

Realism: a strategic approach to energy security

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Outline

- The concept of security
- Realism in International Relations
- Realism: agency and structure
- Realism and energy

The concept of security

- What is security?
- Whose security we are talking about?
- What counts as a security issue?
- How can security be achieved?

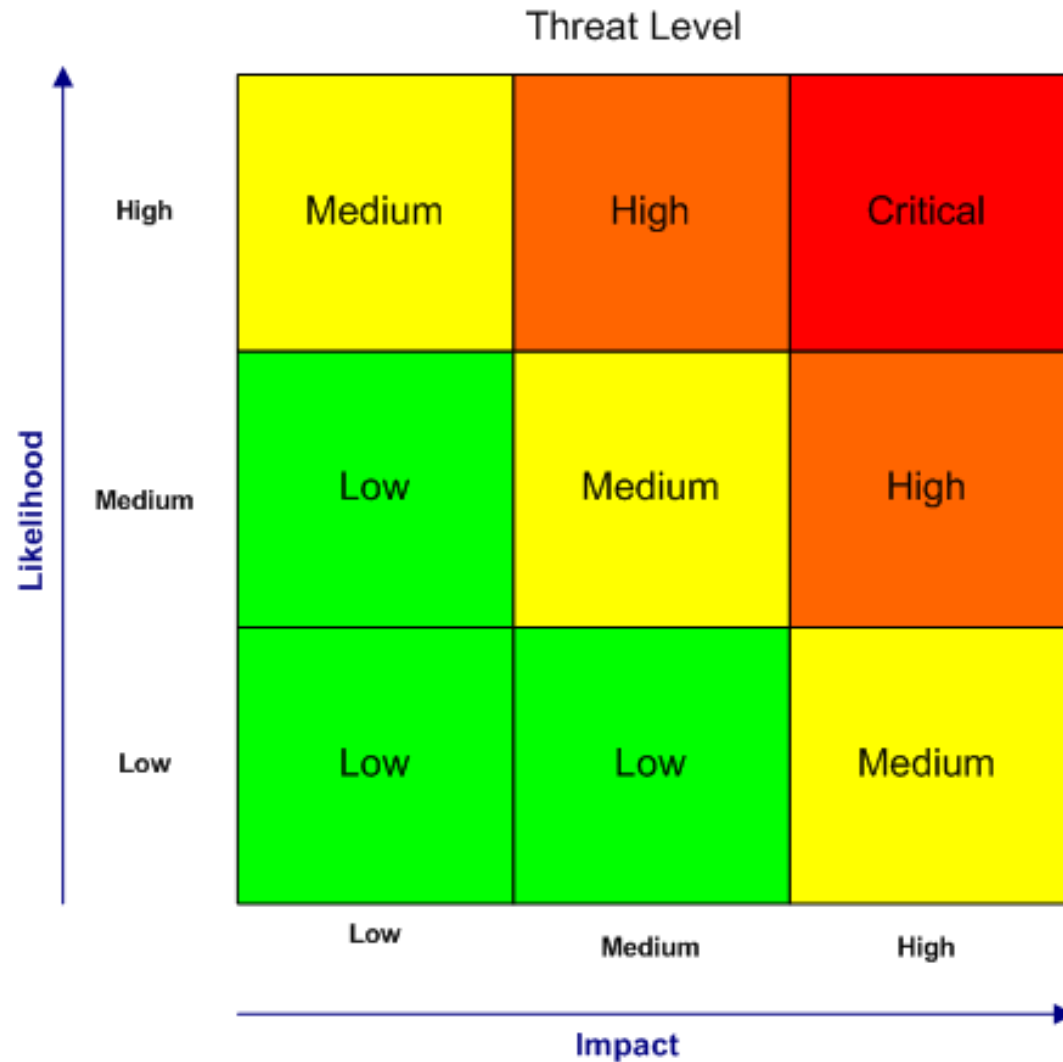
The concept of security

- What is security?
 - organizing principle (survival, subsistence, emancipation, etc.)
- Whose security we are talking about?
 - referent object (state, individual, social class, etc.)
- What counts as a security issue?
 - threat (military, social, environmental, etc.)
- How can security be achieved?
 - measures (military, economic liberalization, social reform, etc.)

Related concepts

- **Referent object:** an entity which is to be secured.
- **Security actor:** relates to referent object in order to secure or threaten the referent object.
- **Threat:** a source of existing or potential damage or destruction of referent object.
- **Impact:** given by extent of a threat and importance of a referent object.
- **Risk:** a likelihood that a particular threat is realized.

Impact-risk matrix



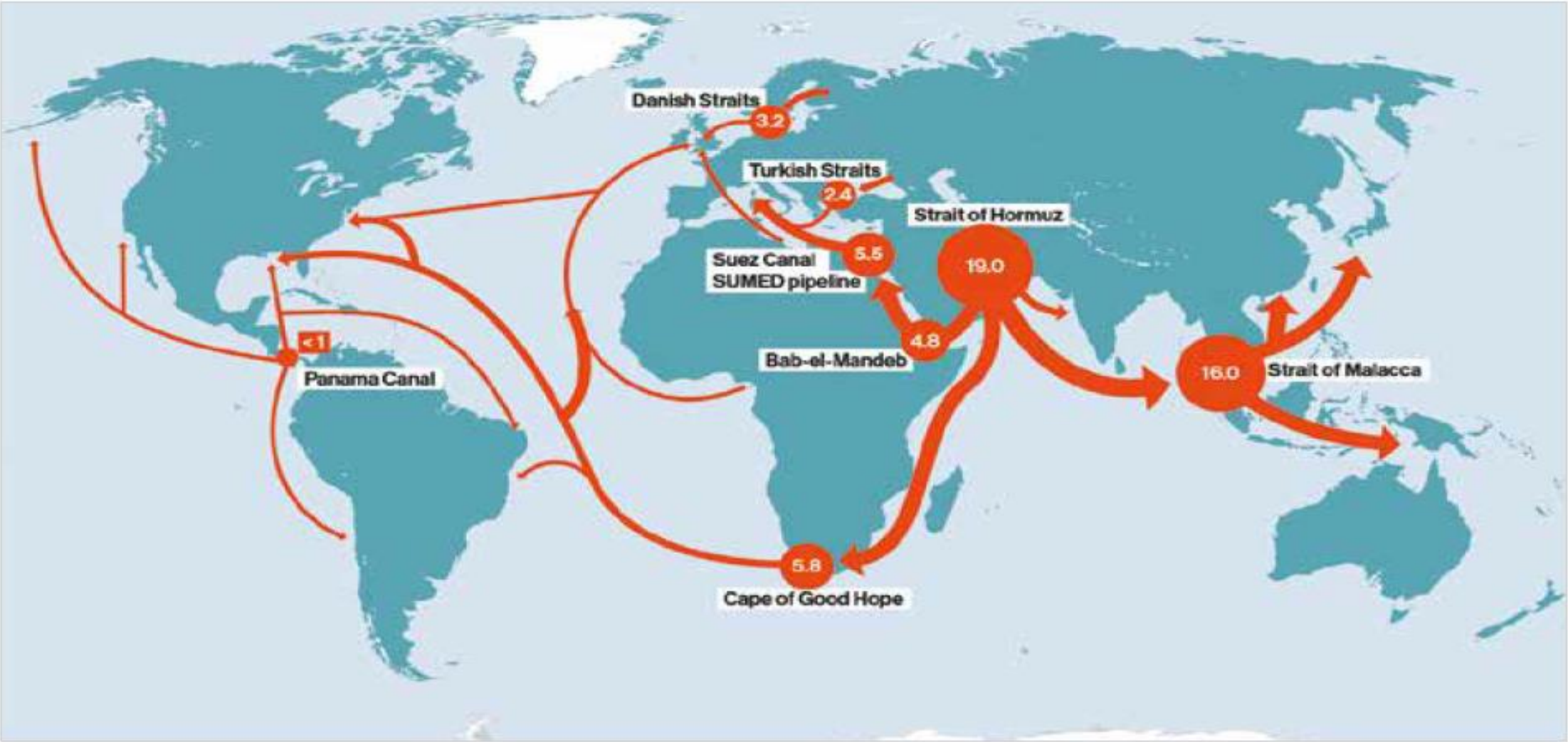
Realism in IR

- International system (IS) is **anarchically organized**
- The IS is structured by **distribution of material capabilities**
- The IS consists of national states, **self-help units**, that seek **survival**
- **Conflict** is an **inherent feature** of IS
- There is a clear distinction between international and domestic level

Neoclassical geopolitics (NG)

- NG shares number of Realist assumptions
 - State-centrism
 - Emphasizes power distribution and military forces
 - Conflict as an inherent feature of international system
- NG emphasizes and focus on **geographical factors**
- Geographical space shapes opportunities and constraints of actors' behavior
- **Energy arena:** security of transport routes, chokepoints, control of production areas, and pipeline policies

Figure 11. Daily transit volumes through world maritime oil chokepoints



Note: All estimates in million barrels per day. Includes crude oil and petroleum liquids. Based on 2016 data.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Agency

- **Agency:** concept of a social actor
 - Actor: an entity that is able to make decisions
- Realism rejects optimistic liberal view of agency.
- Two main variants:
 - **Classical Realism:** agency connected to ambivalent human nature
 - **Neorealism:** agency based on rational actor model where actors optimize their security

Agency: national capabilities

- Most important feature: **power capability**
- Seen in material terms
- **Composite Index of National Capabilities**
- 6 indicators:
 - Total population
 - Urban population
 - Steel and iron production
 - TPES
 - Military expenditures
 - Number of military forces

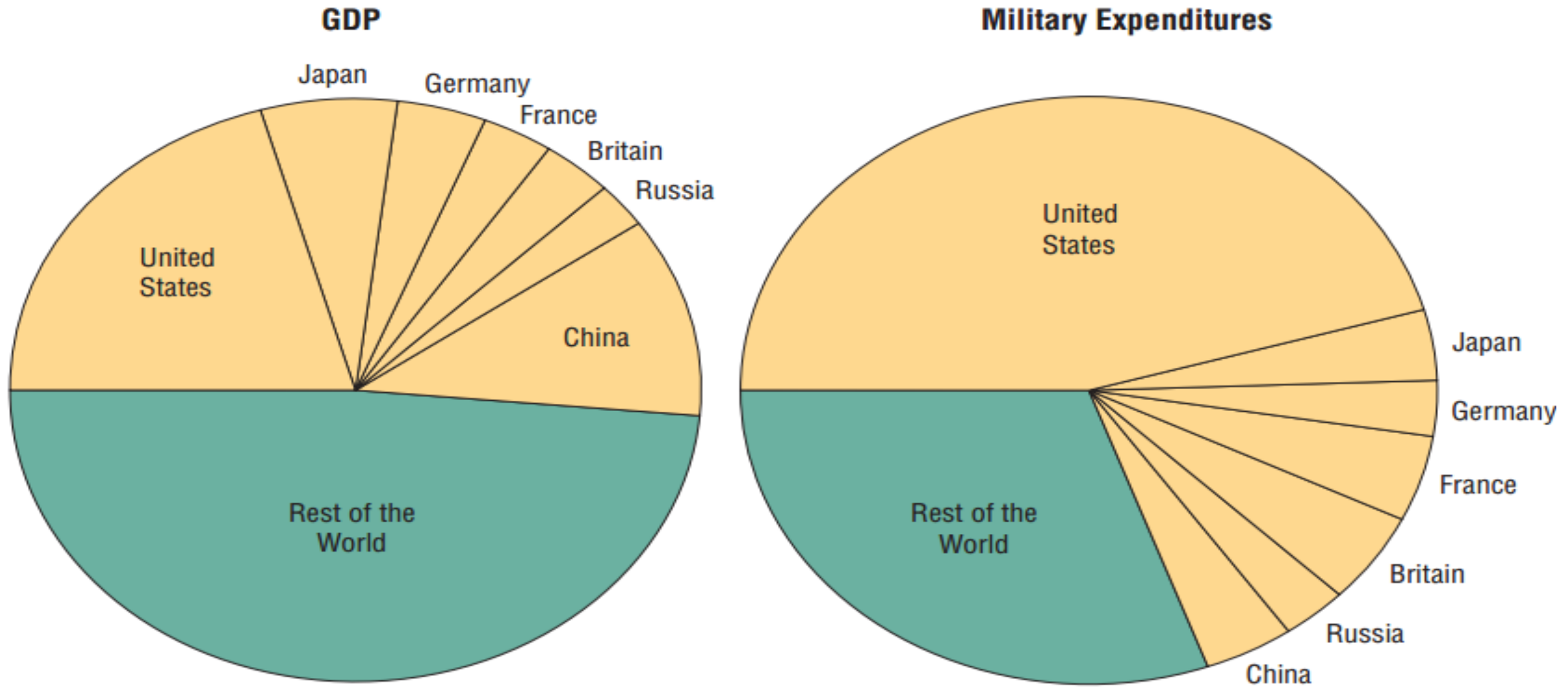
Number	Country	CINC
1	 China	.198578
2	 United States	.142149
3	 India	.073444
4	 Japan	.042675
5	 Russia	.039274
6	 Brazil	.024597
7	 Germany	.024082
8	 South Korea	.023878
9	 United Kingdom	.021158
10	 France	.018924
11	 Italy	.017420
12	 Turkey	.014317
13	 Pakistan	.013772
14	 Indonesia	.013708
15	 Iran	.013450
16	 North Korea	.012925
17	 Mexico	.012269
18	 Ukraine	.011835
19	 Spain	.011389
20	 Saudi Arabia	.010883

Structure

- **Structure:** a context that enables and constraints actions of actors
- Constant: **anarchy, functional undifferentiation**
- Variable: **distribution of power capabilities**

- Based on the distribution different configurations of IS are recognized:
 - Unipolar
 - Bipolar
 - Tripolar
 - Multipolar
 - Diffused

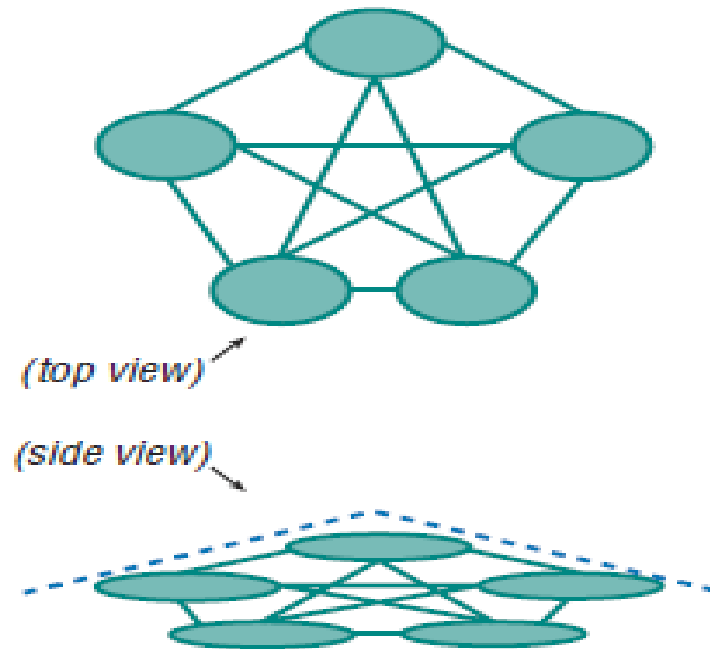
FIGURE 2.3 Great Power Shares of World GDP and Military Expenditures, 2008



*Note: GDP calculated by purchasing-power method. China's GDP using alternate method would be about half as large.
Data sources: World Bank, World Development Indicators 2009; SIPRI, SIPRI Yearbook 2009*

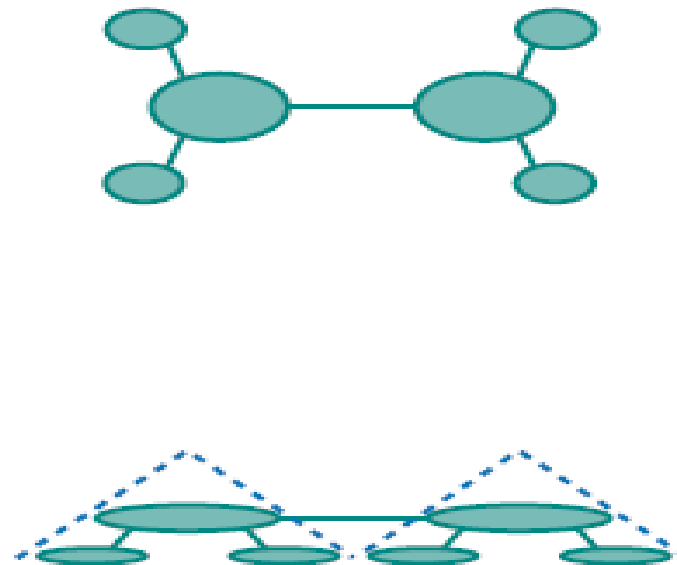
FIGURE 2.4 Power Distribution in the International System

Multipolar System



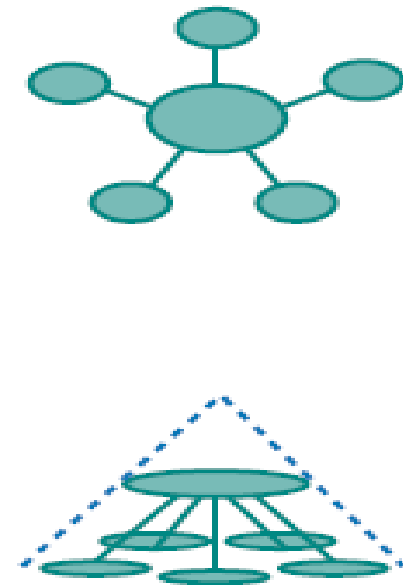
Flat hierarchy
More reciprocity
Less stable?

Bipolar



Split hierarchies
Dominance within blocs,
Reciprocity between blocs
Stable

Unipolar (Hegemony)



Steep hierarchy
More dominance
More stable?

Structure: balance of power

- **Balance of power** mechanism mediates structural effects
- Two conditions of balancing (Waltz 1979: 121):
 - International system must be anarchical
 - System must consist of units that seek survival
- It is distinguished between **internal and external balancing**:
 - Internal balancing: e.g. military build-up
 - External balancing: e.g. alliance formation

Structure: security dilemma

- The **inherent uncertainty** of an anarchical system and **self-help** nature of states lead to security dilemma
- Introduced by **John Herz** (1950)

Structure: security dilemma

*“Wherever ... **anarchic society** has existed ... there has arisen what may be called the ‘security dilemma’ of men, or groups, or their leaders. Groups or individuals living in such a constellation must be, and usually are, **concerned about their security from being attacked**, subjected, dominated, or annihilated by other groups and individuals. Striving to attain security from such attack, they are driven to acquire more and more power in order to escape the impact of the power of others. This, in turn, renders the others more insecure and compels them to prepare for the worst. Since **none can ever feel entirely secure in such world of competing units, power competition ensues**, and the vicious circle of security and power accumulation is on.” (Herz 1950: 157)*

Structure: security dilemma

- The **inherent uncertainty** of an anarchical system and **self-help** nature of states lead to security dilemma
- Since **security is seen as a zero-sum game** → security gain of one state brings security loss of another
- Result: escalating spiral of armament (**an arms race**)

FIGURE 2.7**Payoff Matrix in India-Pakistan PD Game**

		Pakistan	
		Cooperate	Defect
India	Cooperate	(3,3)	(1,4)
	Defect	(4,1)	(2,2)

Note: First number in each group is India's payoff, second is Pakistan's. The number 4 is highest payoff, 1 lowest.

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Conflict over resources

- National resources are dominant sources of power (Klare 2008).
- Energy resources are integral part of the national states' power capabilities.
- Strategic nature of energy resources is given by:
 - **Limited amount** and availability of these **resources**.
 - **Relative scarcity** of its **substitutes**.
- In combination with anarchical nature of IR → pushes states towards competition over resources.



Self-sufficiency

- State is able to satisfy its whole consumption from domestic resources
- **Self-sufficiency vs. autarky** (or independence)
- Latter assumes independence of external influences
- Self-sufficiency often not a realistic option

Economic nationalism

- Approach that evaluates economic policies based on their contribution to state power
- **Economic mercantilism:** accumulation of scarce resources
- **Strategic trade:** state support of strategically important companies



Energy security: strategic approach

“War, war never changes.”

- **State-centrism:** state as a key actor.
 - The main goal is **survival**.
 - State interactions governed by **balance of power mechanism**.
 - **Energy commodities** are considered as a **source of power**.
 - Energy comm. might be **causes and means of conflict**.
 - Limited amount of energy comm.: **zero sum game**.
 - Emphasis on **relative gains**.
- Militarization of energy issues (**logic of war**, Ciuta 2010)

Realist tradition

Referent object	National state
Security actor	National state
Threat	Military conflict
Values	Territorial integrity Political sovereignty
Measures	Military build-up Balancing

- **Hans Morgenthau:** *“National security must be defined as integrity of the national territory and its institutions.”* (1960: 563) ... *“The survival of a political unit, such as a nation, and its identity.”* (1952a: 973)
- **Walter Lippmann:** *“A nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values, if it wishes to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war.”* (1943: 51)
- **Arnold Wolfers:** *“Security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked.”* (1962: 149)

- **Stephen Walt:** security studies are *“the study of the threat use and control of military force.”* (Lynn-Jones 1991)
- **Kenneth Waltz:** *“In anarchy, security is highest end. Only if survival is assured can states safely seek such other goals ... The first concern of states is not to maximize power but to maintain their positions in the system.”* (1979: 126)
- **International security:** competition for power among states, understood in terms of military capabilities.