

**A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE
ON THE U.S. MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAQ**

**(TEORETICKÝ POHLED NA OZBROJENÝ ZÁSAH USA
PROTI IRÁKU)**

PhDr. Vilém Kolín, MGS

Anotace:

Důvody, který vedly k válce mezi Spojenými státy a Irákem, měly pramálo společné s realistickým vyvažováním. Anarchie hrála určitě důležitou roli, ale hodnoty a identita byly pro konflikt klíčové, zatímco distribuce schopností představovala mimořádně okrajový prvek. Článek analyzuje chování Spojených států z neorealistické, konstruktivistické a post-strukturalistické perspektivy, aby v rovině teorie mezinárodních vztahů vysvětlil, co bylo „opravdu“ důležité ve válce proti Iráku.

The State of Play

We are in the midst of an international debate about how to force Iran and North Korea to give up their nuclear ambitions.¹ The current debate mirrors the discussion about when states may use force to settle their international disputes, which took place three years ago with regard to the US military action against Iraq, in what it became to be known as the Second Gulf War.² As a matter of fact, it may now be the right time to analyze the causes of war against Iraq from a perspective of international political theory, an approach that would allow us to provide a compact analysis of the conflict short of normative considerations on the legal and legitimate use of force in international relations, which since then have taken much of scholarly writings on this matter.³ Drawing upon the ontologically incompatible yet irrefutably illuminating perspectives of Kenneth Waltz, Alexander Wendt and David Campbell, such an analysis would provide us with a coherent explanation of the US war prone behavior which goes well beyond the particular case of the intervention in Iraq.

Anarchy

Addressing the question of the causes of the US military action against Iraq from Waltz's perspective, anarchy is certainly an important part of the story. As the most important structural feature in the Waltz's account of international politics, the absence of central rule in international relations means that no one by virtue of its authority is entitled to command and no one, in turn, is obliged to obey.⁴ It follows that because states are the constitutive units of the system (a structure and interacting units), and there is no centralized authority in the system, states themselves are ultimate arbiters of force.⁵ The desire of states as units, at a minimum, to survive is assumed and the organizing principle of international relations in an anarchic order—self-help—is postulated: under such constellation every state will try to put itself in the position to be able to ensure its own survival by taking care about nobody else.⁶ The United States thus were entitled to take military action against Iraq, as their survival was

claimed to be at stake and,⁷ in the anarchical realm of the system, nothing could prevent them from doing that. The United States did not need to care about balancing,⁸ as they were, indeed still are, the only real great power (hyperpower)⁹ in the system, so there was nobody to balance against from their point of view. The distribution of capabilities¹⁰ is also of a minor importance in this case, as it says nothing about the behavior of the United States besides the fact that they behaved in the way they actually behaved because of their dominant position in the system.

Culture

What was of a real importance in this case were values and identity, about which Waltz has nothing to say. It makes little sense to try to understand how states behave without knowing first who (or what) they are. Such an inquiry would touch a lot more on the substance of a state than the realist vision of a state as a “black box” holding a particular quantity of power.¹¹ Realism with Waltz, as a neo-realist in the forefront, focuses on what states (are forced to) do. Constructivist and post-structuralist approaches reflected in Wendt and Campbell writings focus instead on who we are. We thus face not competing theories, but radically opposed ideas of what it is important to explain. For both Wendt and Campbell the question of identity is absolutely essential to any international analysis. In Waltz’s account identity is shaped by structure of anarchy. There is no space for functional differentiation, as states are shaped and shoved in the same way by structure.¹² Internal attributes of states are given. Changes in actor behavior, and system outcome, are explained not on the basis of variations in states’ characteristic, but on the basis of changes in the attributes of the system itself.¹³ For Wendt, identity of states is shaped by cultural selection through imitation and social learning (cognitive dimension).¹⁴ For Waltz, states either reproduce themselves or fade away in what can be called natural selection (mechanical dimension).¹⁵ In Wendt’s account states imitate those who succeed in acquiring power or wealth, or those who succeed in acquiring prestige—a passive process from the point of view of states which follow the model.¹⁶ From his perspective, states also learn through interaction with other states, making themselves through interaction with others—an active process for states participating in the interaction.¹⁷ In Waltz’s perspective, there is no space for socialization, process is a unit level and units are given.¹⁸ They are the same. For Wendt, this is also true, but he reveals some system-wide processes that can cause the structural change. For Wendt, the change of structure is the change of culture, which has many forms (Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian).¹⁹ The change in structure and culture, respectively, changes the identity of the unit through, what he calls master variables (interdependence, common fate, homogeneity and self-restraint).²⁰ So, he can explain the change of identity of the units. Why, for example, it has come about that the France is no longer the House of Bourbon, but the house of French, and how it happened.

Identity

Campbell, drawing upon the constructivist approach, went one step further, in grasping the way how culture is fixed and contingent (constructed). As far as the identity of the United States is concerned, Campbell proposed an argument that the identity of the United States is formed and shaped by their foreign policy.²¹ Identity is product of the foreign policy of a particular state, as well as the source of its foreign policy.²² In other words, foreign policy is the production and reproduction of identity in whose name it operates. In the case of the foreign policy the United States, which is in the centre of Campbell’s investigation, he argues that the identity of the United States was not based on the ethnicity, or historical experience,

which were crucial for the creation of the identity of most European states, but on the clash with enemies.²³ As Campbell argues, the identity of the United States was created around the fear from others.²⁴ The foreign policy of the United States has redefined American values, interests and identity through the interaction with outside world, finding and defining what the United States stand for.²⁵ What Campbell demonstrated is that the foreign policy of the United States was not simply generated by identity in the sense of the traditional view, which consider foreign policy an one-way through process (inside out), but that the identity in the case of the United States was, and still is, generated by the conduct of the foreign policy and vice versa.

... and the United States

What then is the relevance of Campbell's argument for the purpose of this inquiry? In line with Campbell's line of reasoning, the United States need an enemy to be able to know who they are. Without an enemy the United States do not know who they are. In such a case, they are not sure about their own identity. During the Cold War the enemy was clear—the Soviet Union—and the identity and foreign policy of the United States were shaped accordingly, as Campbell demonstrated.²⁶ However, after the fall of the Berlin wall and the disappearance of the Soviet Union, the enemy was not clear at all.²⁷ There was no clear identity maker and shaper in this respect. But the terrorists' attacks of September 11 changed this situation substantially.²⁸ Although the civilian deaths as a result of these attacks were marginal in comparison to how many Americans are killed every year in car accidents or die as a consequence of drug addiction, the response of the United States was overwhelming, if not disproportionate. And, the reason for that? Following the logic of Campbell's argument, the era of an uncertain enemy, and the time of uncertain identity of the United States is over. The new enemy became clear: international terrorism; and the United States behave accordingly. The US response to the terrorist attacks in fighting terrorists and their protectors in Afghanistan and all around the world,²⁹ the new national strategy of the United States, articulating a comprehensive policy against the new enemy,³⁰ the change of US posture to outside world from defensive to offensive (preemptive action),³¹ to note just the most significant examples, illustrate the importance of enemy for the identity formation of the United States and their foreign policy practice.

Beyond Iraq

Why then as a target of the US action was selected Iraq, and not Iran or North Korea, other enemies of the United States, for instance? This is another question, a question of historical contingency that can be answered by an analysis of US-Iraq relations, and their relevance to the war against terrorism, the United States are now waging.

Clearly, however, Waltz's account can explain very little about war between the United States and Iraq. Anarchy is certainly an important part of the story, but values and identity are central to the conflict while the distribution of capabilities is an extraordinarily peripheral element. The main explanation for the current conflict lies in the way the identity of the United States has been shaped by facing enemies of the past and those of the present, by the interplay of the foreign policy conduct and identity formation. If Campbell is right, the United States need an enemy to be able to define themselves, to be able to know who they are. They need to face clear and present danger embodied in an enemy to be able to know upon which their "we" is based and where it comes from, and they can know this only through the clash with others. That the target of their action was Iraq, and not Iran or North Korea, is a different story.

References

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4. See Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), p. 88.
5. See *ibid.*, pp. 80-82, 102-107.
6. See *ibid.*, pp. 104-107, 111-114.
7. The intervention in Iraq is now defended increasingly on humanitarian grounds particularly because of the failure to find weapons of mass destruction, which the President of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, was believed to possess. See *Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq's WMD* (Central Intelligence Agency, September 2004) (https://www.cia.gov/cia/reports/iraq_wmd_2004/index.html [last accessed October 2006]); and Thomas Cushman, ed., *A Matter of Principle, Humanitarian Arguments for War in Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). See also James Bamford, *A Pretext for War: 9/11, Iraq, and the Abuse of America's Intelligence Agencies* (New York: Doubleday, 2004); Laurie Mylroie, *Bush vs. the Beltway: How the CIA and the State Department Tried to Stop the War on Terror* (New York: Regan Books, 2003); and Christopher Scheer, Robert Scheer and Lakshmi Chaudhry, *The Five Biggest Lies Bush Told us about Iraq* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003).
8. On balancing see Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 123-128.
9. The term coined by Michael Mandelbaum in Michael Mandelbaum, "The Inadequacy of American Power," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 81 (September – October 2002), pp. 61-73.
10. On the distribution of capabilities see Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 97-99.
11. Both realism and neorealism treat states as unitary actors, seeking to maximize power. Both approaches consider states' internal affairs of a minor, if not of any, importance for the explanation of states' behavior in the international arena, which is the main focus of the study. See most prominently Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace* (7th. ed.; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977) and Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.
12. See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 93-97.
13. See *ibid.*, pp. 80, 87-93, 97-101, 107-111.
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15. See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 76-77.
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21. See David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), pp. 1-13.
22. See *ibid.*, pp. 35-72.
23. See *ibid.*, pp. 91-132.
24. See *ibid.*
25. See *ibid.*, pp. 133-168.
26. See *ibid.*
27. On the US foreign policy after the end of the Cold War see e.g. Stephen E. Ambrose and Douglas G. Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy since 1938* (8th. ed.; New York: Penguin Books, 1997); Robert J. Art and Seyom Brown, eds., *U.S. Foreign Policy: the Search for a New Role* (New York : Macmillan, 1993); Thomas L. Brewer, *American Foreign Policy: a Contemporary Introduction* (3rd. ed.; Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1992); David Callahan, *Between Two Worlds: Realism, Idealism, and American Foreign Policy after the Cold War* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994); Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996); Bruce W. Jentleson, ed., *Perspectives on American Foreign Policy: Readings and Cases* (New York: Norton, 2000); Robert D. Kaplan, *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the post Cold War* (New York: Random House, 2000); Robert J. Lieber, ed., *Eagle Adrift: American Foreign Policy at the End of the Century* (New York: Longman, 1997); Robert S. Litwak, *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); Thomas J. McCormick, *America's Half-Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War and after* (2nd. ed.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); C. Richard Nelson and Kenneth Weisbrode eds., with a foreword by James N. Rosenau, *Reversing Relations with Former Adversaries: U.S. Foreign Policy after the Cold War* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998); Brad Roberts, ed., *U.S. Foreign Policy after the Cold War* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992); Alvin Z. Rubinstein, Albina Shayeich and Boris Zlotnikov, eds., *The Clinton Foreign Policy Reader: Presidential Speeches with Commentary* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2000); James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the post-Cold War World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); and James E. Winkates, J. Richard Walsh and Joseph M. Scolnick, Jr., eds., *U.S. Foreign Policy in Transition* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1994).
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3rd, when US military intelligence was able to confirm that Democrats and Biden were acting illegally to steal the election. DNI John Ratcliffe, we believe, issued a classified report to Trump and the DoD, documenting the foreign interference and cyber war operations carried out against America by foreign aggressors. The recent letter from the US Joint Chiefs reveals that the military will only follow lawful orders, and that the military will defend the US Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. From that letter The US views al-Sadr as a key Iranian ally in Iraq. He is best known for leading a vicious insurgency against US troops in the wake of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. 22:07 US Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Washington has restored a "level of deterrence" with Iran. "I call on the Iraqi factions to be deliberate, patient, and not to start military actions, and to shut down the extremist voices of some rogue elements until all political, parliamentary and international methods have been exhausted," he said. 17:23 British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab is now in the same city as Trump, having touched down in Washington "for a day of valuable talks with senior members of Congress ahead of [a] meeting with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo." Throughout history, the US has conducted many peace treaties for other countries, and has resolved conflicts by stepping in and implementing its foreign relations diplomacy. But it has not been a smooth ride of foreign policy. In the three war study cases discussed below, the United States has played a more passive role in some instances, and rush into military action ignoring further diplomacy in other instances. In the current war in Iraq, the US has touched upon all implementation areas from the first stages of diplomatic involvement to issuing final ultimatums threatening the country in co Funding gives us more weapons! Thank you patriots! Oh and If you disable the Ad-blocker - on your deathbed you will receive total consciousness. So you got that going for you...which is nice! Disable. This is the military action we have been talking about. The EBS/blackout is happening. These days will go down in the history books. The charade we have witnessed is serving a higher purpose: to get our country back. As I have kept telling you: They got this! (regarding voter fraud). The Patriots are in control! Three Spiritual Perspectives on the Current Mayhem. The 9D Arcturian Council: Receiving Pleadian, Sirian, Lyran & Andromedan Energies. Big Pharma's Finest Hour? We believed that we had to change policy on nations developing such weapons in order to eliminate the possibility of a link between WMD and terrorism. Saddam's regime was the place to start, not because he represented the only threat, but because his was the only regime actually to have used such weapons, there were outstanding UN resolutions in respect of him and his record of bloodshed suggested he was capable of aggressive, unpredictable, catastrophic actions. In addition, the UN sanctions imposed on Iraq because of its WMD programme, were crumbling and therefore containment "the policy up