

The Historiography of International Relations: Martin Wight in Fresh Conversation with Duroselle and Morgenthau

Bruno Mendelski*

Abstract: This article reviews three classic texts of the French, American-Realist and English schools in International Relations, namely *Tout Empire Périra* (Duroselle 1992), *Politics Among Nations* (Morgenthau 1948), and *Power Politics* (Wight 1978). I argue that Wight's approach can be regarded as a middle course between those of Duroselle and Morgenthau, and that Wight adopted this position in order to associate himself with important assumptions by both Duroselle and Morgenthau. In particular, there are similarities between Wight's concept of 'international revolution' and Duroselle's notion of the 'unbearable.' Both are critical of behavioural methods, and both search for recurrences in international relations. As regards Morgenthau, Wight shares with him a Realist view of international anarchy, a classical understanding of 'national interest,' and an understanding of ideologies as the legitimation of government actions.

Keywords: Historiography of International Relations; Martin Wight; Jean-Baptiste Duroselle; Hans Morgenthau; Middle Course.

Introduction

Martin Wight, Jean-Baptiste Duroselle and Hans Morgenthau are leading exponents of the English, French and American-Realist Schools of International Relations (IR), and their core texts are regarded as classics. Given their status, scholars continue to examine and re-examine these texts and their fundamental ideas and assumptions. Several authors have focused on the convergences and divergences between the English and French Schools on the one hand and the English and American-Realist Schools on the other, with several arguing that the English School represents a middle course between the Idealist and Realist approaches.

* University of Brasilia (UnB), Brasilia-DF, Brazil; brunomendelskidesouza@gmail.com. ORCID iD 0000-0001-6814-5749.

However, the interplay between the French and American-Realist Schools has received less attention, and few studies have examined the interplay among all three. This article asserts that *Power Politics*, *Tout Empire Périra* and *Politics among Nations* provide fertile ground for doing so. It presents the hypothesis that Wight occupies a middle course between Duroselle and Morgenthau, and shares fundamental elements with both. With Duroselle, he shares the search for recurrence in international relations, skepticism about behaviourism, and an emphasis on a historical approach. With Morgenthau, he shares a recognition of the compelling character of anarchy in the international realm, the employment of philosophical foundations, and indifference about the influence of the domestic sphere.

In order to substantiate this hypothesis, I conducted bibliographic research, giving priority to primary sources, but also studying secondary sources which deal with the authors' theoretical and conceptual premises.

Historical context and intellectual traditions

Born in Brighton, England, in 1913, Martin Wight received a doctorate in modern history from Oxford University under Herbert Butterfield, his future colleague on the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics (Oliveira 2002: ix). Wight worked at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) from 1938 to 1941, and again from 1946 to 1949. He taught International Relations at the London School of Economics from 1946 to 1961, and at the University of Sussex from 1961 to 1972 (Hall 2006).

His status as a founding member of the British Committee and his prestigious courses at the LSE made him very influential (Dunne 1998). The formation of the Committee in 1958 can be regarded as the symbolic start of the English School (Dunne 1998). Wight chaired the Committee from 1967 to 1971, developing ideas that later sparked important works such as *Systems of States* (1977), *Why Is There No International Theory?* (1966), *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (1991) and *Four Seminal Thinkers in International Theory: Machiavelli, Grotius, Kant and Mazzini* (2004).

Traditionally, scholars refer to these texts when they seek to position Wight and the English School as a middle way between realism and liberalism. Specifically, Wight's contribution is largely evaluated in terms of his own conception of the main traditions of Western thought, namely realism, rationalism and revolution. As a result, some of the ideas in *Power Politics* tend to be overlooked. Besides containing initial notes about the concept of 'international society,' *Power Politics* reflects a proximity to realism which is unusual for the English School. Moreover, its pluralist propositions represent a step forward in the realism-idealism debate.

On the other side of the channel, Jean-Baptiste Duroselle was born in Paris in 1917. He obtained a master's degree from the École Normale Supérieure (Paris) in 1943, and a doctorate in history in 1949. From 1945 to 1949, he worked as an assistant to Pierre Renouvin at the Sorbonne. In 1956, he began to teach the History of International Relations at the Institut d'études politiques (Paris), and in 1964, began to teach the same subject at the Sorbonne. He taught at both universities until 1983 (Scot n.d.).

Duroselle is a central figure in the French historiography of IR. A disciple of and later collaborator with Renouvin, Duroselle was responsible for consolidating the pluralist approach of the French School, moving away from the juridical and factual vision of the previously hegemonic *École des Annales*. He also expanded on the concept of 'deep forces,' first coined by Renouvin¹ in 1964 in his introduction to *L'histoire des relations internationales* (written jointly with Renouvin), and then in *Tout Empire Périra* in the 1980s (Saraiva 2008).

In this last-named work, Duroselle expanded on Renouvin's concept of 'deep forces' by proposing two fundamental concepts, namely finalities and causalities, which are meant to provide a systemic explanation of international relations (Saraiva 2008). According to Hernández (2001), *Tout Empire Périra* is a classic of French historiography because of its definitive formulation of the concept of deep forces, and its ambitious attempt to propose a theory of IR based on history. In this work, Duroselle discusses theories and methodologies of the history of IR and proposes a dense theory of IR (Avila 2000). Aiming to create a link between theory and history, and anchored in the defence of the empirical method of historical observation, Duroselle advocates the analysis of international relations by identifying recurrences. 'Regularities,' 'temporary rules' and 'recipes' are the conceptual expressions of this understanding.

Hans Morgenthau, another great exponent of the historiography of IR, was born in the German city of Coburg in 1904. In the 1920s, he graduated in Law and Diplomacy from the universities of Frankfurt and Munich, and in 1929 obtained a doctorate in law from the University of Frankfurt (Griffiths 2001; Souza 2006). In the early 1930s, Morgenthau taught law at the University of Geneva, and in 1935 he worked at the Institute for International and Economic Studies in Madrid. Following the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and the persecution of Jews in Europe, he emigrated to the USA (Sardenberg 2003). In 1943, Morgenthau became a naturalised American and established himself at the prestigious University of Chicago, where he taught until 1971 (Sardenberg 2003).

Politics Among Nations (1948) plays a pioneering role in describing and discussing the Realist foundations of international relations. Morgenthau's relevance to the discipline was so great that Messari and Nogueira (2005) argue that the theoretical study of realism and IR can be divided in pre and post-Morgenthau periods. Sardenberg (2003) highlights the enduring relevance of *Politics Among Nations*, notably the insight that power resists political and economic change, and its recognition of the impact of the technological revolution as well as the advent of non-government organisations, which has transformed the world.

Morgenthau, Duroselle and Wight began their academic careers in the inter-war period, influenced by the global tensions of the first half of the 20th century. Guided by pacifist ideals, Wight became involved with the League of Nations, and retained his convictions even after this organisation failed (Hall 2006). Duroselle, whose father was wounded in World War I, spent his youth in occupied France (Scot n.d.). From early childhood, Morgenthau experienced the anti-Semitism that plagued Germany, and eventually drove him to emigrate to the USA (Griffiths 2001; Sardenberg 2003). His realist world views partly resulted from his personal experiences (Sardenberg 2003).

These three scholars were also directly involved in the academic institutionalisation of IR in the post-war period, marked by the profitable academic exchanges among the

American Committee on the Theory of International Politics, its British counterpart, and the CERI-Sciences Po (Guilhot 2011).

Led by Kenneth Thompson, the American Committee first met in 1954. It encompassed the main exponents of realism in its first academic period, namely Reinhold Niebuhr, Hans Morgenthau, Arnold Wolfers and Kenneth Waltz, who had met at Columbia University (Dunne 1998). It set out to improve the theoretical framework of the discipline of IR, thereby providing a more rigorous foundation for the analysis and practice of international relations and foreign policy (Dunne 1998).

Based on the experience of the American Committee, and led by Herbert Butterfield and Kenneth Thompson, the British Committee was created in 1958 (Dunne 1998). Formed initially by philosophers and historians like Herbert Butterfield, Martin Wight, Adam Watson and Desmond Williams, the Committee was located at the University of Cambridge. It played a central role in the development and intellectual consolidation of IR in England (Vigizzi 2005). Especially during the early years of the British Committee, there were personal and institutional contacts between the members of the two associations (Vigizzi 2005).

On the French side, Duroselle played an important role in organising international relations in post-war France (Keim et al 2014), being one of the founders of the Centre d'Etudes des Relations Internationales (CERI) at Sciences Po in 1952. Duroselle's intensive contacts with Thompson enabled CERI to develop an academic exchange with American IR scholars (Keim et al 2014). This, and his status of visiting professor at important American universities, made Duroselle an icon of Franco-American academic relations (Scot n.d.).

The role of history

In order to substantiate the hypothesis that Wight occupies a middle space between Duroselle and Morgenthau, I will begin by highlighting their perceptions of the historical dimension. According to Maso (2009), the French and English Schools share a belief that historical research reveals the fundamental and enduring features of international politics. Morgenthau shared this awareness of history but thought about it in a more monolithic way as exemplifying what he described as the objective laws of politics (Smith 1999).

The study of IR in France, England and the USA has followed different courses, with the first two countries traditionally more open to the influence of history than the last. Weaver (1998) shows how, in France, political science moves between administration and the humanities, while in England, it has historically enjoyed a multidisciplinary character, and in the USA, it is based on economics. In this sense, while Morgenthau does not totally disregard the importance of history, the influence of the American establishment over his work is undeniable. More specifically, Morgenthau believes that history provides valuable empirical support for rational decisions by political leaders (Smith 1999). By contrast, French historiography values the structural aspects of history, while the English approach values its normative character.

According to Smith (1999), Realists regard history as an important source of insights into the present. History comprises a continuous struggle for power between interest groups, sometimes leading to endless conflict. This fatalistic conception of history differs from the Durosellian understanding, which has a more multifactorial historicist bias. By contrast, the Wightian school rejects the idea that history could predict and explain the present, or has any kind of mechanical relation to it (Buzan 2014).

However, the three share the understanding that history reveals some repetitions, and the constancy of some rational political choices. Hence, for Morgenthau, history is a 'teacher' which provides lessons about international politics (Souza 2006). While Morgenthau sees history as a tool to be used by states in formulating their external policies, Duroselle conceives it at a structural level, while Wight shares Morgenthau's understandings of historical contingencies and how they affect state motivations and international structure (Buzan 2014).

For Smith (1999), Morgenthau's method involves two steps. The first consists of inductive and intuitive techniques, including philosophical thinking about history and human nature. Although derived from historical reflection, his insight is supra-historical, and linked to general truths. This differs from Duroselle in that although the latter treats the individual as an important variable, he does not analyse this in terms of the general laws of human nature but in terms of domestic ('deep forces,' state bureaucracy) and external constraints. Similarly, philosophical premises are not important to Duroselle. In turn, Wight does not agree with supra-historical positions and universal truths, but converges with Morgenthau on the role of other fields of knowledge in examining international politics, such as human history, war and peace, philosophy and theology (Epp 1996).

The second major feature of Morgenthau's method is that of deduction and empirical evidence, as philosophical propositions connected to history (Smith 1999). Duroselle and Wight agree with Morgenthau insofar as they defend the value of empirical evidence in support of their theories. However, Duroselle distances himself from the need for philosophical presuppositions on the grounds that identifying regularities in IR is both adequate and more effective. He explains that his theory is based on history, supported by studies of concrete events (the empirical dimension) as well as analogies and regularities.

As part of the agreement about the need for empirical verification, the English School expresses its scepticism about the Realist use of history. According to Buzan (2014), while the Realists see history as a recurring mechanism which validates their assumptions about power politics, they are not interested in its details. Dunne (1998: 49) notes that Wight's works:

[...] project a sense of history which is not simply about mapping 'recurrence and repetition,' but rather one which delights in pointing out the tricks that history plays on those who shape its course, the tragedy which accompanies their ethical choices, and the irony of unintended consequences.

This passage demonstrates a subtle dialogue between Wightian and Durosellian theory in which mapping historical recurrences becomes as important as investigating the impact of these regularities on decision-makers.

Therefore, one of Duroselle's greatest contributions to IR is his classification of international events into the categories of *regularities*, *rules* and *revenues*. The first involves the repetition of a particular event in different historical periods, or irrespective of political periods. The second involves patterns at a given time, or in a given period. The third represents once-off actions at a given moment, and under certain circumstances.

A deeper analysis of Wight's *Power Politics* shows that he agrees with Duroselle not only about the recurrence of some historical situations in international politics, but also about their character. Duroselle's notion of regularity, which explains the major conversion of people to distinct ideologies or religions, can be associated with Wight's premise that every dominant power is engaged in an international diffusion process of its core values. Duroselle regards this regularity as a 'deep force,' while Wight associates it with the actions of individual states. As Wight (1978: 289) himself notes: 'A dominant power that is thus able to give its policies the added momentum of an international ideal becomes a tremendous force, whose limits are reached only if it provokes the counter-interest of general freedom.'

This Wightian perception of ideological power also resembles the Morgenthauian conception of the ultimate goal of war. Morgenthau (1948: 15) notes that the 'political objective of war itself is not per se the conquest of territory and the annihilation of enemy armies, but a change in the mind of the enemy which will make him yield to the will of the victor.' However, Wight's and Morgenthau's understandings of aspects of political power are remarkably similar to Joseph Nye's (2004) concept of 'soft power' – the notion that states legitimise their power through intangible resources such as culture, ideology and institutions.

Other regularities highlighted by Duroselle and correlated with Wightian and Morgenthauian thinking concern the recurrence of war. Duroselle believes wars are a permanent feature of human history, and will remain so indefinitely. Wight believes that wars are largely inevitable, and can only occasionally be avoided through diplomacy. He demonstrates his affinity with realism by noting pessimistically that the inevitability of war 'means living with endless uncertainties and crises' (Wight 1978: 143). Although Morgenthau does not emphasise the inevitability of war, his convictions about the systemic permanence of International Anarchy and his pessimistic view of human nature make this point implicitly (Gaspar 2013).

The three authors share the view that power differentials among states contribute to the inevitability of war. Duroselle posits that this contrast in power eventually leads the most powerful states to occupy the spaces previously occupied by the weakest. Wight (1978: 144) points out that 'it is the nature of the powers to expand.' In support of this assertion, he mentions historical examples of expansionist actions taken by major powers such as Britain, the USA, Russia and France. He also argues that the expansion of powers is a product of domestic pressure and the weakness of neighbouring powers. This preoc-

cupation with the domestic variable draws him closer to Duroselle and further away from Morgenthau.

Morgenthau agrees with Wight and Duroselle that weak states or politically empty spaces favour the imperialist expansion of nations. He also contributes the sceptical and rationalist view that ideologies are at the service of external policies, and function to legitimate those policies. According to the author:

When the imperialistic policy is not directed against a particular status quo resulting from a lost war, *but grows from a power vacuum inviting conquest, moral ideologies which make it an unavoidable duty to conquer take the place of the appeal to a just natural law against an unjust positive law.* Then to conquer weaker people appears as the ‘burden of the white man,’ the ‘national mission,’ ‘manifest destiny,’ a ‘sacred mission,’ a ‘Christian duty’ (Morgenthau 1948: 65, my emphasis).

This passage is relevant because it is very similar to Wight’s assumptions about the role of ideas in the expansion of powers:

There have always been economic or moral arguments to justify specific territorial annexations, whether they be ‘frontier rectifications’ or schemes of ‘closer union’ between a strong and a weaker power (Wight 1978: 104).

I have continued to look for a possible dialogue between the authors on the notion of recurrence in international relations. Based on a historical study of power struggles in Europe, Wight infers that there is a tendency in world history for a once dominant power to become dependent on the power that took its place. This is similar to Duroselle’s method of mapping political trends and behaviour patterns throughout history. Following this logic, the search for frequencies and constancies in international relations brings French thinking closer to the English School (Canesin 2007).

There are traces of this in Morgenthau as well when he notes that, although historical events are unique, there are degrees of similarity between them. In this sense, it is up to political leaders to try to identify similarities and differences with previous events and processes when he or she faces a particular political challenge.

Nevertheless, Dutra (2015) following Wight (1977, 1978, 1991, 2004) and Watson (2004, 1990) argues that similarities do occur in the history of international relations. One recurrence would be that independent political groupings always demand equal status with others, and seek to organise a proper system of international relations. Despite the constant evolution of political communities (*polis*, city-states, fiefdoms, empires, states, and so on), they have never stopped interacting in an international environment. Therefore, it is possible to establish a clear link between Dutra’s argument, which sustains the historical conceptions of the English School, and Duroselle’s effort to classify international relations events into regularities, rules and revenues.

Dutra's hypothesis about the existence of similarities throughout history, such as political groupings seeking autonomy from their peers, and developing sets of relations at the international level, is directly related to Duroselle's notion of regularities, which holds that the same sorts of events recur in different historical periods. More than a simple conceptual correspondence, this similarity attests to the rapprochement between the English School and French School of IR, both aimed at reaching a better understanding of international relations via a critical empirical examination of history.

Realism and conceptions of human nature and the state

Wight is more realist than Duroselle. Nevertheless, both share some realist conceptions of international relations with Morgenthau. Duroselle is the least strongly associated with this perspective. Despite sharing realism's scepticism about human nature and state behaviour, he is strongly critical of behaviourism due to its recognition of the domestic sphere (as opposed to realism), and in discounting the systemic and universalist approaches in Morgenthau's reasoning.

Morgenthau not only assumes a realist position, but also makes a laudable theoretical effort to justify it. Given this, it is important to highlight and problematize the convergences and divergences between his theoretical matrix and that of Wight.

Scholars disagree about classifying Wight as a realist. After analysing studies of the relationship between realism and the English School, Buzan (2014) asserts that an intermediate view prevails, involving some agreements and some significant differences. Although Wight acknowledges the importance of international law, he also believes that the complex relationships among states occur in an inherently anarchic environment, in which they compete for power. He does not revert to the traditional realist view of regarding the actions of states and political leaders as quests for singular gains.

Dunne (1998) believes that *Power Politics* associates itself with realism in three ways. First, Wight argues that international relations always approaches power politics in an immoral or amoral form. Second, discourses about power predominate, including the classification of states as 'great powers,' 'world powers' and 'minor powers.' Third, anarchy is recognised as a cause of constant potential enmity between states. Thus Wight (1978: 104) states that 'in a world of independent sovereign powers, war is the only means by which each of them can in the last resort defend its vital interests.'

Brown (2001) argues that Bull and Wight form part of the same group as Morgenthau, Kennan and Wolfers, noting that it is hard to differentiate works between works of the English School and those of Classical Realism. In the same vein, Ashworth (2013) notes that there are substantial similarities between the classical American Realists and adherents of the English School, notably that they share a belief in the central role of rationalist solutions in global governance, and that both emphasise the limits of human nature and human actions as significant variables at the international level.

By contrast, Hall (2006) and others argue that Wight does not totally embrace realism in *Power Politics*. More than a realist manifesto, they assert, this work aims to go beyond

power politics. Following this logic, Vigezzi (2005) notes that *Power Politics* opens up room for discussing the importance of normative issues, such as international law and morality. He argues that the understanding of Wight's vision was impoverished from the moment when *Power Politics* was characterised as a seminal realist work. He also argues that, while Wight tended to portray international politics as a relentless power struggle, this was realism in a qualified sense, as *realpolitik* was also tempered by moral issues. In this way, Wight tried to go beyond realism and to reappropriate classical European ideas about the administration of international relations, particularly in respect of international law, diplomacy, and the balance of power (Dunne 1998). Finally, Buzan (2014: 27) observes:

The actual debate about how the English School and realism stand in relation to each other is quite diverse, though it is generally true that similarities are easier to find between classical realism and the English School, and differences more obvious in relation to neorealism.

Wight and Duroselle reject the use of behaviourist methods in IR research, while Morgenthau adopts an intermediate stance. Before starting this discussion, it will be valuable to briefly recount the origins and development of IR studies in France, the USA and England. In France, where behaviourism is most strongly criticised, subjects discussed under Political Economy or Sociology would normally be classified under Political Science in other countries. Moreover, unlike in the USA, realism and idealism were not intensively debated in the inter-war period (Waeber 1998).

In the USA, IR was traditionally associated with Political Science, which has a strong scientist tradition in that country. In line with this, Hadfield, Rofo and Williams (2012) highlight its lack of historical depth, on the grounds of its strong association with deductive methodologies of testing hypotheses against various forms of 'evidence' instead of working with an epistemology based on the verification of political facts in a specific historical context. In turn, Saraiva (2008) argues that no American School of IR History exists, but that US scholars have developed various different approaches linked to problems postulated by political scientists. He asserts that there is a symbiosis between historians and political scientists about the USA's insertion into the international arena, and a recurring concern about the national interest.

By contrast, English historiography has traditionally been sceptical of abstractions and theoretical frameworks, valuing instead the identification and analysis of singularities (Hernandez 2001). Vigezzi (2005) asserts that, unlike the North-American behaviourist school, the British Committee on International Policy Theory rejected the necessity of a general theory of IR. The British School also relied more on history and ethics, preferring a tempered realism. Dunne (1998) argues that, rather than methodological disagreements, behavioural realism and the English School differed on the latter's understanding of the impossibility of some fundamental issues in IR – notably the state, international society and diplomatic community – which were empirically inaccessible. He rounds out his argument about the English School by noting that 'it is this profound anti-positivism

which continues to mark out the approach of the English School from the mainstream American approach to international theory' (Dunne 1998: 62).

Against this historical background, we can now proceed to analyse the stance of the three authors under review on the use of quantitative methodologies in IR in a more useful way.

Duroselle is most emphatic in his critique of what he called 'a fetish for the mathematics of human sciences.' He dedicates part of the introduction to *Tout Empire Périra* to defending the idea that international relations can only be studied via methods drawn from the study of history, and not via abstract methods drawn from the natural sciences. He argues that valid IR theories need to be based on empirical evidence rather than abstractions (Camargo 2013).

Also defending the use of historical approaches to analysing international relations, Morgenthau argues that IR theory should be empirical and pragmatic rather than a priori and abstract. Bull (1969) corroborates this by noting that Wight and Morgenthau formed part of a classical approach to IR that employed a form of reflection derived from philosophy, history and law – unlike the scientific approach, whose presuppositions came from mathematics and logic, and whose greatest exponents were Kaplan, Schelling and Deutsch. However, Morgenthau distances himself from Duroselle and Wight in asserting that the struggle for power is universal, rather than just a recurrent phenomenon. Therefore, he presents a fundamental determinist and generalist trait, arguing that the struggle for power is not only universal in time and space, but constitutes an undeniable experiential phenomenon. In doing so, he paradoxically draws closer to behaviourist approaches (regardless of the use of mathematical or statistical models).

Wight disagrees with this generalist argument by stating that 'a political law is a generalization about how political events recur. It may be a satisfactory generalization within a limited context, but becomes dubious in a wider context' (Wight 1978: 179). Alves (2014) argues that Wight as well as the French scholar Raymond Aron represented an European attempt to break away from the behaviourist approach to IR in the USA. For them, behaviourist matrix theories, with their rational and abstract models, moved away from History, and tended to generate reflections on subjects that did not previously exist in international politics (Alves 2014). In this respect, Wight, commenting on the conceptual definition of 'the great powers,' postulates that a scientific definition will be an abstraction far from the complexity of international policy.

Duroselle advocates the use of a plurality of explanatory variables in order to avoid monistic approaches which start from a single explanatory principle, or abstract IR theory. In the process, he distances himself from Morgenthau by criticising theories which postulate that the supreme goal of states is to gain and retain power. Although Morgenthau does not exclude the existence of contingencies and irrationalities, his ideas about the foreign policies of states are markedly rationalist (Gaspar 2013). Duroselle censures this rationalist conviction, defending explanations that take into account the heterogeneous sets of motivations that characterise statesmen and stateswomen. This becomes relevant insofar as Duroselle regards political decision-makers as partly rational and partly irrational.

Wight, representing the typical middle course of the English School, argues that it is not possible to understand international politics merely in terms of current mechanics, and that a historical perspective is also necessary. Therefore, despite sharing some realist premises, his perspective is situated between realist rationalism and idealistic liberalism. Usefully, Dunne (1998) points out that Wight was the first IR theorist to reject the bifurcation of international thought into realism and idealism, and that, contrary to the paradigms and models marking IR's scientific phase, Wight can best be framed as an exponent of the history of ideas.

State-centrism and the domestic dimension

All three authors share the conservative view that the state has a privileged status in international relations. Duroselle believes this is because states have a monopoly over the legitimate use of force. Wight, in turn, believes this is because the international environment is an anarchic one (although marked by the constraints of morality and law), which demands force as an inherent mechanism of survival (Maso 2009). Both Morgenthau and Wight recognise the existence of international anarchy and understand that states have a predominant role in international relations. Nevertheless, adopting the classical realist view, and consequently distancing himself from Duroselle and partially from Wight, Morgenthau believes that this anarchy turns the survival of states into their supreme national interest.

Although they agree on a state-centric view of international relations, the three authors differ about how the foreign policies of states should be understood. According to Lima (2007), the French School emphasises the societal dimension, analysed in terms of causality and purpose. In this perspective, Duroselle emphasises the importance of internal-external relations, affirming that acts of foreign policy contain some aspects of internal politics (Lima 2007). In Duroselle's view, the strongest determinants of both domestic and foreign policy are 'deep forces,' of varying forms and intensities. Drawing on a more generalist vision, and the substantiated anthropological philosophies of Hobbes and Schmitt, Morgenthau regards the foreign policies of states as dominated by the human will to power, thereby leaving little room for the study of variables (Gaspar 2013). This categorical position is well illustrated in his first theoretical principle, namely: 'Political realism believes that politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature' (Morgenthau 1948: 4).

However, in line with the classical tradition of the English School, Wight devotes little attention to domestic variables (Lima 2007). While he acknowledges that the domestic dimension makes an important but intangible contribution to the constitution of state power, he focuses almost exclusively on structural issues such as anarchy, the balance of power, the international order, and international law. Buzan (2001) also acknowledges that the domestic dimension is undervalued and advocates the need to investigate domestic constraints on foreign policy, since states tend to reflect their domestic character

externally. Therefore, Wight places next to Morgenthau in his scant appreciation of state-owned internal content.

In contrast with Wight and Morgenthau, Duroselle (1992) pays close attention to the role of political leaders, holding that their ideologies, personal ambitions and temperament play important roles in foreign policy decisions, and in defining the national interest. Duroselle recognises and distrusts the desire for power of political leaders, which leads him to conclude that they seek to turn their personal goals into the 'national interest.' This leads him to a direct dialogue with Morgenthau's premise that human beings are self-ish by nature. Despite these timely considerations about the national interest as a domestic dimension, Duroselle still recognises that the search for security is common to all states, due to their inevitable quest for survival. This once again places him close to both Wight and Morgenthau.

National interest and sovereignty

The three authors have convergent views on the 'national interest,' all recognising that particular historical contexts play a major role. Wight prefers the term 'vital interests' to 'national interest,' regarding 'vital interests' as those which states consider essential for maintaining their independence, and which they are determined to fight for. Importantly, however, he adds that 'vital interests' are uncertain, and vary according to historical context. Wight (1978: 95) adopts a strongly realist tone in asserting that 'a Foreign Minister is chosen and paid to look after the interests of his country, and not to be a delegate of the human race.'

Stressing the importance of domestic variables, Duroselle asserts that internal groups reinforce the national interest, which vary from state to state. Because of the diversity of these domestic actors, the real national interest lies in expressing the wishes of the majority, while trying not to harm minorities. Morgenthau remains faithful to his belief in the desire for power of humans and states alike, and points out that power defines interest. Similar to Duroselle and Wight, he notes:

[...] [The] kind of interest determining political action in a particular period of history depends on the political and cultural context within which foreign policy is formulated. The goals that nations might pursue in their foreign policy can run the whole gamut of objectives any nation has ever pursued or might possibly pursue (Morgenthau 1948: 5).

While acknowledging the mutability of the concept of 'interest,' Morgenthau affirms that the central historical condition is a struggle for power, which motivates both international and domestic politics.

Morgenthau gives intensive attention to the concept of sovereignty,² but seeks to broaden it beyond the traditional realist conception which brings it in conflict with international law. In an important contribution to IR theory, he introduces the economic vari-

able as a relativiser of the classic realist understanding of sovereignty as a synonym of state equality in the international system. Instead, he argues that economic dominance intrudes upon sovereignty in that economically weaker states depend on the resources they receive from stronger ones. He cites the example of the relationship between Central American states and the USA. While the former are formally sovereign, they do not have much practical autonomy vis-à-vis Washington because of their economic dependence on the USA.

However, in some respects, Morgenthau's understandings of sovereignty are also fragile. In contrast with Wight and Duroselle, he disregards history as a relevant factor for the examination of sovereignty. Among other things, Wight (1991) studied previous political systems based on some kind of sovereignty, such as the Hellenistic system of Greece and the interactions system among territories in China, as a means of analysing relations among different political units in different historical periods. Along these lines, the English School seeks to understand concepts such as sovereignty through a historical sociology, investigating the meanings given to these notions at certain historical conjunctures (Dunne 1998). Thus Wight makes it clear that the state system is relatively recent, and draws attention to the illusion of its historical predominance created by its strong structure. These insights are relevant because they allow a more critical view of the notion of state a-historicity. This concept, given prominence by Waltz (1979), contributes to the conceptual impoverishment of the state in international relations.

Despite recent state history, Duroselle devotes more attention to structural issues of international relations and human behaviour than to sovereignty. His great insight is that when a state commands a given territory delineated by borders, this does not necessarily mean that it commands a political unit in that locale. In this view, it is important to examine domestic social and economic configurations, since they could generate contradictory movements which, depending in the degree of instability, can become a 'deep force.'

The power of ideas

On the question of the power of ideas and ideologies in international relations, Wight against assumes a middle position between Duroselle's multicausal understanding and Morgenthau's rationalist perspective. Nevertheless, on some points, Duroselle and Morgenthau still converge. To Duroselle, states often utilise ideology to increase their power. If the ideology in question is adopted by other states, they become 'sister republics' and 'satellites.' This strengthens the power of the main state, which may become responsible for the protection of citizens of other countries, thereby increasing its prestige and its ability to extend its ideological orientation (Duroselle 1992).

This perception of ideology as a political tool harmonises with Morgenthau's conception of ideologies as legitimising mechanisms for external policies. Thus Morgenthau (1948: 61) affirms that 'it is a characteristic aspect of all politics, domestic as well international, that frequently its basic manifestations do not appear as what they actually are – manifestations of a struggle for power.' Wight also shares this notion of ideology (which he eventually uses as a synonym for 'revolutionary doctrines') as a legitimising device for

governments and affirms that state power depends on the strength of its ideologies. Given this, it is possible to discern realist traits in all three thinkers, recognising the instrumentalisation of ideas as an important variable of foreign policy.

However, both Duroselle and Wight aim to go beyond the realist view of ideology. In a major innovation, Duroselle situates ideologies as a variable that often acts independently of the human will, thereby configuring itself as a *deep force*. In this way, it plays a fundamental causal role in international relations. In the process, he distances himself from Morgenthau's notion of ideologies as mere means to achieve and legitimise power.

Wight (1978: 94) shares Duroselle's conception of the autonomy of ideas when he states that 'there are few greater errors in the study of international politics than to suppose that revolutionary doctrines have been discarded or are held only in a hypocritical manner for reasons of State.' In the process, Wight affirms that international revolutionary doctrines bring passion and fanaticism to calculations around political actions, resulting in many scenarios where doctrine surpasses the national interest. He goes on to argue that international revolution modifies the character of war, making it difficult to distinguish between war and peace, or international war and civil war.

The modernity of Wightian thought is magnificent. When ideologies are situated within inter-state dynamics, it is possible to relate them to the current theme of transnational religious terrorism. Wight asserts that international revolutions tend to generate revolutionary wars, marked by doctrinal ferocity and unlimited goals. This is a prescient description of groupings such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State Organisation – the more so because of the author's observation that this type of conflict is characterised by crusades that are not aimed at reaching a negotiated agreement, but unconditional surrender.

The notion of 'international revolutions' allows interesting comparisons with Duroselle's notion of the 'unbearable.' For this French intellectual, wars are justified when groups realise or believe that they have been inserted into unacceptable (or 'unbearable') contexts. The reasons may be social, economic, political, national, cultural, ideological, or a combination of any or all of these factors. Thus, the unbearable becomes a *deep force* in international relations, and conflicts motivated by the unbearable often take the form of a revolt against a current regime.

Duroselle does not theorise about the expansion of the intolerable to the international level, and its impact on relations between states. Nevertheless, it is precisely at this point that the Wightian idea of international revolution presents itself as complementary to Duroselle's notion. The reasons why revolutions occur are similar to the impulses outlined by Duroselle in his concept of the unbearable.

Wight argues that nationalist revolutions such as the Glorious Revolution, the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution illustrate two points. The first is the existence of a degree of unity in international society in terms of which events in the territories of one power become relevant to others. Second, these revolutions are connected to a series of movements destined to revolutionise international society as a whole. Accordingly to Wight (1978: 88), 'a revolutionary power, in the sense of one that wishes to alter the foundations of international society, will assume that other governments do not represent

their peoples, and will try to manipulate or take advantage of the potential stratification of loyalties within other countries.’

This placement, rather than demonstrating the strong relationship between state dynamics, highlights the relevance of domestic factors to a sophisticated analysis of international relations. In line with this, Buzan (2001) posits that states are the dominant units in international society, which is therefore influenced by their internal character. The desire of the revolutionary power to export its values places it in a constant position of possible war with its neighbours, once a revolutionary power believes in its mission of transforming international society by conversion or coercion (Wight 1978).

Reflecting his usual rationalist premise, Morgenthau asserts that ideologies, as well as other sets of ideas, have the relevant utility of conferring legitimacy onto external policies. Other than this, his considerations on this subject run counter to the Wightian understanding of revolutionary power. This is evident when Morgenthau (1948: 63) asserts that ‘ideologies, no less than ideas, are weapons that may raise the national morale and, with it, the power of one nation and, in the very act of doing so, may lower the morale of the opponent.’ Ultimately, there is conformity between their conceptions of ideology, which happens at the point where Wight adopts the realist proposition that ideologies only prevail in international relations when they are associated with power.

Conclusion

This study tests the hypothesis that Wight occupies a middle ground between Duroselle and Morgenthau. In the course of doing so, I have initially argued that Wight draws closer to Duroselle in the use of history as a methodological tool. This is evidenced by their mutual search for historical recurrences. Similarly, all three authors share a multidisciplinary understanding of IR studies, including ancillary subjects such as philosophy.

In the course of discussing recurrences in international relations, I pointed to a marked convergence between some Wightian ideas and Durosellian regularities. Wight discusses historical events and processes that can easily be typified as Durosellian regularities, namely the diffusion of ideals by dominant power, the recurrence of power expansion, and the repetition of war. I have also shown that Wight draws closer to Morgenthau than to Duroselle in respect of certain realist assumptions. However, even when recognising anarchy as a promoter of war, and the conflicting character of international relations, he does not deny the relevance of international law as well as morality, thereby assuming an intermediate position between Idealism and Classical Realism. In turn, both Wight and Duroselle are sceptical about behaviourist approaches. They share an approval of empirical historical methods, which Morgenthau also defends, but the latter is more inclined to rationalist and generalist assumptions.

With regard to state-centrism and the domestic dimension, all three authors regard the state as a fundamental actor in international relations, although they differ about the consequences for foreign policy. Wight draws closer to Morgenthau when he characterises the external actions of states in response to international constraints as anarchy, and

further away from Duroselle, who links the internal variables that act on statesmen to his concept of deep forces.

The national interest marks another point of contact between Wight and Morgenthau, namely a realist view of sovereignty and national independence, whereas Duroselle prefers a more multifactorial view. Importantly, Wight and Duroselle approach sovereignty from a historical point of view, while Morgenthau does not.

Regarding the relevance of the power of ideas, Wight establishes an important link with Morgenthau and Duroselle. To start with, he shares a realist notion with the former that ideologies work to legitimise governments and need to be associated with power in order to become more effective. However, he goes beyond this perspective by noting that ideologies are not associated with state power alone. In this sense, there is a fortuitous similarity between Wight's concept of international revolution and Duroselle's notion of the unbearable, in terms of which ideas and ideologies may be strong enough as a driving force to start a war.

Finally, the relation that is possible to draw among Wight and Duroselle and Morgenthau is based on the English author's own characteristics: his uniqueness, complexity, and multidisciplinary nature. These characteristics allow us to situate him as occupying a meaningful middle position between Morgenthau's rationalism and philosophical realism on the one hand, and Duroselle's multifactorial historicism on the other.

Notes

1. It was first addressed in *Historie des relations internationales* (1953).
2. Morgenthau devotes a 36-page chapter to a detailed discussion of this term.

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About the author

Bruno Mendelski is Professor of International Relations at Universidade de Santa Cruz do Sul, where he teaches the undergraduate course in IR. He holds a BA degree in IR from Unilasalle-RS, a Masters degree in IR from Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, and is currently a PhD student in IR at the Universidade de Brasília. He is also a Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior Fellow. He has published widely on IR theory, Middle Eastern politics, and international security.

A Historiografia das Relações Internacionais: Martin Wight em Franca Conversa com Duroselle e Morgenthau

Resumo: O artigo revisita três textos clássicos das Escolas Francesa, Americano-Realista e Inglesa nas Relações Internacionais, a saber: *Tout Empire Périra* (Duroselle 1992), *Politics Among Nations* (Morgenthau 1948), e *Power Politics* (Wight 1978). Eu argumento que a abordagem wightiana pode ser considerada um *middle course* entre Duroselle e Morgenthau, e que Wight desempenha esse papel ao associar-se à importantes premissas de Duroselle e Morgenthau. Existem similaridades entre o conceito wightiano de ‘revolução internacional’ e a noção duroselliana de ‘insuportável’. Ambos autores também são críticos à abordagem behaviorista, e procuram por recorrências nas relações internacionais. Em relação à Morgenthau, Wight compartilha a visão realista da anarquia internacional, o entendimento clássico do ‘interesse nacional’ e a compreensão das ideologias como legitimadoras das ações governamentais.

Palavras-Chave: Historiografia das Relações Internacionais; Martin Wight; Jean-Baptiste Duroselle; Hans Morgenthau; *Middle Course*.

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