EMERGENCE OF NOOPOLITIK

GRAND STRATEGIC SHIFTS AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

The end of the Cold War has brought two major shifts that appeal to grand strategists. The first concerns political and military dynamics. The bipolar international system has expired, and the world appears to be returning to a loose, multipolar, balance-of-power system, with possibilities for U.S. dominance in key military areas. Since this shift is largely about interstate relations, it arouses the theorists and practitioners of realpolitik. The second shift is mainly economic: the enormous growth of liberal market systems woven together in global trade and investment webs. This shift began long before the Cold War ended and is now ascendant. Its dynamics appeal especially to the liberal-internationalist or global-interdependence schools of strategy, whose proponents argue, contrary to realists and neorealists, that statist dynamics matter less than in the past, and that the prospects for peace depend on multilateral cooperation through international regimes that transcend the state.

The result of these shifts is not only a changing world, but also a continuing interplay between America's two main schools of grand strategy: realpolitik and liberal internationalism.[1] Meanwhile, a

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[1]Informative manifestations of this appear in the Spring 1998 issue of *Foreign Policy*, whose cover theme is "Frontiers of Knowledge: The State of the Art in World Affairs," and in the Autumn 1998 issue of *International Organization*, whose theme is "Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics." While these (and other) journals emphasize the interplay between the *academic* schools of realism and

third, emerging shift has been noted: the intensification of the information revolution, with its implications that knowledge is power, that power is diffusing to nonstate actors, and that global interconnectivity is generating a new fabric for world order. Many theorists and strategists do not seem to know quite what to do with this shift. Some view it as spelling a paradigm change, but most still try to make it fit into either of the paramount paradigms about realpolitik and internationalism.

Here we reassess how the information age is affecting the two dominant paradigms and call for a new paradigm for U.S. strategy. The structures and dynamics of world order are changing so deeply that neither realpolitik nor internationalism suits the new realities of the information age well enough. A new paradigm is needed—in fact, it is already emerging, especially in nongovernmental circles consisting of civil society actors—which we call noopolitik.[2] The term extends from our finding in the prior chapter that a global noosphere is taking shape—the development of cyberspace, the infosphere, and the noosphere make noopolitik possible, and information strategy will be its essence.

FROM REALPOLITIK TO NOOPOLITIK—A COMPARISON OF THE PARADIGMS

Noopolitik makes sense because knowledge is fast becoming an ever stronger source of power and strategy, in ways that classic realpolitik

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liberalism, they have also, in just the past few years, begun addressing the emergence of a third school known as constructivism (or social constructivism). It holds that ideational factors—e.g., social identities, and norms—determine the nature of international reality, as much as do material factors. Thus, the concepts behind constructivism are much like those behind our notion of noopolitik. However, we do not discuss constructivism in this study, mainly because, unlike realism and liberal internationalism, this new academic school does not yet figure in the worlds of policy analysis. For good overviews of constructivism, see Ruggie (1998), and Hopf (1998).

[2]In our view, other possible terms like *cyberpolitik* or *infopolitik* are not appealing. We considered and rejected the term cyberpolitik, because we wanted to focus attention on the noosphere, not cyberspace, and because we wanted a term whose connotation would be less technological and more ideational, which is in keeping with the noosphere concept. Also, we felt that yet another term with a *cyber* prefix would not take hold. However, see Rothkopf (1998, p. 326) for an illumination of why "the *realpolitik* of the new era is *cyberpolitik*, in which the actors are no longer just states, and raw power can be countered or fortified by information power."

and internationalism cannot absorb. Noopolitik is an approach to statecraft, to be undertaken as much by nonstate as by state actors, that emphasizes the role of soft power in expressing ideas, values, norms, and ethics through all manner of media. This makes it distinct from realpolitik, which stresses the hard, material dimensions of power and treats states as the determinants of world order. Noopolitik has much in common with internationalism, but we would argue that the latter is a transitional paradigm that can be folded into noopolitik.

In the coming years, grand strategists interested in information strategy will be drawn to both realpolitik and noopolitik. As noopolitik takes shape and gains adherents, it will serve sometimes as a supplement and complement to realpolitik, and sometimes as a contrasting, rival paradigm for policy and strategy. As time passes and the global noosphere swells, noopolitik may provide a more relevant paradigm than realpolitik.

Looming Limitations of Realpolitik

Realpolitik may be defined as a foreign-policy behavior based on state-centered calculations of raw power and the national interest, guided by a conviction that might makes right (see Kissinger, 1994). Classic realpolitik—as put into practice by Cardinal Richelieu, Prince Metternich, and Otto von Bismarck—depends on *raison d'etat*, whereby "reasons of state" (including maximizing the state's freedom of action) take precedence over individual rights. It advances state interests by aiming to create and preserve a balance of power that keeps any state from becoming hegemonic or otherwise too powerful, in the expectation that balancing behavior by all parties can produce a self-regulating equilibrium. In a multipolar environment, realpolitik regards balancing acts as the essence of strategy, the way to keep order and avoid chaos (see Waltz, 1979). And it requires that alliances and other balancing acts be based strictly on power calculations, with little regard for whether an ally has similar or different beliefs—a major power should seek alliances that restrain a rival, even if "moral compromises and odious associations"

are necessary at times.[3] In this light, realpolitik tends to be amoral. But it works best at constraining adversarial behavior if the players share some common values (see Morgenthau, 1948; Kissinger, 1994). Since it is state-centric, it admits only a grudging, selective recognition of nonstate actors.

Although realpolitik has been the dominant paradigm of statecraft for several centuries, it should not be taken for granted as a permanent paradigm. It emerged in a particular epoch in Europe, when the nation-state was gaining strength as the key form of societal organization, ending another epoch when the aspiration was to integrate all Europe under a Holy Roman Empire blessed by the Catholic Church (Kissinger, 1994). Thus, realpolitik spelled a harsh departure from the then-prevailing paradigm for diplomacy, which called for building a universal empire, not a competitive system of nation-states; which was rationalized by moral law, not raw power calculations; and which often worked more through marriage politics than power politics, as dynasties and aristocratic clans used intermarriages to extend their sway.[4] Although it is identified with the academic school known as realism, it should also be noted that realpolitik has no corner on the notion of being realistic. All these approaches to strategy—from marriage diplomacy to realpolitik, and noopolitik— amount to different ways of being realistic by making sensible, appropriate cost-benefit, win-loss, and risk calculations, as suited to the realities of the times.

Realpolitik retains a strong hold on statecraft today, but once again the world is entering a new epoch, and there are many signs that realpolitik is reaching its limits as a reflection of underlying realities. Realpolitik works best where states fully rule the international system—but nonstate actors from the worlds of commerce and civil society are gaining strength and reshaping the international environment. It works best where states can maneuver freely and independently—but complex transnational interconnections increasingly

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[3]Phrase from Huntington, 1991, p. 16.

[4]This progression—from marriage politics to realpolitik, to noopolitik—appears to reflect a progression in the evolution of societies (discussed in Ronfeldt, 1996), from those centered first around the rise of tribes and clans, then around hierarchical institutions, and later markets, with networks now on the rise as the next great form of social organization.

constrain this. It works best where national interests dominate decisionmaking—but a host of "global issues" is arising that transcends national interests. It works best where states respond mainly to coercive calculations and applications of hard power—but state and nonstate actors are increasingly operating in terms of soft power. It works best where ethics matter little—but ethics are increasingly coming to the fore as global civil-society actors gain voice through all types of media. It works best where there is no such thing as a globe-circling noosphere to take into account—but one is emerging. Furthermore, realpolitik works best where diplomacy and strategy can be conducted mainly in the dark, away from public scrutiny, under strong state control, and without necessarily having to share information with many actors—but the information revolution is making all that increasingly difficult and is favoring actors who can operate in the light and gain advantage from information sharing. Indeed, the information revolution underlies most of the transformations noted above—it is the information revolution, above all else, that is delimiting the appropriateness of realpolitik.

Realpolitik has a natural reaction to the information revolution: It inclines strategists to prefer state control of informational stocks and flows, and to stress guardedness over openness when it comes to issues of sharing with others (unless there is a clear cost-benefit advantage to being open). A realpolitik posture is evident, for example, in governmental efforts to impose legal and technical controls over encryption.   This resembles realpolitik's past mercantilist treatment of commerce.

Realpolitik can be modified and adapted to the information revolution, so that it remains an active paradigm.[5] Indeed, the international political system may be returning to a condition of loose multipolarity; and state-centric balance-of-power games will surely remain crucial at times and in places (e.g., in the Middle East and Asia). But seeking favorable balances of power in a multipolar system is only one process that U.S. strategy should take into

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[5]Maynes (1997) discusses the prospects for "ethical realpolitik." Rothkopf (1998) aims to modify realpolitik under the rubric of cyberpolitik and analyzes how the information revolution is altering the traditional political, economic, and military pillars of U.S. policy and strategy—but his essay is less clear as to what cyberpolitik may actually consist of in the future.

account. Global interdependence (and interconnection), combined with the prospect that the United States is becoming a global power, as distinct from a national one, suggests that no ordinary balance-of-power game-of-nations lies ahead—American information strategists will need more than realpolitik in their tool kits.

Liberal Internationalism—A Transitional Paradigm

Liberal internationalism (or global interdependence)—the principal paradigm that has aspired to moderate if not supersede realpolitik—also does not provide an adequate basis for American information strategy. A more recent paradigm, since it requires high levels of economic transactions that did not exist when realpolitik emerged, internationalism has roots that lie in 19th century liberal views that held that increases in trade openness would foster harmonious, prosperous interdependence among nations, and that economic interdependence would make war unthinkable. This view was first elucidated in the 19th century "Manchester Creed,"[6] and then extolled by Sir Norman Angell (1913), who declared war "dead" because of the peace-enhancing properties of interlocking trade and the unacceptable costs of conflict. Ironically, World War I broke out soon after publication of his ideas. Furthermore, this paradigm—under the rubric of "Wilsonian internationalism" (named for U.S. President Woodrow Wilson)—aspired to replace raw power calculations with an understanding that the spread of democratic values, and their enshrinement in international institutions, would prevent conflict, in part by encouraging ever greater economic interdependence and openness.

The seminal academic writings about "complex global interdependence" by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (1972 and 1977) fleshed out this paradigm, showing that the state-centric balance-of-power paradigm neglects the growing influence of transnational ties. Indeed, the trends heralded two decades ago by the prognosticators of interdependence are still unfolding: the global diffusion of power, the erosion of both national sovereignty and international hierarchy,

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[6]The Manchester Creed epitomized 19th century classical liberal thought, positing the notion that free markets and expanded trade would leave little or no room for warmaking.

the growth of transnational economics and communications, the internationalization of domestic policy, the blurring and the fusion of domestic and foreign policy, the rise of multilateral diplomacy, and the need to broaden security concepts beyond their military dimensions (from Nye, 1976). Recently, interdependence theory has been revivified by a notion that states are becoming "trading states" who see no profit in war—and thus have no reason to go to war (see Rosecrance, 1984).

In general terms, the interdependence paradigm furthers the Wilsonian quest to create state-based global regimes to regulate and resolve specific issues. However, the goal is not simply to build new bureaucratic hierarchies that stand above states, but rather to embed states in a set of constraining transnational networks:

> The international organization model assumes that a set of networks, norms, and institutions, once established, will be difficult either to eradicate or drastically to rearrange. Even governments with superior capabilities—overall or within the issue area—will find it hard to work their will when it conflicts with established patterns of behavior within existing networks and institutions (Keohane and Nye, 1977, p. 55).

Meanwhile, a key notion that interdependence will tamp down conflict and ensure peace has not fared well—even though the record is mixed, the world remains as turbulent as ever, if not more so. This has left the door open for critics to reiterate the realpolitik mantra: Statecraft based on realpolitik may not be any better at preventing conflict, but at least power balancing can restore an equilibrium once it has been disturbed. Indeed, the interdependence paradigm has been subjected to constant heavy criticism by realists and neorealists who argue that, on all essential matters, states continue to rule the international system, and that international regimes of any influence merely reflect this (see Mearsheimer, 1994–1995; Waltz, 1979). Moreover, a case can be made that the structures and dynamics of the world economy reflect economic multipolarity (i.e., realpolitik) as much as economic interdependence.

Nonetheless, the internationalism paradigm keeps pace with the new realities of the information age better than realpolitik does. But even so, it too has some notable weaknesses and shortcomings. Although

it effectively emphasizes the spread of transnational ties, it does so mainly in economic terms, despite some nods to increased information and communication flows. And although it recognizes the growth in influence of actors besides states, including NGOs, it mainly spotlights multinational corporations and international organizations composed of state representatives, while barely keeping up with the growth in influence of global civil-society NGOs. Lastly, although it heralds the rise of network forms of organization, it takes more a top-down than a bottom-up approach to them.

Not long ago, a leading proponent of the interdependence paradigm has responded to the information revolution with a major contribution: the concept of soft power (Nye, 1990; Nye and Owens, 1996). As noted earlier, this concept relates to the idea-sharing pole of information strategy, which is most in need of development. The soft power approach contravenes realpolitik's emphasis on raw power. It also contravenes realpolitik's inherently guarded orientation toward the information revolution, by favoring postures of openness and sharing with allies and other actors. Moreover, even where guardedness is needed, soft power allows for less-pronounced statist options than does realpolitik—for example, in relation to freedom of encryption.

Much of liberal internationalism is so close in spirit and substance to noopolitik that, with modification, it may be absorbed by it. A line runs from Wilsonian internationalism, through interdependence theory, to noopolitik, although it is more a broken than a straight line.

NOOPOLITIK IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

An old metaphor about realpolitik views world politics in Newtonian terms as though states, as the only important game pieces, were the only billiard balls moving around on a pool table. What would be more accurate now is a post-Newtonian metaphor, or at least a changed understanding of this old one. The new metaphor should not only add balls for nonstate actors, but should also show that what happens on the table depends on the dynamics of the table fabric as well as the interactions among the balls. And, metaphori-

cally speaking, that fabric is changing in ways that make it—the fabric itself—a new and important factor.[7]

Trends That Invite Noopolitik

Noopolitik makes sense because trends exist that make it increasingly viable. We identify five trends: the growing fabric of global interconnection, the continued strengthening of global civil society, the rise of soft power, the new importance of "cooperative advantages," and the formation of the global noosphere. These trends do not spell the obsolescence of realpolitik, but they are at odds with it. To a lesser degree, they are also at odds with the tenets of liberal internationalism. We discuss each of the five trends below.

Global Interconnection. The era of global interdependence began in the 1960s, and many trends its theorists emphasize continue to come true. However, the term "interdependence" is wearing, and is not quite right for our purposes. It retains a primarily economic connotation; it is overly associated with recommendations for the creation of state-based international regimes; and it connotes the rather traditional, even negative, dynamics of "dependence," as in the contrast between independence and interdependence. Moreover, the term does not quite convey the point we want to make—that a new "fabric" of relations is emerging in the information age, weaving the world and all its key actors together. In our view, the coming age is defined better by the term "interconnection." America and Americans are moving out of the age of global interdependence into one of global interconnection.

There are many reasons why the world became interdependent, and changes in those reasons help explain why interconnection may be the best word to describe the situation. These include the following: a shift in the underlying nature of interdependence, the global rise of nonstate actors, and the emergence of global networks of interest and activity.

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[7]We were inspired to pose this metaphorical reference after a meeting of the Highlands Forum in November 1997, where several attendees broached the obsolescence of the billiard-balls metaphor in a discussion about diplomacy in the information age. Theoretical writings about complexity also sometimes raise this kind of metaphor.

First, the world became interdependent because transnational
"flows" of all kinds—capital, labor, technology, information, etc.—
became immense. But as the flows have grown, the "stocks" that re-
ceiving nations accumulate from the sending nations—e.g., foreign
immigration and investment—have grown large and permanent. For
many nations, the nature of interdependence is now defined not
only by the flows, but increasingly by the presence of foreign stocks
that are self-perpetuating, and that have multiple, complex eco-
nomic, cultural, and other local consequences.[8] Thus, societies are
becoming connected in new ways.

This change combines with a second: Interdependence was spurred
by the rise of transnational and multinational actors, especially
multinational corporations and multilateral organizations. Now, a
new generation of actors—e.g., news media, electronic communica-
tions services, human-rights organizations—are increasingly "going
global," some to the point of claiming they are "stateless" and deny-
ing they are "national" or "multinational" in character. They are re-
defining themselves as global actors with global agendas, and pursu-
ing global expansion through ties with like-minded counterparts.
Interconnection impels this expansion.

Third, the capital, technology, information, and other flows that have
moved the world down the interdependence path were initially quite
inchoate, episodic, and disconnected from each other. That is no
longer the case—the best example being that a global financial sys-
tem has taken shape. These new flows and stocks are resulting in
myriad, seamless networks of economic, social, and other relation-
ships. As these become institutionalized, state and nonstate actors
acquire interests in the growth of these networks separate from the
national and local interests they may have. This growth requires
continued interconnection. For some global actors, building and
protecting the new networks become more important than building
and protecting national power balances—as the networks them-
selves become sources of power for their members.

Some global actors are thus looking at the world more in terms of
widespread networks than in terms of distinct groups and nations lo-

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[8]These points about stocks and flows are repeated from Ronfeldt and Ortíz de
Oppermann (1990, Ch. 6).

cated in specific places. The process of global interconnection is concentrated among the industrialized nations of the Northern Hemisphere. Yet, the growth of the global "borderless" economy often means that the key beneficiaries are not nations per se but particular subregions, such as Alsace-Lorraine, Wales, Kansai, Orange County (see Ohmae, 1990, 1995), as well as "world cities" (e.g., London, Los Angeles, and Tokyo) that are becoming so linked as to represent collectively a distributed "global city" (Brand, 1989; Sassen, 1991; Kotkin; 1993). The United States is increasingly a global, as distinct from a purely national, actor.

In sum, interconnecting the world may be the most forward-looking "game" in the decades ahead—as or more important than the balance-of-power game. Barring a reversion to anarchy or other steps backward—e.g., endemic ethnonationalism, or neofascism—that would make the world look more like it did in past decades, interconnection is likely to deepen and become a defining characteristic of the 21st century. The information revolution is what makes this possible—it provides the capability and the opportunity to circuitize the globe in ways that have never been seen before.

This is likely to be a messy, complicated process, rife with ambivalent, contradictory, and paradoxical effects. It may lead to new patterns of cooperation, competition, *and* conflict across all levels of society (local, national, international), across all spheres of activity (public, private), in all directions (East-West, North-South), all at the same time. It may weaken states in some respects, while strengthening them in others. Ultimately, global interconnection should benefit its proponents, in both state and nonstate arenas; but it may well expose them, and others, to unexpected risks and vulnerabilities along the way. An ambitious actor may have to enter into, and manage, many cross-cutting connections and partnerships—and many of these may involve transnational civil-society actors.

Growing Strength of Global Civil Society. No doubt, states will remain paramount actors in the international system. The information revolution will lead to changes in the nature of the state, but not to its "withering away." What will happen is a transformation.[9] At the

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[9]There is an ongoing debate about the implications of the information revolution for the future of the state. Our own view is summarized rather than elaborated here.

same time, nonstate actors will continue to grow in strength and influence. This has been the trend for several decades with business corporations and international regulatory regimes. The next trend to expect is a gradual worldwide strengthening of transnational NGOs that represent civil society. As this occurs, there will be a rebalancing of relations among state, market, and civil-society actors around the world—in ways that favor noopolitik over realpolitik.[10]

Realpolitik supposes that states thoroughly define and dominate the international system. This will be less the case as nonstate actors further multiply and gain influence. The top-down strengthening of international regimes, as favored by internationalism, will be only part of the new story. Equally if not more important, from the standpoint of noopolitik, will be the bottom-up strengthening of NGOs that represent civil society.

Noopolitik upholds the importance of nonstate actors, especially from civil society, and requires that they play strong roles. Why? NGOs (not to mention individuals) often serve as sources of ethical impulses (which is rarely the case with market actors), as agents for disseminating ideas rapidly, and as nodes in a networked apparatus of "sensory organizations" that can assist with conflict anticipation, prevention, and resolution. Indeed, largely because of the information revolution, advanced societies are on the threshold of developing a vast sensory apparatus for watching what is happening around the world. This apparatus is not new, because it consists partly of established government intelligence agencies, corporate market-research departments, news media, and opinion-polling firms. What is new is the looming scope and scale of this sensory apparatus, as it increasingly includes networks of NGOs and individual activists who monitor and report on what they see in all sorts of issue areas, using open forums, specialized Internet mailing lists, Web postings, and

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Some reasons for our view, and literature citations, are provided in Arquilla and Ronfeldt (1996b; and 1997, Ch. 19) and Ronfeldt (1996). Also see Sassen (1998, Ch. 10) and Skolnikoff (1993).

[10]For elaboration of these points, and citations to the literature, see Arquilla and Ronfeldt (1996b) and Ronfeldt (1996). For an early elucidation of the concept of "global civil society," see Frederick (1993a and b). For recent statements, see Slaughter (1997), Simmons (1998), Sassen (1998, Ch. 9), and Clark, Friedman, and Hochstetler (1998).

fax machine ladders as tools for rapid dissemination.[11] For example, early warning is an increasing concern of disaster-relief and humanitarian organizations.

Against this background, the states that emerge strongest in information-age terms—even if by traditional measures they may appear to be smaller, less powerful states—are likely to be the states that learn to work conjointly with the new generation of nonstate actors. Strength may thus emanate less from the "state" per se than from the "system" as a whole. All this may mean placing a premium on state-society coordination, including the toleration of "citizen diplomacy" and the creation of "deep coalitions" between state and civil-society actors (latter term from Toffler and Toffler, 1997). In that sense, it might be said that the information revolution is impelling a shift from a state-centric to a network-centric world (which would parallel a potential shift in the military world from traditional "platform-centric" to emerging "network-centric" approaches to warfare).[12]

This is quite acceptable to noopolitik. While realpolitik remains steadfastly imbued with notions of control, noopolitik is less about control than "decontrol"—perhaps deliberate, regulated decontrol—so that state actors can better adapt to the emergence of independent nonstate actors and learn to work with them through new mechanisms for communication and coordination. Realpolitik would lean toward an essentially mercantilist approach to information as it once did toward commerce; noopolitik is not mercantilist by nature.

Rise of Soft Power. The information revolution, as noted earlier, is altering the nature of power, in large part by making soft power more potent. In the words of Nye, writing with Admiral William Owens (1996, p. 21, referring to Nye, 1990),

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[11]Schudson (1998, pp. 310–311) argues that it is time for America to give rise to a new (in his historical view, a fourth) model of citizenship that will emphasize civic monitoring. This means environmental surveillance—keeping an eye out—more than it means trying to be knowledgeable about all things (his third model).

[12]The phrase "network-centric" is from military discussions about whether future military operations should be "platform-centric" or "network-centric." See Cebrowski and Garstka (1998).

> "Soft power" is the ability to achieve desired outcomes in international affairs through attraction rather than coercion. It works by convincing others to follow, or getting them to agree to, norms and institutions that produce the desired behavior. Soft power can rest on the appeal of one's ideas or the ability to set the agenda in ways that shape the preferences of others.

This does not mean that hard power and realpolitik are obsolete, or even in abeyance. According to Josef Joffe (1997, p. 24),

> Let's make no mistake about it. Hard power—men and missiles, guns and ships—still counts. It is the ultimate, because existential, currency of power. But on the day-to-day level, "soft power" . . . is the more interesting coin. . . . Today there is a much bigger payoff in getting others to want what you want, and that has to do with the attraction of one's ideas, with agenda-setting, with ideology and institutions, and with holding out big prizes for cooperation, such as the vastness and sophistication of one's market.

Playing upon a distinction about three different kinds of information—free, commercial, and strategic—Keohane and Nye (1998, p. 94) propose that soft power rests ultimately on credibility, and that this derives mainly from the production and dissemination of free (public) information:

> The ability to disseminate free information increases the potential for persuasion in world politics. . . . If one actor can persuade others to adopt similar values and policies, whether it possesses hard power and strategic information may become less important. Soft power and free information can, if sufficiently persuasive, change perceptions of self-interest and thereby alter how hard power and strategic information are used. If governments or NGOs are to take advantage of the information revolution, they will have to establish reputations for credibility amid the white noise of the information revolution.

In our view, the rise of soft power makes noopolitik feasible. Whereas realpolitik often aims at coercion through the exercise of hard power (whose essence is military), noopolitik aims to attract, persuade, coopt, and enjoin with soft power (whose essence is nonmilitary). In keeping with the point that the root *noos* refers to the mind, noopolitik means having a systematic ability to conduct

foreign interactions in knowledge-related terms. It requires information strategy to work—indeed, at its indivisible core, noopolitik *is* information strategy.

The relationship between information strategy and the traditional political, military, and economic dimensions of grand strategy can evolve in basically two directions. One is for information strategy to develop as an adjunct or component under each of the traditional dimensions. This process is already under way—as seen, for example, in metaphors about information being a military "force multiplier" and a commercial "commodity" that benefits the United States. The second path—still far from charted—is to develop information strategy as a distinct, new dimension of grand strategy for projecting American power and presence. To accomplish this, information strategists would be well advised to go beyond notions of soft power and consider Susan Strange's (1988, p. 118) related notion of "knowledge structures" as a foundation of power:

> More than other structures, the power derived from the knowledge structure comes less from coercive power and more from consent, authority being conferred voluntarily on the basis of shared belief systems and the acknowledgment of the importance to the individual and to society of the particular form taken by the knowledge— and therefore of the importance of the person having the knowledge and access or control over the means by which it is stored and communicated.

The proponents of realpolitik would probably prefer to stick with treating information as an adjunct of the standard political, military, and economic elements of grand strategy; the very idea of intangible information as a basis for a distinct dimension of strategy seems antithetical to realpolitik. It allows for information strategy as a tool of deception and manipulation (e.g., as in the U.S. deliberate exaggeration of the prospects for its Strategic Defense Initiative during the 1980s). But realpolitik seems averse to accepting "knowledge projection" as amounting to much of a tool of statecraft. However, for noopolitik to take hold, information will have to become a distinct dimension of grand strategy.

We will elaborate later that there is much more to be done in regard to both paths. Our point for now is that the rise of soft power is essential for the emergence of the second path, and thus of noopolitik.

Importance of Cooperative Advantages. States and other actors seek to develop "comparative" advantages. This has mostly meant "competitive" advantages, especially when it comes to great-power rivalries conducted in terms of realpolitik. But, in the information age, "cooperative" advantages will become increasingly important. Moreover, societies that improve their abilities to cooperate with friends and allies may also gain competitive advantages against rivals.

The information revolution and the attendant rise of network forms of organization should improve U.S. competitiveness. But they should also stimulate shifts in the nature of comparative advantage: from its competitive to its cooperative dimensions. An actor's ability to communicate, consult, and coordinate in-depth with other actors may become as crucial as the ability to compete (or engage in conflict) with still other actors. A new interweaving of competitive and cooperative advantages may be expected. This trend is already pronounced in efforts to build regional and global partnerships.

Some U.S. strategists have begun to see the value of "cooperative competition" in regard to global economic, political, and military relations:

> From this network perspective, national strategy will depend less on confrontation with opponents and more on the art of cooperation with competitors. . . . The new strategy of cooperative competition would be defined more in terms of networks of information flows among equals that provide for enhanced cooperation on technological developments and potential responses to international crises in a framework of shifting ad hoc coalitions and intense economic competition. . . . The strategy of the United States, then, would be to play the role of strategic broker, forming, sustaining, and adjusting international networks to meet a sophisticated array of challenges (Golden, 1993, pp. 103, 107, 108).

Thinking along these lines could advance via soft power and noopolitik. In the military area, for example, where advanced information systems give the United States an edge for building interna-

tional coalitions, "selectively sharing these abilities is therefore not only the route of coalition leadership but the key to maintaining U.S. military superiority" (Nye and Owens, 1996, p. 28). Martin Libicki's (1998 and forthcoming) idea for creating an "open grid" for militarily illuminating the world—a global command, control, communications, computing, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) system, installed and sustained by the U.S. military, whose information would be available to any country's military so long as it accepts illumination of its own military deployments and other activities—is very much in line with noopolitik. Similar notions are being fielded about global cooperation to address economic, social, judicial, and other issues (e.g., Joffe, 1997; Mathews, 1997; and Slaughter, 1997). David Gompert (1998) argues, more broadly, that freedom and openness are necessary for benefiting fully from the information revolution—and thus a "core" of democratic, market-oriented powers, led by the United States, is gaining a global presence, such that any potentially adversarial power like China who wants to benefit as well from the information revolution will have to adapt to cooperating with this core, including by sharing its interests and eventually its values.[13]

The United States, with its diversity of official, corporate, and civil-society actors, is more disposed and better positioned than other nations to build broad-based, networked patterns of cooperation across all realms of society, and across all societies. This surely means moving beyond realpolitik, which, unlike noopolitik, would avoid information sharing, define issues and options in national rather than global terms, prefer containment to engagement, and focus on threats and defenses rather than on mutual assurances.

Formation of a Global Noosphere. This was discussed at length in the prior chapter. But the point should be reiterated that the formation of a noosphere is crucial for noopolitik. Without the emergence—and deliberate construction—of a massive, well-recognized noosphere, there will be little hope of sustaining the notion that the world is moving to a new system in which "power" is understood mainly in terms of knowledge, and that information strategy should

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[13]An opinion piece by Ikenberry (1998) articulates a similar set of points, although without tying them to the information revolution.

focus on the "balance of knowledge," as distinct from the "balance of power."

Mutual Relationship Between Realpolitik and Noopolitik

Realpolitik, no matter how modified, cannot be transformed into noopolitik. The two stand in contradiction. This is largely because of the uncompromisingly state-centric nature of realpolitik. It is also because, for an actor to shift the emphasis of its statecraft from realpolitik to noopolitik, there must be a shift from power politics to power-sharing politics. Nonetheless, the contradiction is not absolute; it can, in theory and practice, be made a compatible contradiction (rather like yin and yang). Indeed, true realpolitik depends on the players sharing and responding to some core behavioral values— a bit of noopolitik may thus lie at the heart of realpolitik (see Morgenthau, 1948, pp. 224–231). Likewise, true noopolitik may work best if it accords with power politics—however, this perspective should be less about might makes right, than about right makes might (as also exposited in Gompert, 1998). Understanding this may help in persevering through the transitional period in which realpolitik and noopolitik are likely to coexist. Skillful policymakers and strategists may face choices as to when it is better to emphasize realpolitik or noopolitik, or as to how best to alternate between them or apply hybrids, especially when dealing with a recalcitrant adversary who has been able to resist realpolitik types of pressures.

The relationship between realpolitik and noopolitik may be dynamic in another sense. Patterns of development remain uneven around the world; parts of it are already quite steeped in the dynamics of the information age, while other parts still seem more medieval than modern. Thus, noopolitik will be more pertinent in some parts of the world than in others, and in regard to some issues more than others. We surmise that it will be most pertinent where advanced societies predominate: e.g., in Western Europe and North America. It will be less so where conditions remain traditionally state-centric, and thus ripe for the continuation of realpolitik (e.g., much of Asia). Moreover, noopolitik will be most effective where all manner of media are prevalent, where civil-society NGOs have an edge in generating attention to issues, where government-NGO relations are quite good,

and where issues are intricate rather than strictly economic, political, or military.

One way to balance the realpolitik model with aspects of the global interdependence model is to theorize that world politics is bifurcating into two worlds that coexist, overlap, and interact. In this view, as explicated by James Rosenau (1988, 1990), a "multicentric world" of "sovereignty-free" actors concerned with "autonomy" is growing in parallel to the old "state-centric world" of "sovereignty-bound" actors concerned about "security." The latter world corresponds to the traditional nation-state system, the former to the nonstate actors whose numbers, diversity, and influence are increasing—including global corporations, international regimes, and civil-society advocacy groups. This bifurcation may endure a long time and be fraught with major episodes of citizen-based activism, as in the fall of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe,

> where the activists in the population become agents of communication, either through uncoordinated but cumulative behavior or through ad hoc, informal organizational networks (Rosenau, 1992, p. 268).

But even if "bifurcation" makes theoretical sense, a somewhat obverse point is important for the practice of noopolitik: This kind of analysis underscores, again, that noopolitik will require governments to learn to work with civil-society NGOs that are engaged in building cross-border networks and coalitions. Even a geopolitical strategist as traditional as Zbigniew Brzezinski realizes this. At the end of his latest book (1997, p. 215), after treating the world as a "chessboard" to be mastered through statist realpolitik, he turns to postulate that efforts to build a new transnational structure for assuring peace would have the

> advantage of benefiting from the new web of global linkages that is growing exponentially outside the more traditional nation-state system. That web—woven by multinational corporations, NGOs (non-governmental organizations, with many of them transnational in character) and scientific communities and reinforced by the Internet—already creates an informal global system that is inherently congenial to more institutionalized and inclusive global cooperation.

In his view, the United States should work for the creation of such linkages because we are the only ones who can pull this off. Even if U.S. primacy were ultimately to wither away—which is likely in his view—this web of linkages would remain "a fitting legacy of America's role as the first, only, and last truly global superpower."

For cases in which it is not easy to bring realpolitik and noopolitik in line on ethical grounds, and in which there are contradictions and trade-offs that may result in accusations of hypocrisy, the relationship between the two will break down. U.S. policy toward Iraq offers an example. In the 1980s, when Iraq seemed to be losing the Iran-Iraq war, the U.S. government supplied intelligence to Iraq, ignoring Iraq's use of chemical weapons (e.g., in Iraq's 1988 counterattack against Iran on the Faw Peninsula). This was a realpolitik posture. Realpolitik allows for taking the position that a leader may be a heathen but he is "our" heathen—a position that would generally be inconsistent with noopolitik. Today, U.S. policy opposes Iraq's development of chemical weapons on grounds that mix aspects of realpolitik and noopolitik. In other parts of the world—e.g., Algeria, Nigeria, and Saudi Arabia—there also appear to be trade-offs between supporting democracy (an important goal for noopolitik) and supporting an authoritarian or theocratic regime because it rules a country of strategic value (an important goal for realpolitik).

FOSTERING NOOPOLITIK: SOME GUIDELINES AND TASKS

Noopolitik is foreign policy behavior and strategy for the information age that emphasizes the shaping and sharing of ideas, values, norms, laws, and ethics through soft power. Noopolitik is guided more by a conviction that right makes for might, than the obverse. Both state and nonstate actors may be guided by noopolitik; but rather than being state-centric, its strength may likely stem from enabling state and nonstate actors to work conjointly. The driving motivation of noopolitik cannot be national interests defined in statist terms. National interests will still play a role, but they may be defined more in societywide than state-centric terms and be fused with broader, even global, interests in enhancing the transnationally networked "fabric" in which the players are embedded. While realpolitik tends to empower states, noopolitik will likely empower networks of state and nonstate actors. Realpolitik pits one state against another, but

noopolitik encourages states to cooperate in coalitions and other mutual frameworks. In all these respects, noopolitik contrasts with realpolitik. Table 2 summarizes this contrast.

Kissinger may be said to epitomize the *zeitgeist* and practice of realpolitik. Who may stand for the zeitgeist of noopolitik? One name that comes to mind is George Kennan. He has always been mindful of realpolitik. Yet, his original notion of containment was not (as he has pointed out many times) essentially military. Rather, it was centered on the idea of creating a community of interests, based on shared ideals, that would secure the free world, while dissuading the Soviet Union from aggression, and eventually persuading it to change. This seems an early expression of noopolitik, geared to a state-centric system. Nelson Mandela and George Soros, not to mention a host of less renowned individuals who have played leading roles in civil-society activist movements, are those whose beliefs and activities reflect the rising importance of nonstate actors.

Some of the best exemplars of the emergence of noopolitik involve "social netwars" waged by civil-society activists (see Arquilla and

Table 2

Contrast Between Realpolitik and Noopolitik

Realpolitik	Noopolitik
States as the unit of analysis	Nodes, nonstate actors
Primacy of hard power (resources, etc.)	Primacy of soft power
Power politics as zero-sum game	Win-win, lose-lose possible
System is anarchic, highly conflictual	Harmony of interests, cooperation
Alliance conditional (oriented to threat)	Ally webs vital to security
Primacy of national self-interest	Primacy of shared interests
Politics as unending quest for advantage	Explicitly seeking a *telos*
Ethos is amoral, if not immoral	Ethics crucially important
Behavior driven by threat and power	Common goals drive actors
Very guarded about information flows	Propensity for info-sharing
Balance of power as the "steady-state"	Balance of responsibilities
Power embedded in nation-states	Power in "global fabric"

Ronfeldt, 1996a and 1997).[14] While all-out military wars, such as World Wars I and II, represent the conflictual heights (and failures?) of realpolitik, nonmilitary netwars may prove the archetypal conflicts of noopolitik. The Nobel prize-winning campaign to ban land mines;[15] NGO-led opposition to the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI);[16] the Greenpeace-led campaign against French nuclear testing in the South Pacific; the swarming of transnational NGOs in defense of the Zapatista insurgents in Mexico;[17] and recent information-age efforts by Burmese and Chinese dissidents, with support from U.S.-based NGOs, to press for human rights and political reforms in these countries[18] all exemplify how transnational civil-society networks, in some cases with strong support from states, can practice noopolitik, with varying degrees of success, to change the policies of states that persist in emphasizing the traditional politics of power. These cases substantiate that old ideas about "peace through strength" may give way to new ideas of "peace through knowledge." They also show that ideas themselves, particularly ones with deep ethical appeal, may be fused with advanced communications technologies and new organizational designs to create a new model of power and diplomacy that governments will increasingly encounter and have to heed. Noopolitik is more attuned than realpolitik to the advent of social netwar. And for now, activist NGOs, perhaps because they lack the resources for realpolitik, appear to be

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[14]Netwar is an information-age entry on the spectrum of conflict that is defined by the use of network forms of organization, doctrine, and strategy, made possible by the information revolution. We presume here that most readers are familiar with the concept. See Arquilla and Ronfeldt (1996a, 1997).

[15]For an academic analysis of this movement that treats moral suasion and organizational networking as important factors in the growth of transnational civil society, see Price (1998).

[16]Kobrin (1998) views this opposition to the MAI as a "clash of globalizations"—between the type of globalization favored by investors, and a newer type represented by electronically networked global civil society actors who oppose economic globalization.

[17]On the Zapatista movement in Mexico, see Cleaver (1998) and Ronfeldt et al. (1998).

[18]On Burma, see Danitz and Strobel (forthcoming). On China, see dissidents' declarations posted at sites maintained by Human Rights in China (www.hrichina.org) and the Digital Freedom Network (www.dfn.org). Periodic articles in The *Los Angeles Times* have also provided excellent coverage of efforts by Chinese dissidents to use the Internet to spread their views.

ahead of states in having the motivation and ability to apply noopolitik.

But what if states regard noopolitik as attractive, without caring about the emergence and construction of the noosphere? In the hands of a democratic leader, noopolitik might then amount to little more than airy, idealistic rhetoric with little or no structural basis; while, in the hands of a dictator or a demagogue, it could be reduced to manipulative propaganda.[19] Or narrow versions of noopolitik may be practiced mainly for private gain—in the commercial worlds of advertising and public relations, this already occurs when companies develop a media blitz and plant testimonials to shape public opinion.

Much as the rise of realpolitik depended on the development and exploitation of the geosphere (whose natural resources enhance state power), so will the rise of noopolitik depend on the development and exploitation of the noosphere. To pursue this, measures need to be identified that, in addition to fostering the rise of a noosphere, are likewise geared to facilitating the effectiveness of soft power, the deepening of global interconnections, the strengthening of transnational civil-society actors, and the creation of conditions for governments to be better able to act conjointly (in terms of cooperative advantages), especially with nonstate actors.

The following are some measures for U.S. policy and strategy that could assist with the development of the noosphere and noopolitik. All are taken from ongoing discussions about issues raised by the advance of the information revolution.

- •   Continue to support expansion of cyberspace connection around the world. Support the access of NGOs as well as state and mar-

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[19]It has been suggested that a Hitler would like the concept of noopolitik. Our rejoinder is that noopolitik must be based on the existence of a noosphere, and that the openness and interconnectedness that comes with a noosphere would expose and constrain a Hitler. Additionally, some religious and other cults may practice a version of noopolitik to attract adherents and assail their critics and opponents, although at base these cultists operate from a closed, even isolating ethos that really contradicts the notion of an open, global noosphere.

ket actors to it, including where this runs counter to the prefer-
ences of authoritarian regimes.[20]

• Move away from realpolitik designs to control encryption, toward
freedom of encryption. (For a good discussion, see Dyson, 1997.)

• To ensure cyberspace safety and security at the international
level, develop multitiered information systems for information
sharing, creating a shared infosphere.[21]

• Promote freedom of information and communications as a right.
Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states
that "everyone has a right to seek, receive and impart informa-
tion and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."
An equivalent appears in the International Covenant for Civil
and Political Rights. Noopolitik requires more. Activists on the
political left have drafted a "Peoples Communications Char-
ter."[22] Something along these lines, made suitable for people
across the political spectrum, seems essential for the evolution of
a global noosphere.[23]

• Encourage the creation of "special media forces." They might be
modeled along the lines of special forces units but should be
armed with weapons of the media (e.g., digital cameras and
satellite uplinks) rather than those of the military. Under some
circumstances, they could be dispatched into conflict zones to

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[20]See Kedzie (1997) for the argument that communication, interconnection, and
democracy reinforce each other.

[21]This point is from a briefing by RAND colleague Robert H. Anderson.

[22]See http://www.waag.org/pcc/. Also see Frederick (1993b).

[23]This point, with variations, has adherents in Japan, as well as in America and Eu-
rope. Kumon and Aizu (1993, p. 318) write:

> [T]he emergence of hypernetwork society will require not only physical/technical in-
> frastructure but also a wide range of new social agreements binding the infostructure
> that is the social/human network. We propose that the core of such infostructure will
> be "information rights," a new concept of human rights that will supplement, and in
> part replace, property rights that have been widely accepted in modern industrial soci-
> ety.

Also see Frederick (1993a), in the same book.

help settle disputes through the discovery and dissemination of accurate information.[24]

- Open diplomacy to greater coordination between state and nonstate actors, especially NGOs, by undertaking a "revolution in diplomatic affairs" (RDA) that matches the revolutions under way in business and military affairs (see Arquilla and Ronfeldt, 1997 and 1998b).[25]

- Broach with other potentially interested state and nonstate actors the idea of building an "information commonwealth" (term from Cooper, 1997, and other sources).[26]

These measures relate to the creation of a global noosphere that would be of interest to all realms of society. It may also be advisable for the United States to work on creating a "military noosphere"—and for that, different measures may be needed. The goals might include improving jointness in the U.S. military, as well as the effectiveness of the U.S. military engagement, alliance, and coalition activities abroad, and U.S. ability to address small scale contingencies (SSCs) involving NGOs. The emphasis in recent years on "jointness" among the U.S. armed services could be a key aspect of the creation of a military noosphere. In a similar light, the many foreign internal defense (FID) missions of U.S. forces throughout the world (in over 100 countries) could be seen as external aspects of an emerging military noosphere.

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[24]For related ideas, also see Metzl (1997), De Caro (1996), and Toffler and Toffler (1993). An earlier idea, fielded by Anderson and Shapiro (1992), is that of creating "deployable local networks to reduce conflict," which could be rushed into conflict situations in the expectation that increased communications may foster conflict resolution. Still earlier, Keohane (1984, p. 121) proposed that "data sovereignty," if it could be established, would ease environmental debates.

[25]For background on the prospects for an RDA, and on the concept of "virtual diplomacy," see materials from the conference on "Virtual Diplomacy: The Global Communications Revolution and International Conflict Management," organized by the U.S. Institute for Peace, Washington, D.C., April 1–2, 1997, located at http://www.usip.org/. Also see Cambone (1996), Shultz (1997), Solomon (1997), Wriston (1997), The Project on the Advocacy of U.S. Interests Abroad (1998), and Burt, Robison, and Fulton (1998).

[26]Benedict Anderson's (1991) notion of an "imagined community" may be appropriate, too.

In a sense, a military noosphere is already emerging, although no one has yet called it that. In addition, no one has thought through the ideational, organizational, strategic, and technological implications of this emergence. An overarching aim of military noopolitik might be to supersede realpolitik's emphasis on "strong defenses" with a new emphasis on "strong sharing," which may avoid accusations that the military noosphere is only a new name for an old approach to domination—realpolitik in disguise. A traditional realpolitik mind-set makes it difficult to share with others and could thus encourage an "information arms race." However, in today's world, a failure to engage in strong sharing with friends and allies, in regard to such issues as cyberspace security and safety, may undermine the prospects for either realpolitik or noopolitik.

If a U.S.-led military noosphere can be built, the key gains may be in peacetime rather than wartime, for such purposes as conflict anticipation and prevention, nation-building, humanitarian and disaster relief, and confidence-building with regard to new military and security arrangements in various parts of the world. Libicki's notion, mentioned earlier, of an "open grid"—a global C4ISR system open to all—could provide a structural element for a military noosphere. Success with designing a military model of the noosphere might lead the way for creation of a diplomatic counterpart.

As U.S. information strategy approaches the rise of the noosphere and noopolitik it should be based on "guarded openness." This is an advisable policy posture for democracies (Arquilla and Ronfeldt, 1996b and 1997). Openness is crucial for sharing, which is the ethical and practical essence of the noosphere and noopolitik, but guardedness will long remain crucial for security. Most of the general measures noted above emphasize openness, but military noosphere measures will require a different balance between openness and guardedness. The next chapter goes more deeply into military and security matters, where achieving the best balance between guardedness and openness—and between the enduring value of realpolitik and the emerging value of noopolitik—may require a deft hand in the years ahead.

As all this gets worked out, it may become clear that there is a lot more to noopolitik than merely asserting, sharing, and instituting the particular values, norms, ethics, laws, and other ingredients of soft

power that an actor wants to uphold. What may especially matter for all parties—the advocates and their audiences—is the "story" that is being told, implicitly or explicitly.[27] Realpolitik is typically about whose military or economy wins. Noopolitik may ultimately be about whose story wins.

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[27]Thus, further analytical elaboration of noopolitik may benefit from inquiring into the "postmodernist" literature about the importance of narrative and discourse in the exercise of power, as exemplified by the writings of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida; and into a new academic literature about story modeling, as exemplified by Pennington and Hastie (1986). We are indebted to RAND colleague Tanya Charlick-Paley for calling the story-modeling literature to our attention.