

**IS THE LEVEL OF ANALYSIS A  
METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEM  
FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

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(SESSION 8-2)

**SYNOPSIS** This paper examines the level of analysis problem and its theoretical significance for the study of the international system. It reviews the theoretical problem, particularly in relation to the development of a Waltzian interpretation of international studies. The analysis links between levels and units of analysis as an inevitable endeavour for international studies and demonstrates that international practice affects theory. It argues that a critical appraisal of the whole discussion through the eyes of methodological constructivism tends to broaden the discussion of a non-separate entity of studying structures and units. Therefore, the contribution of this paper is inclined towards a 'substantive understanding' of what may be called 'a substantive critical voice' towards the intellectual culture of international studies that in the end will question the feasibility of the separation of units discussion from the level of analysis problem.

This paper opens with a discussion of the historiography of the level of analysis problem in international studies as a methodological and conceptual primitive undertaking over the last fifty years. It is critically reflected in its origins as a methodological problem, its significance, and how it has been developed through questions and answers.

It starts with a survey of the level of analysis problem and looks at how international studies has seriously reflected the level of analysis problem. Theoretical implications have absorbed the problematisation that has developed in international studies, in which there is a tendency to analyse the problem of levels of analysis in methodological terms and in its relationship with the agent-structure debate in IR (International Relations).

Contemporary analysis of the level of analysis problem discusses it in terms of the theoretical debate on the agent-structure problem. The validity of the aspect that 'every time the observer is always confronted with a system, its subsystem and their respective environments', tentatively the notion of social, political and culture causality, however, stems from ideas about structure and agency.<sup>1</sup>

Supplementary to what Nuri Yurdusev has argued, there can be no separation between 'level of analysis' as an issue of how to study methodologically the object, and 'unit of analysis' as an issue of what to study, because they link to each other through the idea of the 'whole'.<sup>2</sup> The analysis extends the view of mutually existent problematisation through the agent-structure problem in IR.

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<sup>1</sup> David J. Singer, 'The level-of-analysis problem in International Relations', *World Politics*, Vol.14, No.1, (1961), pp.77-92.

<sup>2</sup> Nuri A. Yurdusev, 'Level of Analysis and Unit of Analysis', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 2, (1993), pp.77-88.

This paper goes further than this view and argues that challenges of the epistemological lens of positivist orthodoxy have failed to incorporate critical elements of methodological relationalism in its analysis. Without analysis of the ontological conditions of separation of unit of analysis and level of analysis, the analysis remains anchored to a commitment to a universalism epistemology of inventing universal laws of application.<sup>3</sup> In the agent-structure debate, there is not only a concern for political and social scientists, but the problem is expanded as it constitutes part of the ontology of the 'social world'.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to using methodological monism, of examining the ontological priority of structure or agents, structure or process, collective action or the individual, the relational perspective demonstrates the 'primacy of relations', which examines new levels of analysis based on the interaction between them.

## **1. Theory building in IR**

What does theory mean for IR? For philosophers theory is a nexus of ideas constructed in such a way to see the world that focuses on reality. In David Marsh and Garry Stoker's contribution, theory is endowed with a number of valuable functions in order to clarify aspects of the social world<sup>5</sup>: first, theory provides a guide as to what is to be investigated; second, theory is a framework within which to place observation of reality, and third, theory enables patterns of ideas to be developed sustainably.

In this paper, however, I would like to extract some aspects of IR from the broader perspective of theory in IR.

First, there is a belief in constructing theories on the basis of universal laws. As in natural sciences models are built up in order to explain the universe; a fact would become uncomplicated if its regularities decomposed in the lab. This was the hypothesis of a unity science for the social and the natural world.

Kenneth Waltz defines theory as merely a collection or set of laws pertaining to a particular behaviour or phenomenon.<sup>6</sup> So, the role of the researcher is to observe reality and

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<sup>3</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New, York: Addison-Wesley publishing Company, 1979).

<sup>4</sup>Colin Wight, 'The Agent-Structure Problem and Institutional Racism' *Political Studies*, Vol.1, 51, (2003), 706-721

<sup>5</sup> David Marsh and Garry Marsh, *Theory and Methods In Political Science*. (London, Macmillan,1995),p.17.

<sup>6</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New, York: Addison-Wesley publishing Company, 1979),p.2

then to report interconnected hypotheses based on similarities in behaviour. However, general laws do not construct theories. Theories are constructed by hypotheses, data and practices.

Second, theory is driven by its observations. There is a reliance on the belief in empirical validation or falsification. In the course of theoretical generalization, the initial hypotheses extracted from theory ought to be tested against the evidence-data collected before hypotheses are accepted.

In Martin Hollis, the role of theory for social sciences leans towards a research understanding that cannot rely on a clear separation between matters of facts and relations of ideas, with “facts independent of theory and ‘ideas’ regarded as components of a language which we construct”.<sup>7</sup>

Martin Hollis criticizes Milton Friedman his ‘methodology of positive Economics’ and concludes that facts of the economic world are no longer independent of the language used to describe them and some of the central tenets that positive science has applied.<sup>8</sup>

For International Relations, according to Michael Banks, theory consists of analysis and synthesis. Analysis begins by breaking down the topic under examination into parts and pieces to be examined and broken down further into details.<sup>9</sup> Synthesis is the opposite direction from the parts and sections leading to the whole that will be made sense by a general conclusion. Theory for IR would be defined by a central concept, consisting of a central idea that would be analysed alongside various other sub-concepts, such that their inter-relationships would be examined and classified. In this context, their relationships would make special units for further analysis.

These special relationships formed appropriate units of analysis whereby each level would consist of a theory with a significant area for application. For instance, by teaching in IR models the great method is the explanation of the époque of the ‘great debates’ in the field between realism, pluralism and structuralism. This debate, which has been called the ‘great paradigms debate’ represents the theoretical paradigms of realism, pluralism and

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<sup>7</sup> Martin Hollis, *The Philosophy of Social Science. An Introduction*. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), pp.56-59 and 64-65.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p.58

<sup>9</sup> Michael Banks, ‘The Inter-Paradigm Debate’, in Light Margot and A.J.R Groom, *International Relations a handbook of current theory*, (London, Macmillan Press Ltd, 1985), pp.7-24.

structuralism, a response to the question of what consists a theory for properties and purposes of the observable facts.<sup>10</sup>

In the perspective of the inter-paradigm debate the discourse is the choice of the analytical framework. Similarly, in the level of analysis problem, discussion of each level pinpoints suitable sections for analysis in the process of a research undertaking. There are not necessarily contradictions between different levels for stabilising patterns of analysis. The level of analysis provides stimulus for analysis in IR.

International Relations are formed methodologically by positivism. Positivism in its philosophical terms is epitomised by logical positivism. In its application it marks an empiricism which stresses experience and naturalism. For IR, positivism means application of the same models as in the natural sciences, such as physics, into the process of social sciences inquiry. Facts can be explained as in physics, independently of their environments, as facts are value-free. In other words, positivism in IR means a commitment to the methodology of natural sciences tied to an empiricist epistemology. It is a methodological view expressed by behaviouralism and naturalism that brings regularities of the natural world into the social world, where the subject of inquiry is free from subjective motivations of actors or special intentions in the social and institutional framework.

Consequently, if our research undertaking needs the theory to put concepts into examination we will deal methodologically with the philosophical assumptions that define our research process. Methodology will tell us about the philosophical basis of our theory under examination. The analytical process of our research leads us to consider which sections and levels are the most appropriate units of analysis and the right levels on which to conduct the analysis.

## **2. The implication of theory on the ‘level of analysis problem’ for IR**

Throughout the seventies, increased interest in analysis demonstrated the significance of methodological questions. Increased interest in the problem in international studies clearly demonstrated an epistemological problem that reflected the developments in

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<sup>10</sup> Michael Banks, ‘The Inter-Paradigm Debate’, in Light Margot and A.J.R Groom, *International Relations: a handbook of current theory*, (London, Macmillan Press Ltd, 1985) ), pp.7-24. Ole Waever, ‘The Rise and the Fall of the Inter-Paradigm Debate’ in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp 149-185.

epistemology in social science, which to some extent kept international studies theorisation ‘state of the art’<sup>11</sup>.

Since facts alone cannot be employed to answer questions posed in the study of reality, theory is necessary.<sup>12</sup> Theory is a set of laws pertaining to a particular behaviour or phenomenon.<sup>13</sup> According to this simplification, theory might be built upon by collecting carefully verified and interconnected hypotheses about states.<sup>14</sup> The theory of international politics explains why states behave similarly in the international arena despite their internal differences. Thus, theory brings concepts together in a perspective of shaping potential maps that interpret the international system. Theory can be used as an instrument in attempting to explain ‘the real world’ and to offer some predictions.

Theory also offers interpretations of the nature of the actors involved in the international arena and how the main actors, as communities and individuals, formulate their ideas. From a different perspective, experience and reality might become the criteria for validating the theory itself. Experience and reality will identify the pros and cons of a theory, for the choices made in the course of policy implementation.

In Robert Cox’s theoretical analysis, theory is the constituent problem for social science and his analysis is tied to a theory. Robert Cox’s thinking constitutes an earlier contribution to the debate about the emancipatory character of the field of international relations. His critical theory, which basically lies outside mainstream theoretical debate, inaugurates an alternative method of understanding the world system, ontologically and epistemologically differentiated from the main underpinnings on which realism and neorealism have justified their existence. He endorses a historical epistemology in which he does not accept the prevailing ideas of an immutable world but considers change to be the central focus point for his understanding of how the world works.<sup>15</sup>

Cox’s conceptualisation draws lucid links with the Frankfurt Critical social school. Cox argues that ‘theory is always for someone and for some purpose’ and never exists in an artificial vacuum’<sup>16</sup>. This knowledge comes from a particular historical period and

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<sup>11</sup> Martin Hollis, ‘The Last Past?’ in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski (Eds) *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.301-308. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Addison-Wesley publishing Company, New York, 1979).

<sup>12</sup> David Marsh, and G. Stoker, *Theory and Methods In Political Science* (London, Macmillan, 1995).

<sup>13</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1979).

<sup>14</sup> Adrian, Hyde-Price, *Germany and European Order. Enlarging NATO and the EU* ( Manchester University Press,2000) p.16

<sup>15</sup> Robert Cox, ‘Social forces, states and world orders: Beyond International Relations Theory’ in Robert Keohane (ed.) *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p.204-254.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.207

circumstances, and defines the theory as favouring a particular social position in space and time. This means that theory is always embedded in the context of social beings, historically experienced, which takes into account the function of the world order. This Coxian adoption of the theory does not speak for itself but it is a perspective which will eventually encourage the emergence of an alternative world.<sup>17</sup>

All theories have a respective and purpose. Each purpose gives rise to a different kind of theory. The first purpose gives rise to a problem-solving theory:

The purpose of a problem-solving theory is to make these relationships and institutions work smoothly by dealing effectively with particular sources of trouble.

This category of theories is very close to positivist methodology; it sets up several parameters and reduces a particular problem to a close examination. The second purpose gives rise to critical theory. A critical theory stands apart from the mainstream theorisation and brings into question the social and power relations of a process towards change.

Waltz's definition of theory in international politics is an attempt to formulate 'law-like statements' about international politics with relative scientific validity.<sup>18</sup> This science of international politics consists of the positive mechanism that operates in the international system. For instance, Waltz applies structural analysis to shed light on the 'long peace' of the Cold War superpower rivalry. In structural realism there is a clear distinction between the explanation that comes from interacting units and the explanation that comes from structural constraints of the international system. Therefore, Waltz's theory of international politics cannot be reduced to a theory on foreign policy. Waltz concludes that only the RAM (Rational Actor Model) such as that proposed by Graham Allison is an appropriate approach to international politics.<sup>19</sup>

In Mearsheimer's thinking foreign policy is motivated largely by the rationalistic logic of great power behaviour. Mearsheimer agrees with Waltz that foreign policy is a rational process and is defined by the strategy of the state; that firstly it is based on it's the state's own strengths and its enemies' weaknesses, and secondly that power drives foreign policy targets. For instance, Stalin's willingness to cooperate with Nazi Germany was

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p.208

<sup>18</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York, Addison-Wesley publishing Company, 1979).

<sup>19</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York, Addison-Wesley publishing Company, 1979), p.12, see also Clarke, M. and White, B. (ed) *Understanding Foreign Policy. The Foreign Policy Systems Approach*. (Northampton Massachusetts, Edward Elgar, 2002) and Graham Allison *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missiles Crisis* (Boston, Mass. Little Brown, 1971).

deeply affected by the cold logic of realism.<sup>20</sup> Mearsheimer's offensive realism puts the state within the international system. The structural factors of the international system, such as anarchy and the distribution of power, are what really matter for explaining the external behaviour of the state. It does not matter what constitutes the state, but only how much relative power the state possesses at that point in history.<sup>21</sup> The structure of the international system will largely determine state foreign policy.<sup>22</sup>

Theory in Mearsheimer's analysis is the study of the behaviour of great powers. The overriding purpose of great powers in the international arena is to maximize their share of world power at the expense of other states.<sup>23</sup> Fear and insecurity coexist with the struggle between the great powers. Each one fears the other because at any moment the balance of power could change in favour of the rival state. This offensive realism leads to the rise and the fall of great powers.

Therefore, theory can explain how the structure of the international system forced one great power to behave as it did. The rivalry between the USA and the Soviet Union in the arms race forced the Soviet Union to take particular actions in its external behaviour and to change its approach to Germany. Mearsheimer's theory that bipolarity is the most secure international order narrows the concept of the 'structure of the international system'. In this order small states are obliged to accept the actions and policies of great powers. The great powers' policies determine those of the small states. The main task of theory in Mearsheimer's analysis is to testify to the evidence. Theoretical statements should be carved out of the historical record of events.

Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) is an alternative to Waltz and Mearsheimer's approaches. A theory of FPA is defined by dependent variables that measure the behaviour of individual states.<sup>24</sup> This theory focuses on states as units in international politics. The behaviour of all states, both great and smaller powers, is determined by the decisions and actions of those states with the greater power capabilities. Because the validity of theory can be determined by how well it explains what has happened, a theory of international politics is separated from a theory of foreign policy and will tell us a lot about the history of great

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<sup>20</sup> John, J. Mearsheimer *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* ( W.W. Norton and Company,2001), p.195

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p.10

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p.17.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p.5.

<sup>24</sup> Colin Elman, 'Horses for Courses: Why Not Neorealist Theories of Foreign Policy?', *Security Studies*, 6, 1, (1996), p.17.

powers' behaviour but not about the history of foreign policy. In Mearsheimer's thinking the history of international politics is dominated by the history of great powers' behaviour.<sup>25</sup>

Foreign policy is formulated at the national level according to Waltz and this assertion demonstrates that there is a domestic environment in which policy is constructed, and dependence, ideology, identity and values-based sources make up that environment. The implementation of policy immediately involves actors and their interactions. According to this theory, the study of Soviet foreign policy in the period under examination demands an explanation of the behaviour of the actors involved in foreign policy making.

Theories of IR take into account the distinction between system and units, described in the IR literature as the 'problem of the level of analysis': whether to account for the behaviour of the international system in terms of the behaviour of the nation states comprising it or *vice versa*.<sup>26</sup> The international system is very often supposed to be shaped by the lack of a world government, whilst the state is often defined as a unit of analysis. Waltz's theory (1979) explicitly reflects the 'problem of the level of analysis' in favour of a structural analysis of the international system at the macro-level. Hollis and Smith extend the above problem to the dimension of the identities of system and units.<sup>27</sup>

The conventional theoretical development about the level of analysis problem tries to answer the question of which level should be chosen for analysis.

In 1959 Kenneth Waltz proposed three levels for analysis in order for the phenomenon of war to be studied. Waltz's analysis reflects the phenomenon of war in three distinct images, or levels as they are called, and locates different types of explanation. Waltz defines a system, as 'composed of a structure and of interacting units'<sup>28</sup>. The unit level of the system is defined as 'the attributes and interactions of its parts' and the system level as 'the arrangement of the system's parts'.<sup>29</sup> Waltz's analysis is concentrated on system and structure. Instead of concentrating on unit level, like the state, explanatory ability can be based upon interacting structures of the system. Examining the interacting structures of the system the level of analysis problem will be disciplinised through mutual action of structures and units. Singer's article of 1961 challenged the IR scholarship with

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<sup>25</sup> John, J. Mearsheimer *The Tragedy of Great Power Politic* (W.W. Norton and Company, 2001), pp.5-7.

<sup>26</sup> David J, Singer, 'The level-of-analysis problem in International Relations', *World Politics*, Vol.14, No.1, (1961), Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford University Press, 1991), Alex Wendt, A, 'The Agent/Structure Problem in International Relations Theory', *International Organization*, 41, (1987), pp.335-70.

<sup>27</sup> Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford University Press, 1991)

<sup>28</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York, Addison-Wesley publishing Company, 1979).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

the notion that the level of analysis problem is a simply decision of which level is better to be studied.<sup>30</sup> Singer claimed that the level of analysis problem is not relevant for IR debate and that the problem had already been resolved. The question in Singer's analysis was transformed from a question of which level is more valuable to challenging the discipline as a whole over the recognition of its preliminary conceptual issue, which has to be resolved prior to any given research being undertaken. In this article, levels will be examined as descriptive entities and for their predictive capability.

Neither Waltz nor Singer's conception of the level of analysis acknowledges a correspondence to 'level of being', but rather they analytically categorise the methodological preponderance of making up an International Relations 'science' in the best positivist colour in its orientation. For international relations, for the analytical focuses to satisfy scientific observers, levels needed to be applied for methodological purposes in the scientific inquiry. The uncertainty in pinpointing our conceptualization of how many levels there are, two, three or more, corresponds to the reality and the way we see reality.

Since the number of levels reflects the reality, this reality consists of parts and wholes.<sup>31</sup> The whole consists of its parts and their relations. Neither parts nor relations between parts are considered apart from the whole. As regards whether to proceed from parts to wholes or wholes to parts, individualists are separated from holists. Both agreed the observed parts consist of parts and wholes, and also parts as wholes. In the Aristotelian conception of 'Polis', whole and parts is a recurring encounter. 'Polis' is the self-sufficient unit able to provide the highest good for its members.<sup>32</sup>

According to Aristotle's notion of politics this approach brings forth methodological considerations:

It is necessary to analyse the composite whole down to its uncompounded elements; so too with the state, by examining the elements of which it is composed we shall better discern in relation to these different kinds of rules what is the difference between them, and whether it is possible to obtain any scientific precision in regard to the various statements made above.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> David J. Singer, 'The level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations', *World Politics*, Vol.14, No.1, (1961),pp.77-92.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p.45.

<sup>32</sup> Aristotle, *Politics* (Loeb Classical Library, 1998 [C.360 BC]).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5

The analysis of domestic sources of foreign policy highlights the identity of actors involved in foreign affairs that are constructed by state-society relations.

Levels are comprised of three layers for analysis: individuals, states and structures. Levels are used in IR as a methodological vehicle which systematically addresses the international phenomenon. Kenneth Waltz examined the phenomenon of war and identified possible causes of war such as the internal political system and the roles of individuals.

The definition of 'the level of analysis problem' (thereafter LOAP) reflects the complexity of the international system itself. For social science the concern over identity located sources of explanation of an observed empirical reality<sup>34</sup>. While classical studies in IR has drawn heavily on history and law, epistemologically it showed us an early positivism, of an epistemological problem that would be resolved by adopting different levels of analysis and differentiated sources of one's explanation.

Jervis has discussed the level of analysis problem in terms of political leaders' perceptions. He works out four levels of analysis.<sup>35</sup> The first is the level of decision-making, the second is the level of bureaucracy, the third is the level in which the nature of the state and domestic politics is analysed and the fourth level is focused on the analytical perspective of international structures. This analysis concentrates on outlining the evidence necessary to establish the validity of a simple proposition about the importance of various levels. Jervis sustains that state may become the appropriate level of analysis, i.e. variations in decisions of policy makers may account for variations in the social and economic structure and domestic politics of the states they are serving.<sup>36</sup>

Also analytically emphatic in the formation of policy are governmental decisions that are determined by the bureaucrat position: 'where you stand is determined by where you sit'. Jervis concludes that the level of analysis problem encompasses the implications of the three levels of analysis to the decision making by examining the actor's perceptions as one of the immediate causes of political behaviour.

Level according to Mario Bung is defined as

a section of reality characterized by a set of interlocked properties and laws, some of which are thought to be peculiar to the given

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<sup>34</sup> Barry Buzan 'The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations Reconsidered; in Steve Smith and Ken Booth (ed.) *International Relations Theory Today* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1996) p.198-216.

<sup>35</sup> Robert Jervis, '*Perception and Misperception in International Politics*' (Princeton University Press, 1976).

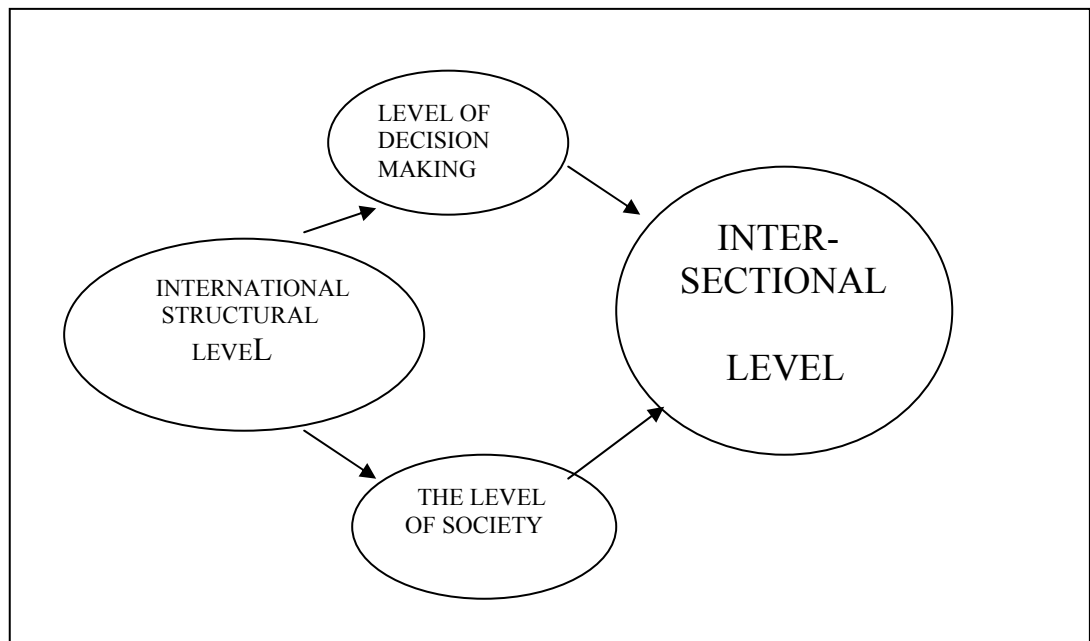
<sup>36</sup> Robert Jervis, '*Perception and Misperception in International Politics*' (Princeton University Press, 1976). P. Gourevitch, 'The Second Image Reversed: the International Sources of Domestic Politics', *International Organisation*, 32, 4, (1978), p.881-911

domain and to have emerged in time from other (lower or higher) levels existing previously.<sup>37</sup>

Levels constitute a metaphor for ways of seeing. This metaphor will tell us how we see reality and not what we see. It is a metatheoretical tool of a certain analytical degree of depth. The definition of Abraham Edel and Herbert Simon reflected an independent scholarship's thinking; one which is becoming more self-conscious about level understanding. Levels are recognised as a problem of method in which the complexity is resolved by the organisation of knowledge into sublevels, basic for our understanding as a distinction of our object of inquiry between what we see in the world and how we see it.<sup>38</sup>

### 3. What is the level of analysis problem

The initial observation in the literature of international studies of a special problematisation, which became known as the LOAP was in an article by Singer in 1961.<sup>39</sup> This article was a critical inspiration from Kenneth Waltz' book of 1957, which sustained the judgement that the question of how many levels needed to be replied according to which level is the best.<sup>40</sup>



**Figure 1**

<sup>37</sup> Nicolas Onuf, 'Levels', *European Journal of International Relations*, 1, 1, (1995), p.40

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp.35-38

<sup>39</sup> David J. Singer, 'The level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations', *World Politics*, Vol.14, No.1, (1961),pp.77-92.

<sup>40</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Man the State and War* (New York Columbia University Press, 1957).

The politics of world actors can be conceived as a two-level game. At the one-national level, the leadership is forced by the power *status quo* to adopt policies favourable to national interests and construct coalitions among interested politicians. At the international level, leadership seeks to minimize unexpected consequences in foreign affairs. Therefore, the political policy process can be divided analytically into two stages (see figure 1):

1. bargaining between the negotiators, called Level I
2. separate discussions prior to a decision on how to proceed, called Level II.

This division into a negotiation phase and post-negotiation phase, according to Putnam's model, is useful for the purposes of exposition.<sup>41</sup> The analysis of the two-level game in the international system combines with the theory of domestic politics and contains the story of power calculations and preference-perceptions of the major actors at level II. These actors are bureaucratic agencies, academicians or even groups of specialists on certain issues and topics. At this level of discussion the size of the win-set depends on the distribution of power and the preference-perceptions of leaders.

Level I refers to the negotiating process in the international arena. Level II represents the arena of national discussion, including domestic groups and divergent opinions. The chief negotiator at this level aims to coordinate different opinions to the extent that the tentative agreements achieved at level I are ratified at level II. The national level corresponds to the government level and government representatives play a pivotal role in aggregating interests from domestic constituencies. The metaphor of Putnam's two-level game constitutes the diplomatic process of an agreement as the interaction of international and national levels. The possibility of an agreement is limited to that which is acceptable at level II.

The structural analysis of the two-level game demonstrates the need for a third level of analysis, combined with the constructivist turn in IR. The negotiator acts in all levels. His task is to promote his own agenda at level I and for it to be ratified at level II. In level II, the leadership would be assessed on its ability to eliminate discrepancies between political actors in a way that unifies domestic views to better serve its negotiating position at the international level. This would be achieved through advice and opinions promoted by domestic intelligence services.

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<sup>41</sup> Robert Putnam 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of two-level Games' *International Organisation*, 32, (1988), p.427-60.

In level I, the role of chief negotiator is constrained by the interaction of two or more actors. This interaction represents the international system factor that would determine the process of negotiations. At this level the negotiators define the benefits expected from negotiations and how political parties and organisations would access the benefits. At this stage the foreign ministry might influence negotiations through its reports. **The third level represents the interaction of the contemporary position of the world player-actors as formed by levels I and II.**<sup>42</sup> In other words, level III represents bilateral relations between the two countries and reveals the role of individual leaders in forming policy priorities. (See figure 2).

LEVEL OF ANALYSIS	
FIRST IMAGE	INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM
SECOND IMAGE	THE STATE
THIRD IMAGE	INDIVIDUALS
FOURTH IMAGE	INTERSECTIONAL LEVEL

**Figure 2**

The level of analysis problem is markedly structured by its lack of the level of mutual interaction. The proposal of this paper concerns analytically the interaction between level I and level II.

Therefore, level III has transformed the level of analysis problem, pushing forward a new dynamism that borrow elements from Robert Putnam's analysis.<sup>43</sup> (See figure 1).

<sup>42</sup> Barry Buzan 'The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations Reconsidered'. In Booth, K. and Smith, Steve (eds) *International Relations Theory Today*. (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995), pp.204-205.

<sup>43</sup> Putnam's seminal article of 1988 stimulated theoretical and empirical research on the causal relationship between domestic and international environment. A great part of the research covers the European Union's diplomacy, albeit in two diametrically different ways: Initially, Moravcsk's liberal intergovernmental approach highlighted the position a national government holds as chief negotiator between domestic constituencies and the EU. Second, the liberal approach examines the external position of the EU in trade negotiations in which the European Commission represents the EU, see A. Moravcsik, 'Integrating International and Domestic Politics: A theoretical Introduction (Ch. I). In Evans, P., Jacobson, H., and Putnam, R. (eds) *Double-Edged Diplomacy: Interactive Games in International affairs* (Berkeley, University Press, 1993), pp.3-42 and M. F. Larsen, *Power and Pressure in EU Agenda-Setting. Theoretical Framework for the Agenda-Setting in Negotiations Between the EU and South Africa*. Paper prepared for the European Foreign Policy Conference LSE, June 2004), pp. 1-12.

Finally, Putnam's model is represented in transnational agenda setting and domestic politics with emphasis of human rights, see S. Gubin, 'Between Regimes and Realism. Transnational Agenda Setting: Soviet Compliance with CSCE Human Rights Norms', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 17,2, (1995), pp.278-302, M. A Pollack, and G.C. Shaffer, *Transatlantic Governance in a Global Economy: Introduction*. Paper prepared for delivery at the 1999 Annual Meeting of the APSA, Atlanta Marriott Marquis and Atlanta Hilton and Towers, September, (1999), pp.1-35 and in issues of international cooperation, see Z. Karaev, *Z. Managing the Water*

The originality of Putnam's model is connected with the mutual interaction of the internal level of analysis with the external level.<sup>44</sup> It provides the necessary framework for explaining the negotiating process, the level of negotiations, actors involved and their strategies. Even if Putnam's model may be considered just a metaphor, it gives power to our explanation, to capture the essence of the international system as mutually interacting with domestic politics.

In the two-level game framework of analysis, the key negotiator is the leader of the negotiation, representing the state with the main aim of uniting the domestic with the international arena. The leading negotiator negotiates in both arenas and the effects from each negotiation arena reverberate in the other arena.<sup>45</sup> In addition, Putnam describes the chief negotiator as 'autonomously' constructed by his own interests, which he will then apply. According to Putnam the negotiators act autonomously within their domestic win-set. Putnam defines win-set as the possible negotiating outcomes that are acceptable to domestic constituencies. Consequently, the larger the win-sets at level II (internal level), the more likely it is that an agreement will be achieved.<sup>46</sup>

### **Contemporary understanding**

LEVEL I: contemporary analysis may be called level I understanding. Level I represents the conventional understanding of the knowledge. This structure was defined by the fixed structure of dependence and closed interconnected structures.

### **Critical understanding**

LEVEL II: Critics of level I developed a second level of understanding. This level represents the developments of different opinions and views on important issues between two or more countries. These constrained the conventional understanding.

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*Resources in Central Asia: Is cooperation possible?* Paper prepared for the workshop 'Resources, Governance and civil war' ECPR Joint Sessions of workshops, University of Uppsala, 14-18 April (2004), L. Schoppa, *International Cooperation Despite Domestic Conflict: Japanese Politics and the San Francisco Treaties*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association in New Orleans, March 24-27, (2002), pp. 1-16.

<sup>44</sup>Robert Putnam 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of two-level Games' *International Organisation*, 32, (1988), p.434.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p.437.

### **Post-critical understanding**

LEVEL III: A third level is needed for the new époque to be analysed in comparison with level I and II. In the third level of understanding our argument is formed around the view that the post-critical understanding is premised on a misunderstanding of the paradoxical political relationship between the two countries, and that the events of the end of the Cold War proved how important political sovereignty was in the collapse of communism.

Furthermore, the literature does not adequately explain the shifty nature of the paradoxical relationship between two or more countries. What is missing from the ‘dependence’ argument of power is the third level explanation of the two-game model: on the one hand the international system that structured transnational political authority, on the other hand, the ‘hierarchical relationship’ between two or more countries that demonstrates a shared intersubjective understanding in treaties, norms and ideology.<sup>47</sup>

#### **4. How is the level of analysis problem resolved**

The confusion of the distinction between system and unit of analysis and between structure and process stems mainly from how the so called ‘LOAP’ is interpreted. There are two main responses to the question of how ‘LOAP’ is resolved. The first response is that the LOAP concerns the question of ‘how to study’ the object of inquiry (methodology). The observer will select the system or subsystem or its enclosed environment where certain actions will develop. This analysis is well-known as ‘level of analysis discussion’. The second response corresponds to the question of ‘what to study’ as the unit of analysis. We could not avoid the methodological sources of IR and improve the rigour of theoretical thinking about international phenomena as a useful stimulus to theory in the discipline.<sup>48</sup> The promises of these two implications led to the consciousness that the ‘LOAP’ should be resolved by looking towards positivism in IR.

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<sup>47</sup> Alex Wendt and Daniel Friedheim, ‘Hierarchy under anarchy: Informal empire and the East German state’, *International Organisation*, 49, (1995), p.697.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

In his 1957 book Kaplan favoured the dominance of state level for analytical purposes and in 1959 Waltz favoured the structural explanation as the prominent source of explaining the international phenomenon of war. Both Singer and Waltz focused on the system, encompassing all interactions at the level of units and the system's environment. System, according to Waltz, composed of a structure and its interacting units. System is a structure that is able to explain different units.

Buzan argues that not only has the 'LOAP' been resolved, but also that the idea of levels for analysis has made a profound impact on the state-of-the-art for IR. The scholarship became more systematic about their explanation for international political phenomena. Therefore, level of analysis is part of the theorisation of IR and the way of thinking of level as an analytical method of sources of explanation and object of analysis.<sup>49</sup>

The positivist solution to the question of level of analysis considered the international structure as one level of analysis, the internal state structure as the second, and the level of the individual constructed the third level of analysis of the problem under inquiry.<sup>50</sup> The international system is fundamentally connected with the progress of international studies. Whether the international system features out anarchy or hierarchy, individual states are treated as self-contained units or analytical categories of scientific achievement, with those achievements demonstrating an intellectual alertness.

If Singer's initial question accounts for the behaviour of the international system in terms of the behaviour of the states comprising it or vice-versa, then Smith and Hollis extend the problem to include the identity of the system and the nature of its units.<sup>51</sup> Smith and Hollis' explanation raises new questions relating to the nature of structures, the nature of agents and the relationship between units and their interactions and systems as ontologically distinct totalities.<sup>52</sup> If then Singer's analysis defends even today's prevailing theoretical developments, one might start by inquiring level by level without investigating into the internal organisation of the units.

Smith and Hollis propose new levels for analysis of the problem. The behaviour of the state is examined in terms of constituent bureaucracies. Then, if bureaucracies are taken

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<sup>49</sup> Barry Buzan 'The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations Reconsidered;', in Steve Smith and Ken Booth (ed.) *International Relations Theory Today* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1996) p.198.

<sup>43</sup> Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153

<sup>45</sup> Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 153. John Gerard Ruggie, 'Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Towards a Neorealist Synthesis', in Robert Keohane (ed.) *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp.204-254.

as independently contributed variables, there is revealed another level: that of individuals or distinctive individuals comprising bureaucracy.

It turns out that for each unit of analysis able to make an independent contribution, each other level of analysis will be seen as an independent variable for the coming analysis. However, behind certain methodological and epistemological considerations, ontological implications are certainly about the nature of the agents, the structures and their linkages.<sup>53</sup> The ontological problem is resolved either by methodological individualism through the actions of society or by a methodological structuralism of social structures made up by individuals' actions.<sup>54</sup>

The agent-structure debate represents a post-classical meta-theoretical problematisation for the epistemological orthodoxy of positivism of one subject – one – object - one observer. Developments in international studies have related the nature of agents with structures and to the interactions between them. The agent-structure debate in IR comprises the following interrelated meta-theoretical elements:

- A. The question of which level of analysis is the most appropriate for the social outcome.
- B. What are determinant for the social outcome.
- C. The question about the models of investigation needs to be studied at the appropriate level – the agents and the structures.
- D. The distinctiveness of the level of analysis and the agent-structure problem that a systematic theory should explain.

What makes our targets of analysis valuable scientifically is the distinctiveness of the combination of agent-structure and the level of analysis problem which tends to avoid an inherent confusion.

Wendt argues for lack of concern of systemic theorising to include a concern to process of identity and interests formation in favouring the rationalistic metaphor of micro-economic theory. Waltz equates systemic theorising with classical micro-economics and Hollis-Smith reduces the question of systemic structural causation to whether the international system conditions that the agent-structure debate is reduced to one level of analysis. Wendt reserves the level of analysis for leading the behaviour of exogenously given actors and the agent-structure debate for leading the constitutive properties of those

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<sup>46</sup>Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge Polity Press, 1984).

<sup>47</sup>Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge Polity Press, 1984), Alex Wendt, 'The agent-structure problem in International Relations theory', *International Organisation*, 41, (1987), p.335-370.

actors in the first place.<sup>55</sup> Holistic systemic theory takes the properties of states as endogenously interacting within the system and individualistic systemic theory takes the properties of states as exogenously given that system explains state behaviour.

Since Waltz, Singer and Kaplan resolved the problem of method for level of analysis, Alex Wendt, Hollis and Smith (for IR) and Anthony Giddens (for social theory) opened up again the discussion of the level of analysis problem and its significance for IR. According to Hollis and Smith, Wendt presupposes a prior position on the agent-structure debate, whilst Smith and Hollis suppose both levels and agent-structures involve questions about the nature of agency.<sup>56</sup>

## 5. The reconstruction of the level of analysis problem

This section reconsiders the level of analysis problem as a critical appraisal enabling a straightforward examination; proliferate schemes have dominated relative explanatory ability as far as back to Aristotle.

Singer's claim, that the level of analysis problem is related to the level at which our study should be devoted, and that structures and politics require a priori understanding of how levels will be formed prior to the definition bestowed on the factors of internal structures, constituted an explanation of its external implications. The question is whether the social outcome is best captured by individuals or structural properties.

Martin Wight says the ontological question of the nature of agents and structures and their mutuality occurs prior to the question of the mode of investigation required to be studied.<sup>57</sup> Is the distinction between the level of analysis problem and the agent-structure debate inevitable? The response to this question comes from the reconstruction of the problem of level of analysis through the lens of the 'third level' explanation ; the level of intersection that combine understanding and explaining in one unify level.

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<sup>55</sup> Alex Wendt, 'Level of Analysis vs. Agents and structures: part III, *Review of International Studies*, 18, (1992), pp.181-185.

<sup>56</sup> Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, 'Beware Gurus: Structure and Action in International Relations', *Review of International Studies*, 17, (1991), pp.393-410.

<sup>57</sup> Colin Wight, 'The Agent-Structure Problem and Institutional Racism' *Political Studies*, Vol.1, 51, (2003), p.707: 'Epistemological and methodological issues arises, deepening upon how this problem is resolved, but these are derivative of the prior ontological problem'.

Waltz's meta-theoretical formulation of levels is a simple categorization of a quasi-typology for a causal explanation lacking theoretical sophistication.<sup>58</sup> The three levels in Waltz's analysis of war are at odds with the scientific typology in several aspects. Firstly, Waltzian 'international system structuration' is not conducive to account for historical transformation, and in turn inclines towards increasing centralization of power. Secondly, Waltzian 'international system structuration' proposes a holistic study of security. The appeal of the typology of levels of analysis reveals a monolithic strategy unable to think of levels of analysis of state-political hierarchy. For instance, Buzan propose a holistic study of national security.<sup>59</sup> Contrary to Waltz's three-tomisation of analysis, broadening security to include subsystems and units, security will become understood as a society of states, that of several parts making up a whole. In addition, the possibility of several other levels of analysis is excluded, indeed more significant for the flow of analysis.

Waltz built boundaries between levels for a system and levels of structures in order to defend his approach to the international phenomenon of war. The struggle between structures, systems and units of analysis on the other hand, has moved the debate only between two levels. The levels of analysis problem brought heavy criticism to Waltz's narrowness towards the political sector and on the other hand, unfolded a range of factors, structural and 'non-structural' incentives, socio-economic factors, process and patterns of interaction among states.<sup>60</sup> Everybody's strategy depends on everybody else's. This means autonomy of National Foreign Policy can lead only to disaster. Therefore, it can be supposed that the balance of power mechanism and its doctrine can be seen as a normative and perspective requirement of national survival.

The prevailing myths of the international system cannot always challenge the prevailing structures of the international system because the institutional arrangements of these myths supported stereotypical policy. The years of the Cold War, for instance, were perceived as a series of historical developments rather than as a natural feature of world politics; over years of threats the balance of power became an institution and people started believing in the threats as inherent since the state of the world reflected them. But when this image started to erode, whole series' of concessions on security policy enabled he shifting of policies in the international system.

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<sup>58</sup> Rob Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.131.

<sup>52</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, (Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991).

<sup>60</sup> Robert Cox, 'Social forces, states and world orders: Beyond International Relations Theory' in Robert Keohane (ed.) *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p.204-254.

The international shared capacity between states of technological capability is able to formulate shared norms and institutions of a certain type of interaction between units in the system or within units.<sup>61</sup> Information and technology share norms and values and make up the preconditions for establishing certain organisations. Progress also in technology is a distinctive source of explanation both at the system level and unit level.

The predominant structural understanding of international phenomena resembles approval by the bipolar Cold War superpower struggle. The releasable structure of bipolarity dominated world events in all developments. The end of the superpowers' struggle swept away such structures and revealed other; equivalent significant levels of analysis combined different analytical perspectives from process to interaction of subsystems and interdependence, reflecting shifts in the state-of-the art in international studies.

Nevertheless, the question is not which level of analysis would become predominant for our explanation. Different levels of analysis are very important in reference to some specific phenomena or to different historical periods. The contested issues are involving to understanding different levels of analysis and can offer a widely accepted relatively powerful explanation to any given analysis which the nature of agent will be involved in an analysis of the agent-structure debate.

At the core of the agent-structure debate lies an increasing recognition that, instead of a zero-sum game between agent and structure being observed, human agency (actors) and structure (social structures) are in linkage with entities and hence cannot be conceived separately. The problem of the agent-structure debate for social theory has been captured by two different intellectual traditions. The first, the US-dominated scholarship, is focused on the problem of level of analysis and the second, more European, is largely focused on the relationship between agency and structure. The former refers to the level of analysis as a distinction of 'how' to study from 'what' to study, of an object of inquiry can be referred empirically as structure-state-individuals. The latter refers to the relationship between agents (individuals) and structures (institutions).

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<sup>61</sup> Barry Buzan 'The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations Reconsidered; in Steve Smith and Ken Booth (ed.) *International Relations Theory Today* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1996) p.198-216.

The first view is based on methodological individualism and the second concerns the defining characteristic of agents and social structures within a purposive behaviour on any level for social analysis.<sup>62</sup>

The current debate in IR between Wendt, Hollis-Smith and Anthony Giddens demonstrates an interchanging overlap between the two different views of the agency-structure problem that cannot be resolved through the level of analysis problem.<sup>63</sup>

According to Martin Hollis and Steve Smith 'there are always two stories to tell, one explanatory and the other interpretative, and ... they cannot finally be combined.'<sup>64</sup> This distinction is a priori an epistemological position and requires a distinction at various levels of analysis. An analysis from system to units contrasts with an analysis that proceeds from unit to system.<sup>65</sup> Caerlens considers the problem of the agent-structure debate in terms of its theoretical implications for social sciences and part of the problem for its implications for foreign policy analysis.<sup>66</sup> The former category of scholarship speaks more ontologically than epistemologically and focuses on the properties of agents and structures **qua** of analysis examining also their relations.<sup>67</sup> The latter category of scholarship, even if it considered the problem in its meta-theoretical implications, has had a profound empirical genesis founded in foreign policy changes that occurred in the previous Warsaw Pact states and in the structural transformation of superpowers relations.<sup>68</sup>

What is more striking is that when the Warsaw Pact states radically shifted their foreign policy as a consequence of change in the Soviet Union's ideologically driven foreign policy, structures within societies remained unshifted. These societies remained

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<sup>62</sup>Walter Carlsnaes, 'The agency-structure problem in foreign policy analysis', *International Studies Quarterly*, 36 (1992), pp. 245-270.

<sup>63</sup> Alex Wendt, 'Level of Analysis vs. Agents and structures: part III, *Review of International Studies*, 18, (1992); Alex Wendt, 'The agent-structure problem in International Relations theory', *International Organisation*, 41, (1987), p.335-370; Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge Polity Press, 1984); Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, 'Beware Gurus: Structure and Action in International Relations', *Review of International Studies*, 17, (1991), pp.393-410.

<sup>64</sup>Colin Wight, 'The Agent-Structure Problem and Institutional Racism' *Political Studies*, Vol.1, 51, (2003), p.709

<sup>65</sup> Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford University Press, 1991), p.9.

<sup>66</sup>Walter Carlsnaes, 'The agency-structure problem in foreign policy analysis', *International Studies Quarterly*, 36 (1992), pp. 246-248.

<sup>67</sup> Martin Hollis, 'The Last Past?' in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski (eds) *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996),pp.301-308. Nicolas Onuf, 'Levels', *European Journal of International Relations*, 1, 1, (1995), pp.35-58. Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge Polity Press, 1984). Max Weber 'Subjectivism and determinism', in Anthony Giddens (ed.) *Positivism and Sociology* (1974).

<sup>68</sup>Walter Carlsnaes, 'The agency-structure problem in foreign policy analysis', *International Studies Quarterly*, 36 (1992), pp. 245-270.

unchanged and apparently shifted direction in foreign policy to target European Union membership.

The ontological distinctiveness of the problem focuses on properties of agents and structures **qua** units of analysis and their relationship between them. This critical moment of social theory is contrasted with the long-standing neo-positivistic moments of social science.

The ontologically distinctive concept occurred in the historiography of social science in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a continuation of the structural pluralism of IR in Politics departments. Anthony Giddens proposes a synthetic view, both highly acclaimed and vigorously contested. Social life is distinguished by an eternal transformation in social life, because of ‘duality of structure’: ‘structure is both medium and outcome of the reproduction of practices’.<sup>69</sup> Structure enters simultaneously into the constitution of the agent and social practices and exists in the generated moments of this constitution. The problem is a ‘constitutive relationship’ of the link between action and structure in a series of sequential acts in time and space that made up the process. The agent-structure problem tends to be overcome by attempting to amalgamate the dividing line between action and order. Ontologically, Wendt, highlights that if the properties of states and system structures are causally relevant to events in the international arena, then these properties are somehow interrelated ontologically. Bipolar theory brings up the epistemological issues, of whether agency can be seen ‘objectively’ or ‘subjectively’ in terms of ‘understanding’ or ‘explanation’.<sup>70</sup>

Karl Popper justifies the ‘methodological individualism’ as ‘all the social phenomena are resulted from the decisions of human being’.<sup>71</sup> Then, the ontological explanation is reduced to the choices of the actors, as the objects maximize their utility by the realization of their individual aims. Foreign policy analysis treats agents (actors) as objectively maximizing users of their utility. Ghaman Allison explains three rational models.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge Polity Press, 1984).

<sup>70</sup> Georg Sorensen and Robert Jackson, *Introduction to International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>71</sup> Walter Carlsnaes, ‘The agency-structure problem in foreign policy analysis’, *International Studies Quarterly*, 36 (1992), p. 249.

<sup>72</sup> Graham Allison *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missiles Crisis* (Boston, Mass.” Little Brown, 1971).

In terms of 'collective methodology', agency and structure is captured its significance by the second and the third Graham Allison's model of the 'bureaucratic and organizational' model. The two models investigate political behaviour by what offices people hold and if the process sustains the status quo. Agency and structures are treated by a structural differentiation in which individual action is conceived in terms of social order. The metaphor of ontology towards the agency-structure debate represents the overcoming of the dichotomy that either agency is privileged over structures or structures over agency by an increasing necessity to view the relationship between actors and structures as mutual linkages rather than causal reduction.<sup>73</sup>

In summarizing this article I would like concentrate on the followings points:

The discussion about the level of analysis problem and units of analysis has had a profound impact on the theory of international studies. On the one hand it represents the dividing line between the US-based scholarship and on the other hand it reconstructs the logic of international studies towards social constructivism that at the end will meet the principles of the English School.<sup>74</sup>

Therefore, I would like to conclude by pointing to two main points that need more elaboration here. The first point recognises that the agency-structure linkages implicate a shift towards a view about the object of analysis and the level of analysis needed for redefining the empirical observation of our epistemological orientation.

For Singer and Waltz, levels are methodologically expedient and able to make whole theories. Singer concludes for a greater utility of the two-level of analysis that is methodologically needed in the field of international studies. The real point is a temporary resolution to the problem prior to any given resolution being undertaken. The context is that two or more levels are available and perhaps even potentially more fruitful than either of those already selected.

Waltz's analysis is almost incapable to resolve the problem in international studies without applying the three levels of analysis: 'man, state and war'. This claim is methodologically of a nature that will enhance the success of the scientific inquiry. This view is reconstructed by a more integrated and cumulative approach.

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<sup>73</sup> Alex Wendt, 'On constitution and Causation in International Relations', *Review of International Studies*, 24, (1998), 101-117. Richard Ashley, 'The Poverty of Neorealism', in 'Theory' in Robert Keohane (ed.) *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp.256-300.

<sup>74</sup> Stanley Hoffmann, 'An American Social Science: International Relation', *Daedalus*, 106, 3, (1977), pp.41-60.

The second point includes the reorientation of 'state of the art' in international studies by adopting a post-positivist gesture in its methodological undertaking. However, each level of analysis encompasses a set of rules and arrangements that includes as parts all those rules and arrangements set up in the level beneath. If we know the ensemble of the components and the relations existing between them, then the levels may be analysed.