

INTRODUCTION

Pondering Postinternationalism

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There is widespread agreement that the dynamics of international relations have changed since World War II. The postwar period has seen a tremendous growth in the number of actors in the international system, including both newly created and independent nation-states, as well as a growing subnational presence. These new actors have been confronted with unprecedented challenges and have risen to the occasion. Yet, the study of these forces in international relations theory remains rooted in traditional debates (realists versus transnationalists) and familiar discourses (sovereignty and states' interests).

James N. Rosenau has responded to these changes by breaking out of what he calls the "conceptual jails in which the study of world politics is deemed to be incarcerated."¹ He has fashioned a paradigm for the study of these diverse phenomenon—the postinternational paradigm or turbulence theory (used interchangeably)—that can simultaneously cope with both state and "nonstate" actors and the changes experienced by them in an ever evolving international order. He has added a new lexicon to our ordering of world affairs, and continues to push us to "think theory thoroughly."

The postinternational paradigm is the culmination of Rosenau's many years of hard work. Steve Smith, of the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, in speaking at an International Studies Association panel honoring Rosenau in 1991, most eloquently pointed out the way in which the many stages of Rosenau's work has led to postinternationalism, most notably, linkage theory, adaptation, and the pretheory of foreign policy.² Rosenau has distinguished himself in the field of international relations as a leader. He has championed the cause of social science and directed his colleagues to look closely at their discipline. While not a methodologist himself, he has urged scholars to proceed carefully and

in a methodologically correct manner in their attempts at understanding the complexities of global life.

But what about content and contribution? Rosenau's forte has been in the marriage of the discipline to the complexities of everyday life—in understanding “global patterns” when many were unsure there was such a thing beyond a traditional state-centric, realist-dominated point of view. Rosenau was one of the first to elaborate on the linkages between domestic and foreign policy. The pretheory of foreign policy offered a reasoned way to understand similarities in the way in which states behaved, at a time when there was little attention beyond very cursory comparative analysis. He recognized the important points his colleagues were making at the time—such as David Easton, J. David Singer, and Bruck, Snyder, and Sapin—and brought them into a broader frame of reference in his subsequent work.³

In his theory of adaptation he argued that the contradictions of complexity did not spell disaster for the nation-state, but instead pushed the state to rise to the occasion and adapt accordingly.⁴ He incorporated these abilities in his review of the pretheory on its twentieth anniversary, bringing together the increasing ability of individuals to influence the nature of international relations while relying on the adaptability of the state to respond to this challenge.⁵ These ideas precipitated many of the changes that would emerge in the next few years, as the bipolar system eroded, and the Cold War came to an end. Was Rosenau a visionary in this regard? Perhaps, but Rosenau's work never focused on the constraints of the existing system, which has tied the hands of so many of international relations theorists. Instead, Rosenau was always looking beyond those constraints, and the fact that they ultimately broke down just offered greater evidence for his contentions.

Rosenau captures these contradictions in the turbulence model, in which he notes the prolific global changes experienced in the world today.⁶ Identifying three parameters of global change—the micro, the micro-macro and macro parameters—Rosenau argues that at each level individuals are becoming more skilled in their ability to deal with the world around them while, simultaneously, their world is less able to provide them the authority structures that once governed their environment. The result is a bifurcation of global structures, where individuals and states may often find themselves at odds. These changes require a new terminology and better tools of analysis to understand the dynamics at work.

The central question remains, however, the extent to which the postinternational paradigm constitutes a coherent research program. The purpose of this volume is to explore both the strengths and weak-

nesses of the postinternational paradigm as a model for studying international relations in the twenty-first century. It provides an opportunity not only for the critics to have their say, but for those who espouse this perspective to refine their views toward a more workable paradigm that allows for clear specification of research parameters, empirical testing of hypotheses, and ultimately, true theory building.

Toward that end, the chapters in Part 1, "Postinternationalism in Perspective," explore the paradigm from other points of view in the field. In the opening chapter, Richard Mansbach explores the underlying arguments of the postinternational paradigm and their relationship to historical trends. Dario Moreno follows with an examination of the role of sovereignty in the paradigm. In the third chapter, Margaret Karns explores the postinternational paradigm from the context of governance, while Spike Peterson concludes this part with a feminist point of view.

A critical dimension of the turbulence model is the unique role of individuals. Part 2, "The Role of Citizens in a Postinternational World," examines the individual from three different perspectives. First, Ronnie Lipschutz compares the growing literature on global civil society and the way in which postinternationalism both informs and is informed by this view. Nicholas Onuf then adopts a more postmodern perspective as he looks for traditional writings on the role of individuals and their habits, specifically Hume, and how that might relate to Rosenau's conceptualization. Finally, Ole Holsti explores public opinion and its impact on postinternationalism, comparing both realist and liberal worldviews.

The third part, "Postinternationalism: A Paradigm for the Twenty-First Century?," offers some methods for operationalizing the paradigm for future research. Mary Durfee clarifies the meaning of complex systems in her chapter and how they might be examined. Joseph Leggold places postinternationalism in the liberal tradition and identifies ways to move forward. Ralph DiMuccio and Eric Cooper take a more methodical approach, first giving an in-depth history of Rosenau's personal evolution to postinternationalism, then doing a citation comparison with Waltz's, *Theory of International Politics*, to chart the movement of postinternationalism into the mainstream of international relations discourse. Yale Ferguson concludes this part with a call to arms for those interested in postinternationalism to take up their pens and test hypotheses, chart a new course, and create new structures.

The final part, "A Postinternationalist's Response," gives Rosenau his say. Rosenau responds to his colleagues, complementing their insights and looking to the future.

The contributors to this volume share an interest in the postinternational paradigm and a respect not only for James N. Rosenau, the scholar, but for the person as well. They have all known Rosenau either as students, colleagues, or both. I myself have been fortunate enough to be both student and colleague, and both my academic and personal life have been enriched by this association. Therefore, this volume serves not only as an exploration of the enormous intellectual contribution Rosenau has made to the field of international relations, but as an example of the personal touch he has extended to students and colleagues all over the world. The dedication and enthusiasm Rosenau brings to his work is an inspiration for us all.

There can be no doubt that the international system has changed in profound ways. While some would argue that the forces of history simply repeat themselves, the ways in which we have studied those forces have been limited by the narrow focus international relations scholars have employed. The postinternational paradigm suggests an alternate view that may enable us to be more effective in our theorizing. It is a useful starting point for reevaluating our theoretical limitations as we move into the future.

NOTES

1. James N. Rosenau, *Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 22.
2. Steve Smith, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, speaking at the International Studies Association, Vancouver, B.C., 1991.
3. James N. Rosenau, *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy* (London: Frances Pinter Publishers Ltd., 1981).
4. James N. Rosenau, *The Study of Political Adaptation* (London: Frances Pinter Publishers Ltd., 1981).
5. James N. Rosenau, "A Pre-Theory Revisited: World Politics in an Era of Cascading Interdependence," *International Studies Quarterly* 28 (September 1984): 245-305.
6. James N. Rosenau and Mary Durfee, *Thinking Theory thoroughly: Coherent Approaches to an Incoherent World* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995).