

The theory of decision makers role politics essay



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In Richard Snyder's book, the theory is that decision is made by people. He says " Decision makers are viewed as operating in a dual-aspect setting so that apparently unrelated internal and external factors become related in the actions of the decision makers."(Snyder, 1954: 53) So when we research foreign policy, the keystone should be these decision makers who represent the state to make decisions, rather than the state itself. In international relation, John Lewis Gaddis treats the decision maker as " conscious entities capable of reacting to and often modifying, the variables and conditions they encounter." What the decision makers analyze and the conclusions of their analysis is the core of a country's foreign policy. So when decisions are made, or presented to people finally, the most important point is not to consider the decisions themselves but the decision makers. What sets foreign policy analysis from other theories is that foreign policy analysis insists " compelling explanation (of foreign policy) can not treat the decider exogenously". (Hermann and Kegley, 1995: 514). As is known that England is constitutional monarchy and the king has no power at all, but maybe all the world would ask why English policy maker dose not fully eradicate the imperial family. Richard Snyder's theory may make a good deal on this question. In the depth of English people's heart, they keep the royalty not because the royal families can benefit them a not but just can meet their invisible wish. The policy makers take it for granted that as long as the royalty exists, the glory of their country can't downcast. Although actually the truth is that they act on their own, however from another side this is just the impact of the decision maker's perception on the policy. Obviously, the conclusion can be summarized that the decision makers' perception is the

most important factor and keystone for impact of the foreign policy in Richard Snyder's theory on FPA.

Harold and Margaret Sprout add the realistic factors when they consider the analysis of foreign policy. In their theory, the foreign policy is contextualized. They stress the importance of foreign policy undertaking which they connect with strategies, decisions, intentions and so on. Harold and Margaret hold the view that each foreign policy outcome will not be generated if there is no antecedent undertaking. When the undertaking is concerned, we should give thoughts to the social environment where the individual or group makes decisions. Harold and Margaret Sprout divide the decision makers' environment into operational environment and psychological environment. The operational environment is the actual environment, and psychological environment is the environment in decision-makers' imagination. (Harold and Margarte 1957) It is known that conflicts often occur between the real environment and the psychological or perceived environment, so the unsatisfactory decisions may happen in foreign policy. Sprouts have noticed this phenomenon and point it out, " Instead of drawing conclusions regarding an individual's probable motivations and purposes, his environmental knowledge, and his intellectual processes linking purposes and knowledge, on the basis of assumptions as to the way people are likely on the verge to behave in a given social context, the cognitive behavior list-be he narrative historian or systematic social scientist-undertakes to find out as precisely as possible how specific persons actually did perceive and respond in particular contingencies"(Spout and Spout, 1965: 118). Because people consciously react to the environment through sense and could choose the information by

themselves, they can abandon the information they think insignificant and harmful to their final decisions. For this reason, sense decides against actions. In the process of decision-making, psychological environment is more important than the operational environment.

In a systematic and scientific fashion, James Rosenau's pretheorizing encourages scholars to make clear the outlines between nationalities about the foreign policy behavior of states. As Rosenau indicates, " To identify factors is not to trace their influence. To understand processes that affect external behavior is not to explain how and why they are operative under shaped by internal as well as external factors is not to comprehend how the two intermix or to indicate the conditions under which one predominates over the other... Foreign policy analysis lacks comprehensive systems of testable generalizations... Foreign policy analysis is devoid of general theory."(Rosenau, 1966: 98-9). James Rosenau wants to find a theory which can be tested. He divides the factors which could affect foreign policy decision into five types. Simply, they are Decision maker's individual factor, decision maker's role factor, government factor, and problem inside the state and outside the state. According to the country's domain area, economic development and open level, Rosenau divides countries into sixteen kinds. Then on the basis of this division, he applies the five factors to each kind of country and finds out order and level of the influence in the country's diplomatic decision.

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You will be required to write a brief short essay in which you will review and critique Raymond Cohen's book Negotiating across Culture. The essay should identify major common theme and/or disputations in the book and evaluate the literature' strengths and limitations. It should have a coherent structure and should not read like a " laundry list".

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It is known that cultures in different countries or regions take on different meaning. Actually, to define culture is quite difficult. The concept of culture bears the weight of many meanings. We must notice that " Culture is such a multifaceted concept that it may only be possible to be use in rather vague and intuitive ways."(Bayliss& Smith, 2008: 457). If people want to have a specific definition, the culture can be as " a set of shared and enduring meanings, values, and beliefs that characterize national, ethnic, or other groups and orient their behavior" (Faure and Rubin, 1993: 177). No matter in the old time or in modern society, the culture always plays an important role in the negotiation. But in the old time, the transportation was undeveloped so the negotiation between people was hard. When people from different countries or regions communicated with each other, then the cultural obstacle was obvious. For example the language. However, thanks to the information age and the fast development of technology, modern media and the growing independence between countries, even sitting at home, people can still have a good understanding on the world. Just for these reasons, in modern world, the visibility of national cultures has not been mysterious as the old time. Recently, research aiming at different cultural background or integrating cultural components in its models and paradigms is began and still largely in the progress. Many researchers acknowledge and accept the function of culture in the negotiation, such as William Zartman and Maureen Berman arguing that " national differences in negotiating behavior" and that culture affects " the perceptions and assumptions of negotiators." Four main streams can be distinguished when linking to specific approaches: the structural-processual approach, the behavioral approach and the cognitive-strategic approaches. (Faure, 2002: 399)Some researchers will be mentioned

in an indicative way. Raymond Cohen's approach belongs to the fourth mode. Cohen (1991) analyses the impact of different negotiation styles during various stages of the negotiation process: renegotiations, opening moves, middle game, and end game.

What is negotiating across cultures? The essence of negotiation is to negotiate under different cultures. Referring to the negotiation, it always means that multilateral negotiation is involved. The complexity of negotiation is obvious and widely accepted. In the words of Holsti (1982, p. 160), "the problem with this kind of diplomacy... is that it is often a very messy affair, almost defying generalization." Why is multilateral negotiation complex? The cultural may be one of the most important reasons. Because different cultural backgrounds lead to cultural practices, thinking form, emotional patterns and behavior into different way, in general negotiating across cultures is very complicated. Negotiating across cultures involves different cultural backgrounds with the unknown factors (for example, the different patterns of behavior, religious beliefs and traditions), and these unknown factors may make the effective communication failure. In Cohen's book, he checks up the ways in which cultural factors have influenced the act and the outcome of the United States dealings with countries, such as Japan, China, Egypt and other countries. Whereas the effect of cultural factors on the diplomacy was ignored at the start, now the influence of the cultural factors perhaps excessively is thought highly of. Fortunately, Raymond Cohen has noticed this tendency: "In most cases negotiation failure is more likely to be the result of divergent interests than of subjective misunderstanding... It should not be thought that all international negotiation

is a distressing saga of stumbling incoherence." In spite of this fact, cultural factors do " on occasion complicate, prolong, and even frustrate negotiations where there exists an identifiable basis for cooperation." Cohen stresses the importance of culture but at the same time he also doesn't agree with the view that excessively emphasizes the importance of cultural factors on negotiation.

Cohen's approach is to study through combination of practical cases to analysis this theoretical framework. It focuses on different models with Western countries model and non-Western countries model. One hand, Cohen thinks that there is no single, universal model for negotiation. But on the other hand, he presents two quite different contexts, " low context" and " high context". Many countries are involved in his empirical method, such as United States, Chinese, Japan, German, French and many other countries. For example, In Cohen's view, the United States belongs to " high context" but China belongs " low context". According to make an analysis on different countries people's actions, we may become more acquainted with his approach.

There are two negotiation models in Cohen's book. The first one is western countries model, the main characteristics of which are verbal, low context, individualistic¼confrontational, direct, issue oriented, monochromic concept of time. The other is non-western model, whose main characteristics are high context, no verbal¼collectivist¼harmonious, indirect, relation oriented, polychromic concept of time. (lecture notes)If negotiation goes on in different negotiation model, there will be problem in all probability, unless the representatives have an in-depth understanding of the culture. The book <https://assignbuster.com/the-theory-of-decision-makers-role-politics-essay/>

also points out that the dissonance of cross-culture may damage the bilateral relationship. Understanding each other's psychological needs is very useful for cross-culture negotiation. In Cohen's book, he also points out some valuable skills, for example, negotiation should not only consider the immediate problems, but also study the opponent's culture and history to prepare for the negotiation, then think about the opponent's response, and at last make solutions.

Cohen believes that a single cultural background makes the negotiators ignore the importance of local culture. The impact of cultural differences is enormous, especially for the impact of individual's personality. The impact of local culture can not be resolved by other cultures.

Cohen's theory is borrowed from Szalay model. Szalay first distinguishes between form and content of a message. The meaning of the message is encoded, and then if we want to understand the meaning of this message, we need to properly decode it. The recipient must match the sender's intention to understand this message. Szalay says, " Since the encoder and the decoder are two separate individuals their reactions are likely to be similar only to the extent that they share experiences, that they have similar frames of reference. The more different they are, the less isomorphism there will be between encoded and decoded content."(Szalay, 1981: 135) Cultures are similar in the aspect of providing us with a similar model of thinking, but individuals from different cultures have different experiences and thinking patterns. Cohen, drawing on this model, identifies some very basic and universal cultural differences. The first one is the difference between individualistic culture and collectivist culture. In the individualistic culture, <https://assignbuster.com/the-theory-of-decision-makers-role-politics-essay/>

interpersonal relations are often not taken seriously and communication is direct and clear. There is no complicated protocol and patient. According to Cohen's theory, the United States is the individualistic culture. The American people like individualism, and communicate with other people directly. But in collectivist culture, they stress courtesy and talk about the business indirectly in the process of negotiation. China is just the representative of such culture. The differences between the two cultures led to Cohen's two different kinds of models in the negotiation.

Another very important difference is between polychronic and monochronic concepts of time. Polychronic cultures believe that time is very precious, and there is a clear time-norms; and monochronic cultures is less time-sensitive. The attitude that time is valuable is developed from the former viewpoint but not the latter one. German is quite on time no matter they date or work, but on the contrary the Arabic countries people always are late for their appointments . So Cohen divides German into the polychronic culture and the Arabic countries monochronic culture.

Cohen also discusses the cultural differences that effect four phases of the negotiation. These four phases are the preparation phase, the beginning, middle and end phases of negotiations. Cohen's division of negotiation is like Touval's . Touval divides the phases of multilateral negotiation into three phases: the pre-negotiation, the formal negotiation, and the agreement phase.(Touval, 1989: 163) Cohen points out that different cultures determine the differences between the four of the negotiation process. Culture is a double-sword, so it can affect different impact in the process of negotiation.

Advantages: Negotiating across cultures is good for people from different countries know each other better. Through negotiating can clear up the misunderstandings among countries. It also can make different countries reach a same goal in international affairs.

Disadvantages: in some conditions it does not always work. When it comes across the problems of a country's benefit, or some problems concerning the major principle, there is always no space for negotiating.

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There are various models of foreign policy decision-making. A common starting point for studying the decision-making process is the rational model. Other models of decision making include the organizational process model, the bureaucratic politics model, and the psychological models. Explain and compare the central tenets of these four models.

Before we analyze the models of foreign policy-decision, the question that what the foreign policy is should be firstly figured out. The book of " *Elements of Political Science*" (Sheehan, 1999) refers to two kinds of definitions about foreign policy. He says, " For some commentators the term foreign policy refers to a clear set of attitudes toward the international environment and a vision of one's country's place in the world", and " An alternative view sees foreign policy as simply the policies of governments obliged to react to external events."(Sheehan, 1999: 329). In Mansbach's book *Global Puzzle* (2000), Mansbach points out three concepts. He says, " the phrase denotes behavior that is external or foreign to the state, leading to the first version:' the general tendencies and principles that underlie the conduct of stages.' This definition focuses on the interests and goals of states but largely ignores their actual behavior and commitments", " A second definition describes foreign policy as 'the concrete plans and commitments' that leaders devise", " The last definition is more inclusive,

but it too is incomplete. It leaves the impression, first, that sovereign states and their surrogates are only actors involved".(Mansbach, 2000; 164).

Combining the above three definitions, foreign policy can be regarded as a process in which the decision makers are in pursuit of maximized national interests in a certain external environment. Hudson holds that " Foreign policy analysis as a distinct and consciously theoretical enterprise, however, did not exist before World War II." and " a theoretical enterprise informed by empirical investigation". (Hudson, 1995: 50).

There are four models in foreign policy decision making process. They are rational model, organizational process model, bureaucratic politics model and psychological model.

Rational model

In the rational model, the state action is decided by the decision maker. So the core of rational model is decision maker. Rational model assumes that people are all rational and economic rule as the basis. Decision makers can calculate the costs and benefits carefully, and work out a policy to pay minimum cost but get maximize value. The core of rational model is to calculate cost-benefit in all cases, and then make rational decision. The rational model stresses the decision maker's " cognitive approach". The cognitive approach involves assessing the decision makers in perception due " to the difficulties a careful and logical person would have in making inferences from an ambiguous environment under trying conditions."(Robert, p. 253). The decision maker must be a careful and logical person who has the ability to make right decision in a complex, ambiguous environment.

However, in reality, it is impossible to make a completely rational policy decision. First of all, the pre-condition of rational model is that people are rational. This assumption is too idealistic. People can be sentimental. The human being is a complexity of ration and sentiment. Secondly, there are several problems during the decision-making process. For example, there are inadequacy and uncertainty with the information and the unpredictable factors. Thirdly, during the process of decision-making, the decision makers would be influenced by their own subjective judgments. It's difficult for them to make rational judgments according to the result. These are the shortcomings of rational model.

Organizational process model

Organizational process model could fix the problems of being simplistic and idealistic which are the shortcomings of rational model. In the rational model, foreign policy is made by a single decision maker (individual or state). In the organizational process model, basically the problems that the organization faces are solved through the standard operating procedures and "driven primarily by internal processes". Therefore, the organizational process model does not pursue the ideal maximized value. It stresses the consideration of all of the circumstances with limited rationality to solve problems.

Bureaucratic politics model

The basic theory of bureaucratic politics model is that state power is divided by different government agencies. In this model, decisions are made less by the rational choices of individual decision-makers than by "the pulling and hauling that is politics" among clusters of policy-makers. (Allison and

Zelikow, p. 255). State is linked by government agencies. A political leader is on the top. Political powers are decentralization in the hands of various government agencies. The government agencies' interests but not the country's interests are the guide foreign policy decisions. In the bureaucratic politics model^{1/4} foreign policy is the result of haggles between government agencies. In the bureaucratic model, the domestic interest groups are involved. Business groups, lobbyists, and ethnic and racial-interest groups can affect the decision of the government. For example, Cuban Americans in Florida lobby the government to keep pressure on Fidel Castro. (Jose de Cordoba, 1994, p. A12). African Americans helped reshape U. S. policy toward Haiti. (Steven A. Holmes, 1994, p. A6). And Jewish Americans advocate U. S. Support of Israel, and Greek and Armenian Americans lobby against Turkey. (Raymond Bonner, 1996, p. A4) To fully understand the foreign policy decisions from this angle, one must pay attention to " this web of participants, their interests, their relative influence, and the bargaining that occurs among them prior to a decision." (Mansbach, 2000: 173).

Psychological mode

Psychological model focuses on the analysis of the decision maker's cognitive process and mental status. Decision makers' affective characteristics may also affect the final decision, such as one's ability to control events and one's confidence to himself. Political psychologist Margaret Hermann (considered the relationship or leaders' traits to types of foreign policy decision 1980, p. 46), " professed orientation to change, independence or interdependence of action, commitment, affect, and environment feedback." Considering the human being's complex calculations

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and reasoning ability is limited by the basic cognitive structure of the physical restrictions. When human being thinks questions and makes the final selection, this process is not only limited by various objective conditions in the environment, but also limited by the cognitive process and mental status. The shortcoming of psychological model is that the psychological processes of decision makers can not be seen directly and therefore people only can rely on their external performance. The credibility of the decision maker's external performance is very limited.

In general, all of these four models have their merits and shortcomings. They reflect the features of foreign policy from different perspectives and different stages.

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Yan Wang

In today's world terrorism is increasingly becoming a transnational threat which needs transnational solutions. There stages will be presented. Firstly, compare and contrast this new version of terrorism with the old version. Further, what actors are involved in counter-terrorism and how do they fight terrorism? Finally, how do you think international society's 'war on terrorism' can be improved and become more effective?

The new terrorism is not a newborn thing but it's relative to the old terrorism. However, what's difference between the new terrorism and old terrorism?

First, the target of terrorism becomes generalized. The most important condition to define terrorism is whether it has political purpose. The old terrorism activities all have their specific political purpose and specific attack target, mostly are government building and military architecture. However, the new terrorism is different, and its attack target becomes generalized. The traditional terrorist attempts to overthrow the existing regime or claims for the land, or they want to be independent from their mother country, so their political purpose is clear and specific. But the new terrorism is not like this. Their political purpose is more abstract. They put some sort of ideas, values, lifestyles as targets, or in opposition to a country or an idea for the purpose, which greatly generalizes the political purpose. In some cases, the new terrorism's motivation is "revenge", "punishment" or getting the greatest possible casualties and destruction in order to produce the greatest social impact of violence for the purpose of catharsis. For the old terrorism, the main targets are diplomatic facilities and diplomats, government facilities and officials, because they strongly represent the politics. The old Terrorism focuses on a specific target. But the new terrorism has increasingly shifted to business and other civilian targets. Moreover, the new terrorism does not think about humanitarian and human nature, which makes the civilian casualties increasing.

The geographical features are more obvious for the old terrorism. The terrorists' activities always do not exceed a certain range, and their political

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purpose also has some geographical profit. The connection between the transnational terrorists is closer. The new terrorisms are a part of a complex network. Most of them are not restricted by national boundaries and geographical constraints. Thereby they create a kind of international terrorism network.

When the old terrorisms do terrorism attack, they always want to minimize the damage to women and children. But for the new terrorisms, women and children become the carrier of a terrorism attack. In order to win people's support, the old terrorism often uses violence as less as possible, and consciously limits the number of casualties. But new terrorism never thinks about this.

For all of the world, terrorism is becoming the common enemies governments agree that " It was one of the five key threats to European security, along with the proliferation of weapons -of mass-destruction, regional conflicts, state failure and organized crime outlined in the European security strategy (ESS)in 2003(European council, 2003)."(Keohane, Daniel, 2008: 126)Or the president of The United States says, " Because the enemy operates globally, it (terrorism) must be confronted globally"(Obama, 2007: 332). Counter-terrorism is a role to curb the spread of terrorism, to fight against terrorism, and to attempt to eliminate terrorism. The main instrumentality to fight terrorism is war and economic sanctions. Obama in his " Renewing American Leadership" argues that " To renew American leadership in the world, we must forge a more effective global response to the terrorism that came to our shores on an unprecedented scale on 9/11."(Obama, 2007: 332). So after the 911 terrorist attacks, the United

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States started a war against terrorism in Iraq. However, the war and economic sanctions can only solve the surface problems, but it can not eliminate the root of terrorism. Fully defeated terrorism is quite difficult, for "The battle against terrorism and terror is not a chess game. There are no preset rules: in principle, there is no distinction between legal and illegal moves and no basis on which the best move can be decided."(Borrdori, 3003, p. 2)All of the people in the world should work together to fight the terrorism with all the possible ways in order to get a peaceful world.

Then how to improve the war against terrorism?

The threat caused by terrorism is global. It is an international threat. Therefore, when countries in international cooperation fight against terrorism, they must put aside their national interests. In the course of the fight against terrorism, we must know that the relation between terrorism becomes network, so countries should strengthen mutual cooperation among countries in order to achieve the network against the terrorist network. The war against terrorism in Iraq shows that the results are very limited with a few countries in counter-terrorism operations. Military power can not eradicate terrorism, because it can not eliminate the root of terrorism. The security of the international community can not simply rely on military power. In my opinion, the most important thing is not to counter the terrorism after the terror activities have happened but to prevent and intervene in them. As such prevention entails a move from danger to risk. (Castel, r. 1991))Thus, preventive security is virtual security: it is one step further away from danger in its potentiality, but at the same time it is real, for the future increasingly determines present security choices.(Lupton, D, <https://assignbuster.com/the-theory-of-decision-makers-role-politics-essay/>

1999: 93). Through all states fight against the terrorism, we must find the roots from the social, ideological, ethnic, and religious conflicts, and then seek the right way to eliminate terrorism. From the global point of view, inequality and injustice in international political and economic order are the most important reasons t