

CHAPTER TWO

Chapter Two

3. Theories of Foreign Policy

3.1 Foreign Policy Understanding

The concept and phenomenon of foreign policy generally define and delimit the scope, relevance and meaning of states interdependence and international relation. Why do some states define their interests in relation to other states or precisely extend their impact or look for mutual cooperation with other regional or extra-regional states? At what point do states mutually relate with other concerns, and through which auspices or instruments? These structural divergences distinguish and characterize three distinct and complementary institutions in the study and analysis of international politics, as follows:

- Foreign Relations,
- Foreign Affairs, and,
- Foreign Policy.

This means that states could manage different foreign affairs but are consistent in the pursuit and maintenance of respective national interest subsumed in the statement of the foreign policy of each state. However, the contrary is not obliterated as some states could rarely manage different foreign policies towards other states, therefore, it is inconsequential to assume that foreign affairs ministry make foreign policies. Rather it can initiate (issues of) foreign policy decision process and of course carry out foreign policy decision; however, the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of foreign policy lies

directly on the Head of government who is the Primus inter paribus and the Cabinet. They are the decision makers as well as the policy makers¹.

3.2 The Meaning of Foreign Policy

Foreign policy presupposes international relations, which encompass the formal and informal relationship of states that could be cooperative or conflictual. The conflictual or cooperative course of international politics is essentially the politics of national interests of states, which are substantial in the foreign policy. Foreign policy in this direction could be viewed as the representation of greater international participation and /or interdependence of states. It manifests greater realization that states concerns are mutually interdependent and consequently internationalism, a forum for intercourse of national interest.

Historically, the concept and practice of “foreign affairs” or foreign relation” were common in the 17th century to designate the conduct of states business at home and abroad. It refers to the business relationship of states². The concept of foreign policy as a coherent set of propositions reflecting states interests appears to be a product of industrial age systematization and bureaucracy³.

¹ A.K. Mohammed, et al., (ed.), Malaysia Foreign Policy Issues and Perspectives, Kula Lumpur: National Institute of Public Administration, 1990, p. 28.

² K. Joel , et al., ed., The Oxford Companion to the Politics of the World, 2nd editions, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, P. 290.

³ Ibid.

Foreign policy is perceived accordingly as “the sum of official external relations conducted by an independence actor (usually a state) in international relations.”⁴

International relation is understood here as “ the web of transaction across state boundaries by all kinds of groups and individuals” while foreign relations refers to “ the same activities from the point of view of these actors as they move outside their own society into dealings with others.”⁵ Foreign policy is further defined as: “as strategy or planned course of action developed by the decision makers of a state vis-à-vis other states or international entities to achieve specific goals defined in terms of national interest.”⁶

This definition buttresses some major components of foreign policy as:

1. Strategic course of action;
2. The role of decision makers;
3. States and internationalism;
4. National interest of states.

These among others characterize states foreign policies defined in terms of national interest. A state’s foreign policy reflects and responds to specific ends of national interest, while specific foreign policy maybe initiated by the state for a purposive end, or determined by the continual flux of the international system, or may become a reaction to

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ziring Lawrence, Jack C.Plano and Roy Olton, The International Relations: A Political Dictionary, ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara, California, Denver, Colorado, Oxford, England

initiatives, action or relations of/ with states⁷. Major steps in foreign policy process include translating national interest considerations into specific goals and objectives. This is one of the key functions of decision makers. National interest in this regards is the compendium of a country's policy objectives, which represents its domestic fronts. It forms and translates the salient issues in a state's political history and political economy. Among others, it also

- I. evaluates the state's capabilities, potentialities and possibilities of achieving the desired national interest goals. The making and formulation of specific foreign policy are often extensively bureaucratic and in-depth. This is because the process involves holistic national interest in relation to the variable demands of the international system.
- II. designs a strategy for using the state's capabilities to deal with the challenges and changes in the pursuit of the policy goals. This is founded on the grounds of deep recognition of the ever-changing nature of international relation. The strategy checkmates the unprecedented occurrences that may arise in implementation or pursuit. The plan is therefore, target-oriented.
- III. defines and sets the international and domestic platform of interrelations and situational factors related to the policy goals. The foreign policy of states defines the level and manner of participation, independence, interrelations, and cooperation or conflict management.

⁷ Ibid.

- IV. undertakes requisite and appropriate action to issues involved. The national pursuit or enforcement of foreign policy involves taking and initiating appropriate actions and steps to realize the set priorities.
- V. responds to changes in the international changes. Policy and decision-makers periodically evaluate and review the extent of progress made in achieving national objectives in due time. It assesses the conditions and instruments of change, the nature of the international system, the obstacles and factors that promote the achievement of the desired goal, that is, it evaluates the level of success across failures. This means that foreign policy may change according to the demand of the international relations

3.3 Theories of Foreign Policy

Major issues and doctrines of foreign policy have already been analyzed in the beginning of this chapter on the discourse on foreign policy perspectives. However, it is essential to restate the fact that foreign policy presupposes, preoccupies and predisposes the forum for international relations; while international relations, defines the level of compatibility, competitiveness, interdependence and alliances of foreign interests subsumed in the foreign relations of states.

In a platform of mutually-assured protection, not necessarily determined in terms of balance of power and balance of interests, foreign policy theories and perspectives are expected to contend the guidelines and feasible approaches for the relation of common

and agreed interests. Different schools of thought proffer different theories as such sieving out the relevant theoretical endpoint from related schools on the first perspective

3.3.1 Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy

Realism as a philosophical doctrine primarily maintains the objective existence of the world or physical phenomena. That reality exists in the thing itself. This tenet has been drawn from the ancient (Aristotelian) Greek philosophers who ratiocinated on the primordial cause of reality, insisting that the phenomenon is really real. Realist school posits a states-centric international system that is characterized by structural anarchy and competition for power and influence.⁸

The realists perceive the state as the principal unit of analysis that configures other factors of the international system or within which they function. For instance, sovereignty and nationalism are the principle attributes of the state that exercise enormous and decisive impact on foreign policy of states to the extent that the responses of states to external environment and issues are expatiated mainly in the terms of the interaction and conflicts of nationalism and sovereignty.

Another distinguishing feature of the realist is the prominence of rationality and homogeneity in the conduct of state affairs. The government of the state is perceived as a unitary homogenous actor and profoundly rational actor. To act rationally is for the realist

⁸ Ziring Lawrence, Jack C.Plano, Roy Olton, The International Relations: A Political Dictionary, ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara, California, Denver, Colorado, Oxford, England 1995, p.6-7

to have a preoccupying concern for power. It is for rational statesman a sine qua non for everything and the only condition for ensuring national security, peace and order in the international society⁹. In this perspective, to move out rationally is to pursue the national interest defined in terms of power.

Classical realists like E.H. Carr (1939), Nicholas Spykman (1942) and Hans J. Morgenthau (1978) insist that states are influence maximizers, and that they seek to control and shape their external environment and influence. For them, power is an indispensable character of foreign policy. They arguably insist that, knowing “ how much a nation has, they argue, tell much about the foreign policies it is likely to pursue... [that] s states’ international power [sic] or capabilities increase, they will seek to extend their political interests abroad; as their power ebbs, their actions and aspirations will be scaled back accordingly.”¹⁰ They maintain succinctly, that power determines intentions, that is, the stronger the state’s international position, the more expansive its foreign policy interests¹¹.

In the post-cold war international system, realists argue that nation-states will inexorably return to their individual pursuit for power and status in the global community. They perceive the structure of the global system as very vital because states believe their security is dependent on the system equilibrium centered on a balance of power that is diplomatically and militarily oriented than legal. This means that post-cold

⁹ G.O. Olusanya and R.A Akindele (eds), the structure and process of F..P., P. 13

¹⁰ Neil J. Smelser, J., (ed) international Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, United Kingdom: Elsevier Science Ltd, vol. 9, 2001, P. 5737.

¹¹ Ibid., pp.5737-5738

war was to trigger than reduce multi-polar strategic actions, demonstrating an era of increase in individual states' nuclear capabilities to enhance security and power status. Therefore, the strategic efforts by India, Israel, Iraq, Iran, North Korea and Pakistan to establish themselves, as nuclear capable states are manifestations of state increased demand for security¹².

The influence of the realist paradigm is expressed in the study and analysis of Algeria's foreign policy. The Algerian government personified by the Chief Executive, the President and his Foreign Minister, is the principal state actor in Algeria's foreign policy. Algerian state is influenced, shaped and determined by the domestic forces of national power, and the external forces of international society. Algeria should be regarded as the supreme value of the nation because without the imperatives of national survival, there can be no other value. On the other hand Algeria should aim at maximizing the advantage to Arab, afro-Asian, and Afro-Latin American cooperation, and purse the goal of the North Africa integration.

One of the realist strengths is reiterated in the perception that it depicts the value of power in understanding state behavior. Significant change in a state international status will consequently lead to significant changes in its foreign policy, and which invariably mean significant changes in its domestic interests. Its major weakness lies in the fact that it is largely indeyerminable¹³. also, as state-centric theory, it undermines the vita; roles of non-state actors such as the multinational corporations and liberation

¹² Zring Lawrence, International Relations: A Political Dictionary, pp. 7-8

¹³ Smelser, international Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences P. 5738

movement which are pre-requisites for studying and understanding the dynamic forces of Africa international relations. It is also incapable of formulating theories of sub-structural or social class basis of international relations¹⁴.

3.3.2 Liberalism Theories

Liberalism is rooted in the 18th century of constitutionalism, laissez-faire economics and parliamentary in which can be variously understood as a political tradition, a political philosophy and a general philosophical theory, encompassing a theory of value, a conception of the person and a moral theory as well¹⁵.

As a political tradition its meaning varies across states. In England, (the birthplace of liberalism) liberal tradition in politics, centers on religious tolerance, government by consent, personal, and economic freedom. In France, it is associated with secularism and democracy, while in the United States, it is conceived as a devotion to personal liberty with an antipathy to capitalism; however in Australia, it tends to be more sympathetic to capitalism and less desirous of civil liberties¹⁶.

¹⁴ G.O. Olusanya & Akindle: The Structure and process of Foreign Policy, P. 13

¹⁵ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/liberalism/> p.1.

¹⁶ Ibid.,

For the liberal , “there is no opposition between domestic policy and foreign policy, and the question so often raised and exhaustively discussed, whether Considerable of foreign policy take precedence over those of domestic policy or vice versa, is, in eyes, an idle one¹⁷”.

The main points of the liberal world view or perspective can thus be summarized as follows:

- (a) Cooperation is a central feature of all human relations, including international relations.
- (b) Individual liberty is of supreme political importance.
- (c) Rationality is the defining, universal, characteristic of human harmony.
- (d) Government is necessary, but the centralization of power is inherently bad.”¹⁸

Liberalism is a doctrine that has faith in the capacity of human beings to solve seemingly intractable problem through collective action.¹⁹

In that vein, they emphasize that security is not measured or determined in nuclear arsenals or in the capability of weapon proliferation, but in improving the physical and psychological well-being of the society. Ipso facto, balance of power arrangements are effected not on geopolitical terms but essentially on geo-economics relations of states²⁰.

The significance of liberalism lies in building a world, in fact, a borderless world devoid of strategic military arsenals. For them, democracy thrives in a demilitarized society that

¹⁷ <http://www.mises.org/liberal/ch3sec1>

¹⁸ Jill Steans and Lloyd Pettiford, International Relations Perspectives and Themes , First Publication 2001, Malaysia., p.48

¹⁹ Ibid. p.54

²⁰ Ziring Lawrence, Jack C.Plano, Roy Olton, The International Relations: A Political Dictionary, ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara, California, Denver, Colorado, Oxford, England p.7

requires greater stress and efforts on confidence-building measures, which could be accomplished by establishing institutions that minimize, if not eliminate threat and maximize economic security of nations. Proponents conclusively assert that: “this is not just a theory about politics: it is a substantive, perfectionist, moral theory about the good. And on this view, the right thing to do is to promote development, and only a regime securing each individual extensive liberty can accomplish this.”²¹ These proponents include John Locke, John Rawls, Maurice Cranston, John Stewart Mill, T.H. Green, L.T. Hobhouse, John Dewey, Bernard Bosanquet and so on.

3.3.3 Behaviorism Theory

Behaviorism as a philosophical tenet is concerned about human and animal behavior. It involves the perception and analysis of human interrelationship and interaction with the society. It explains human action from the verification of his external circumstance in relation to actual character.

One writer has summarized behaviorism in this way: “The central tenet of behaviorism is that thoughts, feelings, and intentions, mental processes all, do not determine what we do. Our behavior is the product of our conditioning. We are biological machines and do not consciously act, rather we react to stimuli”²².

²¹ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/liberalism/>

²² David Cohen, “Behaviorism” In the Oxford Companion to the Mind, Richard L. Gregory, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. p.71

Therefore, in the analysis of foreign policy, the behaviorist approach is focused on the individual human beings rather than on the larger political units as the standards of analysis. The units are as formed by the human actors. Unlike the realist, the behaviorist approach perceives political actors as primarily individuals with emotions, prejudices, and predisposition and character linings of human beings. Thus, political process is explained in its relatedness to human actions, motivations and personalities of participants, and of course the inevitable influence of the society. In other words, foreign policy is perceived as a human policy than institutional policy.²³

The Behavioral approach is characterized by these procedural methodologies. The first is the insistence on systematic investigation of the social phenomena. This entails two basic scientific processes.

- a. The research involves a clear statement of hypothesis and a rigorous ordering of evidence. The research must distinguish between independent and dependent variables, establish their relationship and forms of variable in verifiable hypothesis.
- b. The process involves what David Singer call data making. This means that facts should not only be sought and accumulated, but should necessarily be converted to data.²⁴

The second methodological approach is its insistence on scientific empiricisms. This involves greater emphasis on empirical analytical methods, guided by theory. It defines

²³ G.O. Olusanya & Aindele (eds), The Structure and Process of Foreign Policy, P. 13

²⁴ Ibid., p.p.13-14

and explains all social phenomena in terms of the observed and observable behavior of human beings.

The third approach is the preference for quantification and measurement of variables. According to Robert Dahl, the growth of the survey method enhances the application of quantitative techniques to the analysis of social phenomena. Thus, the behaviorist considers human character and values major determinants of the political process administered by state actors.

Finally, the behavioral approach aims at developing a general theory of human behavior which is applicable to international politics. In doing this, the behaviorist seeks to adapt and adopt insights from related disciplines like sociology and psychology for general theoretical model to explain human and political behaviors. Ipso facto, the behaviorist theory has an interdisciplinary approach.²⁵

3.3.4 Status Quo Policy Theorists:

The status theories are conservationists and defensive in nature. Their theory is centered on “ Any foreign policy aimed at maintaining the existing international territorial, ideological or power distribution”²⁴ A state will likely seek to maintain this policy when it enjoys a vantage position in the world politics or international system. It

²⁵ Ibid., p.25

²⁴ Ibid.

seeks to maintain the stability of the existing status quo than alter it as evident in the policy of the revisionists who are obviously dissatisfied with the existing status quo and seek structural alteration. The status quo policy is desired and carried out by a hegemonies state over and against the expansionist state of the revisionist policy. The power alignment that arise out of the status quo-revisionist divisions among states may lead to the formation of alliances and counter alliances which may also lead to the development of balance of power system. For instance:

During the cold war, more than 40 states were at one time or another allied militarily with the United States, ostensibly to defend the status quo by deterring aggression or other forms of violent, revolutionary change initiated by anti-status quo Communist. The Soviet Union challenged the U.S. generated status quo in ideological terms that pitted the forces of capitalism against those of revolutionary, Marxist-inspired communism. Each state regarded the other's policy as expansionist imperialism, although the revisionist, anti-status quo Soviets insisted that their cause had the popular support of the people everywhere. The failure of the Soviet Marxist appeal, however, was witnessed in the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the abandonment of Communist systems in Eastern Europe, and finally, in the self-destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991. it could be said, therefore, that the status quo prevailed over revisionism during the era of the Cold War.²⁵

With these multi-polar positions in foreign relations of states and state actors, we shall be able to determine in the subsequent chapters the vital role of Algeria in harnessing the contrasting political ideologies, and Algerian revolution in the region and the whole of Africa, and also underline the relevance of her African policy initiative towards effective regional integration. These theories serve as the perspective or framework for analysis of the divergent roles of Algeria in North Africa.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 10.