, neorealism aims to explain broad systemic outcomes or the recurrence of the balances of power and the anarchical international systems across history. However it does not define why and how states choose a specific foreign policy behavior or different strategies such as emulation, innovation, or the continuation of existing strategies which do not always reflect its relative power or its place in international system.¹³

As has been clear, neorealism does not offer a theory of a state nor develops a theory of foreign policy. The state and foreign policy or individual states’ external relations are not the primary focus for neorealism. It is not surprising that neorealist assumption on foreign policy turns out to be insufficient in explaining of, for example, why and how individual states choose different foreign policy behaviors and strategies. For this reason neoclassical realists call for opening “the black box of the state”. We could have a sound, comprehensive and rational explanation of foreign policy only if state-level variables are included into the analysis. For example, as Jennifer Sterling Folker has noted, “anarchy does not dictate how states should arrange their domestic processes in order to achieve that end. States are free to experiment, to emulate one another’s practices, or to do nothing. Nonetheless, domestic processes act as the final arbiter for state survival within the anarchic environment.”¹⁴ Moreover,

¹⁰ Waltz, *Theory of International...*, 98.

¹¹ Waltz, *Theory of International...*, 124.

¹² Waltz, *Theory of International...*,

¹³ Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, “State Building for Future Wars: Neoclassical Realism and the Resource-Extractive State”, *Security Studies*, Vol.15, No. 3, (2006): 466.

¹⁴ Jennifer Sterling-Folker, “Realist Environment, Liberal Process, and Domestic-Level Variables”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol.41, No. 1 (March 1997): 7.

state responses are affected by domestic political and decision-making factors including perceptions, states' motives, political traditions and identities, domestic institutions and coalition building, and perceived lessons of the past.¹⁵

Since the 1980s, the most prominent international relations theory, neorealism has been challenged and critiqued by a variety of new schools of thought, including constructivism, critical theory and post-modernism. Exchange of ideas is much rare, between traditional and critical/reflectivist approaches and they have huge differences on epistemology, ontology, and methodology. For that reason, intellectual debate and an exchange of ideas within the realist tradition has emerged and created new interpretations and types of realist thought.¹⁶ State-level realism was reborn as 'neoclassical realism' in the 1990s after some books and articles published by scholars who were dissatisfied with existing neorealist theory. Gideon Rose entitled this foreign policy theory as 'neoclassical realism' in his 1998 article, "*Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy*". In the article, Rose presented the new approach of neoclassical realism that was designed specifically to explain foreign policy behavior. According to Rose, some scholars such as Randall Schweller, Fareed Zakaria, William C. Wohlforth and Thomas J. Christensen conduct their research within this type of realism. These scholars explain the foreign policy behaviour of particular states by introducing certain concepts such as grand strategy, military policy, international economic policy, trends in alliances and crisis management. Neoclassical realists argue that neorealism extensively focuses on system level factors and could not explain major historical events and differentiation in individual states' foreign relations. Furthermore, its theoretical model prioritizes parsimony and consistency over explanatory power and this in turn explains why the outcomes in world politics do not occur and function as it predicts.¹⁷

The structure of neoclassical realism is made up of three steps: the independent variable (state's relative power in the international system), the intervening variable (domestic level "transmission belt", through which systemic pressures are filtered) and the dependent variable or the foreign policy outcome. Neoclassical realism carries eclectic features which host different theories within its formation. Some part of the theory is mixed and matched in order to reach a useful outcome. For some

¹⁵ Juliet Kaarbo, "A Foreign Policy Analysis Perspective on the Domestic Politics Turn in IR Theory", *International Studies Review*, Vol.17 (2015): 203.

¹⁶ Liu Feng and Zhang Ruizhuang, "The Typologies of Realism", *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 1, (2006): 109.

¹⁷ Beach, *Analyzing Foreign...*, 64.

writers, neoclassical realist theory could be seen as the best example to use concepts from constructivist, liberal, and cognitive theories.¹⁸ As Rose argues “neoclassical realists occupy a middle ground between pure structural theorists and constructivist. The former implicitly accept a clear and direct link between systemic constraints and unit level behavior. The latter deny that any objective systemic constraints exist at all, arguing instead that international reality is socially constructed.”¹⁹ For example, Schweller combines a structural factor as an independent variable with state-level intervening variables such as the autonomy of leaders. The intervening -domestic-level- variables which “channel, mediate and (re)direct” systemic pressures present one of the important innovation of neoclassical realism.²⁰ With roots in classical realism, liberalism, and constructivism, neoclassical scholars have identified three common assumptions in their approaches: a) collectivity and groups are key actor in (world) politics; b) power is the fundamental feature of (international) politics; c) the essential nature of (international) politics is conflictual.²¹

Neoclassical Foreign Policy: An Outline of a Comprehensive Framework

There has been an ongoing debate over the material and ideational explanations of foreign policy behavior and foreign policy making process. Power, capability, security, national interest, perceptions, ideas, identity, ideology etc. have been used in foreign policy analysis. Some theories prioritize material factors, such as economic-military capabilities, for their explanation while other use ideational ones such as identity manifest as a socially constructed idea. As we have seen, neoclassical realism argues for foreign policy that is an outcome of the international structure, domestic factors, and the complex interaction between them. More specifically, both state power and the placement of states in the international system are the important factors that shape foreign policy. According to neoclassical realists, not only structural and material factors, but also ideational and domestic level variables have to be included in the explanation and making of foreign policy. Neoclassical realists also

¹⁸ Beach, *Analyzing Foreign...*, 11.

¹⁹ Rose, “Neoclassical Realism...”, 152.

²⁰ Randall L Schweller, “Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing”, *International Security*, Vol. 29, (2004): 164.

²¹ Randall L. Schweller, “The Progressiveness of Neoclassical Realism”, in Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman (Eds.), *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field*, (Cambridge: MIT. Press, 2003): 327.

address the concept of power but in a different perspective. Because for realists, power is defined as being material (i.e. geography, natural resources, population, trade and industrial capacity, technology, etc.) and military power (i.e. expenditure, size and quality of military, training, etc.). However, neoclassical realists claim that power cannot be calculated solely on material factors. Other elements of power should be included such as individual leadership, the quality of government, the competence of its administrators, and a government's reputation or track record in world politics.²²

Neoclassical realism shares the argument with neorealism that the scope and ambition of a state's foreign policy goals are determined by its placement in the international system and its relative material power. The effect of such power capabilities, however, is indirect and complex and how they are translated into foreign policies or security strategies may depend on various intervening factors within the state itself. In order to understand how states respond to the shaping of their external environment, it should be analyzed how system pressures are translated through intervening unit-level variables.²³ That means the material capacity of a state does not transform itself in a specific foreign policy behavior directly. Instead this relative power is mediated by the political leaders and elites' perceptions and assessment of this power which may be more important than the actual power of a state. That is why, domestic state structure, internal characteristics, leaders and their perceptions become determinant factors in shaping foreign policy decisions.

Intervening variables such as perceptions of leaders and state structure are positioned between foreign policy and the international system. Further these intervening variables have the effect of strengthening or weakening the influence of structural factors on unit behaviors. Each neoclassical realist may prioritize different variables; Dueck, Lobell, and Taliaferro, for example, focus on domestic politics and state–society relations, putting the national security executive at the center, with the ability to define the national interest. Whereas other neoclassical researchers like Schweller and Sterling-Folker focus more on ideational elements at the domestic level, such as nationalism and ideology, as the leaders may use and invoke nationalist sentiment in order to gain public support.²⁴

²² Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, "Introduction: Neoclassical Realism...", 297

²³ Nicholas Kitchen, "Systemic Pressures and Domestic Ideas: A Neoclassical Realist Model of Grand Strategy Formation", *Review of International Studies*, Vol.36, No.1 (2010): 118.

²⁴ For details see: Juliet Kaarbo, "A Foreign Policy Analysis...", 204.

Ideational Factors and Individuals in Foreign Policy Making Process

The ideas, beliefs or the ideology of decision makers play a role to formulate states' interests and shape their foreign policy behavior. Leaders may use foreign policy as a tool to transform a nation's political culture according to their worldview. Furthermore, ideas may become "as sources of legitimacy for some actions and the guide interpretations of the behavior of others."²⁵ Neoclassical realism places the impact of ideas alongside the imperatives of material power in the making of foreign policy. Nicholas Kitchen categorizes ideas into three groups, demonstrating how ideas and states' behavior are related and how a state's response to systemic factors does not actually reflect its position in the international system. According to him, the three groups of ideas are:

- 1) The scientific ideas, which establish the boundaries of possibility for state strategies by describing and interpreting the relations of empirical realities in the international system.
- 2) The intentional ideas, which are normative suggestions that seek to establish goals for foreign policy.
- 3) The operational ideas which help us explain the differing approaches of states towards similar threat as much as differing coercive capabilities.²⁶

Kitchen also describes how ideas intervene at the unit level: through the specific individuals that hold them; through institutions in which they may become embedded; and through the broader culture of the state.²⁷ In this respect, neoclassical realism presents a "top-down" conception of the state by unveiling it in order to predict foreign policy behavior. For this conception, the state is made up of individuals and these individuals construct systems, institutions and bureaucracies. Thus individuals make judgements, take decisions and implement them. Neoclassical realists argue that the state is governed by a national security executive comprised of the head of government, the ministers and officials who are together charged with making foreign and security policy. The members of government or decision-makers as top officials of the foreign policy

²⁵ Ahmet K. Han, "Paradise Lost: A Neoclassical Realist Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy and the Case of Turkish-Syrian Relations" in *Turkey-Syria Relations: Between Enmity and Amity*, (Eds.) Raymond Hinnebusch and Ozlem Tur, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013): 59.

²⁶ Kitchen, "Systemic Pressures...", 129-130.

²⁷ Kitchen, "Systemic Pressures...", 129-130.

executive are positioned between the state and the international system, whereby systemic constraints are perceived and national interests are determined. Moreover, Zakaria notes that “state power is that portion of national power that the government can extract for its purpose and reflects the ease with which central decision-makers can achieve their ends.”²⁸ As Taliaferro et al. have stated, “leaders define the ‘national interests’ and conduct foreign policy based upon their assessment of relative power and other states’ intentions, but always subject to domestic constraints.”²⁹

Decision makers are not only constrained by external threats but also by the domestic institutional structure.³⁰ Even though top policy officials have privileged information on security issues in comparison to other domestic groups, they are not autonomous from society or domestic constraints such as the legislature, nationalism and the public. As Taliaferro notes “material capabilities can influence states’ external behavior only through the medium of central decision makers’ perceptions, calculations, and estimates. Purely quantitative indicators of capabilities simply cannot capture decision makers’ assessments.”³¹ In that sense, *perceptions* may become crucial during crisis or noncrisis periods and radical changes or stable periods in international structure. He also argues that “politicians, military leaders, and bureaucrats make foreign policy choices based on their perceptions and calculations of relative power and other states’ intentions. This means that, over the short and medium terms, different states’ foreign policies may not be objectively “efficient” or predictable based on an objective assessment of relative power.”³²

Neoclassical realists contend with the more descriptive and specified *security* policy of states by incorporating both the domestic and international level.³³ Therefore, neoclassical realism presents a more coherent approach to the security policy choices than neorealist theory or Innenpolitik model. As Norrin Ripsman maintains, if security is scarce in the international system, domestic actors have limited roles in which to influence foreign policy. However, when the security environment is more

²⁸ Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999): 9.

²⁹ Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, “Introduction: Neoclassical Realism...”, 26.

³⁰ Rose, “Neoclassical Realism ...”, 153.

³¹ Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, “Security Seeking under Anarchy, Defensive Realism Revisited”, *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Winter 2000/01):141-143.

³² Taliaferro, “State Building for...”, 485

³³ Colin Dueck, “Neoclassical Realism And The National Interest: Presidents, Domestic Politics, And Major Military Interventions”, in *Neoclassical Realism, the State and Foreign Policy*, (Eds.), Steven E. Lobell and Norrin M. Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009):139.

stable, domestic actors have a greater role in shaping foreign policy choices.³⁴ When political leaders feel that their governing position is at stake, they may be more responsive to domestic preferences and may choose riskier security policies in order to secure themselves domestically.³⁵ Thus, neoclassical realism rejects the assumption that the fundamental actors in international politics are risk-averse. For example, leaders' perceptions or misperceptions play an important role to respond to systemic changes and therefore leaders may take high risk strategies in decision making processes.

In addition to the perceptions of leaders, domestic factors such as civil society, organizational politics and civil-military relations can impose a limit on the efficiency of leaders' responses to systemic imperatives. Furthermore neoclassical realism indicates the specific conditions under which domestic politics matter in foreign policy. During periods of imminent external threat, the calculations of central decision makers become crucial. Over the longer term or in the absence of an immediate external threat, national leaders will have more difficulty in mobilizing domestic resources for foreign policy. Leaders' mobilization efforts may later restrict their ability to readjust their foreign policies in response to changes in the external environment.³⁶ Hence leaders always use certain principles for their actions in the uncertain and anarchic world of the international system. They also develop identities and postures for their nations in often violent competition with others.³⁷ In that sense neoclassical realism aims at explaining national foreign policy behavior by utilizing classical realism's focus on statesmen and neorealism's main argument about the relative material power of states to explore a few systemic mechanisms – e.g. balancing, bandwagoning. Therefore, neoclassical realism could be seen as a functional supplement to its predecessor realist approaches by blending both systemic and sub systemic factors such as state governance structure and individual perceptions.³⁸

³⁴ Norrin M. Ripsman, "Neoclassical Realism And Domestic Interest Groups", in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State and Foreign Policy*, (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009): 186.

³⁵ Ripsman, "Neoclassical Realism...", 173.

³⁶ Taliaferro, "Security Seeking under...", 143.

³⁷ Kitchen, "Systemic Pressures and...", 119.

³⁸ Sebastian Harnisch and Magdalena Kirchner, "Neoclassical Realism and State-Sponsorship of Terrorism: The Case of Syria": 2, http://www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/politik/harnisch/person/publikationen/harnisch-kirchner_ncr_paper.pdf [20.12.2015]

Neoclassical realists also seek to explain how leaders shape the *national interest* in a particular state at a particular time by looking at leaders' capacity to construct national interests according to their own assessment and related to their autonomy in national system. As Colin Dueck has stated "the process of identifying national interests and then mobilizing resources to pursue those interests is not a given, and cannot even be usefully taken as such..."³⁹ If there are weak domestic constraints, leaders pursue their own conception of the national interest. However if they are constrained by strong domestic limits, they have to follow the concept of the national interest defined by domestic structure and actors.⁴⁰ Moreover, decision makers' national interest conception could be crucial while they face potential external threats. In some cases, these conceptions could be excessive or misguided but, anarchic international system forces states to focus on their security and necessary tools to make secure foreign policy. The process of defining national interests and tools is not given as the domestic political factors (interest groups, public opinion, normative considerations, and electoral pressures) and systemic constraints influence this dynamic process. Neoclassical realism demonstrates that in this process, elites may adopt their own concept of national interest which does not always reflect systemic imperatives.⁴¹

In neorealist analysis, state-level variables become determinant factors at the intersection between the international system and foreign policy preferences. In this sense Schweller describes four domestic variables which indicates the ability of a state to respond to systemic threats; (1) elite consensus about the systemic challenges facing the state, (2) the level of elite cohesion, (3) the level of social cohesion and (4) regime vulnerability to being removed from office.⁴² He also proposes another intervening variable, namely "state interests and motivations".⁴³ States are

³⁹ Dueck, "Neoclassical Realism...", 146.

⁴⁰ Dueck, "Neoclassical Realism...", 149.

⁴¹ As Rathbun underlines, neoclassical realism explains when states cannot properly adapt to systemic constraints and there are serious consequences of that. For details see: Brian Rathbun, "A Rose by Any Other Name: Neoclassical Realism as the Logical and Necessary Extension of Structural Realism", *Security Studies*, Vol.17 No.2, (2008): 296. Although the systemic structure is believed to shape the long term foreign policy behavior, "in the short term, states may miscalculate their power positions or defy systemic pressures –particularly at the regional level" because of the intervening variables. See: Han, "Paradise Lost: A Neoclassical Realist...", 56.

⁴² Schweller, "Unanswered Threats...", 169.

⁴³ Randall L. Schweller, *Political Constraints on the Balance of Power*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006): 128.

therefore able to extract or mobilize resources as determined by their institutions as well as nationalism and ideology.⁴⁴ Concurring with Schweller, Taliaferro identifies “the relative strength of existing state institutions, levels of nationalism, and existence of state-sponsored or anti-statist ideology”⁴⁵ which impact on state’s response to international system. By utilizing some immaterial ideational variables, neoclassical realism seeks to explain why and how an individual state chooses a specific foreign policy behavior at a specific time and in a particular condition.

The notions of national interest and security are associated with foreign policy making. They have a huge impact on the determination of the external behavior of state. However, national interest is an ambivalent concept in realism, which has no single or systematic definition. It is often considered to be highly related to survival and security of a state in general. As Waltz clearly states it in his structural realist framework, “a country acts in its national interest means that, having examined its security requirement, it tries to meet them”. Neoclassical realists goes further by linking it with idea of national identity, which is regarded to determine state’s interest, foreign policy preferences and its role in the world.⁴⁶ In the investigation of this concept, neoclassical realists claim to utilize constructivist theoretical insights by focusing on the process of identity formation. For example, Sterling-Folker combines structural realism with constructivist intervening variables such as *identity* and ideas. In constructivist theory, national interest is not just shaped by material security interests but also by a state’s identity. Identity shapes perceptions of interest and security. National identity differentiation plays an enduring role in both domestic politics and foreign policies of nation states. Moreover, in line with structural realist insights, states compete with one another over the allocation of scarce resources at the international level and within each state, different groups also compete with one another over the allocation of resources. Those who have access to resources also get the ability and legitimacy to make decisions for the state. These interstate and intra-state competitions cannot be isolated from each other and they interact and take shape in this interaction⁴⁷

In her study, Sterling-Folker integrates the main realist and constructivists concepts such as anarchy and security and group identity factors in order to explain Chinese-Taiwanese relations. She contends that

⁴⁴ Rose, “Neoclassical Realism ...”, 149.

⁴⁵ Taliaferro, “State Building...”, 495.

⁴⁶ Beach, *Analyzing Foreign...*, 65.

⁴⁷ Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, “Introduction: Neoclassical Realism...”, 35.

humans are social beings who construct their own identity differentiating themselves from other groups. In this process, groups form their identity in competition with other groups and this is best analyzed using constructivist theory. The construction of identity provides domestic elites to form and strength their own identity by being different from other entity such as foreign countries.⁴⁸

Balance of Interest Theory and Four Different Types of States

Each state demonstrates different characteristics because of their relation to domestic society. Schweller differentiates states on the basis of differing motivations. Different types of states engage in different types of actions such as balancing, band-wagoning or coalition. He contends that all states in the anarchic international system are forced to maximize their influence and improve their position within the system. The systemic structure presents possibilities and fears for states. Even though all states face similar systemic pressures, their foreign policy preferences may be different based on their motivation and unit level variables. According to the balance of interest theory, state interest refers to the costs a state is willing to pay to defend its values (status quo), and the costs it is willing to pay to extend its values (revisionist). Thus there are two main categories among states and four sub groups which define state behaviors; *lions* (strong status quo state), *lambs* (weak status quo state), *jackals* (weak revisionist state) and *wolves* (strong revisionist state), based on their interests and according to their relative power. In short, not only the distribution of power in the system, but also characteristics of the state that make them revisionist or status quo are influential.⁴⁹ Therefore he predicts different foreign policy responses to given systemic political conditions based on these different characteristics of domestic politics. His balance of interest theory challenges Walt's balance of threat theory by utilizing new

⁴⁸ Sterling-Folker contends that states can perceive each other as security threats despite increased economic interdependence between them, because nationalism and capitalism are not behavioral, analytical, or practical contradictions. See: Jennifer Sterling-Folker, "Neoclassical Realism and Identity: Peril Despite Profit Across the Taiwan Strait" in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State and Foreign Policy*, (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009): 103-104.

⁴⁹ Randall L. Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In", *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer, 1994): 90.

concepts.⁵⁰ Because Schweller argues that alliances are motivated for gain as well as by danger and fear. Balance of interest theory explains alliances motivated by profit not the threat of punishment. He states that the fundamental difference between bandwagoning and balancing is that “balancing is an extremely costly activity that most states would rather not engage in, but sometimes must to survive and protect their values. Bandwagoning rarely involves cost and is typically done in the expectation of gain. This is why bandwagoning is more common...than Walt and Waltz suggest.”⁵¹

The primary concern of neoclassical realist theory is to construct a foreign policy theory which explains foreign policy behavior of a particular state over time or different states facing similar external constraints. It does not have the aim of explaining broad patterns of systemic or recurring outcomes. Thus, a neoclassical realist hypothesis tries to explicate diplomatic, economic, and military responses of particular states to systemic imperatives, but it does not specifically focus on the systemic consequences of those responses.⁵² Unlike the structural theories, neoclassical realism unveils behavior patterns by combining domestic and individual level into the analysis without sacrificing material capabilities or position of the state in the system. Moreover, neoclassical realism draws useful foreign policy analysis focusing on micro level by looking at the individual political leader’s behavior and domestic constraints.⁵³ Neoclassical realists believe that leaders’ perceptions on a state’s relative power must be taken into account because “statesmen, not states, are the primary actors in international affairs.”⁵⁴ The leaders’ assessment on the distribution of power should be taken into consideration in order to reach a well-articulated foreign policy theory. Furthermore,

⁵⁰ Walt argues that states tend to balance against threats and not against power. Balancing is defined as allying with the others against a prevailing threat, bandwagoning refers to alignment with the source of danger. Walt asserts that states usually balance and rarely bandwagon. Weak states can be expected to balance when threatened by states with roughly equal capabilities, and in fact this is the more common tactic, but are inclined to bandwagon when threatened by a great power, Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987): 180.

⁵¹ Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing...”, 93.

⁵² Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, “Introduction: Neoclassical Realism...”, 21

⁵³ Balkan Devlen and Özgür Özdamar, “Neoclassical Realism and Foreign Policy Crises”, in Annette Freyberg-Inan, Ewan Harrison and Patrick James (Eds.), *Rethinking Realism in International Relations*, (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009): 136.

⁵⁴ Zakaria, *From Wealth...*, 42.

foreign policy analysis must combine leaders' perceptions of the state position in the international system and domestic factors such as identity, political survival or ideology with structural factors. Therefore, in order to understand the whole process of external behavior of a state it should be combined different levels and factors. As Zakaria stated, "a good account of a nation's foreign policy should include systemic, domestic and other influences, specifying what aspects of a policy can be explained by what factors."⁵⁵ Moreover neoclassical realists assume that states do not seek security, instead states respond to the uncertainties of international anarchy by seeking control and shape their external environment.⁵⁶ As Zakaria notes "states are not resource-maximizers; they are influence-maximizers."⁵⁷

Neoclassical Realism, Region and Foreign Policy Crisis

The individualistic structure of neoclassical realism also presents a coherent frame for foreign policy crisis analysis. States' relative power and structural theories cannot predict or explain short-term foreign policy behavior, particularly during crisis. The analysis of foreign policy behavior during a crisis is a matter of short time analysis; therefore micro-level variables carry a crucial role. In order to analyze policy preferences during a crisis, micro level factors which impact on process should be taken into account. These variables include personal/cognitive characteristics of leaders, efficient actors on decision-making process (the president, prime minister, chief of general staff, minister of foreign affairs, intelligence service), opposing parties and their leaders, interest or pressure groups.⁵⁸ Furthermore, leaders often face ambiguous, incomplete, and contradictory information about changes in relative power, especially during crises and periods of rapid change. In this situation, leaders make mistakes in estimates of material capabilities, or have misperceptions of the distribution of power, thus state leaders miscalculate shifts in net power.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Fareed Zakaria, "Realism and Domestic Politics: A Review Essay", *International Security*, Vol 17, (1992):198.

⁵⁶ Rose, "Neoclassical Realism ...", 152.

⁵⁷ Zakaria, *From Wealth...*, 19.

⁵⁸ In addition, other essential variables including domestic political factors; national structures, regime type, ideological perspectives/discourses, financial, political and military capacities, societal structure and its features, culture-identity elements, government type and its characteristics, administrative- legal features of a state have impact on foreign policy decisions.

⁵⁹ Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, "Introduction: Neoclassical Realism...", 63.

As another domestic variable, the government type could be decisive in these periods. For example, Susan Peterson posits that crisis bargaining outcomes depend not only on relative power considerations, but also on the nature of the governments involved. She argues that the institutional structures of a state and the strategic beliefs of key actors in the domestic theater play the principal role in determining whether crises end in war or not.⁶⁰

Miriam Fendius Elman improves this model and operationalizes institutional structure by subdividing the category of democracy into majoritarian parliamentary democracies, coalitional parliamentary democracies, and presidential democracies. Moreover she examines the relative hawkishness or dovishness of the executive and the legislature. She argues that in majoritarian parliamentary democracies, executive preferences dominate legislative preferences; thus a hawkish executive will pursue belligerent policies and a dovish cabinet will behave peacefully. In coalitional parliamentary democracies and presidential democracies, however, the executive is non-autonomous and public preferences trump executive preferences.⁶¹

During crisis, it becomes difficult to make rational foreign policy decisions. Time constraint and psychological pressure have huge effect in this process. That's why decision making at times of crisis is harder to understand and predict than normal foreign policy making. Time limitation prevents an appropriate communication between adversaries and decision makers have not enough time to consider about best decision/best option. In addition, psychological stress cause decision makers to overestimate the hostility of adversaries and to underestimate their own hostility toward those adversaries. Individuals indicate exaggerated feelings; such as "dislike" which easily turns to hatred, and anxiety to fear.⁶² That's why it becomes crucial for decision makers to protect their cognitive balance during these periods. Moreover physical exhaustion has similar impact on decision making process. Sleep deprivation, pills that leaders use and even individual relations of leaders may change foreign policy decisions.

Furthermore during the crisis, leaders' belief system about international structure and domestic constraints shape foreign policy preferences. Devlen and Özdamar particularly argue that there are three important variables which effect foreign policy behavior during an international crisis; leaders' perception of the international system which

⁶⁰ Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, "Introduction: Neoclassical Realism...", 177.

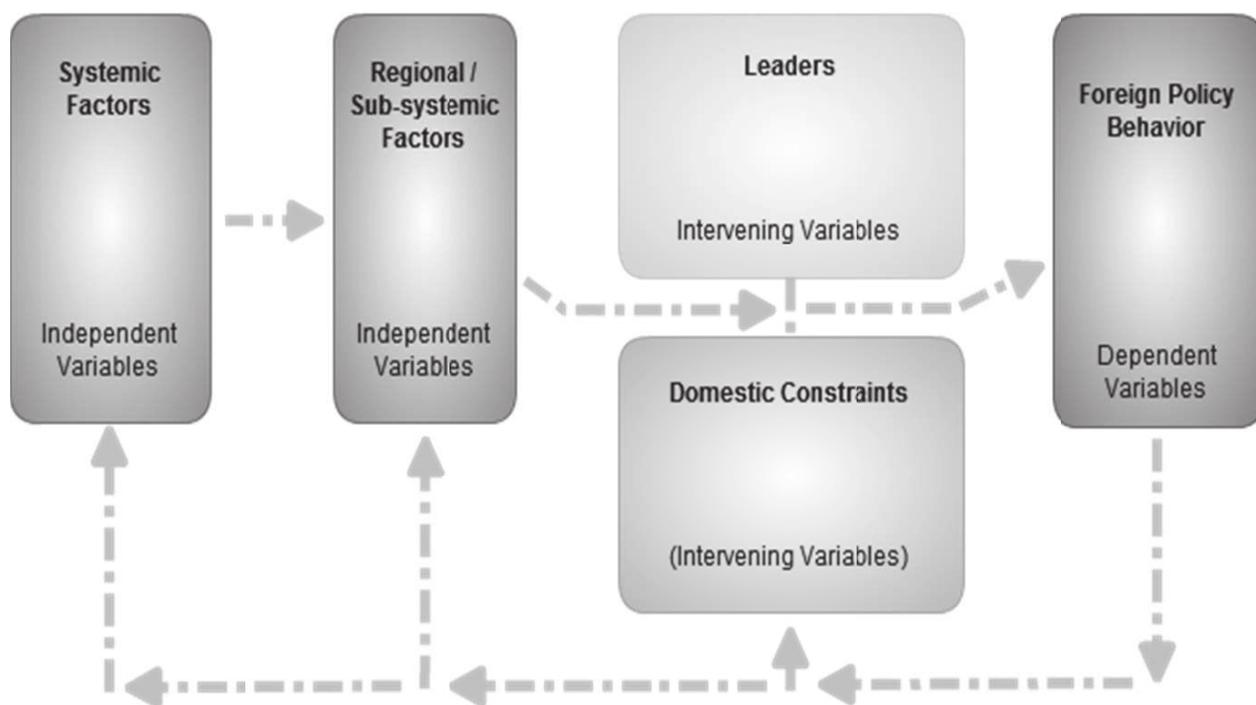
⁶¹ Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, "Introduction: Neoclassical Realism...", 177.

⁶² Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *International Relations, 2013-2014 Update*, (Pearson, 2013): 134.

is captured by their operational code; political survival which leaders calculate the expected cost of militarized conflict for the leader and support base compared to the other possible outcomes of the crisis; and large group identity, which means the experience of oneself as a member of an ethnic, racial, national, or religious group.⁶³

In addition, neoclassical realism yields a suitable ground to include regional dynamics as independent variables. Region may also be a crucial factor that affects the foreign policy behavior of a state, which exists in it. Both states and political actors can be constrained and influenced by their regional factors. Moreover regional agenda could be different from international one which affect the states heavily. Therefore, interactivity of both sides shapes foreign policy behavior that decision maker must take into consideration of regional developments for choosing behaviour; and the outcomes of this behavior reshape region effectively. It could be a good contribution to add regional dynamics for foreign policy analysis of states. Figure-I shows variables, their interactions and decision making process in neoclassical realist model.

Figure 2.1. Variables and Decision Making Process in Neoclassical Realist Model



Source: Created by author using diagram in Gideon Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy”, *World Politics*, Vol 51, N. 1, October 1998, p.154

⁶³ Devlen and Özdamar, “Neoclassical Realism...”, 145-146.

Last but not least there have been critiques over this new emerging research method. Wivel argues that neoclassical realism's explanation of how material factors, such as power, are perceived by decision makers is not sufficient and the relationship between materialist and idealist variables should become more precise. In order to overcome this problem he contends that neoclassical realism should utilize psychology to explain perceptions, interpretations, and motivations.⁶⁴

Kaarbo suggests that "foreign policy analysis [FPA] presents a more contingent view of the relationship between domestic and international politics than neoclassical realism. Leaders' responses to domestic and international pressures are conditioned by a number of factors, including their own beliefs and perceptions".⁶⁵ Therefore FPA challenges neoclassical realism's arguments of how domestic politics influences executives. Furthermore she claims "the psychological approach in foreign policy analysis includes a focus on personality traits, leadership styles and beliefs, images, analogies, framing effects, consistency-based and schema-based information processing, attribution biases, threat perception, problem representations and problem solving, and the psychology of small group social influence dynamics."⁶⁶ Therefore she notes that neoclassical realism looks very similar to many studies in contemporary FPA, and she argues that some scholars build directly on FPA research. According to her, FPA perspective is more advanced for explaining domestic political and decision-making factors than neoclassical realism. Lastly the neoclassical assumption that domestic and international pressures are easily separable and identifiable is also found *problematic*. As Fordham argues, the nature of international threats is determined to a great extent by the interests of the domestic coalition that governs the state, and domestic political and economic interests are affected by international circumstances....⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Anders Wivel, "Explaining Why State X Made a Certain Move Last Tuesday: The Promise and Limitations of Realist Foreign Policy Analysis", *Journal of International Relations and Development*, Vol. 8, (2005): 367-368.

⁶⁵ Kaarbo, "A Foreign Policy Analysis...", 204.

⁶⁶ Kaarbo, "A Foreign Policy Analysis...", 205.

⁶⁷ Benjamin O. Fordham, "*The Limits of Neoclassical Realism: Additive and Interactive Approaches to Explaining Foreign Policy Preferences*" in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (Eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): 251.

Conclusion

In the beginning of this study, it is argued that there are two contemporary realist schools. Realism is a philosophical tradition such as Marxism and liberalism, and it resulted in the birth of two new branches, neorealism and neoclassical realism, which have similarities and differences. Both schools begin with the assumptions about the conflictual nature of politics, the centrality of conflict groups, and the importance of relative power distributions. Both research programs utilize same independent variables; the systemic level factors. They both generate testable and probabilistic hypotheses. The biggest difference they have is on the dependent variable, which is explained by them differently. Neoclassical realism is a theory of foreign policy, which aims to explain security and foreign policy behavior of a particular state by utilizing domestic intervening variables. On the other hand the dependent variable of neorealism is the recurrent patterns of international political outcomes.

Neorealism perceives states as unitary rational actors while neoclassical realism defines states as an entity consist of different actors which are related to society in many ways. For example within the state, actors may hold different ideas about which tools should be used to address particular threats. Some actors may consider using economic sanctions and military “sticks”, whereas other actors prefer to utilize the “carrots” of trade and softer elements of power.⁶⁸ Neorealism’s definition of state behavior is also capabilities-centered, while neoclassical realism is multi-layered and includes both material and ideational factors. Moreover the conceptual framework of neorealism is constraining, rather than determining. However the insights of neoclassical realism are plural, hosting systemic imperatives and ideational factors at unit level.

Aim of neoclassical realism is not explaining deviations from neorealism but is to create a useful approach for understanding foreign policy in general. That is why neoclassical realists ask “not only why states occasionally fail to balance against hostile powers, but also why they select particular balancing strategies from a range of acceptable alternatives (e.g. alliance versus rearmament) and the timing and style of their foreign policy.”⁶⁹ Neoclassical realism provides a rich understanding of the determinants of foreign policy and the way that states respond to international challenges. Moreover, neoclassical realism thus indicates how and why states may choose a specific foreign policy behavior resulted

⁶⁸ Kitchen, “Systemic Pressures and...”, 135

⁶⁹ Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, “Introduction: Neoclassical Realism...”, 282.

from systemic reasons or domestic factors. Even though neoclassical realism has its limits, proponents believe that “neoclassical realism will continue to flourish as a research program precisely because its proponents have not lost sight of the ‘political’ in the study of international politics, foreign policy, and grand strategy.”⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, “Introduction: Neoclassical Realism...”, 299.