Peter Katzenstein, ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*

Peter Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security"

Most studies of international politics assume that the national interest is relatively defined and set. This doesn't adequately explain changing views of states' interests. This book looks to sociological explanations of how states' interests are defined. It examines the cultural-institutional context of policy and the constructed identities of states, governments, and other political actors.

Three sociological concepts used:

Norm – collective expectations for proper behavior of actors with a given identity. Norms can either define identities of actors based on their actions or prescribe behavior, or both.

Identity – "varying constructions of nation- and statehood." These include national ideologies of distinctiveness and purpose, and variations in statehood enacted domestically and projected internationally.

Culture – "collective models of nation-state authority or identity, carried by custom or law." Refers to evaluative standards (such as norms and values) and cognitive standards (such as rules and models) that define social actors.

While the end of the Cold War has focused attention on a variety of broader "national security" issues, this book focuses on traditional national security issues in order to attack other views on their strongest grounds, rather than seem to try to mop-up the margins of security studies.

Structural realists and neoliberal institutionalists agree on the central importance of international anarchy. Neoliberalism allows that institutions have an affect, but limits itself to looking at institutional constraints on interests.

This book moves further by taking the neoliberal theory of the cultural-institutional context of state actions that defines regimes as combinations of principles, norms, rules, and procedures. This work, however, takes norms to be premises of action, and thus expand on the behavioral and rationalist assumptions of neoliberalism. It also notes that Cultural-institutional factors help constitute the actors whose conduct they seek to regulate. History is not constant, nor progressive: it constantly changes and has an effect on state identity.

In sum, this broader view that does not assume national security interests are fixed, but rather seeks to find them in political identity and cultural-institutional context.

Martha Finnemore, "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Assistance"

Realist and liberal theories, which focus on geostrategic and economic motives, do not adequately explain the occurrence of military intervention in places such as Somalia, Cambodia, and the protection of Iraqi Kurds and Shiites.

This pattern of intervention can only be understood with reference to the changing normative environment in which they occur.

Using Norms to Understand International Politics

In the above mentioned situations, not only do geostrategic and economic incentives seem to be absent, even a more classical liberal desire to build democracy is subsumed beneath the humanitarian objectives. (Note – if this was the case in Somalia and Iraq, it seems less true in Cambodia and in U.S. and U.N. policy toward the former Yugoslavia, Haiti and Sierra Leone.)

The key is in investigating interest, rather than assuming it. The key to this is by looking at norms, which allow one to focus on how interests change. This view holds that norms shape interests and interests shape action. Other factors, notably power constraints, also shape actions, but norms create the conditions in which they can occur.

Justifications, while not explaining motivation, are important to consider, because they show the norms that states feel they should follow, and thus allow us to look at how norms have changed over time. Further, while states obviously do violate international norms, they do not often do so.

Humanitarian Intervention in the Nineteenth Century

Four case studies are used to show that:

1. Humanitarian justification for intervention is not new to the 20th century.
2. Humanitarian action was rarely taken when it jeopardized other stated goals or interests of the state.
3. Humanitarian action could be taken either uni- or multilaterally.
4. Interveners identified with the victims of humanitarian disasters in some important and exclusive way. All acts of intervention were to support Christians, and generally there was some closer bond (i.e. Orthodox Slavs, for the Russians).

The Expansion of "Humanity" and Sovereignty

During the 19th and 20th centuries, the norms relating to how interveners identify with victims and determine who is an appropriate candidate for intervention changed dramatically.

Slavery – By the 1830s, blacks Africans had become human enough that slavery was (in Europe) banned, and Britain even actively began to attack the slave trade. Still, slavery was allowed to exist where it did and was not seen as reason for intervention.

Colonization and after – Colonization had, in many cases, a moral context in which it sought to

bring civilization to the “savage” parts of the world. In the extreme, this sought to make them human. By the mid 20th century, however, liberal notions of universal human rights had reached their logical expansion to all humanity, and decolonization became the norm. As sovereign statehood became associated with human rights, unilateral intervention became harder to justify.

Humanitarian Intervention Since 1945

Not only have ideas of humanity changed, so too have ideas of legitimate intervention. Thus Indian intervention in East Pakistan (Bangladesh), Tanzanian intervention in Uganda, and Vietnamese intervention in Cambodia have not claimed a humanitarian motivation, even though all of them clearly intervened in situations of great humanitarian distress.

Since the end of the Cold War has made multilateral intervention more feasible, it has been used on several situations. While these have been criticized as uneffective, they have not been criticized as illegitimate. (Note – The NATO intervention in Serbia perhaps suggests that multilateralism is not enough to gain legitimacy in the broader wold community.)

Thomas Risse-Kappan “Collective Identity in a Democratic Community: The Case of NATO.”

NATO is puzzling – why did the U.S. become entangled in this alliance after World War 2, why did the alliance survive internal conflict during the Cold War, and why has it survived the Cold War and remained the strongest of the security institutions? These questions are best answered by liberalism in the Kantian sense, not realism or neoliberal institutionalism.

Realism can explain the formation of NATO, but equally it could explain many other potential behaviors (e.g. Western Europe balancing with the Soviet Union against the U.S., which was the clearly dominant power; the U.S. deciding it was strong enough to go it alone and ignoring Europe). Sophisticated balance-of-threat realism might better explain it, but only by delving so deeply into ideological aspects that it becomes indistinguishable from liberalism. Similarly, the maintenance of the alliance and its cooperative leadership can be explained by some versions of realism, but based on incorrect assumptions about cooperation and without much parsimony. The continued existence might be accounted for by some versions as well, but offers of a "partnership for peace" to Russia would be difficult to explain.

Liberal theories of IR agree that:
1. The fundamental agents of international politics are individuals acting in a social context, not states.
2. The interests and preferences of national governments have to be analyzed as a result of domestic (institutional and social) as well as external factors.
3. Ideas (values, norms, and knowledge) are causally consequential in IR, especially in regards to state interests, preferences and choices.
4. International institutions form a social structure presenting constraints and opportunities to actors.

Liberal democratic nations do not fight other liberal democratic nations. They do face "cooperation problems" and even conflict, but they know that they are not likely to fight, and are in fact more cooperative.

Democracies tend to form democratic international institutions. They anticipate each others demands or consult partners before making conclusions, they use the institutional norms to back up their own positions, and they bargain through the use of rules that do not include coercion, but frequently resort to references to domestic pressures and constraints. When these norms are violated, one expects to see excuses, justifications, or compensatory action.

According to the Liberal view, NATO emerged from the clash of fundamental ideas about the domestic and international order of the post-WWII era. When Stalin would not join the (already extant) liberal community, and instead reneged his promises and, well, Sovietized Eastern Europe, the liberal nations institutionalized the transatlantic security community to cope with this threat. It was formed as a genuinely multilateral organization, privileging European states far beyond their relative power in decision making.

The Suez crisis of 1956 shows that expectations of behavior when norm violations occur do bear out. The Cuban missile crisis shows the strength of norms in that, during this moment of greatest tension, not only did the U.S. continue to consult its allies, but would not make concessions until

Turkey agreed to let obsolete missiles be removed from its territory.

Liberal theory accounts not only for the continued existence, but even for the expansion of NATO in the post-Cold War world. Because it was an institutionalization of an existing community of values, there is no reason that it should not remain after the original catalyst of its formation disappeared. Further, as the community of democratic values spreads, there is no reason the alliance should not spread with it.

NATO is not unique, although it is the prime example, of security communities among democracies. Alliances among non-democracies do not seem to have this interaction pattern, and in fact more closely resemble realist expectations.

Paul Kowert and Jeffrey Legro, “Norms, Identity, and Their Limits: A theoretical Reprise”

Neorealists and neoliberals both largely ignore cultural variables. Realists do so by focusing on microeconomic models of generic states acting rationally in an international “market,” while

neoliberals allow for norms but treat actor identity and interests as fixed. The sociological approach used by the authors in this book problematize these assumptions, and are thus able to move farther.

They concentrate on three categories:

1. The effects of norms on interests. Norms can shape interests and preferences, even in ways that contradict strategic imperatives.
2. The ways norms shape instrumental awareness of links between interests and behavior. They shape actor's awareness and acceptance of different means that might be used to achieve there ends.
3. The effects of norms on other normative structures (including actor identities). They can help construct national identities, and may affect norms at different levels.

The authors in this book, however, rarely look at the process of norm and identity construction. As a start on building a theory, Kowert and Legro discuss three processes that generate, maintain, and change political norms.

1. Ecological Processes – Result from interaction of actors and their environment. One category considers the role of ambiguity in social knowledge, a second looks continuity in the environment, and a third at sudden changes. But none yet provide clear analysis of what effects the environment has.
2. Social Processes – generalizations about the way human beings, organizations, states, or other political agents interact. One form looks says that norms are spread through a simple process of social diffusion. A second says that norms, especially identity, emerge from a process of in-group/out-group differentiation and social role definition.
3. Internal Processes – occur within political actors, and are often dismissed in the study of phenomena of collectives. Still, there effects may be felt on other levels. Such theories include cognitive, linguistic, and rational choice approaches.

Five more theoretical and methodological challenges:

1. Knowing norms – How widely must norms be shared to be considered collective? On what does their regulative authority depend? Also, only norms that have survived of those that seem to be emerging at a given time are studied (i.e. why has the prohibition on the use of chemical and nuclear weapons largely held, while the ban on bombarding undefended towns has not?)
2. An embarrassment of norms – There are a lot of norms out there, and one can almost always identify a norm to explain a given behavior after the fact. Which norms are most important is thus a question.
3. Continuity and change – How does one account for both stasis and change in political norms within a given culture?
4. Material and normative worlds – How precisely are the interaction of material forces such as physical environment and power of actors relate to norms?
5. Agency and norms – How to account for the fact that political actors, while shaped by norms, also at times set out to deliberately manipulate or change norms. This is linked to the more general problem of social science, that of studying norms without altering the phenomenon being studied.

All of the above mentioned problems can, however, be dealt with, and the sociological method is the most promising in examining international relations. Go team, go!