Using Complexity Theory to suggest a new framework to deal with crises in international politics

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Abstract

This paper applies Complexity Theory to the response of three countries (the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany) to the terrorist attacks of 11th September 2001 in the sphere of foreign policy.

The work shows that, whilst the attacks of 9/11 were unique, they did not represent the beginning of a new era in international politics. Rather, this particular crisis, just like others before and since, represent processes of self-organisation within social Complex Adaptive Systems.

This work applies three Complexity tools to the responses of the three case study countries:

Complexity mapping is used to define the broad social systems applicable to the case study as Complex Adaptive Systems and processes of self-organisation. It maps the orderly, complex and disorderly elements of Complex Adaptive Systems and outlines the implications for the way problems are defined, policies are developed and solutions are framed in response to crises.

The *Fitness Landscape* is used as a metaphor to map the environment in which specific policies in response to crises are applied. It demonstrates the importance of local boundary conditions in determining the effectiveness of the policies developed and, as such, illustrates the self-organising nature of Complex Adaptive Systems. This has key implications for political strategies and processes in response to crises.

The *CDE model* is used to analyse the different variables needed for any policy process of self-organisation and point to possible interventions in order to allow for a coherent process of self-organisation to emerge in response to foreign policy crises.

Applying these three tools to the foreign policy processes of the three case study countries after 9/11, it is shown that policy processes in response to foreign policy crises have to *normalise* and de-centralise quickly in order to maintain coherence. Continued centralisation after a crisis event will lead to incoherent processes of self-organisation, greatly reducing the chances of achieving particular policy goals. The key task for political leaders in response to crises should be to facilitate a process of self-organisation through specific interventions in the policy process so that it contains a mixture of containers, exchanges and differences.

Based on this, the work concludes by briefly analysing the wider implications of the case study for crisis foreign policy-making as well as the theoretical constructs used to explain them.

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List of Abbreviations

CAS	-	Complex Adaptive System
CDE	-	Containers, Differences, Exchanges
CDU/CSU	-	German Christian Democratic Party
CIA	-	Central Intelligence Agency
COBRA	-	Cabinet Office Briefing Room A (Emergency Committee)
DfID	-	Department for International Development
EU	-	European Union
FCO	-	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FPA	-	Foreign Policy Analysis
IR	-	International Relations
ISAF	-	International Security Assistance Force
MEPP	-	Middle East Peace Process
MI5	-	British Domestic Intelligence Service
MoD	-	Ministry of Defence
NAFTA	-	North American Free Trade Association
NATO	-	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NHS	-	National Health Service
NSC	-	National Security Council
PNAC	-	Project for the New American Century
SPD	-	Social Democratic Party in Germany
UN	-	United Nations
US / USA	-	United States of America

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The shock of September 11th

The terrorist attacks of 11th September 2001 in the United States (US) have generally been seen as world-changing events.[1] In terms of the political response, there was almost universal agreement that terrorism represented a new, existential threat which had to be defeated.[2] More broadly, September 11th sparked a debate within the discipline of International Relations (IR) about how one could classify and respond to such events and why it was so difficult to predict them. Here, too, there was talk about 'new', 'unconventional' threats, and 'challenges' to the 'traditional' international order.[3] 9/11 was seen as a shock and turning point.[4]

Yet, the response to these events was very traditional. Policy-making power centralised around the Executive, which used this power to formulate a seemingly unambiguous response (the War on Terror[5]) which would lead to a clear and definable end (the defeat of every terrorist group of global reach). In doing so, political leaders used a framework which has been applied to many crisis situations, ranging from World Wars to short-term events. This framework was based on order, reductionism, predictability and determinism.[6] Terrorism was seen as a singular phenomenon which could be defeated by the application of enough power.

IR theory also tried to deal with the attacks in reference to traditional concepts of the discipline.[7] Whilst, as will be shown, the theoretical landscape has become considerably more crowded over the last few decades, the *framework* of IR theory has remained largely static. There was a lot of talk about power, about how to fight unconventional wars and about the implications of the attacks for the development of traditional IR theories.[8] None of the mainstream core works of the respective theories

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[1] See Runciman (2003)
[2] On the utility of this context of terrorism as an existential threat see Abbott & Sloboda (2006).
[3] See Halliday (2001) or Booth & Dunne (2002)
[4] See Pleszczynsky (2002) or Dudziak (2003).
[5] Yet this war has generally been defined quite specifically as a fight against 'Islamic terrorism'. See Judis (2006). 'War on terror' will be the term used throughout this work, in keeping with Bush's declaration on 20th September 2001. Some commentators have used 'War on Terrorism', kept when part of a direct quote.
[6] These terms will be defined in chapter 3. See Geyer & Rihani (2010).
[7] 'IR theory' here refers mainly to Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism
[8] See Glennon (2003) or Dobson (2006)

have challenged the premise of centralisation in times of international political crises.[9]

Yet, the results of this approach have been disappointing and have failed to achieve their aims. Terrorism has not been defeated. The coalition of countries who supported the War on Terror has fractured over several issues and, from being one of the most popular Presidents of all times in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, George Bush left office the most unpopular presidents in history.[10]

Several questions arise out of this in relation to how to respond to and explain international political crises and what policy-makers can hope to achieve when responding to such crises. More broadly, there are questions about the concepts within which International Relations are both conducted and explained. It is these questions that will form the central basis of this work.

[9] As will be shown in detail in chapter 2
[10] See www.pollingreport.com/BushJob1.htm

Central research question

As will be illustrated in chapter 2, traditional International Relations theories have been challenged for considerable time, a process which has accelerated since the end of the Cold War, largely brought about by the inability of the established theories to predict the end of this particular conflict.[11] Generally, it came to be recognised that international politics was characterised by 'massive uncertainty' which called for a 'massive transformation' of the traditional framework for international relations in order to take account of this uncertainty and unpredictability (Steinbrunner 2000: 11).

In response, there has been the 'emergence of complex international relations theory [which offers] intriguing heuristic devices that both challenge conventional wisdom and provoke analytical imaginations' (Kavalski 2007: 435). According to Kavalski, the paradigm of Complexity offers the opportunity to 'lift the darkest shadow from the totalizing discourses [...] that seem to pervade current world politics by volunteering "imaginative thinking" on the complexity of human societies and their interactions' (*ibid*: 451).[12]

To do so, Complexity has applied a different set of concepts to the study of the social world, the application most relevant to the present study. Various scholars have re-conceptualised the social world as human Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) which are characterised by partial order, a tension between reductionism and holism, partial predictability, its probabilistic nature, emergence and interpretation.[13]

Using the attacks of 9/11 and the War on Terror as a case study, the aim of this work is to investigate the implications of these concepts for the study of and response to international political crises and, therefore, test the validity of Kavalski's claims about the usefulness of the Complexity approach.

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[11] See Gaddis (1992)
[12] 'Complexity' (or 'Complexity approach') as used throughout this work refers to a number of non-linear approaches drawn from Chaos-, Complex-systems and Complexity Theory. All the concepts and tools to be applied to the case studies have emerged out of these approaches. There are many general introductions to Complexity. See Cowan, Pines & Metzer (1994), Davis (1989) or Nicolis & Prigogine (1989)
[13] These concepts will be discussed in detail in chapter 3. See also Geyer & Mackintosh (2005)

The key question will be why the War on Terror developed in response to the attacks of 9/11 has failed to defeat terrorism. To answer this question, this study will reconceptualise 9/11 and the War on Terror as a Complex Adaptive System which developed through a process of self-organisation. [14] It will be argued that both the policy and the process which led to it were not structured in such a way as to be able to account for, and take advantage of, the complex nature of the events of 9/11.

In order to address the problems identified and take advantage of the complexity encountered, three Complexity tools will be introduced. These tools - Complexity mapping developed by Robert Geyer[15], the Fitness Landscape developed by Kauffmann[16] and the CDE model developed by Eoyang[17] - will be used to reframe 9/11 as a Complex Adaptive System, outline the implications of this for political actions and make suggestions on how the policy-making process can be re-structured to take account of and enable a process of self-organisation which can maintain coherent policy across time and space.

In showing 9/11 to be a typical social Complex Adaptive System, it will be argued that one of the key problems of traditional approaches to crises is the assumptions that they represent clearly definable breaks with the past and that, as such, the aim of any political action must be to restore normal times as quickly as possible which can best be done by concentrating political power around the leader of the executive.

However, this study will show that, as Complex Adaptive Systems, foreign policy crises are evolving, changeable and responsive to differing conditions across time and space. In short, they are the result of multiple, often interdependent and non-obvious variables across numerous levels of analysis. As such, they require a political response which is able to adapt to these changing circumstances, which is responsive and flexible. Applying the three Complexity tools, it will be shown this is best achieved through a de-centralised political process so that a coherent process of self-organisation can be maintained. As such, the following hypothesis will be tested

[14] Self-organisation is the process by which the internal dynamics of a system generate system-wide patterns. See Eoyang (2001) or T. Smith (1997)
[15] See Geyer (2003a)
[16] See Kauffman (1995)
[17] See Eoyang (2001)

Hypothesis

9/11 and the War on Terror are typical Complex Adaptive Systems which developed through a process of self-organisation. Responding to such events requires a quick de-centralisation of the policy process after the initial crisis event in order to maintain the coherence of the process of self-organisation.

Nature and originality of the study

The main focus of this study is one particular crisis event (September 11). The three Complexity tools will be applied to the response of three countries to this event (the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany).

However, whilst the study does make a contribution to the empirical literature by presenting an account of both the policy and the policy process developed after 9/11 in the sphere of foreign policy in the three case study countries, the key focus of this work will be a conceptual *re-interpretation* of the event, and the three case study countries' response it. [18] Using the three tools referred to above, the study analyses 9/11 from the perspective of a Complexity approach with the aim of providing a new and innovative framework which can complement existing theoretical constructs in order to enhance our understanding of crises in international relations. As such, the study will

- add to the understanding of the events of September 11th
- make an original contribution to the field of Foreign Policy Analysis
- contribute to the development of International Relations Theory and
- add to the emerging field of Complexity Theory and Human System Dynamics. [19]

The key focus of this study will be to apply the Complexity approach to IR and foreign policy. Before this can be done though a word has to be said about the term *crisis* and therefore the types of events this study is trying to address.

'Crisis' is a difficult term to define in international politics since it is subject to significant conscious complexity, that is, to differing interpretations from different actors. As will be shown, international politics, and IR as a discipline, developed as a response to the belief that humans were living in an almost permanent state of crisis and chaos.[20]

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[18]For detailed accounts of 'what happened' see, for instance, Woodward (2002), Clarke (2004), Schröder (2007), or Seldon (2007)
[19] See Eoyang (1997), Owen (2008)
[20] On conscious Complexity, see Geyer (2003)

As such, the term has covered a myriad of events, ranging from short-term crises (such as the Cuban Missile crisis[21]) to longer-term and more wide-ranging events. For instance, literature on International Relations has frequently included discussions about the great depression of the 1930s.[22] The two World Wars also represent such a type of crisis and were instrumental in shaping both the development of IR Theory and the development of political crisis decision-making processes.[23]

This work will keep with a very broad conception of *crisis*, using Evans and Newham, who define the term as a 'perceived turning point in relationships between actors or between actors and their environment' (Evans & Newham 1998: 101-2). This definition captures the essence of the events this study is looking at in that it emphasises the *change* which is implicit in a crisis-situation. Crises are often perceived as anything that departs from the norm, from what is expected and as such requires 'correction'. This departure from the expected is frequently seen as a 'shock' and this sense of shock is crucial to the unfolding political process.[24] As such crisis is seen as something that departs from the 'previous' order and implies a new 'disorder', the aim being to restore 'order.

This broad definition also allows for a fuller analysis of the implications of the Complexity approach.[25] This approach essentially rejects notions of *previous* or *future* states of social systems. Instead, it sees such systems as developing through a continuous process of successive adjustments to changing circumstances. This can transform one's understanding of 'crises' and therefore have a significant impact on the organisation and structure of the policy process in response to unplanned and/or unforeseen events.

[21] See Allison & Zelikov (1999).
[22] See, Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff (2001).
[23] See Morgenthau (1948)
[24] This term will feature prominently as it was used time and again by those interviewed and in the literature after 9/11.
[25] In line with convention, capital letters will be used where reference is made to International Relations approaches.

Methodology

The use of Complexity as an approach to study *one* particular crisis event and three countries' response to it in the sphere of foreign policy brings with it certain problems and limitations, both in theoretical terms and in relation to more standard questions concerning reliability and validity, which need to be addressed.

The utility and limitations of Complexity

As will be shown in much more detail in chapter 3, the application of Complexity to international politics and public policy in general, and foreign policy crises in particular, can be subjected to several critiques. These can be broadly divided into the following, related, groups: theoretical critiques[26], epistemological critiques[27], and critiques of the utility of Complexity as a guide for action.[28]

In relation to the first critique, it has often been argued that Complexity does not represent a coherent theory and, consequently, that it does not provide an alternative to the theories it criticises.[29] As such, Complexity should be seen as an *approach* to international politics.[30]

As used in this work, this will indeed be the avenue taken. Complexity, as defined here, is seen as an approach which *complements* existing theories and which remodels the *framework* within which IR theories are used. The aim is to show that any particular issue may require a *coalition* of approaches in order to be addressed. As such, the Complexity framework should be seen as a bridge between various theories and approaches. It is *not* intended to *disprove* existing theories. Rather, it will enable scholars and policy-makers to begin to address problems already identified even by the existing theories.

This allows one to address a second common criticism of Complexity, that the approach lacks epistemological rigor. Essentially, this critique sees Complexity as a metaphor to *describe* a particular situation, i.e. that certain situations or the world a 'complex' and 'complicated'. The Complexity approach would not disagree with the

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[26] See Earnest & Rosenau (2006)
[27] For a review see Cudworth & Hobden (2009)
[28] See, for instance, Levy (2000)
[29] See Hopf (1993)
[30] Earnest & Rosenau (2006) make this point strongly.

description of, in this case, the social world as complex and complicated. The added value of Complexity as an approach to such complex and complicated situations are its core concepts and tools (to be outlined in chapter 3 and 4) which allow one to *utilise* such complexity in a positive and innovative way in order to make real, if uncertain, progress both in relation to particular policy goals and to explaining particular political events, in this case international political crises. In order to achieve such progress Complexity advocates often multiple, flexible and adaptive strategies and methods, which would allow one to take advantage of changing circumstances as a particular situation unfolds. Again, far from disproving other methodological constructs, such an approach simply broadens the base from which research and political action can be undertaken, underlining once again Complexity's inclusive nature, which will become clearer once its key concepts are analysed in chapter 3.

This insistence on tolerance, flexibility and adaptability also has significant implications for actions, which will be addressed in chapter 4. From the point of view of Complexity tolerance, adaptability and flexibility are crucial because of the fact that in social Complex Adaptive Systems of the nature to be analysed in this study predictability is at best partial.[31] Because social Complex Adaptive Systems can vary widely across time and space, there needs to be awareness on the part of political leaders that any action taken in response to a particular crisis may not have the predicted results at all times. As such, it is true to say that Complexity cannot be used as a guide to actions across time and space which would be valid in all circumstances. Rather, taking into account the key concepts of Complexity and the three tools that will be employed to utilise them, Complexity can suggest *types* of actions and *approaches* to political problems and crises which will allow policy-makers and academics to deal with particular situation in just such a flexible and adaptable manner critical to Complexity. In practical terms, Complexity can point to specific interventions in order to facilitate a coherent process of self-organisation without, however, guaranteeing a particular result.

[31] Why that is so will be discussed in chapter 3

The above arguments mean any Complexity-based study will also have to address more traditional methodological issues, principally those associated with reliability and validity.

Reliability and validity
Reliability and validity represent particular challenges in researching Complex Adaptive Systems. Traditionally, a measure is said to be reliable when 'it gives the same result again and again if the measurement is repeated' (Shively 2002: 43).

Yet CASs share numerous characteristics that make such a standard, and the methods to test it, ineffective. Principally, through their partial predictability, partial order, reductionism and holism, their probabilistic nature, and their emergence, CASs often cannot conform to the above definition. A further issue is thrown up by the fact that this study only investigates *one* case of an international political crisis in detail (September 11th).

Despite this, it will be shown that the study of this one particular case can be used to draw some general conclusions for crises in international politics. It does so for a number of reasons:

First, as will be shown in chapter 3, international politics *in general* are Complex Adaptive Systems, that is 'a collection of semi-autonomous agents with the freedom to act in unpredictable ways and whose interactions over time and space generate system-wide patterns' (Dooley, 1997). Equally, as will be illustrated, crisis events represent Complex Adaptive Systems that are the result of-and *interact with*-the CAS that is international politics.

It is these characteristics that are generally applicable to, in this case, International Relations. Great care will be taken to show that 9/11 *also* represents a Complex Adaptive System which, as such, is subject to the same general rules that apply to such systems. It is these *rules* that can as such be deemed to be reliable.[32]

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[32] See Lewin & Voldberda (2000)

It will be argued that the response to 9/11, just like the response to other crises, should be treated as a process of self-organisation. What Complexity *cannot* do is predict the *outcome* of such a process. However, an inability to do so does not invalidate the central premise of this study.[33]

The key to this point is the nature and structure of the study. The one case study, 9/11, will be subjected to three different investigations: the response by the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany. It will be shown that two of these countries tried to *control* or *prevent* the process of self-organisation whilst one *enabled* such a process. In the case studies it will be shown how this, on the one hand, led to problems for those who tried to control the process whilst the one that allowed for such a process avoided many of the same problems.

The study will use a form of 'results reversal' to validate the hypothesis put forward.[34] It will be shown that the response to 9/11 by two of the case study countries did not achieve the intended results. The hypothesis is that this is due to the attempts by the respective political leaders to control a process of self-organisation by extending the period of political centralisation long after the actual crisis event. It will then be shown that the third case study country once again *de-centralised*, and therefore *normalised*, its policy process soon after the crisis, allowing and responding to such a process of self-organisation. By showing what interventions and actions by the two case study countries *prevented* a coherent process of self-organisation and what interventions and actions *allowed* the other country to have such a process, conclusions can be drawn about whether or not the hypothesis is supported. The conclusion chapter will then be used to compare the three case studies and their approaches.

This comparative study will allow for the exploration of further avenues of research into Complexity and International Politics, as well as broader implications for IR theory.

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[33] On unpredictability in Complex Adaptive Systems see Taylor (2001)

[34] Results Reversal has been used in a number of studies of Complex Adaptive Systems, including Eoyang (2001).

The above does in no way suggest that the *outcomes* of the advocated process of self-organisation will *necessarily* be better. What is advocated here is an *approach* which identifies and embraces core features of the types of systems decision-makers confront. As such, any number of solutions to a particular problem may be applicable. Which ones can or should be used will depend on local circumstances and the interactions of semi-autonomous agents which will vary across time and space. [35] Once again, therefore, what is suggested here is an approach which embraces the possibility of *multiple* solutions to similar problems, and to provide suggestions of how to identify particular interventions which can permit a coherent process of self-organisation.

The above paragraph also begins to deal with one of the criticisms most commonly levelled at Complexity, namely that its central premises and arguments do not allow for falsification.[36] As will be discussed in detail in chapter 3 and 4, the key response is that such critique is based on a view that the social world is essentially orderly, predictable and deterministic. Complexity, in contrast, sees the world as being characterised by partial order, partial predictability, emergence, and as being probabilistic. Such characteristics require a different framework for explanation and action. This does *not* mean that the actions taken within this framework will always produce better results.

This leaves a couple of methodological questions unanswered: First, a justification of the particular case studies and, second, a discussion of data sources.

Justification for case studies

As already stated, 9/11 has been seen as a world-changing event, one at which one particular phase of history came to an end and another began. In this case, it has frequently been said that 9/11 marked the end of the 'post-Cold War world', the first major international crisis of the 21st century.[37] The combination of these two factors make it an ideal case study to test the utility of Complexity since it led to an intense debate, both academic and political, over why such a crisis occurred, why it had not

[35] Agents are entities that have unique identities and an ability to interact with other entities. They are 'semi-autonomous units that seek to maximise some measure of goodness or fitness by evolving over time' (Dooley, 1997).
[36] See, for instance, Hurtado (2006)
[37] See Chollet & Goldgeiger (2008)

been possible to predict and prevent it and what the 'new' international system created by the crisis would look like, what its implications would be.

As such, the crisis exposed many of the problems with which both policy-makers and academics in International Relations have been grappling with decades:

- the inability to predict such events
- the inability to prevent such crises from occurring
- the inability to control the policies developed in response to such crises and, as such, to resolve them

On all of these issues, Complexity can provide a new and innovative framework for analysis and action.

The particular case study countries to be investigated were chosen with the above points in mind. Investigating the United States was an obvious choice to make bearing in mind both the fact that the attacks were directed at the country and that the US is the hegemonic country of the international political system. As such, her failure to bring the War on Terror to a successful conclusion or maintain the coalition of countries supporting this war seems all the more puzzling from a traditional perspective.

The choice of the United Kingdom and Germany as comparative case studies will go a long way to resolving this puzzle. In strategic terms, both are similar, middle-ranking powers. However, their particular local circumstances are very different, both in terms of their political systems and many other factors which, as will be shown, are crucial when it comes to explaining their diverging policies as the War on Terror was rolled out. An analysis of these differences, and their differences in relation to the United States, will allow for a clear demonstration of the importance of the concepts of Complexity in explaining and acting in response to foreign policy crises. As such, the three countries provide perfect examples to illustrate the general argument which will be outlined in the next couple of chapters.

Data sources

This study is a qualitative study of elite actor actions in response to a particular event.[38] Numerous accounts exist about September 11th, dealing both with the decision-making processes which led to the various responses and with the general impact on international politics as well as the discipline of International Relations. These accounts form a key part of the material used in this study principally because they have been able to draw on extensive elite access within the countries concerned.

A second main source of data is obtained from government material, such as ministerial speeches, press conferences, and de-classified documents. Such material is plentiful, relatively easily accessible and provides an excellent record of the thinking and the actions of key decision-makers. Using such material assists in the charting of the decision-making processes as they unfolded in the aftermath of the event and the thinking behind them.

A third strand of material is provided by personal accounts. Some of these are provided by academics and others who have spoken to some of the key decision-makers in the aftermath of 9/11. Others are obtained through interviews undertaken by the author, principally with some elite actors (officials and politicians) who were directly involved in co-ordinating and implementing the immediate response to September 11th or who had access to those who were. These interviews were semi-structured: Whilst the core theme and questions of the interview were clear (to explore the policy-making process within a particular country in the aftermath of September 11th in the sphere of foreign policy), it gave the respondent scope to detail his or her observations and thoughts on how this process worked and what the justifications behind it were.[39] In total, 21 interviews were conducted in 2007 across the three case study countries, the vast majority occurring off the record in May and June. For each country, the interviewees were a mixture of parliamentarians, former or serving government officials and senior academics and/or commentators. Furthermore, the author also participated in three separate seminars on the subject, covering US, German and British foreign policy in response to the events. Both serving and former government ministers, as well as senior academics participated in

[38] For the strengths and weaknesses of this type of approach see Trochim (2001)

[39] See Opendakker (2006) for details on this type of interview.

these seminars. Again, what was said at these seminars is used here 'on background', that is, without direct attribution.

A further 7 interviews were conducted with senior policy officials who use Complexity as a policy-making framework within a metropolitan authority in the United States. These interviews were also conducted in May and June of 2007.

The structure of the study

The work is divided into three main sections. The first will trace the historical development of the orderly paradigm which has come to dominate both International Relations theory and political responses to international political crises. Tracing this development through history will form the central part of chapter 2, the literature review. The review will first aim to answer the following questions: How do traditional theories of IR deal with crises in international politics? Is there a pattern to how theories deal with such events? What are the origins of such patterns? Once these are answered, it will be shown how and why these patterns have had such an impact on responses to foreign policy crises. Some of the challenges that have emerged to these patterns will be traced and the problems identified will be discussed. The key focus in this discussion will be the Cold War and, in particular, the problems that were thrown up by its sudden end.

Part 2 of the work will be divided into two chapters. In the first, chapter 3, the key concepts of Complexity will be introduced and their application to politics and international relations will be discussed. This will be followed by a critique of the Complexity approach to International Relations.

Chapter 4 will provide a response to this critique by introducing the three Complexity tools which will be used to apply the concepts outlined in the previous chapter to the events of 9/11. Each of the tree tools and its particular application to this study will be discussed and the link between the three tools will be outlined. This will allow for a clear demonstration of how the Complexity approach can add value to and complement exiting approaches and theories, thereby allowing for a much fuller analysis of crises in international politics and the political actions developed to deal with them.

Chapter 5, 6 and 7 will form the central core of the research. In these chapters, the response of three countries (the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany) to the events of 9/11 in the sphere of foreign policy will be outlined and the process through which these responses were developed will be investigated. Applying the three Complexity tools, the responses of the three countries will be compared in

terms of process and in terms of outcome. Furthermore, the chapters will detail the changes within each country in terms of the pre-crisis, crisis and post-crisis policy process. Using the Complexity concepts outlined previously suggestions will be made on how and where the respective policy processes can be improved to allow for a more coherent process of self-organisation.

Finally, the broader implications of the case studies for the response to, and study of, foreign policy crises will be discussed. Areas for further research will be outlined.

Chapter 2: Literature Review - International Relations Theory and political crises

Introduction

The key questions for this chapter are: How do traditional theories of International Relations deal with crises in international politics? Is there a pattern to how theories deal with such events? Once this is determined, it will be asked how such patterns are reflected in and impact upon foreign policy-making in response to crises. Finally, some of the key problems of these approaches will be identified which will be addressed through the application of Complexity.

A historically-based approach will be taken to answering the above questions. In the first part a brief review of classical writings in international politics will be made. As Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff have pointed out, the intellectual roots of Realist theory 'can be traced to the ancient world' (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff Jr 2001: 69). Liberal theory also has its roots deep in the past.[40] This section will help in the understanding of why political leaders even today respond to crises the way they do.

However, the key focus of this chapter will be the developments since the end of World War II and, in particular, the Cold War. Given the contemporary nature of the study, the key objective is to show how the practices and approaches to foreign policies applied during this period still have a significant impact on crisis foreign policy-making today. In particular, it will be demonstrated how centralisation became a key plank of crisis-management processes in foreign policy, spurred on by the Cold War. In showing this, a link will also be established between International Relations *theory* and foreign policy *practice*, as both used almost identical conceptual frameworks to confront the challenges presented by the Cold War.

However, as this conflict progressed it became increasingly obvious that these frameworks were not always sufficient to deal with the crises that presented themselves, a problem only amplified by the end of the Cold War. Far from being largely orderly and predictable, the events presented traditional frameworks of IR with a series of problems, especially in regards to the ability of apparently scientific

[40] On the connection between the two strands see Whealan (2004)

theories to forecast developments and, as such, provide a guide on how to respond to crisis events.

It is in this light that the end of the Cold War will be analysed. The problems of the established frameworks of IR theory led to a mushrooming of alternative theoretical constructs. Whilst these frameworks identified many of the shortcomings of existing theories, they did not alter the overall *context* within which these were developed and as such also did not provide an alternative framework for foreign policy-making in response to crises. Complexity will then provide such an alternative framework.

International Politics and IR theory until the Cold War

It is impossible to pinpoint when writing on International Relations started. As an academic discipline, IR emerged in the aftermath of World War I (Jackson & Sorensen 2003). However, writers on politics have always been concerned with the question of how to bring order to a chaotic world.[41] Chaos was usually brought about by war and it was the question of why wars occurred with such frequency, and how one could deal with them, which exercised the minds of some formidable thinkers.

It is beyond the scope of this study to look at these early writings in detail.[42] However, one striking feature of all of them is how they used the same concepts in addressing some key issues which will play a crucial part in the study that follows.

One such concept is power. From Machiavelli (1469-1557) to Hobbes (1588-1679) to Locke (1632-1704), there was a shared a belief that power was a key determinant of interstate relations. It was important because different states and rulers had different interests and therefore conflict would occur, which the powerful were in a much better position to win.[43]

With this belief in the importance of power came a belief in the need for political centralisation. Conflict being inevitable, Machiavelli saw the presence of a strong, decisive political leader at the head of a state as imperative.[44] A central authority was needed to ensure survival as human beings, were living an 'existence of worry, fear and helplessness' (Meier 1968: 363). Self-government 'had simply proved to be a recipe for endless debilitating civil strife' (Skinner 2002: 5).

Such a view became widespread and found currency even amongst liberal thinkers who did not share the pessimistic view of human nature held by their 'realist' contemporaries. John Locke (1632-1704), who is best known for his idea of a social contract, agreed that a strong central authority was needed to protect people's rights and property. It was 'for the protection of private property that the state was founded'

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[41] See Canning (1996)
[42] Knutsen (1997) provides a good overview. See also Thucydidis (1972)
[43] Boucher (1998) gives a good account on all three thinkers mentioned here.
[44] See Machiavelli (1940) or Smith (1986)

(Euchner 1968: 8). Should there be conflict or tyranny central authority would have to be asserted in the form of a strong and permanent executive. Euchner quotes from the Second Treatise:

> 'A special power, which is permanently with the Executive, is the prerogative. It is necessary because experience teaches us that normal laws are not sufficient to deal with all suddenly arising emergencies. The state executive therefore requires powers to go above and beyond legislative powers'. (*ibid*: 159).[45]

This idea of a prerogative was subsequently widely adopted in the new modern states that sprang up in the 18th and 19th century: 'The opening statement of the American Declaration of Independence [is] a quintessential re-statement of Locke's philosophy' (*ibid*: 18-9).[46]

A third common theme which has important implications for the current study was the belief in science. For Hobbes, one of the key problems in politics was the fact that human beings were too emotional in their dealings with one another. Politics, he maintained, had to be dealt with the same way as mathematical problems: detached and unemotional.[47] This would lead to the 'deduction of certain irreducibly necessary political consequences' (Skinner 2002: 320).

This belief in science to determine hard and fast 'rules' has been a constant feature of International Relations ever since. Spurred on by the enormous advances of the natural sciences during the Enlightenment, thinkers concerned with human affairs tried to replicate the methods so successfully used in areas like Physics, Biology or Chemistry. Hobbes' general ideas formed the basis of what came to be known as 'positivism', of which the French philosopher Auguste Comte (1798-1857) was the founder.[48]

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[45] Prerogative powers vary from country to country. However, for the purposes of this study, the most important are powers relating to the use of armed forces, the declaration and conduct of wars, the making of peace treaties and the protection of the constitution in times of emergencies. See Durkin & Gay (2005)

[46] Similar ideas can be found in the work of Pufendorf (1632-94) or Montesquieu (1689-1755). See Carr (1994) for a detailed discussion.

[47] See Meier (1968). There will be a detailed discussion of the link between the concepts of the natural- and social sciences in the following chapter.

[48] Positivism contends that the social and political world has regularities and patterns, all of which can be explained if the correct methodology is applied. As such, there can be objective knowledge of the world. See Nicholson (1996), Comte (1998) or Pickering (1993).

Many of these ideas were tested in the United States after its independence in 1776. One of the key drivers behind the constitution of 1787 was the belief that 'a loose confederation of thirteen states could not adequately defend itself against foreign assault or invasion' (Hamilton, 1787).[49] As such, there was a need to centralise power in order to ensure the survival of the country. Article 2 of the constitution enshrines Locke's concept of the prerogative, charging the President with maintaining the constitutional system in times of crisis. He is given extensive powers to suspend the normal procedures of government in order to achieve this objective. This prerogative has been used extensively by US presidents and was seen, certainly in the aftermath of the two World Wars, as a success, entrenching it as a mechanism for the management of crises.[50]

A similar situation existed in the other case study countries. In the United Kingdom Prime Ministers going to war 'will not be troubled by formal domestic constitutional constraints [since] much of the activity involved can be carried out under the royal prerogative, that is executive authority, comprising the remnants of pre-democratic, monarchical rule' (Blick 2005: 54). The use of these prerogatives can be extensive since, nobody 'knows for certain what they all are (*ibid*: 54). In Germany, from the formation of the state in 1870 onwards, the leaders of the Executive completely dominated not only foreign policy, but *all* political spheres.[51] In all three cases, therefore, foreign policy was a centralised activity; it *was* crisis management.

The first half of the 20th century was critical in confirming both the belief in centralisation of decision-making and the scientific approach to such decisions.[52] Key here were the two World Wars, which led to questions both in the US and the UK of how 'a total war effort be reconciled with the limited extent of federal sovereignty' (Kelly *et al.* 1991: 434).

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[49] See also Forsyth (1981) on Confederations

[50] See Schlesinger, Jr (2005) or Bull (2003)

[51] See Ozment (2004)

[52] For a historical review on the development of the US political system in this regard, see Edling (2003).

During the 2nd World War President Roosevelt 'carried the president's prerogative in foreign policy to greater lengths than had any previous Chief Executive' (*ibid*: 439). For many,

> 'the tenure of Franklin Roosevelt marks a dramatic shift in the character of the office: the transition from a traditional presidency, which embraced few of the responsibilities we associate with the office today and which is largely overshadowed by Congress, to a modern conception of the office, which is proactive in the realm of domestic and foreign policy and which occupies political centre stage' (Burke 1992: 1). [53]

Similar developments could be seen in Britain. As the then Prime Minister David Lloyd George remarked in his memoirs, the war effort during the First World War required a smaller war cabinet since a larger group 'meant so many men, so many minds; so many minds, so many tongues; so many tongues, so much confusion; so much confusion, so much delay' (George 1934: 1060). During the Second World War Prime Minister Churchill stated clearly that 'there can be no comparison between the positions of number one and numbers two, three and four' (Churchill 2000: 14).

As such, there were great similarities between the three case study countries in their approach to foreign policy crises. In theoretical terms, the two World Wars were also critical since they seemed to confirm Realists pessimistic vision of the world. A debate emerged between those who argued that conflict was inevitable and had to be *managed* and those who argued that conflict could be *reduced* or *avoided.* Liberals argued that 'peace is not a natural condition but one which must be constructed' (Dunne 2005: 191). In order to achieve such a state one required 'consciously devised machinery' (Luard 1992: 465). This required scholars to 'observe regularities, formulate hypotheses [...] and subject these to critical scrutiny' (Dunne 2005: 194).[54]

For critics of this 'utopian' idea, who would come to be known as Realists, the key task for policy-makers was the *management* of *inevitable* conflict. Centralisation and

[53] See Roosevelt (2006). He called for a strong, assertive presidential role that allows the President to do anything the nation demands so long it was not contrary to the constitution.
[54] One such piece of machinery should have been the League of Nations. See Wilson (1918) or Martin & Simmons (2001)

science were needed to deal with world as one found it, not to construct a world as one would like it to be. No-one expressed this tradition better than Edward Hallett Carr. He argued that the 'Idealists' misunderstood the key principles of international politics. Crucially, they underestimated the importance of power and interests as key variables in the conduct of international relations. According to Carr, International Relations were characterised primarily by a conflict of interests. Since some countries are powerful and others are not, there will be a constant struggle between those determined to preserve the status-quo and those determined to change it which may lead to conflict. It was crucial to understand that this was a *basic condition* of international politics. IR was therefore a study of conflicts, not of co-operation.[55]

What is striking about this brief review is the congruence between the two sides about the *methods* used to respond to particular events and achieve particular objectives: science and centralisation. There was hence a close link between political theory and practice: The *theories* developed greatly influenced the structures constructed to deal with the *practice* of foreign policy-making in response to crises. Disputes occurred merely about the *aims* of any such actions.

[55] See Carr (1962). For a recent appraisal of traditional Realism, see Barkin (2009)

The Cold War

In relation to the case study countries, the end of World War II was crucial in enshrining Realist prescriptions on how to deal with crisis events. In the United States and the UK one key factor was the success in this war. The US emerged in the late 1940s as one of the world's two superpowers. Centralisation in times of crisis therefore became a 'given'. As Rossiter pointed out, 'constitutionally, historically and logically the office of the President is the focus of crisis government in the United States' (Rossiter 1948: 218). Whilst Britain's position in 1945 was somewhat different, the *perception* was still that the country had negotiated World War II successfully (it was, after all, one of its winners). As such, there were no immediate calls to change the way foreign policy was made.[56] The success of centralisation created 'role expectations', whereby individuals are encouraged to modify their 'attitudes and behaviours to accord with the perceived requirements of the position' (Cashman 1992: 92).

The second crucial factor was the onset of the Cold War. By generating 'a climate of sustained and indefinite crisis [it] aborted the customary revision of power to the coordinate branches' (Schlesinger 2005: 53).

A critical factor in this development was the way the Cold War was defined. For most, the Cold War became 'the global expression of a profound, yet controlled opposition between two well-established and well-defined social systems, an opposition moreover that had in its own peculiar superpower fashion managed to produce some degree of order within the core areas of the international system' (Cox 2009: 162).

As such, the Cold War, just like the World Wars before it, was seen as a conflict of a global scale, which called for a continuation of the approaches that had been used during the previous global conflicts. In practical terms this meant that, in the United States, there was a further transfer of power from Congress to the President, in

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[56] For a good account of the tension between perception and reality on this question see Blackwell (1993). In Germany, the totality of the defeat during the Second World War, set off a contrary process towards *de-centralisation* of policy, brought about both by constitutional design as well as externally imposed constraints. See Hacke (2003)

particular the creation of the National Security Council (NSC) in 1947. NSC staff operated under the authority of the President' and their job was 'to bridge the divide between foreign policy and domestic issues' (National Commission on the Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, 2002). Subsequently, presidents used the NSC 'not just as a link to permanent government but also as an alternative to it' (Destler, 1980).

In theoretical terms, the Cold War led to Realism being the dominant theory of International Relations. States needed to be given the tools and authority to do whatever was necessary to keep their populations safe from attack. Concentration of authority was therefore essential. [57] With this argument came a dominance of positivist methods of inquiry. [58] Morgenthau asserted that 'politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature' (Morgenthau 1955: 4). Therefore, all one had to do is assemble the expertise to uncover these laws. Once this is done, one could predict the future, allowing states to be much better prepared to deal with problems. Centralisation was therefore essential in order to pool this expertise. These principles were 'eternally valid' (Rossiter 1948: 5).[59]

Yet, from the very outset, this kind of orderly definition of the Cold War could lead to problems at a number of levels. Most fundamentally, it raised questions about the very future of the democratic political system in the United States. Rossiter acknowledged that '[n]o democracy ever went through a period of thoroughgoing constitutional dictatorship without some permanent and often unfavourable alteration in its governmental scheme...' (Rossiter 1948: 13). However, centralisation was nevertheless justified on the grounds that it 'extends no further in time than the attainment of [the] end [to restore normal times]' (*ibid*: 7).

Yet, during the Cold War how did one decide what are 'normal' and what are extraordinary times? The danger was that this conflict would lead to a permanent state of emergency and therefore centralisation of power around the President who

[57] See Morgenthau (1948)
[58] See de Mesquita (1996)
[59] See Herz (1950, 2003)

would not be subject to the usual checks and balances provided for in the American political system, creating an 'imperial presidency'.[60]

Secondly, such type of definition, whilst creating a very stable overall framework, might lead to problems in recognising differences and responding to change *within* this context. For instance, in Germany, the country's central part in the Cold War also led to some centralising tendencies in the sphere of foreign policy, though in a very different manner than could be observed in the US. Due to its limited sovereignty[61], the German government had little influence on the battles between the two superpowers. The principal decision to be made was not who to side with in this conflict but merely *how close* the country should be to the US. West Germany's first post-war chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, quickly made the decision to be *very* close to the United States which, whilst not entirely uncontested, was largely accepted.[62] This was due to the 'un-political attitude of the majority of the population who let the old man do and, on the whole, did well this way' (Hacke 2003: 94). Therefore, the presence of the United States, which kept the country safe, the lack of interest of the population and the early decision taken by Adenauer to stay close to the US, meant that foreign policy was largely focussed on trade, and regional and international cooperation wherever possible.

The *result* was a stable alliance between the United States and Germany which lasted the entire Cold War and, on the whole, made relations between the two countries very predictable. Yet the circumstances through which this decision was arrived at in West Germany or what it meant in particular were different. *Domestic* policy factors were crucial here and would become critical in explaining differences between the two countries during the Cold War.[63]

However, for a while, these particulars did not seem to matter simply because the tensions created within the overall framework were more important than anything else. The Korean War[64] or the various crises over Berlin[65] seemed to reaffirm the

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[60] See Schlesinger (1973)
[61] See James (1998)
[62] See Adenauer (1965)
[63] See Kloeppel &Schöllgen (2004)
[64] See Stueck (2004)
[65] See Gearson & Schake (2003)

permanent state of crisis, the durability of the Cold War and the need for strong leadership in order to avert such crises turning into a disaster.

Once again, the success of averting disasters during this period reinforced these trends. After all, that the United States 'created the most wide-ranging alliance system in the history of the world' and, as such, created a 'western block' which brought the very thing centralisation of foreign policy was meant to bring in times of crisis: stability.[66]

Yet, several events during the 1960s began to call into question some of the basic assumptions upon which definitions of and approaches to the Cold War were based, in particular the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban missile crisis.

The decision to have anti-Castro exiles land in the Bay of Pigs in the hope of provoking an uprising against the Castro regime has been called Kennedy's 'worst hour' (Vandenbroucke 1984: 471). Vandenbroucke suggests that one of the major failures of the policy process was the fact that it was far too centralised, with major costs in terms of the policy developed. Essentially, the decision and planning was left to the CIA and the President. The CIA's major Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was secrecy, meaning that 'potential dissenters were eliminated, with incalculable consequences' (*ibid*: 475). The 'key player [in the decision] of course remained the President' (*ibid*: 484). As such, even at this stage, the *costs* of centralisation were acknowledged by a minority of scholars. Yet, what is needed is a supplementary framework beyond existing IR approaches which can *conceptualise* this problem and, as such, provide innovative solutions. As will be shown in chapters 3 and 4, Complexity provides such a framework.

This key role in decision-making was underscored by Kennedy's management style which was characterised by 'ad hoc, informal decision processes and impatience with matters of organisation' (*ibid*: 485). As such, Kennedy had no problems in excluding some key expert and actors from the decision-making process, allowing the CIA 'to become both advocate and chief judge on the project's feasibility' (*ibid*: 486). As a result many of the potential problems encountered were simply never raised with the

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[66] Best *et al.* (2008), p. 231

President or, if raised, not heard. For instance, during the Bay of Pigs invasion '[t]he Cuban Desk specialists at the State Department who received information from the island on a regular basis were not even asked to comment on the feasibility of the venture' (Henderson 1988: 131). Centralisation, therefore, brings with it considerable risks which may undermine the effectiveness of a particular policy. [67]

Why this is the case was brilliantly shown by Graham Allison in his investigation into the response of the Kennedy administration to the stationing of Soviet Missiles on Cuba in October 1962.

Allison subjected the decision to instigate a naval blockade against Cuba to analysis from the vantage point of three models of decision-making: The Rational Actor Model, the Organisational Behaviour Model and the Governmental Politics model.[68] Whilst it is beyond the scope of this chapter to go into detail, two things stand out from the account: First, unexpected events and crises almost inevitably lead to a host of actors *trying* to become involved in the policy process, both at an institutional and personal level. According to Allison, Kennedy did take account of a number of opinions before reaching his decision to proceed with the naval blockade, showing that the decision-making process in this instance was constructed in such a way as to allow for the differences that existed between the participants to emerge.[69] He was rewarded with a policy which is generally seen to be his finest hour.[70]

Second, Allison showed that the policy process is far too complex to define universally applicable 'laws'. In fact, it was the adherence to such laws that was one of the biggest mistakes of the Soviet handling of the event. The country's missiles were installed in Cuba following clearly laid-down Standard Operating Procedures which were utterly unsuitable for the particular circumstances found in Cuba and which made the missiles easily detectable for US intelligence.[71] Kennedy himself, as shown, had fallen victim to such mistakes during the Bay of Pigs crisis, when he had proceeded with the covert operation in almost the exact same way the government of

[67] See Sorenson (1965)
[68] See Alison & Zelikow (1998)
[69] These terms will be defined in the following two chapters.
[70] See Dallek (2004)
[71] Allison & Zelikow (1998)

Guatemala had been brought down several years earlier, thereby not allowing for the changed circumstances of Cuba.[72]

The Cuban missile crisis therefore showed that the traditional science-based models for foreign policy crisis decision-making had their limits. The 'laws' which had been defined in previous decades often proved of limited use when confronted with the *particularities* of a *specific* policy situation. There began to emerge a realisation that foreign policy-making was in fact full of complexities which required a considerable amount of *flexibility*.

Such recognition was only underlined by the Vietnam War, which shook several core beliefs upon which Cold War policy-making had been based, especially the belief that centralisation of decision-making equalled control. During this war, Congress tried to re-assert its influence on foreign policy decision-making. As the conflict progressed, it became clear that

> 'the powers of the executive had been closely hedged about, since the congressional amendment in August 1973 that prohibited re-intervention in South East Asia. And perhaps we should have been able to predict the ultimate American default after the congressional cuts in Vietnam appropriations in 1974, from the Administration's request of $1.4 billion to $700 million, and the reluctance to restore the cuts in the winter of 1975' (Ravenal 1975).

Key in this attempt to re-assert congressional control over the policy process was the passing of the War Powers Resolution of 1973. The law, passed over the veto of President Nixon, required any President to inform Congress within 48 hours of taking military action in hostile areas. Unless Congress approved the action and/or declares war, forces must be removed within 60 to 90 days. This was an attempt to learn from Vietnam and to make the President accountable for the biggest decision he can face: whether to send troops to war or not. The subsequent refusal to grant the appropriations request for the Vietnam War was just another illustration that Congress felt that a point had been reached whereby the President's foreign policy powers had to be curbed, even though one could argue that there was a national emergency which called for presidential leadership.[73]

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[72] See Vandenbroucke (1984)
[73] On the War Powers Resolution, see Perkins (2005)

Alongside the attempt by Congress to re-insert itself into the policy process, even during a crisis, the Vietnam War was also resulted in a mass-mobilisation of public opinion, best illustrated in the huge anti-war demonstrations during the late 1960s and early 1970s.[74]

The *practical* impact of this mass-mobilisation has frequently been called into question. John Mueller argued that '[t]he impact of the antiwar movement on American policy and policy-makers seems to [have been] fairly limited' (Mueller 1984). The failure to provide alternative strategies other than simply demanding complete withdrawal allowed Nixon to get off the hook 'at a time when it could have been an effective form of pressure on [him]' (Porter 2005). Laird argued that the involvement of Congress and the demonstrations in the US were counter-productive to US policy: 'In fact, we grabbed defeat from the jaws of victory [in 1975] when Congress cut off the funding for South Vietnam that had allowed to continue to fight on its own' (Laird 2005).

Nevertheless, the 1970s brought a level of debate about both how to explain and conduct international politics rarely seen in the preceding decades.

For instance, it led to clear differences coming out into the open between the United States and West Germany about how to conduct the Cold War. For the first time since the end of the 2nd World War there was open expression of anti-American feeling. In response, chancellor Kiesinger (1966-69) and his successor Brandt (1969-74) pursued a more independent foreign policy from that of the US without, however, questioning the fundamental alliance. Germany's foreign policy was described as more self-confident, seeking to define national interests that may, at times be distinct from those of the United States as, for instance, in the initial pursuit of Brandt's *Ostpolitik*.[75] Differences therefore appeared openly between the two very close allies *despite* the fact that even the defeat in Vietnam had not altered the overall power-relations between them.

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[74] See Mueller (1973)

[75] On Brandt's foreign policy see Merseburger (2006).

As a result of these events, there was also the *beginning* of a broadening of the *theoretical* landscape of International Relations. First, there was the emergence of a pluralist model of foreign policy, suggesting that foreign policy is determined by any number of factors which may or may not be directly linked to the core executive.[76] Given this recognition, there was also much research on organisational processes and bureaucratic politics, i.e. the question of how the interplay of potentially many different actors and institutions impact on foreign policy decisions.[77] Related to this, the defeat in Vietnam led to increasing attention being given to *local circumstances* and their impact on the chances of success of a particular policy.[78]

These developments eventually also began to influence traditional IR theories, namely Realism and Liberalism. Recognition that states were perhaps not quite the singular actors they had often been portrayed as and that their policy choices and effectiveness were not *only* determined by how much power they had led to an enduring and fascinating debate within the field of IR: that between neo-realists and neo-liberals.[79]

One of the key figures to shape this debate was Kenneth Waltz whose 1979 book *Theory of International Politics* is 'a key text in the field [of IR]' (Griffiths 1999: 46). The key to Waltz's theory is the importance of structure. For him, the structure of the international system shapes the foreign policy choices states can make. The structure of the international system is determined primarily by the distribution of power between states and any dramatic changes in the international system can be explained by changes in the distribution of power.[80]

There is, hence, recognition that the policy choices states can make are influenced not simply by state-centric considerations but also by developments within the international system as a whole. However, neo-realists still believed in the anarchic nature of the international system, and the rationality of states as single actors. Their main concern remained security. As such, states see all other states as potential security threats, doing everything in their power to minimise those threats.

[76] For a Vietnam case study on this, see Wittkopf & McCormick (2004), ch. 13
[77] See, Halperin (1974)
[78] See, Krepinevic (1988).
[79] See Jervis (1978) or Dunne, Kurki & Smith (2007).
[80] See Waltz (1979) for a detailed discussion.

This is crucial, for it suggests that any form of co-operation in the international system, such as through international organisations, is the result of being in the interest of the most powerful states. For Waltz, the Cold War stayed largely peaceful because of the balance of power that existed between the two superpowers and their rough equality in military capabilities. As such, this *structure* was important in determining international politics.[81]

Foreign policy behaviour was hence determined by numerous factors. What factors were most important, and why states pursued the policies and objectives they did became an increasingly contentious point *within* Realism. The clearest expression of this has perhaps been the debate between offensive and defensive Realists about the origins of war and conflict and the best way to ensure the stability of the international system.[82]

Neo-liberals also argued that international politics had become far more pluralistic in terms of actors than traditional realists suggest. International politics was now characterised by 'complex interdependence'. There were increasing linkages between states and non-state actors, multiple channels for interaction among actors, and the issues with which foreign policy-makers concerned themselves were now far broader than merely traditional security. However, states would remain key actors in international politics. Just like many Realists had argued, Liberals now accepted that states existed within a competitive international environment and would seek to gain maximum advantage. However, since states are rational actors they would see the value of co-operation in an increasingly interdependent world. As such, international organisations have a key role to play in the conduct of international politics, specifically as mediators between competing states. They had an *independent* role to play and were not *merely* reflections of the distribution of power.[83]

So, even the traditional theories began to recognise the complexity of international politics. The factors influencing foreign policy choices and the actors taking part in

[81] See Neumann & Waever (1997)
[82] Whilst it is beyond the scope of this work to look at this debate in detail, it continued for decades; See Brooks (1997) or Brown *et al* (2004).
[83] Keohane & Nye (1977), Nye & Donahue (2000). There are various case studies to test these assertions. See, for instance, Leonard (2005)

the decision-making process, either directly or indirectly were much more intricate than had often been suggested.[84] In short, foreign policy-making and the environment within which policy was made, was far more *dynamic* than traditional models and concepts had suggested.

Yet, such recognition did *not* lead to a re-consideration of the fundamental nature of the Cold War or the frameworks within which it was being conducted. Rather, 'most observers [...] assumed continuity, not change' and did so because the definition of what the Cold War represented, as outlined at the start of this section, had not changed (Cox 2009: 162). In fact, the rupture which began to appear between the dynamic nature of international political environment and the static concepts used to frame it led to a *re-assertion* of central control in terms of the political process.

In the United States, there were calls

> 'for a renaissance of presidential leadership... Saving only the ritual purification of the removal of Richard Nixon, many are already claiming that the pendulum has swung too far toward congressional government, that we face obstruction or incoherence if the tendency goes too long unchecked' (Ravenal 1975).

These calls became louder in the early 1980s, spurred on by the fact that the Cold War turned decidedly chilly and re-enforced by the election of Ronald Reagan as President in 1980. He showed that even 'a president with only a vague understanding of issues could still dominate the government and lead the country' (Schlesinger 2005: 55).

Much of this re-assertion also had to do with the 'role expectations' already discussed above. Key was the apparent vulnerability of the United States to military dominance of the Soviet Union. For instance, R. James Woolsey stated that:

> 'As the Soviet Union has steadily improved its strategic nuclear and other military forces in recent years, it has become increasingly clear to Americans that the United States is vulnerable in a sense that was never true before the advent of nuclear weapons' (Woolsey 1983).

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[84] See Neack (2002) for a review of this issue.

This created public pressure for decisive action by the President. Such a desire was underscored by a series of events which appeared to show the Soviet Union as being an imminent threat. In 1983 the shooting down of a South Korean Airlines flight by Soviet fighters which killed 269 people, including 61 Americans, saw 'favourable American opinion towards the Soviet Union drop to a 27-year low' (Bundy 1983). Bill Moyers contended that '[o]pen conflict between the two superpowers in this era of nuclear destruction may be unthinkable, but it is possible. There is in the air a sense of crisis. It's been there before, but the stakes have never been higher' (Moyers 1981: 181).

Therefore, very little thought was given to the possibility that the circumstances and structure of the international system might change.[85] This is surprising because during the 1980s there were some indications of change. For instance, the hardening of the relationship between the US and the Soviet Union in the early 1980s was replaced by a 'de-frosting' from 1985 with the onset of the Gorbachev reforms.[86] This apparent discrepancy simply reinforces the point that there was a conceptual tendency to stay with what was expected in terms of approach, often in the face of a differing reality.

Similar developments could be observed in the other case study countries. There was a considerable broadening of theoretical perspectives. Recognising political theory as an 'essentially contested concept' (Smith 2009: 370), the issues theories addressed became ever broader, recognising the often interconnected nature of concepts and issues.[87]

Yet, if anything, this complexity led to more centralisation in terms of foreign policy processes. Margret Thatcher wholeheartedly supported Reagan's assessment of the international situation during the 1980s and the Falklands war she fought against Argentina underscored the belief in a highly centralised foreign policy machine.[88] In Germany, chancellor Helmut Kohl faced down significant internal opposition regarding the stationing of cruise missiles in the country. According to one senior

[85] There are many examples but one that captures the essence of the arguments about the Cold War and decision-making processes to deal with it, see Tower (1981)
[86] See Cox (2009)
[87] See Glendinning (2006).
[88] On the Thatcher foreign policy-process, see Smith, Smith & White (1988)

foreign policy advisor to his party, the Christian Democrats, he was generally disposed to making key decisions with the input of only a small group of advisors. All the key decisions on big foreign policy projects 'were made in the chancellor's office'.[89]

As the Cold War had progressed, therefore, an interesting paradox had developed. On the one hand there was recognition of the increasing complexity of the international political environment. Far from being static the Cold War was actually a dynamic conflict, subject to considerable complexity and variety across time and space, whose development was often influenced by quite particular local variables, as it had, for instance, in Cuba or Vietnam. As such, it provided a stable context for international politics, but did not mean the end of local particularities.

However, this complexity, in a descriptive sense, did *not* challenge the overall *framework* within which International Relations was either researched or conducted. In fact, in terms of policy-making, such recognition led to a *reinforcement* of centralisation precisely to *confront* and *minimise* this very complexity. The overriding aim was the maintenance of stability, *not* the encouragement of change. This would have significant implications for the end of the Cold War was viewed.

[89] Interview with senior foreign policy advisor, May 2007

The end of the Cold War

The end of the Cold War came as a considerable surprise to writers on International Relations as none of the traditional theories had seen it coming: 'The abrupt end of the Cold War [...] and the sudden disintegration of the Soviet Union astonished almost everyone, whether in government, the academy, the media or think tanks (Gaddis 1992: 6).

It was this suddenness which led to the end of the Cold War being seen as a crisis event. It did so for two principal reasons. It challenged the very foundations upon which foreign policies had been based for decades and brought to an end to stability. As mentioned at the start of the last section, the Cold War had been defined as a global, clearly defined conflict. As such, it allowed for predictability, certainty and continuity. Cox (2009) quotes one senior American official as saying that, 'it hadn't occurred to any of us that [the Cold War] ever would end' (p.164). As such, one of the key foundations of foreign policy-making (predictability/certainty) was being torn asunder.

However, the end of this conflict also severely challenged the *theories* which had offered themselves in order to *ensure* predictability and stability, in particular the theory of Realism.

The early 1990s saw Realism attacked from virtually all sides – and this led to the emergence of various alternative approaches which tried to 'rectify' the weaknesses identified. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to go into all of these critiques and approaches in detail. However, a couple will be looked at here in order to represent the *types* of challenges that emerged.

At one end of the scale, it was asked whether Realism in particular had any future as a political theory - Kapstein even asked if Realism was dead whilst Kratochwil contended that Neo-Realism faced 'embarrassment'.[90] One of the most sustained and coherent such challenges came from Leblow who argued that the end of the Cold War had illustrated clearly that 'Realist theories do not meet [the] conditions [of]

[90] See Kapstein (1995), Kratochwil (1993)

testable theories', namely 'careful conceptual and operational definitions of their dependent and independent variables' (Leblow 1994: 250).

He also contended that Realist theories had serious problems conceptualising and explaining change, in particular since 1990, when the 'pace of change in the international system accelerated' (*ibid*: 258). As a result, Leblow argues that Realism is essentially an 'after the fact' theory. By being found at the 'system and unit levels' of the international system, the various Realist approaches may manage to capture developments or parts of developments 'after the fact', but they do not allow for prediction. As Leblow states, for instance, the Soviet government's response to the country's decline so crucial to the end of the Cold War 'is not captured by any realist theory' (*ibid*: 263). For him, the principal reason for this 'failure' is the fact that 'those theories are underspecified [...], [they represent] a paradigm of a fundamental axiom – that the pursuit of power is the principal objective of states – and a collection of loose propositions [...] that attempt to apply this maxim in diverse and contradictory ways [...] which makes it impossible [...] to predict much of anything' (*ibid*: 263).

This problem of capturing change was a common theme of critique in the immediate post-Cold War world. Interestingly, whilst Liberalism equally failed to predict the end of the Cold War, responding to such critique initially was easier for this particular theoretical approach. Whilst acknowledging that 'history has once again left scholars and commentators in its dust' (Doyle, 19995), there was still a consensus amongst liberal thinkers that liberal approaches can better account for the end of the Cold War.[91]

For some, Fukuyama being the most famous example, the world had simply arrived at 'the end of history'. He argued that the gradual spread of liberal democracy across Europe and South America demonstrated the universal applicability of a single model of political and economic organisation.[92] Ikenberry also contended that the end of the Cold War 'was less the end of a world order than the collapse of the Communist world into an expanding Western order' (Ikenberry 1996: 131).

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[91] See Kegly (1993)
[92] See Fukuyama (1989)

This trend would continue in years to come because

> 'European societies are more democratic than before 1914 or 1939, and democracy is spreading rapidly in Eastern Europe. This trend is bound to continue, because key pre-conditions for democracy-high levels of literacy and industrial development, and a relatively equal distribution of land, wealth and income- are now far more widespread in Europe than they were 80 years ago. This change bolsters peace' (van Evera 1990: 26).

Yet, the fact that these claims were also made *after* the event left even some *within* the Liberal scholarly community slightly nervous about its universal applicability. Doyle, in particular, pointed out that 'the democratic politics of modernisation [...] are not smooth.' As such, 'we should be concerned about the compatibility between democracy and capitalism that is assumed in much of the literature' (Doyle, 1995).

This concern was widely reflected in much of the literature on the end of the Cold War. The end of this conflict would not mean an end to problems, be they of economic or of a security nature, but merely change *source* and specific *type* or *expression* of them. Homer-Dixon contended that the factors that may lead to national or international crises were far more interconnected than previously appreciated. Using the example of the environment, he suggested that the fight over resources had led to the realisation that 'we do not know where and when we might cross a threshold and move to a radically different and perhaps undesirable system' (Homer-Dixon 1991: 80).[93]

Doyle takes this argument further. Whilst he agreed that society in the post-Cold War world was more open and pluralistic, he argued that these developments 'are the very forces that make for suspicion, a confused foreign policy and sometimes imprudent aggression in dealing with non-liberals' (Doyle, 1995).

Doyle, then, developed an argument which, whilst stressing the importance and relevance of Liberalism in explaining the end of the Cold War recognised that none of the various strand of liberal thought provide a 'complete model of democratization [after the Cold War]'(*ibid*).

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[93] See also Hurrell (1995)

This incompleteness of the dominant theories, and their now obvious difficulties in predicting significant change, led to a host of theoretical developments, both from within the traditionally dominant theories, as well as from outside, in order to adjust International Relations to what seemed like a more uncertain world. Again, it is beyond the scope of this chapter to look at all of these developments in detail.[94] However, by looking at a few developments in a little more detail one can outline some general trends which will be critical to understanding the responses to 9/11.

Realism responded to the criticisms levelled at it by emphasising the varied nature of Realist theory. Reacting in many ways against the dominance of Waltz's structural Realism – 'which deals poorly with change' (Wolforth 1994: 92)[95] – Realists began to invest much more effort into showing that their theory was 'rich and varied' (*ibid*) and that it could provide a context which 'integrates systemic-level and unit-level variables' (Taliaferro 2006: 464). Out of these efforts emerged new Realist approaches like neoclassical realism.[96]

The key change in the neo-classical approach to Realism is its recognition of the, at least potential, importance of domestic-level variables. According to Taliaferro, while 'systemic variables have causal primacy in shaping states' external behaviour, domestic-level variables intervene to determine the types of [...] strategies [states] are likely to puruse' (*ibid*: 466-7). There is, hence, recognition that states are 'free to experiment' on how they achieve security in an anarchic environment (*ibid*: 467). Foreign and security policies may differ from state to state, depending on particular domestic circumstances.

Neo-classical Realism therefore represents an attempt to re-establish a link between International Relations *theory* and foreign policy *practice*. According to this line of thought, the impact of a states' power capabilities on foreign policy is 'indirect and complex, because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level' (Rose 1998: 146).

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94 See Lebow & Risse-Kappen (1995)

95 Schweller (1996) talked about a 'status-quo bias' of Neo-Realism.

96 See Rose (1998)

Such argument represented convergence around the belief that the development of the international system was determined through an *interplay* of factors across various levels of analysis. As such, *domestic* factors began to receive far more attention in trying to explain particular political outcomes. Kapstein (1995: 755) contended that one must begin the exploration of political developments 'inside the "black box" of domestic politics.' Snyder (1991: 19-20) agreed that 'domestic pressures often outweigh international ones in the calculations of national leaders.' Neoclassical realism intended to 'incorporate [this] complex model of state-society relations [...] while building upon neorealism's insights about the constraints of anarchy and the relative distribution of power' (Taliaferro 2006: 470).

Such a change has significant implications since it recognises the unique set of circumstances each states confronts when developing and implementing its foreign and security policies. As Taliaferro himself says, domestic circumstances are critical for leaders in providing 'material resources and popular support... [yet] the capacity to extract and mobilize societal resources varies across different countries and [...] different historical periods' (*ibid*: 473).[97]

This, though, poses serious questions in terms of Realisms claims about the ability to predict the course of events. Wolforth, for instance, acknowledges that the end of the Cold War 'had unique features that could not be anticipated and probably will not reoccur' (Wolforth 1994: 96). As such, neoclassical realism provides a different focus of inquiry. Whilst Neo-realism

> 'seeks to explain patterns of international outcome but is indeterminate about the likely foreign policies of individual states, [neoclassical realism] seeks to explain variation in the foreign policies of individual states over time or of different states when confronted with similar external constraints' (Taliaferro 2006: 480).

As a consequence there was the acknowledgement that 'different theories may explain different regularities that came together to produce the end of the Cold War' (Wohlforth 1994: 94). As such, it permit that events be explained by focussing on *different* levels of analysis whilst, however, maintaining a *hierarchy* of these levels.

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[97] See also Lobell *et al.* (2009)

Yet, for some these changes still did not go far enough. The focus of Realism was still too much on material resources. In order to understand change in international politics in general, and the radical change the end of the Cold War represented in particular, one needed to focus more on people and the *ideas* they develop. Traditional IR theories had 'serious blind spots and silences, particularly regarding the ideational realm' (Ruggie 1998: 856).[98] Out of this argument emerged the theory of Constructivism.

According to Constructivists, a focus on the ideational realm was particularly important in relation to the end of the Cold War because the largely peaceful nature of its demise, contrary to general expectations, was the result of a significant change on the part of the Soviet leadership about the question what type of behaviour and reaction would be appropriate in response to demands for political reform. Yet, traditional theories say little 'about how standards of appropriateness might change' (Finnenmore and Sikkink 1998: 888). As such, it was no surprise that they could not account for the end of the Cold War.[99]

Perhaps the clearest formulation of such thinking came from Alexander Wendt. In a celebrated article published in 1992 he contended that 'people act towards objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them. States act differently toward enemies than they do toward friends because enemies are threatening and friends are not. Anarchy and the distribution of power are insufficient to tell us which is which' (Wendt 1992: 397).[100] As such, '[i]dentities are the basis of interest. Actors do not have a "portfolio" of interests that they carry around independent of social context; instead they define their interests in the process of defining situations' (*ibid*: 398).[101]

This was particularly important in relation to the end of the Cold War since '[s]ometimes situations are unprecedented in our experience, and in these cases we have to construct their meaning, and thus our interests, by analogy or invent de novo'

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[98] For a general outline of constructivist principles to IR, see Checkel (1993) or Griffiths (2007)
[99] See also Fierke & Jorgensen (2001)
[100] See also Wendt (1987), (1994), (1995)
[101] There has been considerable comment on Wendt's contribution to the field. See Guzzini & Leander (2006). For a critique, see Zehfuss (2002)

(*ibid*: 398). Interestingly, the uniqueness of the end of the Cold War was one of the key defences put forward by Realists for their failure to predict its occurrence.[102] Yet, from a Constructivist point of view, the manner of the end of the Cold War were the result of a process of changes *within* the Soviet Union which meant that, for several years before 1989, 'Soviet foreign policy became increasingly inconsistent with [several] realist theories' (Lebow 1994: 261). Soviet retreat 'appears to have been motivated by a combination of ideological and domestic political considerations' (*ibid*: 262).

According to this argument, the focus on ideational factors allows one to account for and explain change, the constant flux which is evident within the international political system. For instance, Constructivism seeks to move beyond the anarchic nature of the international system presented by Realism by showing this system to be governed through a 'pluralistic security community [which has managed to] overcome the allegedly inescapable consequences of anarchy [through] a complex web of institutions that govern interstate relations and provide mechanisms for resolving disputes' (*ibid*: 269). This suggests a 'transformational conception of structure [in which] structure is both an antecedent and consequence of unit behaviour' (*ibid*: 276). Structure is an evolutionary concept and there are no fundamental differences between the domestic and international system, as they influence each other.

Yet, these insights and arguments have 'not involved a wholesale rejection of scientific method' (Fierke 2007: 168). For the most part, Constructivism accepts 'the existence of an objective world...' (*ibid*: 174).[103] What is argued here is that much of this objectivity depends on who constructs it. In other words, political leaders essentially 'construct their situations through various cognitive processes and shortcuts' (Checkel 2008: 74).[104] These processes are often influenced by societal non-state actors, 'wilful actors' that act as 'norm entrepreneurs', i.e. actors that influence and shape the norms of behaviour it is acceptable for state-actors to adopt (Finnenmore & Sikkink 1998).

[102] See Wolforth (1994).
[103] On the notion of 'truth' in policy-making see Haas (2004).
[104] See also Carlsnaes (2002).

Once again, therefore, what one can see is a broadening of the theoretical landscape, recognition that developments of international politics are potentially shaped by a multitude of interlocking factors that can, often, be interdependent. This led to debates about how one can *order* international society, but there was no challenge to the idea that international society *was*, in some way, orderly.[105]

This acceptance of the idea of an 'objective truth', of order and scientific method led to criticism and the emergence of another theory which had a huge impact on International Relations at the end of the Cold War: Post-modernism.

Post-modernism rejects notions of pre-determined orders. The approach is based on 'incredulity towards [any such] metanarratives' (Lyontard 1984: xxiv). Knowledge and 'truth' are intimately linked to concepts of power. Power and knowledge both depend on, and influence, each other. Accordingly 'truth is not something external to social settings' (Smith 1997: 181). Any claim to truth contains *bias*. Bearing in mind that every person has certain biases, any *belief* in an objective truth and a pre-determined order leads to 'conceptual prisons' which impede the task of inquiry.[106]

Post-modernism therefore is a 'post-structural' approach to international relations.[107] Bearing in mind that with the end of the Cold War, there was common agreement that the old structure of the international system had been torn asunder, it may not be a surprise that for a time, Post-modernism was 'as popular a theoretical approach as any' (Baylis & Smith 2004: 285).[108] It seemed to fit in well with events and tapped into a general spirit of soul-searching which took hold for a period after the end of the Cold War within the discipline of IR.[109]

Post-modern approaches seemed to fit with end of the Cold War because they pay particular attention to 'the increasing plurality and fragmentation of identities and collective organization' (Noorgard 1994: 245). As such, they seemed to fit in well with what many other theoretical approaches had both described and, in many cases,

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[105] See Bull (1995)
[106] See Vasquez (1995).
[107] See Devetak (1999) or Edkins (1999)
[108] See also Viotti & Kauppi (2010)
[109] See Nicholson (1996) or Neufeld (1995)

feared.[110] For instance, there was an expectation within Post-modernism that, in the post-Cold War world the state would be 'de-centred'.[111]

Key to this argument was the way the Cold War ended. The popular revolutions which toppled long-established governments, political and economic systems seemed to suggest a key role for non-state actors in affecting change.[112] Traditional structural frameworks reduce people to 'to mere objects who must participate in reproducing the whole' (Ashley, 1984). As such, traditional theories lack imagination and flexibility to deal with unexpected changes. In fact, in some cases, these theories cannot conceive of the international system undergoing a fundamental change since they are stuck between the concepts of sovereign statehood and international anarchy as the unchanging parameters of international politics.[113] This, in turn, leads to serious blind-spots in terms of explaining particular events. The 'conceptual prisons' constructed by traditional IR theories does not allow one to account for multiple causation and, as such, more complex causation. In short, traditional theories cannot account for the dynamism of international politics.[114]

Post-modernist approaches were subject to severe critique, being accused of making numerous accusations, thereby 'muddying the waters' of IR theory without contributing to solving the problems identified (Osterud, 1997). 'Narratives can be taken apart with nothing to take their place [...] [Such] nihilism lacks any foundation of knowledge because it rejects the possibility and the value of knowledge' (Jackson & Sorensen 2003: 252-3).

However, for the purposes of this study, the key is to show that the end of the Cold War– seen as the end of a previous stable order and therefore a crisis – led to a considerable broadening of the theoretical landscape in order to get a handle on this perceived disorder and on the fact that no-one had managed to predict this change. IR theory, therefore, in some ways at least, responded to what it saw as an increasingly complex political landscape. Approaches to IR now ranged from those continuing to emphasise the predominantly orderly aspects of the international political system to

[110] See Kaplan (1994)
[111] See, for instance, Devetak (1999).
[112] See Coker (1992)
[113] See Walker (1995) or Jarvis (2000)
[114] See Kurki (2008)

those who denied the existence of any overarching order. There was a realisation that policy-making was influenced by numerous factors, some of which were clearly visible and, at least at times, measurable, whilst others were not. These factors could come from across a range of levels of analyses, be they domestic[115] or, as many Liberals contended, international in the form of international organisations.[116]

It may be useful here to give a quick graphic illustration of these various approaches in a form which will make the link to Complexity Theory more accessible.

Figure 2.1: Range of International Relations Theories from Order to Disorder

Order / Disorder

Realism, Neo-Realism (e.g. Waltz)	Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism (e.g. Nye)	Neo-classical Realism (e.g. Taliaferro)	International Society (e.g. Bull)	Constructivism (e.g. Wendt)	Post-Modernism (e.g. Lyotard)

What is fascinating in relation to this study is how this expanding theoretical landscape was reflected specifically in relation to foreign policy-making. In simple terms, normal foreign policy processes were increasingly recognised as more 'messy' than traditional models had suggested. This led to a surge in interest in the discipline of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA).[117]

Like some of the theories just discussed, FPA challenged the rigid division of levels of analysis and located *people* across any number of levels at the centre of foreign policy processes.[118] Studying specific foreign policy case studies, it showed the frequent lack of parsimony between international relations *theory* and foreign policy *practice*. Critically, there was a growing recognition that the rationality upon which traditional theory was based was not always reflected in political practice due to the

[115] The 1990s saw a growing literature on the importance of domestic factors in determining foreign policy decision-making. See Fearon (1998) or Wang (1996)
[116] See Keohane & Martin (1995).
[117] The literature here is enormous. See Hermann *et al* (1987), Neack *et al* (1995) or Hudson & Vore (1995). For a more recent review, see Hudson (2007). A recent case-study example is Vanderbush (2009)
[118] For a discussion on the numerous factors that can influence foreign policy decisions see Hill (2003)

differing influences of other factors that vary across time and space.[119] As such, one had to go 'beyond groupthink' in understanding how foreign policy decisions were arrived at (t' Hart *et al.* (1997). In the normal course of events, policy-making was a dynamic process.[120]

For many, however, this represented a significant problem. As shown at the start of this section, the end of the Cold War represented uncertainty, only added to by several foreign policy crises which marked the 1990s.[121] Whether it was the first war against Iraq in 1991, the crises in Somalia or Ruanda or Yugoslavia, all seemed to indicate that predictions about the *instability* of the post-Cold War world seemed to be borne out by fact. Interestingly, these predictions did not only come from the United States but also from the other case study countries.[122]

As such, there was strong political pressure within all three countries for a re-assertion of executive leadership, a re-assertion of the 'role expectations' already referred to at the start of this chapter.[123] In fact, as will be shown in the case studies, the perceived weak response to the crises of the 1990s by some institutions and actors only served to strengthen this pressure.[124]

One therefore confronted a paradox in the post-Cold War world. Despite widespread recognition of the increasing complexity of the international politics, as illustrated through extensive research, there were practically *no* changes to the policy-making processes employed to deal with and respond to the uncertainty of the 1990s. Rather, this period witnessed a *re-statement* of the traditional belief that crises and uncertainty need to be addressed through strong executive leadership which even new theoretical approaches supported. Valerie Hudson contents that '[m]ost high-level foreign policy decisions are made in small groups [...since...] a crisis situation almost demands that a leader be able to sit around a table with a set of peers and engage in a [discussion] of policy options' (Hudson 2006: 66).

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[119] See Smith, Hadfield and Dunne (2008) for a discussion on the link between theory, actors and cases. Brian White (1999) identified particular challenges in this regard for European countries.
[120] See Hermann & Hermann (1989)
[121] See, for instance, Huntingdon (1993), Kaplan (1994)
[122] For an overview on the UK see Cooper (2004), for Germany see Harrison (2004)
[123] On the US, see Cameron (2005), on the UK, Curtis (1995), on Germany, Hacke (2003).
[124] This was particularly true in the UK in relation to Yugoslavia but, as Weissberg (2008) showed, also applied to the US. See also Mastanduno (1997)

What some of the new theoretical perspectives *did* do is to try and explain *why* no such challenge has been forthcoming. Constructivists, in particular, showed that foreign policy processes were the result of long-established norms. As Finnenmore and Sikkink put it: 'Norms channel and regularize behaviour [...] Shared ideas, expectations, and beliefs about appropriate behaviour are what give the world structure, order, and stability' (Finnenmore and Sikkink 1998: 894). As such, the behaviour of actors in international politics can often be explained by reference to the 'life cycle' of particular norms. At the far end of such life cycle 'norms acquire a taken-for-granted quality and are no longer matter of broad public debate' (*ibid*: 895). Often, state leaders 'conform to norms in order to avoid the disapproval aroused by norm violation and thus enhance national esteem [...]' (*ibid*: 904). [125]

This would suggest that norms about behaviour in times of international crises have evolved over time and have become so internalised that not only are they unchallenged, they have almost become un-challengeable. Centralisation in times of crisis for instance has been seen as a success and therefore is repeated time and again.

It is *this* which would become a key issue in relation to the aftermath of 9/11.

[125] For a specific application of Constructivism to FPA, see Kubalkova (2001)

Conclusion

As International Relations moved towards the Millennium it was faced by a paradox. As far as theory was concerned, there was a definite broadening of perspective in order to describe the complexity of international politics. In some quarters at least there was a move away from the belief that there is an 'ultimate truth' waiting to be discovered.[126]

At the same time, this broadening of theories has not gone beyond adding extra layers to what necessarily still is an incomplete description of international politics. Whilst it is now virtually undisputed, for instance, that developments in international politics are the result of an interplay of numerous variables across often different levels of analysis, this has *not* meant a change in the framework within which these variables are debated.[127]

This being so, new theories have not been able to provide a new framework for the conduct of policy, especially in times of crisis.[128] Even new theoretical approaches make frequent reference to the importance of centralisation so that a strong leader can confront the uncertainty a crisis represents. The norms and values that govern crisis decision-making are deeply ingrained into all studies of practical foreign policy. As a result, there is an increasing discrepancy between international relations theory and foreign policy practice.

In what follows it will be shown that the reason for this discrepancy is the fact that the term 'complexity' here is used in a descriptive sense. That is, that the world is complex and complicated is seen as a fact one has to accept. Crises, however, are seen as anything that departs from the 'norm', anything that is unexpected. As such, the objective of foreign policy-making systems in response to crises is to *minimise*, if possible *eliminate,* this complexity. *Control* is the key, just like the forefathers of modern IR theory had argued. As such, the end of the Cold War was seen as a crisis exactly *because* it departed from the norm and represented uncertainty. As such, it

[126] For the broader debate see also Brown (2010)

[127] See Lebow's (1994) insistence on talking about the importance of dependent and independent variables to analyse the end of the Cold War.

[128] Interestingly, there has been recognition that this is an unsatisfactory state of affairs which needs to be addressed. See Walt (2005)

spurred on the tendency to centralise, aided by long-established role-expectations, constitutional provisions and past experience.

As will be shown during the case studies, it is this *desire* for control and predictability which often leads to a sense of crisis. In that sense 9/11 was no different from the end of the Cold War. It was an unexpected event which departed from the norm.

In the next two chapters, it will be shown that the problem in conceptualising the end of the Cold War or 9/11 was the result of a failure to conceive of such events as Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS). CASs provide a new framework which, through a number of innovative concepts and tools, allows both practitioners and academics to build a bridge between the various approaches outlined in this chapter and therefore to *utilise* their insights in order to provide a more comprehensive explanation of political crisis events as well as allow for an innovative political response. It will be shown that, whilst important, events such as the end of the Cold War and 9/11 do not represent singular systems and clear breaks with the past but particular expressions of processes of Complex Adaptive Systems at a certain point in time. Such recognition has significant implications for both explaining and responding to such events. It will be shown how the conceptual framework provided by Complexity can address many of the problems identified in this chapter and how the link between political theory and foreign policy practice can be re-vitalised.

Chapter 3: Complexity – A new framework for International Relations and crisis foreign policy

Introduction

As shown in the last chapter, there is no shortage of people suggesting that the traditional theories of International Relations are inadequate or incomplete in explaining and dealing with international crises. Yet, additions to IR theory have either been largely descriptive or diametrically opposed to the orderly framework and none have managed to answer some of the fundamental questions raised in relation to IR by the end of the Cold War: Why was it not possible to predict the end of this conflict and its outcome? Why did its end cause such a crisis in international relations, both at a theoretical and a practical level?

In this and the next chapter it will be shown that the key problem in response to the end of the Cold War was the *framework* through which these responses were developed. What is needed is a framework which not only *recognises*, but actually *uses* the complexity of events such as the end of the Cold War or September 11 in an innovative way in order to *facilitate* and *enhance* a process of *self-organisation.*

It will be argued that this task can best be achieved through the application of Complexity. It will be shown that Complexity can build a bridge between and complement the various approaches analysed in the previous chapter in order to allow for a far more comprehensive explanation of and response to foreign policy crises. Complexity will specifically address the shortcomings identified in the last chapter by changing the framework through which crises are explained and analysed.

This chapter will give a general introduction to the Complexity approach. Its main concepts will be outlined and its development traced. These concepts will then be applied to politics and international relations, with reference to a couple of applications in other fields within the social sciences which have a direct bearing on the case studies. It will be argued that what Complexity needs to do is change the terms of debate within which International Relations are conducted. The *language* of

IR needs to be re-written to take account of the insights offered by the Complexity approach.[129]

As such, this chapter will accomplish the first of a two-part process to set up the case studies: By the end of this chapter, the main concepts of Complexity will have been introduced which will allow for a re-interpretation of crisis events in international politics. This will set the scene for the following chapter in which three Complexity *tools* will be introduced which will allow policy-makers to respond to crises taking into account the insights offered by Complexity. In doing so, the next two chapters will establish a link between the *theoretical* innovations of Complexity and their *practical* implications, clearly demonstrating the added value of the Complexity approach and allowing one to test the claims made by Kavalski about the utility of this approach.

[129] In respect of the present study, 'language' refers to the *assumptions* on which much of IR Theory, and by extension foreign policy-making, is based. However, changing these assumptions will also have an impact on the terminology used in International Relations. It is beyond the scope of this work to discuss these terms in detail and this will be an area for future research. This work will address some concerns about the terminology of IR but this discussion will concern itself more with the *approach* these terms represent and the added value Complexity can offer.

The origins and development of Complexity

As shown in the last chapter, policy-makers are greatly influenced in their crisis-behaviour by ideas formulated several centuries ago. The importance of order was outlined by Hobbes, amongst others, and his ideas of how to achieve such order have been largely accepted ever since.

However, the Enlightenment was also crucial, especially the mechanistic vision of science propagated by Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727).[130] He, with his unrivalled set of scientific discoveries, embodied a belief that humans could discover all the "laws" of nature and control both nature and their own destiny, to the point where all knowledge would one day be discovered. As Pierre Simon de la Place (1749-1827) put it: 'If at one time, we knew the position and motion of all the particles in the universe, then we could calculate their behaviour at any other time, in the past or future' (Geyer and Mackintosh 2005: 33).[131]

The success of the Industrial Revolution, with its new scientific approach to production and its astounding technological developments, seemed to confirm the belief that nature could be controlled. Nobel Laureate Albert Nicholson (1852-1931) believed that 'the future truths of physical science are to be looked for in the sixth place of decimals' (Horgan 1996: 19). In 1999 well-known Biologists Edward O. Wilson argued that 'all tangible phenomena [...] are based on material processes that are ultimately reducible, however long and tortuous the sequences, to the laws of physics' (Wilson 1999: 291).

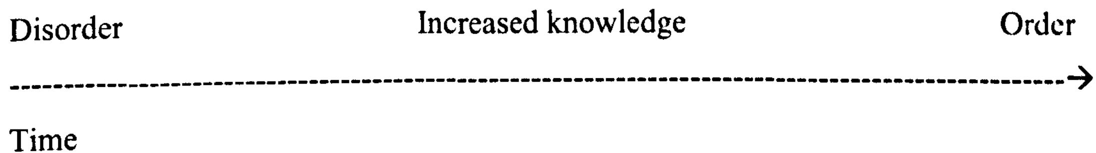
In summary, following a Newtonian framework of inquiry, this paradigm of order was based on the following four principles:

- Order: known causes lead to known effects under all circumstances
- Reductionism: By observing the behaviour of its parts, the behaviour of a system could be understood clockwork fashion, free of surprises. The whole was the sum of its parts.

[130] For a more detailed account, see Geyer and Mackintosh (2005) on which this section draws extensively
[131] For a review of this 'scientific revolution' see Hellyer (2003)

- Predictability: Once the behaviour of a system is understood, the future course of events can be predicted by application of the appropriate inputs to the model
- Determinism: Processes flow along orderly and predictable lines with clear beginnings and rational ends.[132]

As such, with increased knowledge there would be a move from disorder to order:



This belief in the power of 'science' spread to virtually all areas of human activity, including politics. The application of science to the making of policy was an attempt to 'render the practice of governance a more risk-free and engineered process [...]' (King 2000: vii). As a result we now 'live in a world besotted by science' (*ibid*: vii). As Strong put it in 1962, at the height of positivism:

> 'All of us who profess the study of politics are confronted with the prevailing scientific approach, no matter how practical our concern, how slight our interest in methodology, or how keen our desire to get on with the business of direct investigation' (Strong 1962: v).

However, as this belief spread within the social sciences, the natural sciences had already seen the emergence of doubts about the *universal* applicability of this orderly approach and it is here that one can find the origins of what was to become Complexity Theory. Further research, most famously by Albert Einstein (1879-1955) and his theory of relativity, challenged the belief that all phenomena were orderly, reducible and predictable. The whole often did not equate to the sum of its parts.[133] A detailed discussion of these challenges would be beyond the scope of this chapter, though below some of those will be touched upon.[134]

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[132] adapted from Geyer and Mackintosh 2005: 34
[133] See Einstein & Lawson (1920)
[134] See Fuller (1997), Langton *et al.* (2003) or Osler (2000)

Conrad Hal Waddington pointed out that whilst the orderly approach to scientific research had brought enormous advances, such progress was not universal: 'It has given us little understanding [for instance] of embryonic development; little except some rather empty theories about evolution; and hardly anything about the mind' (Waddington 1977: 20).

This is a key point which informs the basis of Complexity: It is not disputed that Newtonian science has helped to foster advancement in most areas of human inquiry, including the social world. However, these advances are incomplete and there is a significant amount of knowledge which is as yet undiscovered, which may indeed never be discovered. As such, complete knowledge is impossible. Rather, knowledge increases at such a rate that previous 'facts' are rendered obsolete. As Waddington states:

> 'Perhaps [this situation is especially acute] in science, in which information is very actively sought, and is recorded for other people to use. But even in less formalised intellectual fields, such as the understanding of peoples, societies and political systems, the same sort of obsolescence of points of view, opinions and understanding also occurs, though possibly at a slower rate (*ibid*: 36).

In addressing the issue of obsolescence, Waddington built on work undertaken by Karl Popper during the 1950s. Popper is best-known for his principle of 'falsification': According to him, science had to proceed inductively through attempts to falsify the results of previous research. As such, it had to proceed from the universal scientific hypothesis to the particular case, a reversal of the widely-held belief that universal rules could be garnered from particular case studies. Consequently, Popper denied that there was absolute verifiable knowledge.[135]

Thomas Kuhn concurred with *that* conclusion but rejected the concept of falsification. Science will not shift simply as a result of the disproval of a particular theory. Rather, old paradigms will only get rejected and replaced when a new one is readily available. Such a new paradigm will only be available after a period of 'extraordinary science', characterised by debates about the rights and wrongs of particular paradigms. As such, a 'paradigm shift' is required which may take a

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135 See Popper (1959) or Bunge & Popper (1964)

considerable amount of time and will depend to a great extent on the societal context of the time. That is to say, paradigm shifts are shaped by the context within which they are conceived, an idea taken up, as shown, by Constructivists.[136]

By the 1970s, some key parts of Complexity were therefore in place: One, the recognition that one cannot know everything was beginning to take hold in the natural sciences. With that also came a realisation that the natural world is not entirely predictable. Some phenomena may defy logical explanation. Finally, progress was not inevitable but depended on the context within which ideas are conceived. The world, therefore, was a complex mixture between orderly and disorderly phenomena.

If that was the case, many of the concepts upon which the Newtonian framework was built had to be reconsidered. Such recognition opened the door to the 'paradigm shift' that Kuhn had been talking about.

[136] See Kuhn (1970) for a detailed discussion of this question. For an application to politics, see Combs (2008)

The key concepts of Complexity[137]

What then is a Complex Adaptive System (CAS)? Different definition exists. The one that will be used here is from Kevin Dooley, who defines them as

'a collection of semi-autonomous agents with the freedom to act in unpredictable ways and whose interactions over time and space generate system-wide patterns' (Dooley, 1997).

This definition builds on the arguments made above and opens the door to a more detailed discussion of the key characteristics of a Complex Adaptive System. Below a brief outline is given of each.[138]

Multiple agents or phenomena

Complex Adaptive Systems are a result of -and develop through- the interaction between the different agents or phenomena that make up the system, as well as interactions with other systems. As such, the development of each system depends on the presence of multiple agents or phenomena. If the different agents within the system did not interact with each other, it could not progress and would eventually die. Equally, if there was only one agent, no development could take place.[139]

Emergence and sensitivity to initial conditions

This constant interaction between different agents across time and space has several implications for the development of Complex Adaptive Systems. First, they develop according to the interactions of agents mostly at *local* level. These, as will be illustrated, can vary greatly across time and space. These systems are therefore sensitive to initial conditions in that they respond to often tiny changes in local conditions.[140]

[137] For a general introduction to Complexity, see Allen (2001)

[138] The breakdown here is based on Geyer & Mackintosh (2005), pp. 38-40. Many others exist, all of which differ slightly in terminology. However, they all agree on the basic concepts discussed here. See Cilliers (1998), or Dooley (1997)

[139] On the multiplicity of agents, see Gleick (1988).

[140] As will be discussed later in this chapter and during the case studies, the development of such systems is *path dependent*, a term which will be defined in relation to Complexity and International Relations later in this chapter. See Shan (2008)

Such systems therefore are 'an emergent property' (Coveney and Highfield 1995: 330). Their sensitivity to initial conditions and their ability to respond to, and interact with, agents and other systems means that their development emerges over time and does not have a particular end-point. Their openness makes this process a continuous one.[141]

Bounded nature

However, this does not mean that the system is chaotic. Rather, Complex Adaptive Systems are bounded systems. Over time, the interactions of agents within a Complex Adaptive System will form more or less coherent patterns of behaviour.[142] These patterns are governed by a set of *general rules*. Without such general rules, no coherent patterns of behaviour could emerge. What these rules are will differ between systems and the tension between the systems that are created by these different rules will again inform patterns of behaviour of other Complex Adaptive Systems. It is this tension between the bounded nature of a system and its openness to interact with other systems that forms a key part of its ability to develop into the future.[143]

Partial reducibility and predictability

These tensions emphasise another key element of Complex Adaptive Systems: their partial reducibility and partial predictability. The innumerable interactions of agents within and between such systems mean that it is impossible to de-construct them in their entirety. Whilst one may be able to extract general rules of behaviour according to which the system acts, the *precise impact* of these rules will vary according to local conditions. The factors influencing the development of such a system may be so numerous that it will be impossible to know them all. This is because Complex Adaptive Systems are noted for their *incompressibility* and *excessive diversity*. In other words 'any description [of a Complex Adaptive System] claiming completeness must be as complex as the system itself' (Geyer 2003: 21). Predictability of the development of such a system is therefore *partial*.[144]

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[141] See also Johnson (2001)

[142] 'Coherence' is the state of the system in which the parts fit together to establish system wide patterns. See Eoyang (2001)

[143] See Bossomaier & Green (2000) or Geyer & Rihani (2010)

[144] See Kratsov & Kadtke (1996) or Sawyer (2005)

Openness to its environment and ability to adapt

Complex Adaptive Systems are by their nature *open systems* that constantly interact with their environment. However, this conclusion is not only descriptive, but also fundamental in relation to ideas of what *should* happen (for the purposes of this study in relation to crisis foreign policy decision-making processes). Complex Adaptive Systems are able to respond to local conditions as they develop across time and space. As Kaufmann (1993) and Rihani (2002) have proven in their respective fields, those systems with the highest complexity stand to gain the most.[145] Critically, the ability to adapt will significantly increase the chances of coherent patterns of behaviour being formed within the system. As such, openness and adaptation are both a necessity for the survival of a Complex Adaptive System, as well as an objective to increase its coherence.

[145] Both will be discussed later in this work. See also Dawkins (1996)

Complex Systems in the Social World[146]

With these characteristics in mind, the fact that the social world is - and consists of- Complex Adaptive Systems of the type described above has long been recognised. As David Byrne has stated:

> 'The issue is that in the social world [...] causation is complex. Outcomes are determined not by single causes but by multiple causes, and the causes may, and usually do, interact, in a non-additive fashion. In other words the combined effect is not necessarily the sum of the separate effects' (Byrne 1998: 20).

In fact, social Complex Adaptive Systems have an added element which makes them *more* complex than physical or biological systems: the ability of human beings to *interpret* their surroundings. This ability to question the world around them, to be aware of their (and others') history, and the ability to consciously seek change adds one more key characteristic to human Complex Adaptive Systems in addition to the ones outlined above: interpretation or, to use the common academic term, *conscious complexity*. This means that 'complex causes can easily generate chaotic outcomes' (*ibid*: 20). Uncertainty is an *inherent* condition of the social world which means that purely orderly or disorderly frameworks for the study of such systems are insufficient.[147]

In the previous chapter it was shown that it was this inherent uncertainty which was fundamental to the development of the doctrine of centralised decision-making around leaders of the executive. *Control* was needed to ensure that differing interpretations of core values or beliefs did not lead to the undermining of societal order. However, as will be shown in relation to 9/11, it is beyond the scope of any leader to control the interpretative ability of all agents within a Complex Adaptive System (its conscious complexity) across time and space.

As such, one can establish that social Complex Adaptive Systems display the following characteristics:

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[146] The Complexity approach actually spilled over into the social sciences from the physical and biological sciences. It is beyond the scope of this work to look at these in detail. For an application to the physical world see Foreshaw & Smith (2009) or Gleick (1988). For an application to the biotic world, see Gell-Mann (1994), Kauffmann (1993), Capra (1996) or Lovelock (1979).
[147] See Ostrom (2002). For a popular account see Gladwell (2000).

- *Partial Order*: phenomena can exhibit both orderly and chaotic behaviours
- *Reductionism and Holism*: some phenomena are reducible others are not
- *Predictability and Uncertainty*: phenomena can be partially modelled, predicted and controlled
- *Probabilistic*: there are general boundaries to most phenomena, but within these boundaries exact outcomes are uncertain
- *Emergence*: they exhibit elements of adaptation and emergence
- *Interpretation*: the actors in the system can be aware of themselves, the system and their history and may strive to interpret and direct themselves and the system.[148]

The presence of conscious complexity challenges the belief in a universal order and total knowledge in other respects. It challenges the belief that societal development has an end-point. It also does away with the idea that one can ever 'get rid' of disorder. In any given human CAS there will be tension, difference and contradiction. Any attempt to remove these will actually have a detrimental impact on the policy process and its outcomes in terms of coherence.[149]

The question now is what kind of implications the recognition of the existence of Complex Adaptive Systems for International Relations in general and crisis foreign policy-making in particular? Once these have been determined, it will then be possible to apply these conclusions specifically to foreign policy and September 11th.

[148] Geyer & Rihani (2010). For a general introduction of Complexity to the social world, see Miller & Page (2007)

[149] Reference will be made later in this chapter to the work of Ralph Stacey who has applied these conclusions extensively to social systems of relevance to this study.

Applying Complexity to International Relations

Using the above characteristics, an increasing number of scholars have identified international politics as a Complex Adaptive System.[150] They are characterised by

- a number of elements or phenomena
- Emergence and sensitivity to initial conditions. Its development is at best partially predictable
- Parts of the system are reducible whilst others are not
- The elements of the system form coherent patterns over time
- The system is open to its environment and therefore capable of adaptation and survival.[151]

As shown, some of the theoretical developments discussed in the previous chapter have either implicitly or explicitly recognised the existence of at least some of these elements. For instance, theories like Neoclassical Realism, domestic policy approaches or disciplines like Foreign Policy Analysis have acknowledged that the development of the international system depends on several factors and agents that may well be spread across several levels of analysis. Other theories, such as Constructivism, have shown that changes within this system depend on changes in attitudes and ideas that may emerge over often lengthy periods of time. These changes can both be the result of, and lead to, changes in the environment within which actors act.

However, as already argued, such recognition has not led to changes in the *context* of IR. The key terms around which these debates are conducted have remained virtually unchanged since IR became an 'independent' academic discipline 90 years ago. This has meant principally that he discipline 'organized itself around the study of power' (Gaddis 2002: 59). The key discussion has been *who* had power and *what* determined how much power a particular actor could have.

150 See Gaddis (1987), Jervis (1997), Harrisson (2006)
151 See Geyer (2005), pp.38-40.

The emergence of several new theoretical approaches within such a relatively narrow context has led to what Stephen M. Walt called a 'protracted competition' (Walt 1998: 30) between the theories to show which one was 'best' in explaining developments within the international system. This competition led to often quite bitter debates about the utility of one theory or other, a trend particularly marked at the end of the Cold War.[152]

The common denominator in these debates was that each side justified its position through the application of science. IR scholars used science to find a 'series of discernible scientific principles that, if revealed, could render events predictable in much the same way that chemists or physicists were able to anticipate the outcome of their own laboratory experiments' (Gaddis 1987: 5).

Yet, applying the concepts of Complexity outlined above, such a 'protracted competition' is neither necessary, nor helpful. Rather, it actually *hinders* the business of inquiry for it obscures many of the key characteristics of Complex Adaptive Systems which are crucial to understanding events like the end of the Cold War or September 11th.

Why this is the case was brilliantly shown by renowned historian John Lewis Gaddis. In his path-breaking book *The Landscape of History* he argued that political developments and the decisions that flow from them cannot be understood without taking account of the temporal dimension. What has happened in the past has a crucial bearing on what happens now and in the future. For the understanding of Complex Adaptive Systems it is important to be aware of their historical development.

However, often leaders are far too quick to draw general conclusions from past events that may be inappropriate to contemporary situations. As Gaddis states, historical events 'can't be satisfactorily explained apart from the workings of micro-processes we've only come to understand in the last 100 years' (Gaddis 2002: 25). Since one cannot re-trace *every* detail of history in order to ascertain the origins of a

[152] See Wolforth (1994). This trend has also been marked *within* particular theoretical traditions. See Richardson (1997).

particular policy or decision, one will have to accept that explanation is often partial and possibly guess-work. In fact, explanations may well have to be revised in the light of new evidence which may force one to 'reassess the origins of the most familiar and agreed-upon events' (*ibid*: 103). There is 'no absolute standard for reaching consensus in history, or science or even law' (*ibid*: 107). Failure to take account of changing circumstances may lead to bad policy-decisions that may not be easily corrected.[153]

What Gaddis, then, is doing is to challenge the concept of a singular "truth" which is replicable across time and space. He emphasises the importance of differing individual perspectives and different interpretations, gleamed from a variety of methodological approaches. He shows that the social world is marked by constant tension between *general* rules and *specific* circumstances, between 'generalizations and particularizations' (*ibid*: 14). This tension is the result of the ability of human beings to manipulate time and space according to their own particular needs and wants. Humans individually can decide what is significant and why. There is, hence, a tension between macro- and micro processes that constantly influence each other.

This conclusion has significant implications for the development of IR theory. It suggests that the key terns around which the discipline has organised itself are open to a variety of interpretations and meanings across time and space. As such, they cannot be *generalised* as *singular* concepts that are equally valid in all circumstances and from which clear rules can be extrapolated that allow for prediction. Results of any a*ttempts* to do so have historically been disappointing. As Paul Schroeder has argued 'the more one examines [...] historical generalisations about the conduct of international politics throughout history [...] the more doubtful [...] these generalisations become' (Schroeder 1994: 115). The desire to be scientific left little room for uncertainty, perception, interpretation and change. Principles are expected 'to work in the same way across time and space [...] as having equivalent meanings across centuries and cultures' (Gaddis 1997: 80).[154]

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[153] For a detailed look on how history impacts the choices of policy-makers in foreign policy see Gaddis (2004)
[154] See also Puchala (2003)

A Complexity framework for IR would not dispute the importance of having concepts and frameworks as a guide to discussion and analysis. Rather, Complexity would suggest a more flexible framework which incorporates *various* approaches in order to explain events and developments. As such, a Complexity approach welcomes the theoretical broadening outlined in the previous chapter but would see these approaches as *complementary*, rather than as being in competition.

As such, the concepts and terms used to frame International Relations have to be less deterministic. Crucial to understanding this is recognition of the open nature of a CAS and, as such, the *interdependence* of variables across time, space and levels of analysis. Trying to determine distinct variables and levels of analysis is flawed because

> 'we cannot look at one side while holding the other constant because even to explain one side's decisions, we need to capture its estimate of the other side's likely response, which in turn is influenced by what it thinks the other thinks the state will do' (Jervis 1997: 85).

Variables, and the terms used to define them, 'take on meaning only within the broader political context in which [they are] situated' (*ibid:* 353). Their meaning depends on *specific boundary conditions*. Yet, as currently formulated, such terms force analysts 'to adopt one perspective in the misguided belief that a context-free definition taps an objective "scientific" reality' (*ibid:* 355). In order to achieve this context-free definition IR has become 'preoccupied, to the point of paralysis with debates over methodology' (Gaddis 1987: 7), at the expense of dealing with issues. The *how* became more important than the *what.*[155]

Employing the key concepts of complexity – multiple agency, openness, emergence etc- one can get away from this focus on methodology and return to the business of practical investigation. To do so, one has to recognise that International Relations are '*irretrievably* plural' (Rengger 2000: 189, emphasis in original).[156] This means that the terms used to define International Relations provide a *partial* context for

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[155] See also Vasquez (2003)

[156] The end of the Cold War provides a fascinating case study to compare and contrast the effectiveness of the various approaches. For 'traditional' takes see Huntington (1989), Kaplan (1994) or Ikenberry (1996). For a Complexity approach, in addition to Jervis (1991), see Gaddis (2005a). A very recent review on the subject is provided by Jones & Cesa (2009)

analyzing international politics. This context is path-dependent and variable across time and space.

A Complexity framework for IR seeks to establish a *bridge* between the various approaches outlined previously and utilise them to explain different aspects of the same events or developments across time and space. It seeks to develop a framework which uses variables as *explanatory tools* rather than causal determinants, tools which see that 'human agents and social structures are in a fundamental sense interrelated entities' (Carlsnaes 1992: 246). In short, Complexity seeks to provide a framework which allows for theoretical and methodological tolerance in order to address one of the key problems traditional IR theory has always faced: how to explain unexpected events and change. By recognising that concepts do not have the same meaning across time and space it begins to address the problem of '*explaining the dynamics of foreign policy change*' (*ibid:* 256, emphasis in original).[157] To illustrate these arguments it will be useful here to briefly return to the end of the Cold War and apply a Complexity perspective to it.

From the perspective of Complexity the failure to anticipate the end of the Cold War outlined in the previous chapter is no surprise: The Cold War was not an orderly battle between two states, their respective satellite states and two clearly defined sets of ideas. Instead, it was a Complex Adaptive System whose end was determined by any number of factors which interacted in any number of orderly, complex and disorderly ways to produce what was an unpredictable outcome. As Gaddis showed, these factors were spread across a number of 'levels of analysis', all of whom influenced each other in innumerable ways.[158]

What was striking about the debate about the end of this conflict was precisely the *competition* between the various approaches. Some, such as Waltz, focussed on systemic factors, and were accused of failure in not anticipating the end of the conflict.[159] Others emphasised personal factors, such as the interplay between

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[157] See Cerny (1990) or Wight (2007)
[158] See Gaddis (2005a), Gaddis (1992) or Cox (2009). The end of the USSR represented a case of 'punctuated equilibrium'. On the term, see Wallerstein (1983)
[159] See Lebow (1994)

Reagan and Gorbachev.[160] Others again emphasised the importance of a domestic factors within a traditional Realist framework.[161]

Yet, each side justified their position with reference to the traditional framework of IR. All the articles referred to above still talk about the importance of defining dependent and independent variables, all of them still spend much time trying to precisely demarcate between the systemic and the unit level of analysis to establish, in Wolforth's words, 'causal primacy'.[162]

However, seeing the end of the Cold War as a Complex Adaptive System which self-organised into a particular pattern transforms one's understanding of this event. Rather than being a singular, unexpected event, the end of the Cold War did not represent as sharp a break in world politics. In fact, Jervis asked if '[if] the Future of [w]orld Politics [w]ill resemble the past' (Jervis 1991). Just like any other period in history, the Cold War was part of an international system which often displayed complex relationships whose 'outcomes cannot be understood by adding together the units of their relations' (Jervis 1997: 6).

This is, of course, not to say that the end of the Cold War was not important and significant. Clearly, the collapse of the Soviet Union was a very significant event at many levels. However, by emphasising change as a natural part of international politics, Complexity opens the way for constructing a framework of explanation and action which accommodates and embraces change, rather than being surprised by it, as was the case at the end of the Cold War.

Finally, it is again important to emphasise the inclusive nature of the Complexity approach. It is not disputed, for instance, that the end of the Cold War was both caused by and had implications for, the systemic level. The basic power inequalities that had developed between the US and the Soviet Union were clearly important. However, other changes were equally important, such as Gorbachev and his policies, such as the growing popular unrest in many communist countries, such as the role of domestic political elites etc. A Complexity approach would emphasise the *interplay*,

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160 See Farnham (2001) or Zakaria (1990)
161 See Wolforth (1994).
162 *ibid*

the *interdependence* between these variables, between macro- and micro processes.[163] It emphasises *linkages* between orderly, complex and disorderly elements, it emphasises *richness* over theoretical *parsimony*.

Therefore, Complexity can provide a new approach to explaining-and responding to-particular temporal events. Its key explanatory concepts allow for a different look at what traditional approaches have seem as 'ruptures' or 'turning points'. It shows that these events are *not* ruptures but the result of interplay of countless agents and processes across various levels, which, eventually, resulted in changes of the systemic context (general rules).[164] This indicates that international relations are characterised by 'fragmentation', a process which consists of 'localising, decentralising or fragmenting dynamics that are interactively and causally linked to globalising, centralising, and integrating dynamics' (Rosenau 2003: 11).

Taking this argument as a principal starting point in his application of Complexity to IR theory, Kavalski has argued that International Relations should be seen as 'not a cluster of unrelated activities but an interconnected system' which has 'important implications for the understanding of agency and structure' which is 'not so determinative as to negate the effect of interactions and to obviate the role of idiosyncratic events and subjective perceptions and choices' (Kavalski 2007: 444).

Taken together, one can summarise the implications of Complexity for International Relations as follows:

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[163] As Gaddis (2005) does in relation to the Cold War

[164] These events therefore represent 'gateway events'. See Rihani (2002)

Table 3.1: Implications of key Complexity concepts for International Relations

Concept	Implication
Partial order	Tolerance: Social systems consist of orderly, complex and disorderly phenomena. As such, all approaches have something to contribute in dealing with a particular issue or problem
Reductionism and holism	Incomplete knowledge: Since it is impossible to deconstruct the entirety of a social complex system cause and effect may remain obscured. There will not be complete knowledge.
Predictability and uncertainty	Openness: Since some phenomena can be predicted and controlled whilst others cannot, debate and openness is crucial.
Probabilistic	Adaptability: Whilst there are general boundaries to a Complex Adaptive System, exact outcomes *within* this system are uncertain. As such, flexibility and adaptability to particular local circumstances are crucial.
Emergence	Learning: Since systems are sensitive to local conditions and therefore can develop in unpredictable ways, researchers and decision-makers have to be open to learning as the system progresses. They are active participants in the process of self-organisation.
Interpretation	Multiple solutions and explanations: Social Complex Adaptive Systems are subject to conscious complexity, they are open to differing interpretations. This implies multiple approaches to explaining a particular issue or event.

What Complexity does, therefore, is to change the focus of traditional IR debates since it sees its core concepts as variable across time and space and therefore as interdependent. This has led to some criticism of the Complexity approach which will be analysed below. Yet, as will be shown now, this *has* allowed is a strengthening, some would say, a re-establishment of the link between political theory and foreign policy action.

Implications of Complexity for political action

What, then, does the application of Complexity mean for political action and political actors? Geyer and Rihani have argued that the recognition of International Relations as a Complex Adaptive System calls for the construction of a 'pragmatic framework' for 'promoting complex interaction, learning, diversity and adaptation' (Geyer and Rihani 2010: 110). Yet, as shown, policy-making in response to foreign policy crises has, if anything, lagged even further behind International Relations theory in embracing complexity not just as a descriptive reality but as a conceptual framework. This suggests that, in order to facilitate the adoption of a Complexity framework in response to crises, one has to look at the organisational structure within which foreign policy is made.

Organisational behaviour has traditionally been subjected to the same kind of orderly approach as other social systems.[165] This had important implications for the management of change *within* an organisation and for the management of shocks *to* an organisation. The approach implies that organisations are usually 'in one *state* or another' (Seel 2000: 2, emphasis in original). In order to achieve change one has to 'somehow shake the organisation out of its current equilibrium so that we can change it while it is unstable and let it settle into a new equilibrium state closer to our ideal' (*ibid*: 2). This implies that one can '*make* organisations change; that by effective analysis, proper planning and appropriate action we can guarantee an outcome' (*ibid*: 2, emphasis in original).[166]

Yet, organisations are in fact Complex Adaptive Systems which are characterised by the existence of considerable conscious complexity. Changing organisational structures and behaviour is a multi-level, interactive and interdependent process in which the observer and the observed influence each other through feedback loops in what is a constant process of *self-organisation.* Different actors (or agents) are constantly influenced by their own local, '*specific boundary conditions*' (Eve *et*

[165] See Harrison & Stokes (1992) or Handy (1995)

[166] This approach is best detailed in Kurt Lewin's model on organisation change: 'Unfreeze-change-freeze', Lewin (1946). See also Gold (1999)

*al.*1997: 275, italics in original)[167] which, as will be shown in the next chapter, often vary widely even *within* one single organisation, creating a great number of *semi-autonomous agents.*[168] These agents, again, will interact in interdependent ways and these interactions will form new systemic patterns which, in turn, will influence the behaviour of the agents. As such, any imposition of change from above faces the difficulty of having to *control* all these semi-autonomous agents, a task, as will be shown, which *impedes* change since it tries to control the process of self-organisation.

Some key contributions on the application of Complexity to organisations have come from Ralph Stacey. In numerous works, Stacey re-frames organisations as Complex Adaptive Systems, arguing that they consist of

> 'agents, in the form of autonomous individual human beings, who interact with each other, so forming a network system that produces patterns of individual, group and organisational behaviour. Just as with all other Complex Adaptive Systems they evolve, or learn, their way to an open-ended future that they co-create in a self-organising way. What is being co-created is not just the emergent pattern of behaviour of the whole system but the very principles driving agent's interactions or relationships with each other. In other words, the individual agents are themselves evolving, that is, being co-created in the evolution of the system they constitute because each is the principles according to which others are related to' (Stacey 1997).

To conceptualise this Stacey draws the distinction between what he calls the 'legitimate' and 'shadow' system. Legitimate systems are the formal structures of an organisation, i.e. its management, its divisions and its hierarchy. It also refers to official ideology and explicitly stated culture.[169] A 'shadow system' is that which develops and emerges through the complex web of social, covert political and psycho-dynamic interactions that themselves become Complex Adaptive System that co-exist and interact with the legitimate system.[170] Only when change has emerged in shadow systems can it be adopted, rationalised and implemented by the 'legitimate

[167] 'Local boundary conditions' refer to the importance of local circumstances to give meaning to a particular situation or term. These can vary widely across time and space, therefore potentially creating widely different contexts for seemingly identical situations. See Richardson (2005) or Mainzer (2007)
[168] Semi-autonomous agents have also been defined as *actors, agents* or *phenomena*. For the purposes of this study these terms are interchangeable. See Byrne (1998)
[169] For a detailed discussion, see Shaw (1997).
[170] See Stacey (1996).

system'. Organisations therefore work best when they are understood as 'complex responsive processes', rather than top-down linear systems.[171] As such, the key process for achieving change is that of 'conversing, persuading and exerting influence in a highly personal network of relationships' (Stacey 1997).

Interestingly, the existence of such shadow systems has been recognised for some considerable time.[172] Yet, they have usually been seen as a "problem" for implementing change. As such, considerable literature emerged about how to control shadow systems.[173] Yet, from the point of view of Complexity, there is no rigid division of organisations into different levels. An organisation is made up of innumerable semi-autonomous agents that interact in interdependent ways to generate patterns of behaviour. These patterns, in turn, influence the behaviour of the agents. There is no such thing as an external and neutral observation of an organisation which can then be changed from one *state* to another. Equally, there is no management structure *independent* of the rest of the organisation. The management of an organisation both influences and is influenced by changes in the shadow-system.

As shown, international politics is a Complex Adaptive System of the more disorderly type simply because of the sheer amount of agents that can potentially be involved in its process of self-organisation. This, then, has significant consequences for political actions and the role leaders can play in planning and implementing this action. No longer can they expect to *control* the exact development of a particular policy or action. Rather, the aim should be to *enable* and *facilitate* a process of self-organisation. Such a process never begins or ends but rather implies a constant series of incremental adjustments, made possible trough an ongoing process of conversation. The key is to instigate a process of *continuous* evaluation and, if necessary, to intervene in specific aspects of the process of self-organisation.[174]

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[171] For a detailed discussion of this concept see Stacey (1996, 2001). In what follows, it will be argued that policy-making systems have to allow for such complex responsive processes. In this work such a process will continue to be called a 'process of self-organisation'.

[172] See Schein (1985)

[173] See Kotter & Schlesinger (1979) or Kanter (1985)

[174] What this may involve will be discussed in the following chapter. Interestingly, one key theme of the interviews in the US with practitioners was the *resistance* encountered to any type of system which did not contain clearly defined boundaries and hard and fast measurements of progress.

This, however, does *not* mean that one does not need *any* kind of management. As one public policy practitioner in the United States who uses the Complexity approach put it: 'You need control, you need to make sure that you respond to your clients' needs. The question is how this is done and *what* are you controlling for. That is where the difference lies'. Key here is to realise that change is a multi-level, multi-agent process where *all* levels will influence- and will be influenced by-all other levels.[175]

Within a Complex Adaptive System change is constant, but mostly incremental, since it emerges out of an infinite number of interacting micro- and macro processes. This is both positive and progressive because it allows for constant adjustments in response to feedback from the various agents and systems that make up any organisation. As such, change is something necessary (because one can never precisely know how something works and therefore whether adjustments are needed), it is responsive (because it reacts to feedback from those who are most directly effected by any change and therefore know whether it 'works') and something to be embraced (because it holds out the promise of improving things whilst enabling further change if something does not function as it should).[176] As such, leaders can expect to do little more than to create and constantly evaluate a framework within and through which individuals and organisations can engage in a process of self-organisation.[177]

In practical terms, this suggest a key change in the focus of political action: If change cannot be imposed from above across time and space, if the effectiveness of a particular political action is variable and depends on specific boundary conditions which are determined largely by local semi-autonomous agents, then this calls for a significant *de-centralisation* of the foreign policy process. The key actors in any process are *local* actors who are much better able to respond to and shape their specific local boundary conditions. This would allow for exactly the flexibility and adaptability which was identified above as a key implication of Complexity for IR.

[175] Policy-manager, Minnesota, United States, May 2007

[176] For further discussion on this question see Eoyang (2004) or Olson *et al* (2001)

[177] The state may be able to affect change, but it is not able to control long-term developments. So, governments may be able to round-up and convict terrorists in the short term, but they are not able to guarantee the eradication of terrorism in the long term. See Geyer (2003b)

As such social systems 'with the highest complexity stand to gain the most' (Rihani 2002: 9). Change is driven by internal dynamics 'that involve vast number of interactions, and where results cannot be retraced back to specific causes' (*ibid*: 9). Orderly policy prescriptions, which seek to isolate single causes for clearly identifiable problems, are hence inappropriate because they assume that a specific action will lead to a particular outcome under *any* circumstance.

The key, instead, is to recognise that interventions in a particular policy problem are 'restricted to enabling interactions to proceed in a manner that produces self-organised stable patterns in preference to either order or chaos' (*ibid*: 9). Therefore, the policy-making process should be geared towards allowing local freedom of action, learning, flexibility and variety. As Rihani point out:

> '[T]oday's developed countries followed an evolutionary path characterised by the steady accumulation of modest growth over very long periods...[D]evelopment in these countries stemmed largely from uncoordinated efforts by individuals and groups concerned exclusively with their particular business, intellectual pursuits and hobbies. The unplanned emergence of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, driven by interventions such as Hargreaves's spinning jenny and Watt's steam engine, illustrates this feature to perfection. ...Finally, today's developed countries are becoming richer, and the gap between and poorer nations is inexorably widening. That is precisely what one would expect if the development of nations behaved as a typical Complex Adaptive System: average complexity increases and the highest Complexity stands to gain the most. Basically, developed countries selected, through trial and error, practices that optimised their performance. Recent discoveries in the field of Complexity simply provide explanations of why these particular practices proved better than others' (ibid: 10-11).

Whilst Rihani's application here refers specifically to development policy, the *principle* expressed can, and will, also be applied to specific crisis events such as 9/11 and the War on Terror. The main task for policy-makers is to enable people to freely interact with one another, to facilitate these interactions and to allow for the results of these interactions to be tried and tested.

Key is to see that the Complexity approach here refers both to political *structure* and political *process*. According to Rihani, the crucial factor is to ensure that the political structure allows for largely uncoordinated processes at local level which actors *other than* leaders are able to undertake in order to deal with particular issues. Political

leadership is needed to *allow* for such a process by constructing political structures which are largely *de-centralised.* General rules need to be established which can then be flexibly applied to local circumstances. As such, there is a crucial link between the way the political *system* is structured and the political *process.*

The above point is crucial in dealing with one of the key criticism normally labelled at the Complexity approach, which will be discussed further in the following chapter: that it underplays the importance of agency and structure and how these influence crises and crisis foreign policy. Complexity does not claim that agents and the structure within which they operate are unimportant. Rather, it emphasises that agency and structure influence *each other* without making assumptions about the *primacy* of one over the other. As the CDE model to be introduced in the next chapter will show, there is a *complex co-existence* between the two.

Flexibility is also crucial because in a CAS 'outcomes do not follow from intentions' (Jervis 1997: 61). This, from an orderly point of view, is wholly unsatisfactory. From a Complexity perspective, however, it opens up a whole raft of possibilities to deal with a particular issue in any number of ways which, flexibly applied, might allow for the emergence of a solution through a process of self-organisation. This process may differ across time and space, but would allow for 'significant room for choice by public and statesmen' (Jervis 1991: 41).[178]

These arguments have critical implications both for the definition of crises and, subsequently, for crisis policy processes. As shown, crises in international politics are commonly defined as 'perceived turning point in relationships between actors or between actors and their environment' (Evans & Newham 1998, 101-2). The identification and definition of the "cause" of the crisis is therefore the starting point of a policy, the *current* state of the system. Once this has been identified, a 'solution' is determined, the point at which the problem is said to be 'solved'. The aim is to move the system as quickly as possible from the current state to the future ideal state. Once this has been achieved, the objective is to keep the situation in a stable state for as long as possible as the system moves into the future. Essentially, the 'ideal' state

[178] See also his application to American foreign policy: Jervis (2005)

of the system has to be maintained or re-established.[179] To do so, as shown, maximum concentration of power is seen as necessary, giving the best chance of changing the system in which the crisis occurs.

However, from a Complexity point of view, crises actually represent particular expressions, particular states, of a process of self-organisation at a particular point in time. There are, hence, typical Complex Adaptive Systems characterised by all the principle elements already outlined in this chapter:

- A number of different elements or phenomena
- Emergence, sensitivity to initial conditions and partial predictability
- Partial reducibility
- The elements of the system form a relatively coherent patterns over time
- Openness to its environment

Yet, as shown in relation to the end of the Cold War, policy-making systems are not set up to deal with these features. They assumed continuity, not change and, as such, could not respond to the change that occurred, leading to the very sense of uncertainty which centralised decision-making processes are designed to avoid.

In response to these problems, the last couple of decades have seen several attempts to re-frame the context of International Relations in order to make it the 'pragmatic framework for promoting complex interaction, learning, diversity and adaptation' Geyer and Rihani are calling for.

David B. Bowbrow recognised the inherent complexity of international politics and argued in 1996 that issues are 'best dealt with by a coalition of professional communities with a wide range of conceptual stance and technical skills' (Bobrow 1996: 436). Failure to do so may result in the appropriate course of action being overlooked:

> 'By the time [this is] recognised, the problem can have worsened or the opportunity passed. Continuing battles to defeat one or other frame, the academic equivalent of protracted conflict, can drain energy away from

[179] For a historical review on this issue see Boucher (1998).

> refining any particular emphasis to improve its contribution to [dealing with an issue]' (ibid: p.442).

One way to deal with this problem, Bobrow suggests, is to apply different metaphors to the sphere of international politics. A metaphor, according to Stacey, is an attempt to 'link contradictions to each other' (Stacey 2000: 315). As shown, the world of IR is full of contradictions because of its high level of complexity. Bobrow uses the metaphor of disease, illness and decline to explain these contradictions.[180] Just like health professionals, the goal of policy-makers and scholars in IR should be to devise

> 'a more effective and comprehensive portfolio of strategies for recognising, preventing and treating threats. That portfolio obviously benefits from knowledge about the causes and development patterns of threats. It also involves diagnostic skills in identifying their presence and severity in particular situations. These are enabling conditions for effective prevention and treatment, but their fruits are only realised after the intervention and effective application of intervention strategies' (Bobrow: 443).

Just like in medicine, '[p]revention and treatment strategies also change over time and are diverse across physical situation and culture at any point in time' (*ibid*: 443). This is particularly important since threats and problems change. As such, one should 'reject freezing the threat list at any point in time, asserting inherent and limited valid content, and attributing to others our own current preoccupations' (*ibid:* 445). Using such a metaphor opens the way for a strategy to come to terms with the never-ending stream of problems faced by the IR community even if many of the solutions may be imperfect.[181]

Another approach was developed by Bernstein *et al.* Arguing that predictions are virtually impossible, they suggest that academics and practitioners be guided by what they call 'forward reasoning'. Such an approach is based on the 'development of scenarios, or narratives with plotlines that map a set of causes and trends in future time' (Bersntein *et al.:* 2000: 53). This way

> 'we can identify different driving forces...and then attempt to combine these forces in logical chains that generate a range of outcomes, rather than single features. Scenarios make contingent claims rather than point

[180] For an early use of this metaphor see Wright (1942)
[181] See George (1998) or Lepgold (2002)

> predictions…Forward reasoning undercuts structural determinism by raising the possibility of multiple futures. Scenarios are impressionistic pictures build on different combinations of causal variables that may also take on different values in different scenarios. Thus it is possible to construct scenarios without pre-existing firm proof of theoretical claims that meet strict positivist standards. The foundation of scenarios is made up of provisional assumptions and causal claims. These become the subject of revision and adapting more than testing. A set of scenarios often contains competing or at least contrasting assumptions. It is less important where people start, than it is where they end up through frequent revisions and how they get there' (ibid: 54).

Taking such an approach has the advantage of generating results that take account of surprises and change as circumstances unfold. It encourages scholars and policy-makers to think outside narrow theoretical boundaries. It would also help in searching for realistic solutions to complex problems since it has

> 'promise for generating new ideas and arguments, broadening the range of causal relationships that we study, and tracking the evolution of world politics through periods of discontinuous change, in ways that promise to better over time both understanding and action' (ibid:71).

These two metaphors, as well as the preceding discussion, point to another use for Complexity: that of adjusting the *discourse* of IR. Essentially, a Complexity discourse of IR will move the discipline:

- from a deterministic framework to a pragmatic framework
- from holism to fragmentation and forward reasoning
- from universal rules to a portfolio of strategies.

Taking together the arguments of this chapter presented so far the Complexity framework has several interlocking applications which can be summarised as follows:

Table 3.2.: Applications of Complexity approach to Politics

Applicability of Complexity approach to	Key points
Discourse	Awareness of sensitivity of terms of explanations to local conditions. Therefore multitude, and potentially changing, explanations of particular events. Interplay of fragmentation and holism. Often this means lack of parsimony.
Political structures	Political structures are the result of a process of self-organisation. Political structures influence, and are influenced by, the political processes that occur within these structures as well as by the interaction with other political structures. As such, structures need to be flexible and adaptable. Their process of self-organisation is continuous and has no end-point or fixed border.
Political processes	Political processes influence, and are influenced by, the political structures within which they take place. Processes need to be able to respond to changes within the structure. They also need to be able to provide feedback-loops in order to allow for adjustments. These feedback loops need to be able to inform global patterns (rules), local interactions and the interactions between the two.
Temporal events	Particular events represent change but not rupture or discontinuity since they are the result of a process of self-organisation, i.e. the interplay of semi-autonomous agents within and between several interlocking Complex Adaptive Systems across numerous levels with local interactions being crucial.

All aspects mentioned in the table above individually and collectively represent Complex Adaptive Systems that influence each other in often unpredictable ways across time and space. Being aware of these interconnections allows for a holistic approach for the study of- and response to- crises events in international politics.

The above also hints at the fact that one is dealing with systems that are characterised by a *continuous* process of adjustments in which differing and changing circumstances require differing and changing solutions. Finally, they point to the fact that the actors within these systems exercise only a limited amount of control over their development. As active participants in this development, actors have *some* influence but equally their behaviour will be influenced by other factors. They are, hence, *semi*-autonomous.

Such a conclusion has significant implications for the policy process. Since the context of policies is ambiguous, sensitive to initial conditions and therefore variable across time and space, the task is now to construct a policy process which can respond to this ambiguity through self-organisation which allows for variation across time and space. How can Complexity help to accomplish this task?

Such an undertaking is no easy task and the precise nature of what the Complexity approach can achieve in this regard is a matter of considerable debate even *amongst* those who accept Complexity as their framework of inquiry. For instance, Byrne (1998) has argued that Complexity offers the chance to understand a greater number of phenomena in the social world. By contrast, Cilliers (1998) has contended that the approach cannot be used as a way to reduce uncertainty. Rather, it is an approach to help us deal with this inherent condition of the social world.

For the purposes of this study it will be argued that the Complexity approach *does* provide opportunities for real progress in dealing with complex political issues by improving the way the policy-making process is structured and therefore how political decisions are taken. Similarly, it will be argued that Complexity promises progress in the way one can *explain* complex political events and therefore how to respond to them.

Yet, this debate points to some of the key critiques that can be made about the Complexity approach, both in relation to the broader discipline of IR, as well crisis foreign policy-making in particular. These will be outlined now.

Critique of Complexity in International Relations

It says a lot of about the newness of Complexity in IR that coherent critiques of it do not yet exist. Instead, critiques have come either from *within* the scholarly Complexity community as a kind of self-critique, or there has been an outright rejection of the approach based on broad methodological and epistemological issues.

The most basic critique is that Complexity does not represent a 'real', coherent International Relations Theory.[182] Since Complexity is neither inductive nor deductive, it lacks a foundation upon which such a coherent theory could be built. [183] This particular critique touches on a much broader criticism which would be expected particularly from the rationalist school of IR: that Complexity lacks methodological rigor and, as such, places too much emphasis on randomness. According to Cudworth & Hobden, Complexity leaves so many methodological issues unanswered that its prime contribution is that of a metaphor.[184] Key to this critique is Complexity's refusal to constitute a hierarchy of variables and/or levels of analysis. As such, it undermines the very basis of a theory which, according to Cutler (2002), is 'justified because it brings some order into the known facts and provides concepts and ordering principles for things as yet to be discovered.'

On this basis, several reviews of Complexity-related works have criticised that the approach underplays the importance of some of the key concepts upon which traditional IR theory is based, especially the importance of authority (for instance, the state). According to this line of argument, Complexity cannot account for the differences in authority structures or how these differences in structure impact on or constrain action.[185] From this point of view, Complexity lacks a basic concept of order, i.e. a hierarchy of agents which would allow for some kind of causal analysis.

The opposite critique can be expected from post-modernist approaches to IR. By emphasising *tensions* between, for instance, predictability and unpredictability,

[182] See Fukuyama (1998)
[183] For the most coherent expression of this view, see Ernest & Rosenau in Harrison (2006), ch.8
[184] See Cudworth & Hobden (2009)
[185] This would be a basic Realist critique and one which has already been made in relation to, for instance, Constructivism. See Guzzini & Leander (2006). Ernest & Rosenau (2006) apply the same argument to Complexity.

between reductionism and holism etc, Complexity acknowledges the existence of *some* kind of order. The concepts of general rules and local variety, of specific boundary conditions and others within the Complexity approach suggest that societal development is not entirely random. In fact, applications of Complexity to specific political issues have emphasised that some kind of order is *essential* for the coherent development of a Complex Adaptive System.[186] It is this emphasis on the need for some kind of stable order which post-modern theorists have criticised in much of their writings on attempts to build a 'bridge' between modern- and post-modern approaches to IR.[187]

These two contrasting critiques lead to a much broader issue in relation to the Complexity approach. Even if one accepts some of the tensions identified by Complexity, does the approach have anything to offer in terms of *addressing* and *solving* the problems identified? As Levy has put it, that the world is 'complex and dynamic there is no doubt; less clear is the extent to which complexity theory can fill the gap' (Levy 2000: 74).

Interestingly, once again this critique can come from both ends of the theoretical continuum. On the one hand Complexity is criticised because 'almost anything is expected to occur and, in hindsight, can be explained as a direct result of chaos' (Kissane 2007: 101). The approach lacks 'the rigorous foundation of natural sciences in guiding our efforts to specify the structure of the system and the network connections' (Levy 2000: 76). Yet, on the other hand, some are worried that recognition of chaos and tension within the international system means that Complexity 'risks becoming a search for more sophisticated tools of social control', in effect trying to minimise the disorder identified (Shanckley *et al.*, 1996).

In light of these critiques and the issues they raise, there are also debates about both the objectives of the Complexity approach. Levy (2000), for instance, criticises the rather vague nature of the concept of 'self-organisation', claiming that as an objective is too broad. Knowing when a process of self-organisation 'is on the edge of chaos seems a rather daunting prospect, though not as difficult perhaps as

[186] See Rihani (2002)
[187] In relation to crises see Hansen (2006). For a broad application of Post-modernism to IR, see Walker (1993)

adjusting organizational parameters to reach this heady state' (p. 80). As such, Baumol and Benhabib (1989) have worried that Complexity raises expectations (i.e. 'resolving' the problem of unpredictability and chaos) that it cannot fulfil. Kissane (2007) puts it in more practical terms: Since it is 'surely impossible to account for the actions of every human on the planet and the implications of all their actions on the wider system [...] the theorist has to make a choice as to which actors or level of interdependence they will restrict their analysis to' (Kissane 2007: 100). In other words Complexity, just like any other theory or approach, has to pick and choose its focus of analysis.

This point leads to a final potential critique, that concerning the utility of the Complexity approach for guiding political *action*. Bearing in mind its focus on de-centralisation and the importance of local circumstances, Complexity could be seen as an approach which advocates doing nothing, a laissez-faire approach which permits political leaders and others to divest themselves of any kind of responsibility for anything that happens by referring to the unpredictability of particular local circumstances.[188]

From this point of view, one could argue that Complexity joins a long line of theoretical approaches that have emerged since the end of the Cold War which do some good work in identifying extra layers of factors and agents that make up the international political system. For instance, it may well be argued that the emphasis Complexity places on the tension between order and chaos, recognising that the system contains both orderly and disorderly elements, is such an addition. In so doing, it in some ways *lessens* the burden of expectation on traditional theories to *resolve* this tension. However, at the same time, it does not provide clear answers to some of the key questions this tension implies. Crucially, in emphasising not only the existence but the *importance* of such tension it, as shown in this chapter, argues for the *creation* of such tension where it does not yet exist. However, it leaves unanswered the question of what the boundary between order and chaos looks like and, therefore, how one can operate within and around that boundary. In fact, the very terms 'boundary' or 'edge of chaos' are very much disputed *within* Complexity,

[188] This is one of the most common criticisms heard of Complexity at the various conferences and seminars on the subject attended by the author.

some arguing that being on the edge of chaos should be an *aim* of any public policy maker[189], whilst others reject such terms as overly restrictive.[190] As such, Complexity needs to answer the question whether the approach represents 'mere intellectual curiosity or the highway to a fundamental understanding of the richness of structure, order, and uncertainty in complex [...] social phenomena' (Levy 2000: 84).

Complexity therefore faces a number of challenges in its attempts to establish itself as a serious theoretical approach within the field of International Relations. However, as shown in this chapter, the Complexity approach does not just see complexity as a descriptive fact, but actually argues that the existence of complexity, the tension between order and disorder, between general rules and local variety are the very conditions which *allow* for development, change and therefore for the possibility of responding effectively to foreign policy crises. In this chapter it has already been shown how the application of Complexity concepts can change the way one defines and therefore confronts such events.

However, this still leaves two crucial tasks for Complexity in respect of the critiques briefly touched upon above. First, it needs to show how the approach can *add* to the theories discussed in the previous chapter. How can the concepts discussed here be turned into a practical framework for the analysis of International Relations in general and foreign policy crises in particular?

To accomplish this task, the approach needs, second, to provide specific tools which can help to turn the concepts discussed in this chapter into practical theoretical and practical applications. These tools need to show the link between theoretical concepts and political practice and serve as a guide for both academics and policy-makers in responding to foreign policy crises events.

Showing *how* this can be done is the aim of the next chapter. This chapter will provide a detailed response to the critiques raised above. By then introducing three Complexity Tools, it will also show how the insights provided by the application of

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[189] See Manchur & Apps (2009)

[190] As one public policy practitioner put it: 'The edge of chaos suggests a small space whereas in my experience the space of Complexity which allows one to act in a way which allows for self-organisation is actually rather big'. Interviewed June 2007

Complexity concepts can be used to make practical suggestion on how and where the study and conduct of IR in response to crises can be improved in order to take *advantage* of the complexity which characterises international politics. As such, the next chapter will build on the concepts introduced above to show how Complexity can add value as an International Relations Theory and as an approach to dealing with foreign policy crises.

Conclusion

This chapter gave a general introduction to the concepts of Complexity. It has been shown that the social world in general and, as such, international politics, is a Complex Adaptive System. The particular characteristics of these systems were discussed which *make* them complex and adaptive.

It was shown that Complexity has broad applicability across the different facets of IR, both in practical and theoretical terms. International Relations develop largely through a process of self-organisation. This has implications for political decision-makers who should encourage and facilitate such a process, rather than try to impose control since, as demonstrated, control over social systems is not only impossible over time and space but actually harmful to the development of such systems.

A broad range of metaphors has been developed to deal with this impossibility of control and to conceptualise the system that one is confronted by when trying to address the myriad of issues and problems within international relations and a couple of these were discussed in more detail. These metaphors hinted at the need to re-frame both *what* leaders and decision-makers can hope to achieve in addressing a particular issues and *how* they should approach this task. In this respect, *expectations* are a key aspect of traditional international relations and foreign policy that need to be addressed.

This needs to be done because Complex Adaptive Systems *self-organise* through the innumerable interactions of semi-autonomous agents across time and space. The argument has been that such a process needs to be *facilitated.* In the next chapter three Complexity *tools* will be introduced which will allow for such facilitation. These tools can serve as a guide for scholars and policy-makers in helping them decide *what* can be done in response to a particular crisis and *how*. The next chapter therefore will set the scene for the application of Complexity specifically to the case studies.

Chapter 4: Applying Complexity tools to international relations and crisis management

Introduction

In the last chapter the main concepts of Complexity were introduced and applied to International Relations. It was argued that Complexity provides a better way of dealing with the uncertainty inherent in the social world precisely by *not* trying to deny its existence. It has become clear that outcomes do not always follow from intentions, principally because international relations are characterised by their openness, their sensitivity to initial conditions, their partial reducibility and their ability to adapt. As such, it was demonstrated that many of the key concepts which frame the study and conduct of IR are, at best, partially correct and, at worst, unsuitable for dealing with crises and unpredictability in the international system.

This being the case, it is important to be flexible and adaptable when pursuing a particular policy. The pursuit of a particular goal may have to be done indirectly and the outcome of any such pursuit is uncertain. Therefore, *expectations* have to be adjusted accordingly. Often, policy-makers may not be able to find a solution to a particular issue but instead only create a framework through which a solution may *emerge*. Such a process of self-organisation should be facilitated.[191]

However, as shown towards the end of the last chapter, the Complexity approach can be and, in parts, has been subject to various critiques in terms of its suitability as a coherent theory of International Relations and guide to political actions in response to crises. As such, to be accepted as a serious and *practical* alternative to traditional frameworks Complexity needs to provide effective tools to deal with this uncertainty. It needs to back up the argument that this very uncertainty can be used positively for the future development of international politics.

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[191] The issue of expectations has been addressed for a long time by scholars looking at the performance of political actors and institutions. See March & Olsen (1984), March (1994) or Birkland (2005). As such, the idea that outcomes of political actions may not meet expectations is not new. However, the *consequences* of such recognition are central to Complexity and directly influence its ideas about what political actions are supposed to- and able to- achieve. This will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

To do so, this chapter will, first, provide a response to the critique outlined at the end of the previous chapter. Building on the concepts and arguments outlined previously, this part will address the issues raised in relation to the utility and the added value of Complexity as an approach to International Relations theory and crisis foreign policy practice.

Following this, three Complexity *tools* will be introduced which will allow one to *utilise* the concepts of Complexity already discussed to improve both the explanation of and the response to foreign policy crises. Complexity Mapping' developed by Geyer, 'Fitness Landscapes', mostly associated with Kaufmann's work in evolutionary biology but now also used in various areas of inquiry in the social sciences, and the CDE model developed by Eoyang to identify the conditions for self-organisation in human Complex Adaptive Systems. These three tools will be applied to international political crises, in this case 9/11, in order to provide guidelines on how to see such crises as Complex Adaptive Systems and responses as processes of self-organisation.[192]

The chapter will look in detail at each of the tools. Their design and aims will be outlined. Following this, the three tools will be applied specifically to international politics to illustrate their utility in relation to this study. As such, it will be shown how the tools are integrated and linked to each other and how, together, they can provide for a comprehensive re-appraisal of how international crises events are both explained and responded to.

[192] For Complexity Mapping see Geyer (2003a, 2003b). For the Fitness Landscape, see Wright (1932) or Kauffman (1995), though, as will be shown, the context in which the Fitness Landscape is used in this work is more as a metaphor for the social world confronting leaders. For the most detailed explanation of the CDE model, see Eoyang (2001).

Applying the concepts of Complexity: The broader IR context

As shown, Complexity has been criticised in relation to its suitability as an International Relations theory. As used in this study, Complexity does not claim to be a *theory* in the sense that, by itself, it brings some kind of order into the known facts. This has to do principally with the concepts outlined in the previous chapter. By emphasising the existence of both order and disorder, of predictability and unpredictability, of reductionism and holism and of emergence, Complexity recognises the existence of *some* kind of order, but rejects the notion of a pre-determined order or the possibility of *making* international politics entirely orderly.

Critical here is the interplay emphasised by Complexity between general rules and local variety. As will be shown below, general rules are crucial in determining the behaviour of many states and their leaders in response to particular events. At the same time, these responses are *also* determined by the interplay of semi-autonomous agents acting within specific local boundary conditions. As a result, the interplay between general rules and specific local circumstances will lead to different results, different particular actions across time and space. It will also lead to differing *interpretations* of events and actions across time and space.

As such, the tensions between general rules and particular local circumstances calls for flexibility and adaptability and it is this which Complexity emphasises above anything else. It means that, form a Complexity perspective, *several different* theoretical approaches could and should be utilised in order to explain and respond to a particular event. Only by bridging and utilising different perspectives can one hope to capture at least *some* of the complexity inherent in any particular event. Complexity as an approach enables such utilisation precisely by *not* trying to create an entirely parsimonious framework of analysis. As such, it is possible to define stable and orderly as well as disorderly elements within the Complex Adaptive System, which vary across time and space.

This being the case, as Harrison (2006) has shown, Complexity is *complimentary* to existing approaches. It fully acknowledges that Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism or Post-modernism provide important insights into international politics. What it

rejects is the *exclusivity* these approaches have at times claimed in showing how IR *works*. By accepting some kind of order as well as incomplete knowledge, Complexity practically *demands* multi-faceted approaches to international politics.

This, in turn, has significant implications for political action. As used here, it is entirely correct to argue that Complexity does not provide a definitive guide for action on how, for example, to defeat terrorism. What it *can* do is to help construct and maintain a coherent process of self-organisation which allows for differentiated approaches to this issue, taking account of the local boundary conditions and semi-autonomous agents that vary across time and space. Again, therefore, it can serve as an *approach* which allows for the utilisation of several policies and tactics that can be adjusted across time and space to respond flexibly to changing circumstances.

It is critical here to stress the link between theory and practice since it is here that Complexity does most to move International Relations on. By de-emphasising the traditional IR focus on agent versus structure (showing that both are essential but interdependent parts of a Complex Adaptive System), Complexity can move IR away from the stifling debates about methodology in pursuit of an unattainable aim: the construction of an entirely parsimonious theory. Instead, Complexity links such concepts directly to the local circumstances which have such an impact on the particular expression of these broader concepts. These local circumstances, in turn, will have a significant impact on political actions within these local boundary conditions, clearly illustrating once again the need for flexibility and adaptability. Political action should be geared towards enabling this flexibility and adaptability across time and space. As such, Complexity does much to untie the 'Gordian knot' of agency and structure which has occupied IR theory for many decades.[193]

Complexity, therefore, does not dispute the need for concepts and theories to provide a framework within which analysis can be undertaken. What it does stress is the massively entangled nature of these concepts across time, space and levels of analysis. Concepts and contexts are partial and changeable and, as such, require constant adjustment precisely because the world is complex and complicated.

[193] See Bieler & Norton (2001)

Once these arguments are accepted one can then move onto the practical business of providing management tools to *deal with* this complexity. As shown, one of the most common criticisms of the Complexity approach is its failure to be *practical*. What can it offer by way of specific tools to deal with the reality it identifies? In what follows, three such specific tools will be introduced which alter the context within which this complexity and complicatedness are confronted. These tools can help identify the broad elements that make up a Complex Adaptive System, apply these elements to specific local boundary conditions, analyse the implications for explanation and political action and make suggestions on how the policy-making process can be adjusted to take account of the fact that one is dealing with, and working within, a Complex Adaptive System.

Tool 1: Complexity Mapping

Complexity Mapping was initially devised to visualise the European Union and the process of European integration as Complex Adaptive System, identifying the orderly, complex and disorderly elements of this particular system (Geyer, 2003a). However, it has since been used in a number of contexts to map and explain the various elements of social Complex Adaptive Systems.[194]

Using Complexity mapping, one can identify the orderly, complex and disorderly elements of the international political system:

Figure 4.1: The range of phenomena in the international political system

Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Physical complexity	Order

←--→

Time

Examples

Detailed long-term development of international system	Norms and values	Interaction between different actors and different institutions	Voting outcomes in international institutions	Basic framework of the international system, power-relations

The basic power structure of the system is its most orderly element. Power-inequalities have always existed and these inequalities significantly influence the policy options open to different states.[195]

As such, the international system is full of very orderly and stable patterns. Voting outcomes within international institutions is one such pattern. The outcomes reflect alliances and power relations and therefore are, on the whole, highly predictable.

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[194] See Geyer (2003b) or Kavalski (2007)

[195] For an early application of Complexity mapping to international politics, see Geyer (2003a).

Despite this, however, the *exact* reasons why countries behave the way they do in response to a particular political issue are marked by physical complexity.[196]

The basic power relations also mask significant amounts of organic complexity. The international system is characterised by a dense interplay of actors (both state and non-state) and institutions. This interplay can heavily influence the options and actions of even the most powerful actors. As will be shown in the case studies even the United States saw its options (and the power to impose its will) severely limited over the issue of the war in Iraq through the assertion of organic complexity *despite* the fact that the basic power structures of the system had not changed.[197]

The international system is full of conscious complexity. One only has to look at the constant debates about what constitutes freedom or respect for human rights to see that many of the core values of organisations such as the United Nations are constantly contested. Such values take on meaning only according to the specific boundary conditions within which they are applied and these change across time and space.[198]

As such, the detailed long-term development of the international political system is unpredictable. Whilst one can assume with a degree of certainty that some basic structures of the system will remain in place (there will be power-inequalities between countries, the United States will still play a significant role within the international system etc), its precise development is unknowable. Who would have thought 50 years ago that the Soviet Union would no longer exist?

Complexity mapping, then, helps to *visualise* the key concepts of the Complexity approach, as outlined in the last chapter. Using this map, one can easily identify:

- partial order
- predictability and uncertainty
- emergence

[196] See Gaddis (2005a) and his look at Taiwan's behaviour towards the United States during the Cold War.
[197] See Bacevic (2008)
[198] As one academic put it at a conference: 'Let's put a Taliban and a Swedish politician around a table to discuss the role of women in society and then tell me who is right or how those two will ever agree on common ground'. See also Morgan & Turner (2009)

- reductionism and holism
- emergence
- interpretation

Complexity Mapping helps to clarify the interplay between these concepts. It illustrates clearly that a social system cannot be *made* to become progressively more orderly since humans lack the ability to control *all* elements of such systems.

The international political system, in terms of its characteristics, is a combination of orderly, complex and disorderly elements. Some of its developments are predictable, whilst others are not. Some are reducible, whilst others are not; the development of the system over time and space is emergent and many of its elements are open to interpretation. Complexity mapping helps to clarify which elements are orderly and which are not. As such, it allows one to break down apparently agreed upon contexts for international politics and expose them for the Complex Adaptive Systems they are.

Complexity mapping, therefore, is an excellent tool for applying the concepts of Complexity to broad systemic structures to show *where* and *why* complexity is an essential part of such systems. As such, it allows one to start to move away from the static debates that have characterised International Relations theory and politics over the preceding decades.[199]

Implications for crisis management and case studies

What, then, are the implications of the application of Complexity mapping for the understanding of 'crisis' and 'crisis management'?

Using Complexity mapping the traditional understanding of crisis is transformed. Crises, whilst representing often significant change, are Complex Adaptive Systems. The very occurrence of a crisis can often act as an ordering event. Crises can unify actors both domestically and internationally in support of a particular country, leader or group. Equally, if the crisis occurs in a country with considerable influence within

[199] For the original application of this tool to European integration see Geyer (2003a)

the international system, the response to it can often be predicted according to the basic power-structures of such system.

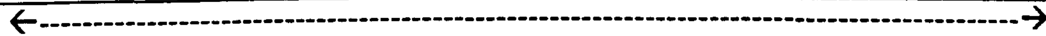
Yet, *why* precisely there is this apparent unity is subject to physical complexity. Different actors may toe in behind the line taken by the injured party for any number of reasons. These will produce a unified outcome but how this was arrived at will have been subject to complexity.

The reasons for this diversity can frequently be found in organic complexity. Different actors within the international system are subject to competing influences, backgrounds, checks and balances. As such, how they arrive at a particular policy will differ. Equally, as time progresses after the occurrence of a crisis, this organic complexity will lead to the emergence of competing patterns within and between the Complex Adaptive Systems encountered by political leaders. Divergences about objectives of a particular crisis-response, about tactics or about the extent of involvement of particular actors are likely to emerge.

These differences and tensions are understandable and may increase once conscious complexity is taken into account. There may be differences about the exact definition of the problem that has been encountered as the result of the crisis, there may be differences about the exact context of the crisis and therefore about the context through which a response should be developed. These differences will vary across time and space. As such, the very specific patterns recognisable in the immediate aftermath of crises may turn into very general and quite vague patterns as the system self-organises into the future away from the immediacy of the catalyst event. As such, the long-term consequences of the crisis encountered and the response mounted will be unknown and unknowable.

Figure 4.2: The range of phenomena of a political crisis situation

Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Physical complexity	Order



Time

Examples

Detailed long-term consequences of crisis and crisis response	Norms and values, definition of problem and context	Interaction between different actors/ institutions during crisis response process	Reasons for responding to the crisis	Basic framework of international system, power relations

In terms of the case studies, the above has several implications. First, Complexity mapping will be used to re-conceptualise the War on Terror as a Complex Adaptive System. It will be shown that the policy, as defined by George Bush, led to serious problems in terms of implementation as was rolled out across time and space. Complexity mapping will show what the orderly, complex and disorderly elements of the policy are and what implications this has for its definition.

Second, Complexity Mapping will be used to re-frame the discourse through which the War on Terror has been presented. It will be argued that, both domestically and internationally, the discourse used created significant problems. Complexity mapping will show where and why these problems arose within and between the case study countries and how they can be addressed. As such, Complexity mapping will also be used to re-frame some of the key concepts through which international politics has been defined. The multiple links between the *general* parameters of this system and the *specifics* of the case of 9/11 cannot be seen in isolation.[200]

[200] The key is to see that analyses of a situation provide snapshots at a particular time. These are sensitive to initial conditions and, as such, path dependent. 'Path dependency' and its role in the policy process is a contested concept. See Peters *et al.* (2005) or Kay (2005). In relation to Complexity and a process of Self-Organisation as used in this study, the term is largely descriptive. It does not assign, *per se*, more importance to one of these conditions over another.

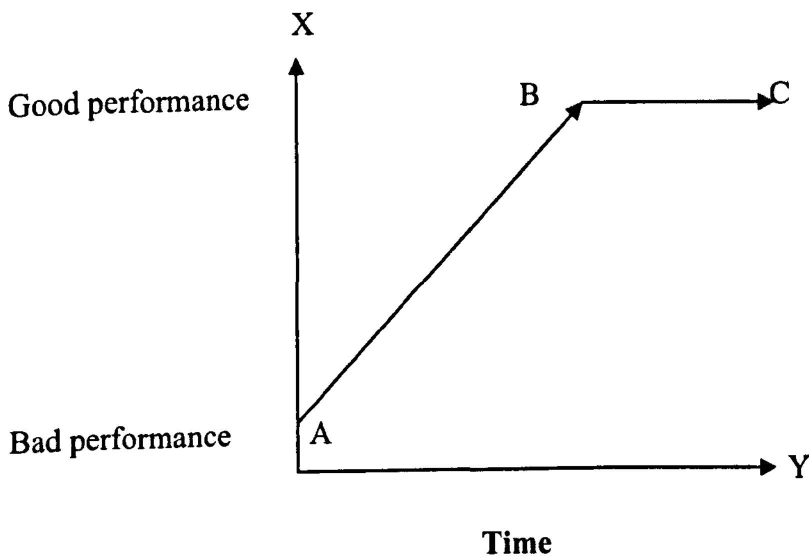
Doing the above will have significant consequences for both the explanation of crisis events as well as the response to such events by political elites. How can the concepts re-interpreted through Complexity mapping be incorporated into the process of problem definition and policy-formulation? The next two tools will help answer these questions.

Tool 2: The Fitness Landscape – Defining political action across time and space

These conclusions lead to questions about how political problems and actions should be defined. For the purposes of this study, what type of problem does September 11 represent and what can one expect to do in addressing it?

A traditional approach to policy-making defines policy-problems on a straight-forward x-y graph.[201] The starting point to a policy is the identification of a particular problem and the extent of the problem (the *current* state of the system). Once this has been identified, a 'solution' is determined at which point the problem can be said to be 'solved'. The aim therefore is to move the system as quickly as possible from the current state (point A) to the future ideal state (point B). Once this has been achieved, the objective is to keep the situation in a stable state for as long as possible as the system moves into the future along line C. Essentially, the 'ideal' state of the system has to be maintained.[202]

Figure 4.3: Typical x-y graph



The implications of such an approach are well-documented but bear repeating in order to link them to the following Complexity tool:

[201] For a discussion on this, See Geyer & Rihani (2010)
[202] Such an approach is widespread in many areas of public policy. See, for instance, the Health Service in the UK (NHS, 2008)

- There is an endpoint to the policy process which needs to be reached as quickly as possible and then maintained for as long as possible
- Polices, once developed, can be applied across time and space unaltered. What works in one context will work in another. Certain rules are applicable in all situations
- Those benefiting from the policy are essentially passive. Policies are developed centrally and are to be 'taken over' at local level.[203]

Yet, such a model is not adequate within a Complex Adaptive System. In such a system, change is constant, variable across time and space and, due to the infinite number of semi-autonomous agents determining its development, at best, partially controllable and predictable. Frequently, the result of this loss of control leads to a sense of crisis since it is equated with 'failure' to 'freeze' a particular situation, the end of the Cold War being a classic example of this.[204]

It is here that the Fitness Landscape can help in redefining the context and objectives of particular political actions, incorporating the key concepts of the Complexity approach and taking account of the conclusions from the application of Complexity mapping.

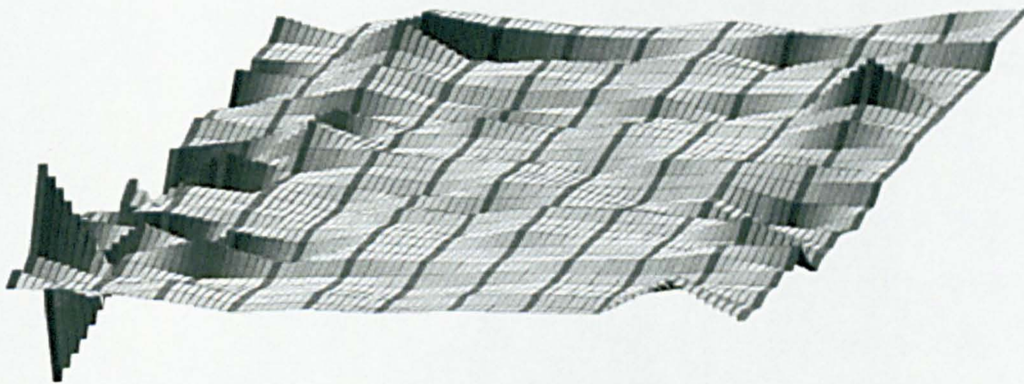
The Fitness Landscape was originally devised in evolutionary biology to visualise the relationship between genotypes (i.e. the specific genetic makeup of an individual in the form of DNA) and reproductive success.[205] Whilst it is beyond the scope of this study to go into the details of this particular application, it is important to stress that the Landscape was developed in order to both visualise and deal with the open nature of Complex Adaptive Systems. They are open to their environment and interact with other Complex Adaptive Systems. Those systems that are most adaptable, those that are best able to respond to changes in conditions are able to evolve further. In short, those systems with the highest complexity stand to gain the most. When the amount of interconnections between evolving systems and populations is "just right" average fitness for all populations is highest; the system is

[203] See Geyer & Rihani (2010) for a detailed discussion of this framework
[204] See Gaddis (2005) or Vandemoortele (2009)
[205] See Wright (1932), pp. 355-366

'coherent'[206] and open to further evolution and change. As such, Complex Adaptive Systems represent an evolving fitness landscape.

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, all these characteristics apply to social (and therefore to the international political) systems as well. For the purposes of this study, this tool will be used as a metaphor, as it has been in several other social settings.[207] In this sense, the *picture* that emerged out of the original application of the Fitness Landscape will be applied to international politics to describe a particular political issue and policy across time and space.

Picture 4.1: Fitness Landscape



The key point emerging out of the above picture is the multifaceted nature of the policy process confronted by policy makers in response to a particular issue. It clearly illustrates the features of a Complex Adaptive System, as outlined through Complexity mapping.

Straight ahead of any policy-maker lies a path of reasonable strategies towards a particular policy goal. To follow this path certain basic rules are important: A stable institutional and political framework, stable societal relations (i.e. the absence of civil conflict or strife), the avoidance of stifling control of the activities of the population etc. All these basic rules can help in the pursuit of reasonable political strategies.

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[206] More will be said on 'coherence' in the discussion of the third concept, the CDE model.

[207] See McCartyh (2004) in relation to the manufacturing process, Geyer & Cooper (2007) on health or Geyer & Rihani (2010) on development.

Yet, the utility of these basic conditions and strategies is essentially determined by the interactions of semi-autonomous agents within local boundary conditions. As seen above, such conditions are influenced by physical, organic and conscious complexity. As such, as a particular policy is pursued within local conditions, the path does not stay the same. Unexpected events can occur, political leaderships change and interpret polices differently, populations react differently to the same political actions etc. As such, seemingly reasonable strategies can become less effective and encounter areas of low fitness. This, in turn, requires often significant changes in strategies. Key is to realise that there can be significant tension between stable general rules and particular local circumstances.[208]

Changes are also likely because no policy is being pursued in a vacuum. As a particular policy is being implemented, it is likely to encounter various counter strategies or differing interpretations. This explains the variable success of a single strategy across time and space within a seemingly stable Complex Adaptive System.[209] Policies follow more of a zigzag course than a straight line as they evolve. As policy-makers encounter these differing circumstances across time and space they may well have to wade in to areas of low fitness away from the path of reasonable strategies. For instance, the imposition of a highly ordered, inflexible political system is often seen as a way of avoiding surprises and therefore crises. Other policy actors may disorder their political landscape through a tactic of 'divide and rule' as a way of, for instance, ensuring the survival of their particular government. All this means that, in order to pursue a particular policy one *has* to invade areas of low fitness.[210]

The metaphor of the Fitness Landscape, then, takes the core features of a CAS, as outlined through Complexity Mapping, and applies them to *specific* local conditions. This has critical implications for policy makers and will greatly influence the development of a Complexity-informed policy process which will be discussed below.

First, it emphasises the need for an adjustable and flexible policy process which can respond to local conditions. Unlike the x-y graph it shows *change* as a basic

[208] See Harrison (2006)
[209] See, for instance, Gaddis (2005c) on containment
[210] On the importance and consequences of 'divide and rule' see Acemoglu *et al.* (2003)

condition of any policy process and action. Second, the impact of a policy becomes *less* predictable as it moves into the future. Entirely orderly policy processes are not set up to deal with this unpredictability. Entirely disorderly processes cannot take advantage of this unpredictability as there are no general rules to hold the system together.[211] Third, the landscape confronting a policy maker will continue to self-organise without an end-point. As it does so, the number of unknowns impacting on the process may well increase. As such, there is no hope of 'freezing' the results of a particular policy into the future, discounting the premise of the x-y graph.

Key to understanding the particular landscape is an appreciation of the presence of different levels of complexity within any CAS. Different political structures (organic complexity) and different interpretations of core features of a particular Complex Adaptive System (conscious complexity) have a significant impact on the Fitness Landscape in relation to a particular political issue at a particular place and time. As such, the systemic features of a Complex Adaptive System and the local interactions within such a system constantly interact in a process of self-organisation and shape each other and, therefore, the development of the system as a whole.[212]

The Fitness Landscape can be used as a tool to interpret the environment within which a particular policy is made. Such a process has to be a *complex-adaptive* process or, to stick to the terminology used throughout the process has to be one of self-organisation. An example from international politics linked to 9/11 may be useful here to illustrate these points.

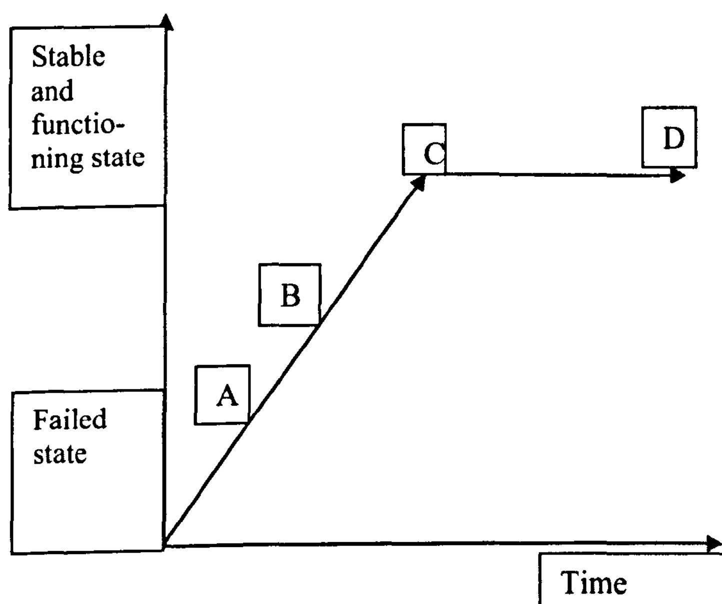
One of the key concerns of the international community since the events of 9/11 has been the dangers posed by so-called 'failed states', states that can be characterised by 'political and economic instability, poverty, civil disorder, terrorism, human trafficking, ethnic conflict, disease and genocide' (*The Economist*, 26th June 2008). According to the 'Failed State Index' over 2 billion people worldwide live in

[211] The importance of general rules will be discussed below, but see Stacey (2001), Eoyang (2001)
[212] One can also see Fitness Landscapes as depicting ranges of complexity, strategies and outcomes; see Weaver (1948). Interestingly, during the interviews conducted in the United States *some* actors showed keen awareness that the *power* of the US, a core feature of the present-day international political system, is interpreted very differently and provokes differing reactions across many regions (conscious complexity) whilst others saw this power as a unique feature which should universally be seen as 'a force for good'. More will be said on this in the chase study chapters.

countries that are in danger of collapse.[213] These states pose 'an acute risk to [...] global security' (Krasner & Pascual, 2005).

As such, an intense debate has been occurring about how best to deal with such failed sates to make them 'functioning'.[214] It is beyond the scope of this study to detail these debates here. However, a general approach can still be outlined. Essentially, the traditional x-y graph has been deployed to determine the actions needed to turn a country into a functioning state.

Figure 4.4: Typical x-y graph as political strategy



To get from point A to point C a number of strategies are usually proposed: These may include sending international peace keepers to 'stabilise' the country (point B), which would allow for the installation of a new government (through democratic means or otherwise). The stability and order brought about through this government will allow for the devising and implementation of rules which, in turn, will allow for economic growth and prosperity, leading to the creation of a functioning state and society (point C). The aim then is to 'freeze' this situation for as long as possible. There is hence a clear step-by-step process which will eventually lead to a clearly

[213] See *Foreign Policy*, July/August 2007
[214] A debate which was fundamental to the war in Afghanistan which followed 9/11

defined end-point. Critical to the success of such strategy is expertise and central control.[215]

What is suggested here is a clear and predictable process which will eventually lead to a 'solution' which then needs to be maintained. Essentially, the idea is that the system has been ordered and has reached its end-state.[216] The key image here is one of control and knowledge, the classic aims of traditional policy-making processes.

However, real-life situations rarely conform to these ideal-type scenarios, which diminishes the chances of success even for very reasonable strategies. If one accepts that, in today's definitions, failed states are those that display an (often severe) absence of order, then the path one has to take to navigate through the landscape that presents itself is frequently far from 'reasonable'. The results of such engagement are unpredictable.[217]

Such recognition has significant implications for *strategy* as well as *process* when responding to crises. In terms of strategy, it calls for far more differentiation in approaching a particular problem. Even within a broadly defined context (i.e. stabilising failed states) problems and issues will vary across time and space. Therefore, *flexibility* is the key to any strategy in order to be able to respond to the changing environment encountered.[218]

This also has implications in terms of policy *processes*. Using the Fitness Landscape, it is clear that the key actors to solving any issue are *local* actors, not "experts" imposing solutions from above. The key task for policy-makers is to *allow* for the emergence of different actions across time and space, to be a *facilitator* rather than imposer.[219]

Seeing the policy process as a continuous evolution into an unknown future frees leaders of the need to fulfil unrealistic expectations. The process depicted by the

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[215] Krasner & Pascual (2005) provide a good outline of this kind of thinking. For a critique see Easterly (2001)
[216] Geyer & Rihani (2010) also use a 'Waterfall model' to describe this kind of process
[217] On the problems this represents for peace-keeping operations see Jett (2001)., Kenkel (2008)
[218] In relation to failed states, see Brinkerhoff (2005) or Crocker (2003)
[219] See Kaplan (2008)

Fitness Landscape is one of continuous learning and adjustment according to the changing conditions that are being encountered as it unfolds. As such leaders *and* others are *active* participants in the process of self-organisation. They learn from-and respond to- changing conditions.

Again, notions of crises, which inevitably occur when a 'good' situation cannot be maintained, are transformed. Mistakes and set-backs are a natural part of the landscape but not necessarily signs of failure. Rather, they are an encouragement to learn and adapt. The policy process becomes one of successive adjustments, one which encourages change as a natural part of system development rather than as a response to a crisis whose aim it is to return to a set state. In the language of Complexity, the Fitness Landscape suggests the adoption of complex-adaptive strategies which will enhance the process of self-organisation in search of coherence.[220]

Yet, as already illustrated, policy-making *processes* are often not set up to be flexible or to allow for corrections. Instead, particularly when confronted with the unexpected, they are set up to be quick and to stifle debate. Centralisation is intended to allow for control from the top and to satisfy public demand to look "decisive" and "strong". They are intended to maintain or restore the status quo. Such processes are constitutionally enshrined.[221] As a result, significant change, such as the end of the Cold War or, as will be shown, 9/11, is seen as a crisis because it is seen as a failure of control.

In order to move away from this, to achieve flexibility and adaptability one has to develop a policy-making process that *encourages* and *enhances* a process of self-organisation. To this end, a third Complexity tool will now be introduced which identifies the conditions necessary for such a process of self-organisation to occur and which will allow for concrete proposals to be made on how policy-making processes should be reformed to permit such a process in response to international crises.

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220 As examples see Geyer & Rihani (2010) or Nitzschke (1997)

221 See, Yoo (2005), Blick (2005).

Tool 3: The CDE model

In Complex Adaptive Systems interdependent, but semi-autonomous agents interact according to a few simple rules to establish system-wide patterns which, in turn, shape the behaviour of these agents in the future development of the system. These interactions occur both within and between Complex Adaptive Systems across time and space. As Eoyang put it:

> 'Because system boundaries in a CAS are multiple, fluid and massively entangled, the "internal interactions" happen at various scales and interlocking patterns emerge at various places across the system and throughout the time period of the self-organizing process. Clusters of agents form micro-patterns continually. The micro-patterns interact to form larger, more comprehensive patterns or disrupt each other during the on-going evolution of the system. At the same time, emergent patterns in a super-system influence the emerging patterns in sub-systems and in individual agents by either reinforcing or disrupting their local self-organizing process' (Eoyang 2001: 27).

This is the essence of the process of self-organisation, a process which occurs naturally within Complex Adaptive Systems to generate patterns. 'When stable patterns are maintained over a period of time and across the system as a whole, the system can be said to have "self-organized"' (*ibid*: 29).

The *outcome* of such a process is unpredictable. As such, it is also difficult to define a 'successful' process of self-organisation. However, for the purposes of this study, one can base measurement of success on the expectations and objectives of leaders in response to a particular crisis. Crises are seen as events that disrupt and, at times, threaten the stability of the system as it existed before the crisis occurred. The key objective, as such, is to re-establish stability and ensure the maintenance of the system. This points to some benchmarks against which the responses to 9/11 can be measured: Has a stable system been maintained or re-established?[222]

If one takes this maintenance or re-establishment of stability as a bench-mark then the aim should be for processes of self-organisation that are coherent since, as

[222] 'Stability' is still a key objective of IR. See Berenskoetter & Williams (2007).

Eoyang points out, system-wide patterns that are coherent 'are more stable than other self-organized patterns' (*ibid*: 30).

Coherence is defined as a state of the system in which

- Meaning is shared among agents
- Internal tension is reduced
- Actions of agents and sub-systems are aligned with the system-wide intentionality
- Patterns are repeated across scales and in different parts of the system
- A minimum amount of energy of the system is dissipated through internal interactions
- Parts of the system function in complementary ways

(*ibid*: 30).[223]

As such, coherence denotes a system whose different parts are aligned and mutually re-enforcing. It is these characteristics which result in less internal tensions between semi-autonomous agents. Instead energy is focussed on system-wide behaviours. Coherent patterns are marked by the fact that the effort required to change the patterns is greater than the effort to maintain them.

Therefore, the key aim for policy makers is to enable the emergence of a coherent process of self-organisation. The discussion above allows for decisions as to whether this has been achieved and point towards possible further intervention in case coherence is still to be attained. This is crucial since some of the emergent patterns in a self-organized system 'are coherent, and others are not' (*ibid:* 30).

In what follows it will be shown that attempts to control such a process across time and space will not stop self-organization but, instead, frequently result in a loss of coherence. Finally, these benchmarks can be used to make the arguments put forward in this work generalizable and replicable to other Complex Adaptive Systems.

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[223] It is worth noting that the term is subject to intense debates within IR. See, for instance, Carbone (2009).

The CDE model was developed by Glenda H. Eoyang.[224] The model identifies three conditions that 'describe the rate, path and outcomes of self-organizing processes in human systems' (*ibid*: 34): Containers (C), significant Difference (D) and Exchanges (E). The interaction between these three conditions will 'through time shape the patterns that emerge from nonlinear dynamics in human systems.' As such, they represent 'the conditions for self-organising in human systems' (*ibid*: 34). Each condition will now be looked at in turn before the model will be summarised in a broader context.[225]

Containers

Containers (or boundaries) are defined as all those things that 'bound the system and hold it together' (Eoyang and Yellowthunder 2005: 5). They are the things that distinguish the Complex Adaptive System from its environment. For any process of self-organisation some kind of container is crucial so that 'relationships between and among agents can be established' (Eoyang 2001: 34). It increases the chances that agents 'will engage constructively with each other and establish the foundation for self-organizing patterns to emerge' (*ibid*: 34).

Such containers could take many forms and often multiple containers exist within any given system that can be active at the same time. Broadly speaking, three types of forces can serve as containers in human systems:

- External boundary containers: These can be geographical containers such as rooms or offices, information system fire-walls or membership criteria for a particular group.
- Central attractor containers: These are magnet like containers and, as will be shown, are hugely important in crises situations. A leader is a classic example of a magnet like container.

[224] See Eoyang (2001)

[225] There are issues of terminology here as a result of the fact that there is no universally agreed 'language of Complexity'. For the purposes of this study, 'non-linear' dynamics are all those dynamics that are not orderly. 'Human systems' are those systems that have been referred to in this study as 'social systems' which always includes some human interaction (conscious complexity). As such, international relations, where human interactions are crucial and plentiful, can be seen as human (social) systems.

- One-to-one affinity like containers: These are containers based on factors such as nationality or ethnicity, gender, shared language etc.[226]

In general, the smaller the container, the quicker the process of self-organisation proceeds. As should be evident from the discussion in the preceding chapters, decision-makers, particularly in a crisis situation, have traditionally sought to narrow containers down as much as possible in order to come to a quick consensus.

However, a container itself is not enough for self-organisation to occur. The second necessary condition for such a process is the existence of significant differences between agents.

Significant Differences

Significant differences are 'any distinctions within the system that constitute a potential for movement. The purpose of the difference is to give the possibility for movement and engagement that results in self-organization to new structural states' (Eoyang 2001: 36).

Within any Complex Adaptive System there exist potentially numerous significant differences. Within organisations, these differences may include power or material resources, different cultural backgrounds, social status, religion, different bureaucratic loyalties, race etc. Since Complex Adaptive Systems are usually characterised by multiple dimensions across time and space, there are potentially a great number of differences between agents.

Too many such differences would be disruptive and potentially *destructive* to the system as no coherent patterns of self-organisation could form.[227] As such, agent attention or focus 'determines which dimension is significant at any moment and how difference along that dimension will affect the system' (*ibid:* 38)

This point is crucial when considering the role of political leaders in the case studies. They have a critical role to play in maintaining significant differences within the

[226] Eoyang (2001)
[227] The state of variables within the Complex Adaptive System is often determined by other variables within the system. See Kauffmann's work on Boolean networks (1969, 1993)

Complex Adaptive System. If there are no differences between agents, no tension exists that generates the potential for change. If there are too many differences, the system will disintegrate as there are no containers sufficiently strong to hold it together. Leaders have crucial decisions to make in order to generate tensions that can bring about change whilst maintaining a system with coherent patterns.

However, to allow significant differences to generate potentially transformative tensions one needs exchanges which will allow the semi-autonomous agents to interact.

Transforming Exchanges

Exchanges 'represent transactions and connections between and among agents at any level' (Eoyang & Yellowthunder 2005: 7). As shown, these agents are semi-autonomous and, as such, are interdependent, the very conditions which allows them to self-organise. When this exchange influences the process of self-organisation it becomes transforming.

Language is perhaps the most obvious transforming exchange. However, the flow of information, money or energy can serve the same purpose. To have such exchanges some kinds of channels of communications must exist between agents (meetings etc). The existence of such exchanges within the system is essential for any process of self-organisation to occur. Without any connection, the differences between the different agents cannot be actualised and no potential for change can be realised.[228]

In a CAS many exchanges can take place simultaneously. This is particularly true in a human system where communication is manifold. The strength and impact of these exchanges (either individually or collectively) on the process of self-organisation can vary and may be unpredictable. Again, this has crucial implications for a policy-making process in response to a crisis.

A leader can have a critical influence on the process of self-organisation in respect of exchanges. Too many exchanges can generate confusion and the patterns produced can lack coherence. Too few exchanges and no coherent process of self-organisation

[228] See also Townsend (2002)

can develop to express the differences generated. *How* these differences between and among agents are released significantly influences the self-organising process. Shorter and faster exchanges tend to allow for more controlled and less ambiguous process of self-organisation whilst slower and longer exchanges tend to be more ambiguous.[229]

Interaction between the three variables

The three conditions interact in often numerous and unpredictable ways. Each Complex Adaptive System will have a different combination of Containers, Differences and Exchanges that serve the functions for self-organising. Since one of the key characteristics of Complex Adaptive Systems is the massive entanglement of its agents across a number of levels, the conditions that enable self-organisation will vary across time and space. Equally, the conditions can serve different functions during a process of self-organisation across different levels. For instance, a meeting of a group of people in a particular office can serve as a container (external boundary) at one level. However, at another level this container can serve as a significant difference, for instance between those party to the meeting and its decisions and those not party to this process.[230]

The three conditions present within a process of self-organisation also influence each other. Changes in one condition can have an impact on the others. For instance, if a meeting was opened up to a greater number of people, the number of differences introduced into the process of self-organisation could increase significantly. This introduction may create pressure for further or different exchanges in order to actualise them.

As such, the inter-dependency between the three conditions influences both the process of self-organisation and the role each variable plays within this process. As the process of self-organisation moves onwards, the occurring changes may strengthen or weaken one particular condition. This in turn will impact on the future patterns that emerge within the system. As such, the process of self-organisation is an

[229] See Laikonen (2006)
[230] See also Tsai *et al.* (2004)

ongoing process of shifting patterns in which the conditions shape, and are shaped by, the development of this process.

Once can summarise the implications of the CDE model for the process of policy-making as follows:

Table 4.1: Implications of CDE model

Conditions for Self-organisation	High Constraint	Medium Constraint	Low or no constraint
Container	Small and few	Many and entangled	Large and many
Difference	Few	Many, some significant	Innumerable
Exchange	Tight, clear	Loose, ambiguous	Arbitrary, Meaningless
Emergent Behaviour	Predictable pattern, rigid structure Clear cause and effect Tight coupling	Emergent patterns Emergent structure Nonlinear cause and effect Loose coupling	No patterns Random No cause and effect Uncoupling

Eoyang and Yellowthunder (2005: 9)

What does this mean for the policy-making process?

As will be demonstrated in the following chapters, the key aim of traditional (i.e. centralised) crisis decision-making processes is to have small and few containers. There are few policy-makers. That way the process will produce few differences between them, for instance in terms of viewpoints and roles. This development is also encouraged by few, tight and very clear exchanges, for instance through strict hierarchical command structures, which will produce clear channels of discourse and communication between them. The key difference in such a system is the power leaders have. The emergent behaviour in such a system is characterised by a predictable pattern of orderly cause and effect with clear linkages between the

various agents within the system. As a result, coherent patterns develop very quickly.[231]

However, as the outline of the core features of Complex Adaptive Systems has shown, even a highly constrained process of self-organisation will produce actions and reactions as it develops into the future. The patterns produced by such a system will be simplistic and rigid, unresponsive to emerging change. The result -and this will be one of the key issues in the case studies- is that the patterns that emerge from this 'unwanted' process of self-organisations will frequently become less coherent. Differences will emerge into the system in a less coordinated fashion. To counter this, traditional systems try to control or constrain the system by introducing more containers. This in turn will lead to more and more pressure for exchanges to give expression to the higher number of emerging differences. As such, there will be fewer patterns and there will, at best, be random coupling.[232]

The key question in terms of this study then becomes the following: Since there are powerful agents working towards a centralisation of power in response to an international political crisis, how does one ensure that the system either avoids moving into 'shock mode' or, at least, quickly moves from this initial shock back towards, 'normality', i.e. a more de-centralised policy-making process of many entangled containers (a larger number of policy-makers, for instance), some significant differences between these policy-makers (in terms of viewpoints and roles), and more extensive exchanges between them, thereby allowing for an emergent pattern and structure of the Complex Adaptive System.[233]

[231] One common theme of the interviews conducted in the United States was the broad adherence to this model in virtually all spheres of public policy. Similar structures exist in the UK and Germany.
[232] The CDE model has been applied to several practical policy examples to demonstrate these issues. For a recent application to a political crisis situation see Eoyang & Yellowthunder (2008)
[233] As will be shown, in general, the three case study countries have such a system during 'normal' times.

Table 4.2: Implications of CDE model for policy-makers

Conditions for Self-organisation	**Centralised policy process**	**De-centralised policy process**	**Continuous centralisation**
Container	Few actors	More actors	Too many actors many outside formal process
Difference	Few differences in viewpoints and roles	More differences in viewpoints and roles	Too many differences in viewpoint and roles
Exchange	Clear discourse, clear lines of communications	More differentiated discourse, richer communication	Arbitrary and meaningless discourse
Emergent Behaviour	Quick policy process Clear, unambiguous policy	Slower policy process, richer but more ambiguous policy	Diffuse and incoherent policy

The three tools in context

In this chapter, three Complexity tools have been introduced which will allow for a comprehensive approach to dealing with the questions posed in the introduction and the literature review.

Tool 1, Complexity mapping, will be used to map the core features of a Complex Adaptive System. As used in this study, the tool allows for a re-conceptualisation of the broadest features of political systems and the actions that take place within them. Developed initially for the process of European integration, it shows that even the most orderly looking aspects of a system are subject to continuous change across time and space, illustrating the continuous nature of development within a CAS. A coherent pattern has therefore been shown to be the result of the interaction of very different semi-autonomous agents acting within local boundary conditions. As such, mapping shows that long-term predictions about the development of a particular CAS are not possible except for the most basic attributes.

In the following chapters it will be shown that political crises (the events of September 11th) are equally social Complex Adaptive Systems made up of the same mixture of orderly, complex and disorderly elements. As such, Complexity mapping can help by illustrating which elements are orderly, which are complex and which are disorderly. It also helps to show how the different elements influence each other as the process of self-organisation unfolds.

The tool can therefore help in re-defining the boundaries (containers) of a Complex Adaptive System. Traditionally, these boundaries, whether defined through organisational structures, political processes or discourse, have been seen as static across time and space. Complexity mapping has shown that this is not the case. Rather, the concepts around which crises and the political response to them are defined are subject to significant complexity and therefore likely to be contested. As such, what is required in response is flexibility, diversity and adjustability. This conclusion also applies to the discourse used to frame the response which needs to be adjustable to changes and different interpretations as it is applied across time and space.

How one deals with such recognition will have a direct impact on how one tackles specific political issues. Using the Fitness Landscape, it is clear that the exact shape, scale and perception of a political issue are subject to local conditions. It is they who determine how the broad features outlined through Complexity mapping can be applied to a *specific* situation. It is within these local conditions that concepts such as conscious complexity are *actualised.* As such, the Fitness Landscape allows one to map the *particular* relationship between the Complex Adaptive System that is the *policy* (i.e. the response to a crisis) and the *environment* within which this policy is being applied. The result is a clear illustration that policies and issues are subject to continuous adjustment and change as the Complex Adaptive System they are part of develops into an unknown future.

The Fitness Landscape therefore takes the conclusions from Complexity mapping and drops them from the more systemic level to the level at which policies are being implemented. It shows that the key actors in such a process are *local* actors who are best able to respond to local boundary conditions. It shows *why* Complex Adaptive Systems are subject to processes of self-organisation and what the implications of such processes are for the strategies pursued in dealing with a particular issue.

Fitness Landscapes also point to a very different political process in order to allow for the flexibility and adaptability needed. A key task for political leaders is to allow for a de-centralised policy-making process which is both responsive to local conditions and adaptive to changing circumstances.

As such, what need to be developed are policy-processes which permit a process of self-organisation with the aim of allowing for the emergence of coherent patterns. Using the CDE model it has been shown that three variables determine the speed, path and outcome of such a process: Containers, significant Differences and Exchanges.

Traditional centralised crisis decision-making processes aim for a system of highly constrained self-organisation, with tight containers, few differences and tight exchanges. Such a system allows for control in the short term (as well as for the

definition of seemingly clear and unambiguous policies in the immediate response to crises) but often leads to a process of self-organisation which lacks coherence in the longer term due to the way containers, differences and exchanges emerge into the system as it progresses. Therefore, the aim should be the creation of a system of medium constraint which will allow the full potential of self-organisation to emerge and the system to adapt and respond to changing circumstances as new patterns emerge.

By identifying the three variables necessary to allow for such a process, the CDE model allows one to map the actors and elements of policy processes within Complex Adaptive Systems. Equally, the model clearly distinguishes between a highly constrained process of self-organisation, a process of medium constrained and an unconstrained process of self-organisation. As such, it allows for clear recommendations about the types of interventions that need to be made in a policy process to achieve a process of self-organisation of medium constraint. As such, the CDE model takes the conclusions from the first two tools further by giving them *practical* applicability to the every-day business of policy-making.

The three tools therefore apply the key concepts of the Complexity approach to different, yet interlocking and complimentary, aspects of social Complex Adaptive Systems. They re-define both the nature and the objectives of political processes, as well as the role of political leaders within them. It is this aspect that will be the principal focus of the following three chapters.

Table 4.3: Principal functions of the Complexity Tools

Complexity Tool	Principal function in relation to case-studies	How?
Complexity mapping	Defining the broad social systems applicable to the case study as Complex Adaptive Systems and processes of self-organisation Who? What?	Mapping the orderly, complex and disorderly elements of Complex Adaptive Systems. Outlining the implications for the way problems are defined, policies are developed and solutions are framed.
Fitness Landscape	Mapping the environment in which policies are applied. Showing the importance of local boundary conditions in determining the effectiveness or otherwise of the policies developed. Show the self-organising nature of Complex Adaptive Systems. Why?	Re-framing the relationship between actors, policies and their environment. Outlining the key implications of this re-framing for political strategies and processes in response to crises.
CDE model	Map the political processes within a CAS; make suggestion on how to allow for a process of self-organising process of medium constraint. How?	Analyse the different variables needed for any process of self-organisation. Map this process during the policy-making process to point to possible problems and interventions.

Critical here is to see how the three tools stress the complimentary nature of the Complexity approach. What is being emphasised is the *interplay* between variables across various 'levels of analyses', between both orderly and disorderly elements. As such, as the case studies will show, the various theories discussed previously all have something to say about IR and foreign policy crises. However, only in *combination* of these approaches can one begin to get a fuller understanding of specific events or political actions. The three tools introduced here provide a framework through which the key concepts of the Complexity approach can be applied specifically to international politics and foreign policy crises, with specific implications for policy-making processes.

This will now be shown in relation to 9/11.

Conclusion

In this chapter the scene has been set for the case studies that follow. Through the introduction of Complexity tools the possibility of applying the insights offered by the approach to specific issues and instances in international politics has been opened up, thereby making it practical in response to a set of events (crises) in this field.

All three tools apply the key concepts of Complexity discussed in the previous chapter to different aspects of international politics as defined here as a social Complex Adaptive System. Complexity mapping does so in relation to the broad systemic features of international politics and policies. The boundaries of such systems are shown to be multiple, interconnected and changeable. The Fitness Landscape applies the same concepts to the particular environment faced when developing and implementing a particular policy within specific local boundary conditions. Finally, the CDE model allows for an application of these concepts to policy-making processes, making concrete suggestions on what political leaders should aim for and can hope to achieve in response to a particular issue.

As such, the three tools allow for a new and innovative look both at international politics in general and international political crises in particular. By showing the interconnectedness of different 'levels of analysis' and by showing that international politics and, as such, crises are the result of an ongoing process of self-organisation, the tools allow for a re-conceptualisation of what constitutes a crisis and what should be done in terms of political actions..

The scene is now set for the detailed application of these concepts to the events of 9/11 and the response to these events by the governments of the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany. This will be done in the following three chapters before a conclusion chapter will draw the studies together.

Chapter 5: Case Study USA

The shock and the response

When the terrorist attacks occurred on 11th September, President George Bush was on a visit in Florida. When told that America 'is under attack', Bush decided that '[t]hey had declared war on us and I made up my mind that we were going to war' (Woodward 2002: 15). This decision was communicated to Vice President Dick Cheney who was asked to give a briefing to Congressional leaders.

With Washington declared unsafe, the first meeting of the National Security Council (NSC)[234] was held in the afternoon of September 11th whilst Bush was in Nebraska. He repeated that the country was now at war. Upon returning to the capital, Bush went to work on his speech to the nation planned for that evening. It was during this speech that the framework through which the US government would deliver its political response was developed. Speaking at 8.30pm that night Bush declared that, in responding to the attacks, 'we will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbour them' (Bush, 2001a). According to Woodward, this was 'an incredibly broad commitment' and 'one of the most significant foreign policy decisions in years' (Woodward 2002: 30-2).

After the speech Bush met with the National Security Council and his closest advisors. Woodward described the mood as one of confusion and uncertainty: 'They had neither a handle on what had happened, nor what might be next, nor how to respond' (*ibid*: 31). Yet, the key policy decision, as outlined above, had been made.

During the meeting some of Bush's advisers raised concern about the scale of the commitment outlined by Bush. According to the chief of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), George Tenet, even dealing with Al Qaeda represented a 60-country problem (*ibid*: 33). Therefore, the prosecution of such a war would pose enormous logistical, financial and political challenges which would require commitment across large areas and for a long time. Bush responded by declaring that they will be

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[234] A more detailed discussion of the role of the NSC, both in normal and in crisis times, will follow later in this chapter.

'pick[ed] off one at a time' (*ibid*: 33). Bush's thinking was 'to get the bad guys moving. We get 'em moving, we can see them, we can hit them' (*ibid*: 153).[235]

During the following days, Bush tried to turn this broad framework into a practical policy. These deliberations culminated in his speech to a joint session of Congress on 20th September when he declared a 'war on terror'. Arguing again that 'enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country', Bush went on to publicly blame the terror organisation Al Qaeda under the leadership of Osama bin Laden for the attacks. He declared that '[o]ur war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated'. Lest there be any doubt about the far-reaching nature of this announcement, Bush declared:

> 'Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbour or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime'. (Bush, 2001b)

The first target was the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The country had served as a base for the organisation credited with carrying out the September 11 attacks. As such, it played host to a number of the most sought-after terrorist in the world. Therefore, an attack provided the opportunity not only for punishing those responsible for 9/11 but also for making progress in the global war. All the accounts that exist paint the same picture. The Congressman interviewed said: 'Afghanistan was a logical step, we were all behind it'.[236]

However, even whilst this military campaign got underway, and more will be said about it below, there was recognition that more needed to be done to stop terrorism than simply destroy terrorist training camps. As Guzzini puts it: 'Military might without a vision for which it should be used might ensure short-term gains [but] it

[235] See Tenet's autobiography (2007) or Risen (2006). See Howard (2002) for a discussion of the terminology used. For a recent reappraisal see Vanderbush (2009).
[236] Former senior official at the National Security Council, interviewed June 2007. For a recent discussion of the significance of Afghanistan in the War on Terror, see Kobylko (2009)

would not be sufficient in combating terrorism' (Guzzini, 2002). A longer term strategy was needed.[237]

In his State of the Union Address of 2002 Bush argued that, to win the war on terror, one needed, first, to 'eliminate the terrorist parasites' and then deal with those countries which supported terrorism. Bush named those countries as Iraq, Iran and North Korea and argued that they constituted an 'axis of evil who threaten the peace of the world' (Bush, 2002a). To counter these threats, he proposed a strategy essentially based on three planks.

The first was beefing up military defence. Bush confirmed that 'my budget includes the largest increase in defence spending in two decades' (*ibid*). This would ensure protection of 'America and our allies from sudden attack' (*ibid*).

Such an increase would also allow the American military to be more pro-active in its fight against terrorism. Bush said: 'I will not wait on events, while dangers gather' (*ibid)*. As such, as his second plank, Bush proposed a strategy of pre-emption.[238]

Pre-emption was not only designed to stop possible terrorist attacks. The concept would also allow for regime change, the third main plank of Bush's anti-terrorism policy.[239] The U.S. should show active global leadership in substituting regimes that were deemed a danger to the country, regimes that harboured and aided terrorists with democratic governments. According to this doctrine, the spread of democracy, freedom and free enterprise across the world - 'a single, sustainable model for national success' (Bush, 2002c) – was the best way of preventing further terrorist attacks by undermining support for terrorist groups. This completed a so-called Bush doctrine which was based on the following elements:

- Active American global leadership
- Regime change
- Promoting liberal democratic principles

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[237] See Walt (2001) or Hoffman (2006). For a strategy from inside the American government, see Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (2006).
[238] See Bush (2002a).
[239] This strategy was, of course, implemented in Afghanistan and was soon discussed in relation to Iraq. See Woodward (2004), Bush (2002b) and PNAC letter to the President, 20th September 2001

Schmitt and Donnelly argued that by defining an 'axis of evil' and naming names the President also 'clearly defined a meaning of victory' (Schmitt & Donnelly, 2002).[240] Very quickly then a clear policy had been defined which mapped out the different stages of a successful campaign against terrorism. The key question is now whether there was a link between the development of the *policy* and the structure of the policy *process*?

[240] See also Perle (2002). For a counterview, see Johnson & Inderfurth (2004) or Mayer (2009)

The decision-making process: Pre-shock[241]

The structure of the 'normal' foreign policy process in the United States is difficult to ascertain, simply because of the enormous number of actors that can potentially be involved in this process.[242]

In principal, the Department of State 'is the lead U.S. foreign affairs agency, and the Secretary of State is the President's principal foreign policy advisor'.[243] The department is therefore responsible for the development of foreign policy though, as will be shown, its lead role has come under pressure from the growing importance of the National Security Council. It undertakes this development through a myriad of sections and divisions whose structure is changeable, depending on particular circumstances. In very broad terms, the structure looks something like this:

[241] The three case study chapters are structured around a comparison of foreign policy processes 'pre-shock' (or 'normal' times), 'shock' (9/11) and 'post-shock' (post-9/11). In line with Complexity thinking, these labels denote changing conditions and are used here in order to emphasise particular conceptual elements. The terms are *not* entirely mutually exclusive, have blurred and often ill-defined boundaries and may not cover the same time periods across the case studies.
[242] See the website of the U.S. Department of State (www.state.gov). For a detailed discussion of the actors involved see Cox & Stokes (2008)
[243] See www.state.gov

Table 5.1: The American Foreign Policy Process in 'normal' times[244]

Chain of command	Role	During the process input may be received by
1. Desk Officers/Field Staff	1. Monitoring developments in his or her region 2. Offer policy advice 3. First submission of draft policy	1. Local and State Governments Can play a role depending on issue under discussion
2. Head of Section	Amends/further develops policy advice	2. Other government departments Policy and resource implications for their respective areas
3. Assistant Secretary	Will sign off policy advice	3. Congress Constitutionally required to be consulted since it holds the purse strings. Can investigate impact of policies through Foreign Affairs Committee
4. Under-Secretary Secretary of State	Will sign off policy or pass policy up the chain of command	4. Interest Groups Impact varies but can play crucial role depending on issue
5. National Security Council	More sensitive issues will go to the National Security Council, with input from NSC staff and other government departments	5. National Security advisor and NSC bureaucracy The advisor and the NSC can play a crucial role due to their direct link to the President and access to resources. Role varies over time and issue
6. President	Sensitive issues will be signed off by the President	

[244] This chart is the result of interviews undertaken and extensive literature. See Holsti (2006)

As such, the 'normal' foreign policy decision-making process of the United States can be seen as a typical Complex Adaptive System. One can use Complexity mapping to illustrate the orderly, complex and disorderly elements of this system:

Figure 5.1: The US foreign policy process as a Complexity map

Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Physical complexity	Order

Examples

Detailed long-term development of US foreign policy system	Multiple interpreta-tions of policy objectives within policy system	Interaction and competition between different actors and institutions	Decision-outcomes and dynamics	Basic power and institutional relations

The basic structure of the US foreign policy system is its most orderly aspect. The system is hierarchical, with the president sitting at its apex, allowing him to get involved in whatever policy he chooses. Essentially, no critical policy decision will be taken without his consent.[245] There is hence the *potential* for significant centralisation.

Yet, this potential is counterbalanced by several factors: The interviewees insisted that the *exact* process decisions are arrived at within the US system is intractable. The reasons why a particular actor supports a decision or not are frequently situational: 'All sorts of things come into consideration, often very little to do with the actual issue at hand'.[246]

This leads to organic complexity: One thing emphasised by all interviewees was the sheer number of actors who either are or who try to get involved in any given policy-making process. The involvement of different departments may introduce differences

[245] As confirmed by all interviewees. See also Crawford (2001)
[246] Academic, interviewed in Washington D.C., June 2007

in terms of priorities and approach into the system: 'There are constant tensions [between departments]'.[247]

There is also, therefore, significant conscious complexity, differing interpretations of situations. For the two former NSC officials, the inability to get a consensus within the system was one of the key reasons for the growing role of the NSC and centralisation in times of crisis. [248] Finally, no-one could have foreseen the long-term development of the US foreign policy system. In 1776, there would have been no inkling that one day, the President of what was then a confederation with very weak central powers would be considered not only the most powerful foreign policy actor in the county but the world.[249]

Taken together, even the basic structure of American foreign policy-making is in fact subject to considerable complexity. Yet, in normal times, this does not seem to represent a problem but rather strength. The dense network of actors that are involved in US foreign policy worldwide helps the country to respond flexibly to the numerous challenges it inevitably faces around the world. Centralisation is possible and, at times, used in order to determine particular policies but, in general, there is recognition that the range of problems confronted by the United States in the world requires the input of many actors across time and space. In short, de-centralisation and the interplay of many variables (agents) which such a system permits *help* the US to navigate the Fitness Landscape.

U.S. Foreign policy action as a Fitness Landscape

The complexity outlined above is both a result of, as well as a response to, the basic power structures of the international system which has the United States at its apex, as the most powerful country.[250] On the one hand, the U.S. has the resources to be powerful, be they military, economic or political. On the other, its status brings enormous expectations and responsibilities vis-à-vis the rest of the world. Often, these issues have very little direct impact on the country itself, but its sheer power

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[247] Both interviewees confirmed this and, as will be shown, this was a significant factor during the process post-9/11. For a summary of the tensions between the various parts of the system, see Cox & Stokes (2008). See Boot (2007) for an account of tensions between the Defence and the State Department about the utility of nation building in conflict zones.
[248] Former NSC official, interviewed June 2007.
[249] For a good overview of early American foreign policy perspectives, see Hunt (1988). For a historical review, see Cox & Stokes (2008)
[250] See Ikenberry (2002) or Lieber (2005)

and influence mean that its intervention is often *sought* as a way of bringing disputing parties together and resolving particular issues.[251]

As a result, within the basic power structures, US policy-makers face an incredibly varied Fitness Landscape in response to the wide array of issues where they involve themselves. Often, the country has to get involved in situations that are full of areas of low fitness, where there is little order or structure.[252] In other situations, these same policy-makers have to engage with political systems that are highly orderly and lack almost any kind of flexibility.[253] As such, the US government requires numerous strategies that can be flexibly applied across time and space.[254]

The complexity, resources and reach of the US system actually allow it to develop such flexibility. Its elevated systemic position means that it has far more options open to it than have other countries.[255] This variety, coupled with its willingness to get involved in international affairs has, on the whole been seen as having been successful. Certainly, recent literature has argued that the US has largely been a positive influence in international politics precisely *because* of its reach, coupled with its flexibility and adaptability.[256] Key to this flexibility has been the way the system outlined above allows for a process of self-organisation.

The CDE model

The normal American foreign policy system is a system of medium constraint characterised by multiple and massively entangled containers, multiple differences, of which some are significant, and numerous exchanges through which these differences can be expressed.

In terms of containers, several can be identified: These may be bureaucratic (departmental loyalties[257]), personal attractors[258] or in terms of missions, a point

[251] Zakaria (2008) uses the Parsley crisis of 2002 as an example to illustrate this point, when Morocco and Spain disputed ownership of the island of Leila, an uninhabited piece of land a few hundred feet off the Morocco coast, a dispute which was only ended after an agreement drafted by then US Secretary of State, Colin Powell.
[252] For the difficulties often faced in such situations, Ghani & Lockhardt (2008) or Crocker (2003)
[253] See, for instance, North Korea: Pritchard (2007)
[254] See Hertz (2004)
[255] See Lind (2006), Yost (1971). On economic sanctions, see Selden (1999)
[256] See, for instance, Maddox (2008).
[257] Which, according to most interviewees, represent significant containers

which is of particular importance within the US due to the key sense of American exceptionalism which is shared across government and indeed the nation.[259]

With the system being open there is also the possibility of differences emerging during the policy process. Some of these are traditional. For instance, one of the key advantages for a president is both his standing-constitutionally and politically- as well as the resources he has at his disposal. One recurring theme of the interviews was the privileged access to information the president enjoys if he wishes to exercise it. However, in normal times, a lot of this information both comes from and is shared with, other parts of government, especially, depending on the particular situation, the State and the Defence department.[260]

The dense network of diplomatic and political relations the US has across the world is crucial in this respect and gives the State Department a potentially critical role in the policy-making process. It is the State department which administers and oversees much of this network which gives it both access to and knowledge of differing perspectives on a particular policy or problem. This allows for the flexibility to respond to differing local circumstances.[261]

As such, the system takes account of the conscious complexity which is present within any social system. Furthermore, the dense network of institutions, forums and other exchanges permits that these differences can be expressed.

Within the American system, exchanges to express difference can be at numerous levels. For instance, even if a decision is deemed to be important enough to deserve presidential attention exchanges are built into the system. In such a case, the National Security Council would become a key policy actor, in effect filtering the policy before it goes to the President. The exact make-up of the Council varies according to Presidential preference but, in general, the meeting of the Principals' Committee, the highest committee within the structure of the NSC, includes all the principal cabinet

[258] Particularly important during the Bush presidency, see Moens (2004)
[259] See McEvoy-Levy (2001)
[260] All interviewees in the United States made this point repeatedly. See also Clapp & Halperin (2007)
[261] See Lynch (2009)

ministers, such as the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defence, the Vice President etc and is chaired by the President's National Security Advisor or the President.[262]

During a normal policy process all the participants in an NSC meeting will be given the chance to bring in their points of view. According to one former official, it is the National Security Advisor who guides these discussions and 'the President would not really make a decision without talking to the National Security Advisor first'.[263] The NSC therefore serves as a forum for the development of policy which brings together various parts of the governmental under the supervision of the President.

This flexibility is aided by the way the American constitution is framed. Article II states clearly that the President is in charge of making treaties with other countries and is the commander in chief whose main duty is the protection of the constitution itself but it does not say anything about foreign policy in detail. At the same time, it prescribes key oversight roles to Congress (i.e. the legislative branch) without going into specifics how the relationship between the different levels of the system should be established or conducted. In short, there are basic rules that can be flexibly applied to changing specific boundary conditions.

This last point is critical and will be further developed throughout the case studies: The Complexity approach does not dispute the importance of the president in directing the United States foreign policy system and in determining the country's policy priorities. His leadership is critical in this respect. However, the crucial point from a Complexity perspective is the tension that exists between what is being done *to* the foreign policy system (i.e. by changing its bureaucratic structure or defining different political priorities and objectives) and what happens *within* the same system. As shown, tensions within the system are often crucial and the normal foreign policy system outlined above has a way of *accommodating* and *using* these tensions. The result in the case of the United States has been a coherent process of self-organisation.

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[262] Info obtained from interviews. See also Rothkopf (2005) or Destler (2009).
[263] *ibid*

Table 5.2: The normal US foreign policy process as a CDE model

Conditions for Self-organisation	Medium Constraint	Examples of normal US system
Container	Many and entangled	Political mission statements, Bureaucratic loyalties
Difference	Many, some significant	Departmental priorities, Power and resource differentials, Differing interpretations of political objectives, Different strategic emphases
Exchange	Loose, ambiguous	NSC meetings, Bi- and multi-lateral meetings, Speeches, Diplomatic missions,
Emergent Behaviour	Emergent patterns Emergent structure Complex cause and effect Loose coupling	Flexibility, Adaptability, Successive adjustments of policy

The key here is to see how the system outlined embraces key concepts of the Complexity approach: it allows for the interaction between various semi-autonomous agents across time and space within a framework of stable rules. This stable framework, however, is flexible enough to respond to emergent change.

The decision-making process: 9/11

The decision-making process in response to 9/11 has been characterised as 'an extreme case of crisis foreign policy, [having] been fashioned entirely by the President and top-level executive actors' (Shannon, 2002).

According to a former senior official in the Bush administration, in a crisis the National Security Council becomes the key institution. He explained the function of the NSC thus:

> 'One is to advise the President, the second is to ensure that the process works... to write the papers, to get people to show up, to narrow down decisions [before] they come to the President...really big decisions...like whether we attack Iraq or not...and the third job is making sure that the different agencies do what the President wants because the career bureaucracy tends not to wholly want to do what the President wants'.[264]

In major crises policy is made 'in the situation room by the principals [the key Cabinet members and national security advisors] and the president chairing the National Security Council meeting'.[265]

The lead role of the Council is underlined by the fact that responsibility for preparing these meetings lies with NSC staff. The institution has an independent bureaucracy from that of the other main government departments and in a crisis it would *that* bureaucracy would take the lead role in formulating policy options.

> 'We had to generate 3-5 page papers outlining the background, options, recommended course of action or several options and we had to try to co-ordinate those with senior people at the State Department or Defence or Treasury very quickly...it is hard to do...very quick to do'.[266]

He went on to describe the process as follows:

> 'So in a ... crisis...typically in a meeting of the principals committee or the National Security Council or the deputies committee...the national security advisor would go first and frame off the policy, then it is the turn of the CIA

[264] Interview with former senior NSC official, June 2007

[265] *ibid*

[266] *Ibid.* On the process see also Best Jr. (2009)

> to give a briefing on what we know, then we turn to the State Department on what we can do or what we want from embassies and then everybody says what they know and what they think we ought to do and then the National Security Advisor guides the discussion towards an answer...two or three options...what do we recommend. Then the President comes in to the NSC meeting which may be the next hour in a real fast crisis, or that evening or the next day, and then the President says: "Okay, here is what I want to do and here is the marching orders"...and that is what the NSC does'.[267]

As such, the key focus of the policy process moves from the respective departments to the White House, a crucial factor in terms of control over the process.[268]

Two aspects of 'typical' crisis decision-making therefore stand out. One, the time pressures that often play into a crisis which have a huge impact on how the process unfolds and, two, the centrality of the President to the process.

On the first issue, the official expanded: 'If it's a major, major crisis it's quicker because it tends to be more top-down'. At times in a major crisis there is 'one hour to do a paper'.[269] The official said that the policy process, as outlined above, is supposed to be the same in any situation. However, and crucially, with the pressures being what they are in a major crisis, 'we just ignore [the departments] and do our own paper and each agency would come in with its own take on what was going on'.[270] Such a state of affairs lends itself to presidential decision-making.[271]

This is linked to a perception that, in normal times, the policy process within some agencies is too slow. For instance, another former NSC official said that, within the State department, 'routine decisions take forever'.[272] This is because 'on a typical State Department paper, 12 different bureaus have to sign off on it...it's hopeless'.[273] Whilst the *degree* of the perceived inefficiency of the normal process has been debated and challenged, the necessity for reforming this process has not.[274] As a result, in a crisis the circle of decision-makers gets narrowed down. Less people, accordingly, means more speed.

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[267] *ibid*
[268] This was confirmed by all interviewees
[269] *ibid*
[270] *ibid*
[271] See also Wang (1996)
[272] Interview with former senior NSC official, June 2007
[273] Interview with former senior NSC official, June 2007
[274] See Project for National Security Reform (PNSR), (2008)

However, with 9/11 having been an 'extreme case' of foreign policy decision-making, the importance ascribed to the council above by one of its former officials, has been challenged. For instance, even many of the closest presidential advisors, were not involved in the crucial decisions immediately after the attacks. According to Woodward, the fundamental decisions to broaden the response not only to the perpetrators of the attacks, but also to those who harboured them was taken by Bush himself, one of his close political advisors (Barbara Hughes) and his speechwriters (Woodward 2002: 31-2). Neither the Secretary of State, nor the Secretary of Defence, nor any other senior cabinet member had been involved.[275]

In fact, the only other senior member of the administration present during this decision-making process was National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice. Whilst she raised concerns about the *timing* of the announcement, she did not challenge the *policy* (Woodward 2002: 31-2). According to one senior academic who has studied the decision-making process in Washington closely, this is not surprising since Rice was very loyal to Bush and therefore failed to present contrary viewpoints, challenge policy, or represent the views of other departments.[276] According to Clarke, Bush was informed only 'by talking with a small set of senior advisors...Bush wanted to get to the bottom line and move on' (Clarke 2004: 243-4).[277] As such, even the NSC was largely shut out of the process of policy development.

This is not to say that there were no meetings. Woodward (2002) shows that in the period between the attacks and the start of the war in Afghanistan there were almost daily meetings of the National Security Council, the Deputies Committee of the Council, and between the President and many of his principal advisors. These meetings took place almost exclusively at the White House or, at times, at the Presidential retreat at Camp David. There were some occasions when other members of the administration would meet with other actors, for instance at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia.[278]

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[275] See also Suskind (2004) or Feith (2008)

[276] Interview with senior academic, June 2007. See also Rothkopf (2005).

[277] See also National Commission Report on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States (2004) or Mitchell & Massoud (2009)

[278] Others back up Woodward's account of Bush's decision-making apparatus and modus operandi. See Mann (2004)

However, in such meetings there were no discussions about the broad policy framework designed by Bush, i.e. the war on terror and the decision to broaden the response to those who harboured terrorists. As one of the former NSC officials said: 'In a presidential system, it is the president that makes the decision. It is, how shall we say, awkward for the staff to say [that a decision taken] was a bad decision. He will acknowledge it, but it is difficult'.[279]

Instead, the discussions that occurred concerned the *language* to use to package the policy: 'There were huge, long, dragged-out debates about what language to use [...] lots and lots of time spent on how we describe [the war on terror]'.[280] However, according to the official, these debates often involved only a small group of people and were frequently quite informal in nature. They were designed to 'package' and communicate a policy across the system. What was communicated was determined at the top of the system in a command and control structure.[281]

This process of centralisation is facilitated by numerous constitutional and legislative provisions. When President Bush declared a national emergency on 14th September 2001 he activated no fewer than 160 provisions of law, according to the National Emergencies Act.[282] With Congress also specifically authorising the use of military force to respond to the attacks, Article II of the Constitution, which defines the President as the Commander in Chief, kicked in, transferring further power to the White House.[283]

Whilst these provisions by themselves do not explain the process of centralisation outlined above, they do tie in with some of the arguments outlined in the literature review. They create a *framework* which casts the President as a key personal attractor. As will be shown, this reinforces the role expectations already talked about and all interviewees identified such expectations as a key factor in the centralisation which followed 9/11.[284]

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279 Interview with former senior NSC official, June 2007
280 *ibid*
281 See also McClellan (2008)
282 See Relyea (2005)
283 On this issue, see Kinkopf (2007)
284 Though not all used the term 'role expectations'.

As such, the process of centralisation just outlined followed a clearly established and tested pattern. Two more factors need to be addressed which have a huge bearing on this process. One is the flow of information. When asked why, in the aftermath of 9/11, Congress, for instance, was not involved in the shaping the response, one of the former NSC officials said:

> 'If it is a crisis and there is a national consensus that it's a real crisis, [Congress] don't get information fast enough [...]. Often the intelligence in a crisis is so sensitive...we have spies and we have sensitive technology and you can't tell 400 or 500 members of Congress about it....[Therefore] they are very hesitant to offer counter views'.[285]

In fact, Bush actively tried to restrict Congress' access to information. He clashed with Congressional leadership on a couple of occasions over access to information. For instance, Bush initially insisted that only the 8 most senior congressional leaders should have access to classified information. Whilst he finally lifted this order, 'he had sent a message that he could cut [Congress] off if he wanted' (Woodward 2002: 198-9). As a result, according to one Congressman interviewed, the institution became a 'rubber-stamp Congress. [It] 'didn't challenge [Bush], *really* didn't challenge him'.[286] For him, whilst access to information was a clear practical issue, this was the result of a *political* decision, i.e. not *entirely* the consequence of the occurrence of a crisis.

The Department of State also was not greatly involved in the immediate aftermath of the crisis: 'The State Department crisis centre tended to focus very much on the safety of U.S. citizens, getting information from the embassies to the Secretary of State and co-ordinating evacuations, and they didn't actually coordinate policy [...]'.[287]

The second factor to be discussed is that of actual crisis capabilities. With the flow of information being so restricted, there is also a huge discrepancy in what the various institutions can actually do. Said one of the former NSC officials:

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[285] Former senior NSC official, interviewed June 2007.
[286] Interview with US Congressman, June 2007. See also Soter (2006)
[287] Former senior NSC official, interviewed June 2007

'The situation room in the White House has, at any one time, 7 people on station. They have constant input from the embassies, the CIA, the military command, press…it is probably the best information centre in the world'.[288]

What one had therefore in relation to September 11th was a self-reinforcing process of centralisation. Constitutional and legislative provisions combined with role expectations to create enormous pressure for presidential leadership. There was also a perception that 'normal' policy-making processes are too slow to respond to major crisis. In combination with the traditionally restricted flow of information in crisis situations and the capabilities gap which has developed between the various institutions, the end result has been a policy process which was centred almost entirely on the President.[289]

This process was also aided by some of the key traits of this president. As has been shown above, one of the key themes for Bush in the aftermath was, first, re-assurance and then action. The framing off of the war on terror in such absolute terms ('you are either with us or you are with the terrorists', 'The war will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated' etc) served just this purpose. It gave the impression that there was a clear target in this war which could be defeated and could be prevented from causing problems again by implementing a clearly defined alternative way of organising society. There were hence clearly identifiable variables which *caused* terrorism. Focussing on these variables would eventually resolve the problem.[290]

However, such certainties also appeal to key parts of Bush's character. Peter Singer has shown that 'Bush's readiness to talk about right and wrong goes back to long before September 11, 2001' (Singer 2004: 3). Bush is 'America's most prominent moralist. No other president in living memory has spoken so often about good and evil, right and wrong […] [H]e has spoken about evil in […] about 30% of all the speeches he gave between the time he took office and June 16, 2003' (*ibid*: 2).

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[288] Former senior NSC official, interviewed June 2007. See also Bohn (2004)
[289] For an overview on this in relation to the Bush presidency see Goldsmith (2007)
[290] See Clarke (2004) or Draper (2007). In Complexity terms the focus was on 'fast' variables, see Ramo (2009)

The attacks of 9/11 served to re-enforce this division of the world into two 'good' and 'bad'. Several accounts exist which paint a picture of Bush in which he is shown to be possessed by an almost absolute moral certainty about what was 'the right thing to do'. Con Coughlin recounts a meeting between Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair on 20th September 2001, just hours before Bush was to address a joint session of Congress to declare the war on terror.

> 'Blair's aides marvelled at how relaxed Bush appeared in view of the fact that, in a few hours, he was going to make the most important speech of his life.... [Bush explained]: "Well, actually, I am not that nervous about it because I know what I want to say and I know what I am saying is right"' (Coughlin 2006: 169).

What one had then was a combination of a president who had absolute certainty about the correctness of his decisions and a severely emasculated policy process which can be illustrated by the table below:

<u>Table 5.3:</u> Centralisation of US policy process on 9/11

Chain of command	**Role**	**During the process input may be received by**
1. President	1. Provide political leadership 2. Provide re-assurance	Key advisors a) Speech writers (i.e. David Frum) b) Karen Hughes Special Advisor c) Condoleezza Rice (timing)

Using the three Complexity tools, the impact of this kind of approach becomes immediately apparent. The concept of the War on Terror, as defined by Bush, essentially strips out all the complex and disorderly elements of a Complex Adaptive System. Using Complexity mapping, one can illustrate this simplification as follows:

Figure 5.2: The US Foreign policy Complexity Map on 9/11

Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Mechanical complexity	Order

--→

Time

Examples

Attacks of 9/11 represent disorder	None. Policy of War on Terror represents 'clear choice'.	None. 'Every country in every region has a decision to make'.	Some. How to 'package' the policy is matter of discussion within the government	End result: Every terrorist group of global reach will be found, stopped and defeated.

The War on Terror represented a top-down policy of global extension. In line with traditional crisis-management thinking, the crisis itself was seen as an event which *disordered* the system. The aim, therefore, was to *re-order* that same system. Since, in the aftermath of 9/11, terrorism was defined as a *global* problem, what had to be re-ordered was the highest possible form of a Complex Adaptive System, a *super-system.*[291] As will be shown, this is crucial for understanding the problems that have followed in the wake of the implementation of this policy.

This way of defining the parameters of the policy had an immediate and, in Bush's case, the desired effect of radically simplifying the policy-landscape. The war on terror was seen as a series of sequential steps which would follow logically. These steps could then be repeated in several countries until the 'axis of evil' was defeated. Once this was done, one could install liberal-democratic regimes which would undercut public support for terrorism. This was a very clear and easily understandable policy, quite typical of a crisis aftermath.

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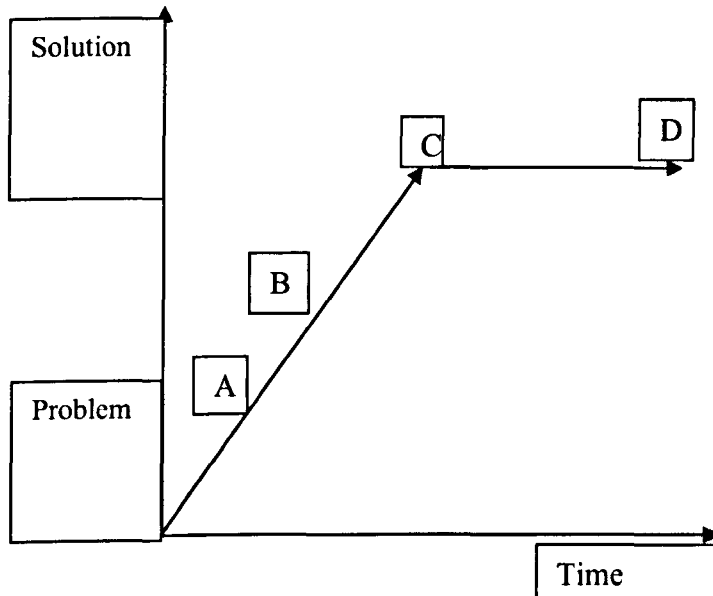
[291] See Eoyang (2001)

Figure 5.3: The US War on Terror as a typical x-y graph



A: Terrorism defined as problem
B: Apply policies (military, economic etc)
C: Defeat terrorism and install liberal, democratic governments
D: Maintain this situation

The decision-making process used during this time both reflected and contributed to the nature of the policy developed. First, President Bush acted as a strong, magnet-like container. His definition of the policy as a War on Terror also acted as a strong political container around which the country could unite.

Bush used power as the significant difference that made a difference. A combination of constitutional authority, role expectations, and a clear moral compass meant that Bush acted the way he did because he *could.*

This also had a significant impact on the exchanges which helped determine the process of self-organisation. In terms of policy formation, the key exchanges were informal meetings between Bush, his speech writers and Karen Hughes. The meeting referred to above was the *only* one used to determine the actual policy-framework. This would have a significant impact as the process of self-organisation progressed, as this lack of exchanges turned into a major difference between various agents over time which resulted in a loss of coherence. However, at the time, this kind of process had exactly the desired effect:

Table 5.4: The US policy process on 9/11 as a CDE model

Conditions for Self-organisation	High Constraint	Examples
Container	Few	President Oval Office War on Terror
Difference	Few	Presidential power
Exchange	Tight, clear	Hierarchical decision-making, use of White House structure to communicate policy
Emergent Behaviour	Fast decision-making, unambiguous, clarity of pattern	Global applicability of War on Terror, Clear choice, with us or with the terrorists.

Nothing about the above is especially original or new. What happened to the American foreign policy process on 9/11 was entirely predictable and did not encounter significant resistance. The attacks being seen as a watershed (or gateway) event required presidential *leadership* in order to define a clear policy, clear policy objectives and, as such, provide re-assurance. There was agreement that 9/11 had crystallized the power and influence of the United States.[292] This clearly influenced both the policy developed and the process through which it was developed.[293]

Equally, it clearly influenced the policy choices made by other countries, as will be shown in the following two chapters. As such, the Complexity tools used above merely represent a different way of *illustrating* entirely predictable and well-established processes.

[292] See Cox (2002) or Christensen (2004)
[293] See Rothkopf (2005)

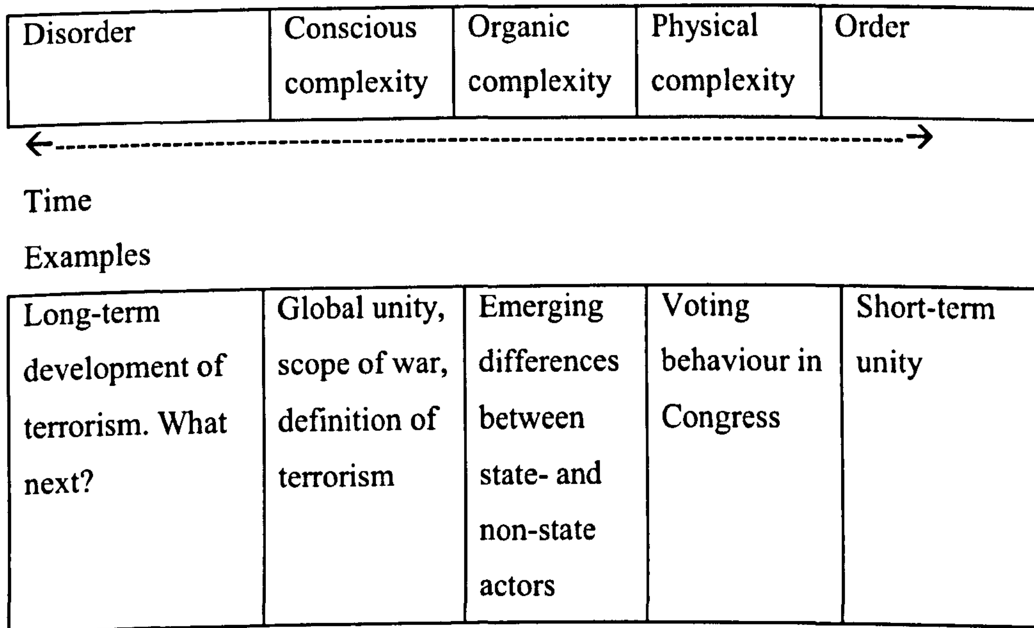
However, this different *type* of illustration becomes critical once one compares the approach and expectations outlined in the section above to what happened after the event. It is at this point that the different concepts and tools of Complexity bring added value.

Post-shock: 9/11, the War on Terror and the re-emergence of Complexity

Crucially, whilst the system as outlined above, was coherent and led to an unambiguous and clear policy, it was not able to maintain this coherence across time and space. At the same time, both the system and the policy lacked flexibility to deal with and respond to the re-emergence of complexity over time. In fact, attempts to control or, better still, prevent this re-emergence resulted in the processes of self-organisation losing the very coherence it was meant to maintain. As will be shown, the crucial factor for explaining this failure was the continued centralisation of the policy processes long after 9/11.

The re-emergence of Complexity can be seen in even the broadest parameters of the Complex Adaptive System, i.e. the concept of the War on Terror. Complexity mapping can help to show both where and why complexity re-emerged in relation to the principal policy concept.

Figure 5.4: The War on Terror as a Complex Adaptive System



Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Physical complexity	Order

←--→

Time

Examples

Long-term development of terrorism. What next?	Global unity, scope of war, definition of terrorism	Emerging differences between state- and non-state actors	Voting behaviour in Congress	Short-term unity

In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, there was great unity amongst all actors within the United States. The national mood of shock, revulsion and crisis, described above, led to an extraordinary sense of patriotism. As one interviewee put it: 'It

would take a brave [man] to come out and say: This is not really a crisis'.[294] As such, it was not difficult for the President to unite the country around the concept of the war on terror. Any dissent by other political actors would be 'the death of their career [...] it would be remembered forever'.[295] This, therefore, represented the most orderly and predictable aspect of the policy: Straight after its declaration, the political circumstances practically demanded support.

Yet, very soon differences emerged as to *why* the War on Terror was being supported and what its precise objectives should be. Some argued that the declaration of a war on terror was simply the expression of a state of affairs which had been obvious since at least the 1993 bombings of the World Trade Centre:

'We were at war, but we insisted on reacting as if these were problems for the criminal justice system. Terrorism of this kind is not a law enforcement problem. It is a diplomatic, military, and intelligence agency problem' (Gingrich, 2001).[296]

Bush himself argued that the war on terror was something new. For him, the United States was confronting a 'faceless enemy [...], no kind of enemy we are used to' (Woodward 2002: 41). In his pronouncements in the days and months following the attacks, he frequently spoke about this being a 'new kind of war'.[297]

Finally, some of the political think tanks from which Bush drew many of his closest advisors chose to frame the war on terror in far more strategic terms. For instance, The Project for the New American Century declared early in 2002 that the war on terror had finally given the United States 'an understanding of its role in the world and a strategy for achieving its purpose' (Schmitt & Donnelly, 2002).

As such, from the very beginning, there was an assertion of physical complexity: Whilst there was great unity in support of the policy, as reflected in the voting outcomes in Congress in relation to the financing of the war and the restructuring of the political system in order to pursue this war, the reasons for this support varied

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[294] Former senior NSC official, 4th June 2007

[295] *ibid*

[296] Interestingly, Gingrich claimed several years later that 'I would never have called it a war on terrorism', Gingrich (2007)

[297] See almost any of his speeches in the last months of 2001

widely. An orderly process was the result of a complex interaction of numerous semi-autonomous agents.[298]

Such recognition is crucial because it begins to explain why, as the policy progressed across time and space, more and more differences asserted themselves. For instance, there were intense debates over whether an independent inquiry should be set up about hat lessons could be drawn from 9/11. Bush initially resisted, arguing that the focus should be o fighting the actual war on terror.[299] However, under strong pressure from Congress and, indeed public opinion, Bush did, in the end, agree to the setting-up of a 9/11 Commission.[300]

This is an example of a process of self-organisation in action. The initial unity on display after 9/11 was replaced by concerted efforts by several actors (i.e. agents) to reassert themselves within the policy process. The attempts by Congress to influence this process are a good example of a reassertion of organic complexity. The process of self-organisation is beginning to normalise as the initial shock fades into the past.

This illustrates a crucial element of Complexity thinking: It is not disputed that initial responses to crises such as 9/11 lead to often very predictable responses and political actions, which can be explained with reference to the insights offered by traditional theoretical frameworks such as Realism. What is being challenged is the idea that such explanations represent an *unalterable* context across time and space. The above demonstrates that even after an apparently cataclysmic event such as 9/11, the Complex Adaptive System within which this event occurred will begin to normalise. As other agents begin to try and re-engage in the process of self-organisation, the context within which the original response to a crisis was formulated changes, it *responds* to this normalisation. As a result, these contexts can become multiple, fluid and massively entangled, with crucial implications for political actions.

The question is how leaders approach such a process of normalisation. In Bush's case, he tried to perpetuate the state of crisis in order to maintain a centralised decision-making process. As shown, the Bush administration was *still* trying to resist

[298] On Congress and the War on Terror, see Nider (2001) or Hoopes (2008)
[299] See CBS News Report, 23rd May 2002
[300] See ABC News 20th September 2002

this process in 2007 (when interviews were conducted), with one academic contended that the system 'has not gone back to normal'.[301]

All this does not even take account yet of conscious complexity which, even within the setting of the US, was considerable. For instance, concerns were raised within the administration (and certainly outside it) that declaring a global war on terror offers virtually no realistic chance of success. According to Woodward, Powell raised concern that the U.S. would be 'declaring war on everybody' (Woodward 2002: 105).[302]

Other problems concerned the definition of terrorism. It has been defined as 'The use or threatened use of violence on a systematic basis to achieve political objectives' (Evans & Newham 1998: 530). Alternatively, Daniel Pipes defines terrorism as 'a military tactic employed by different groups and individuals around the world for different ends' (Pipes 2002: 243). There are, of course, many others.[303]

This being the case, how would one judge whether other countries 'are either with us or you are with the terrorists'? What would states be judged against? Bearing in mind the scale of the war and the difficulty in defining the actual target (terrorism) how did one know the 'end' of this war? [304]

Many of these issues were raised within the administration, but where never fully discussed. Bush was impatient for action and wanted to show progress in the war on terror.[305] At the same time, many of the senior members of the administration had a strongly held belief that, in a time such as this, one should not rock the boat. For instance, Vice President Cheney is reported to have seen his role in relation to the

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[301] Interview with senior academic, June 2007. The Congressman agreed but argued that this continuing 'state of emergency' was critical for the Republican's defeat in the 2006 Congressional elections.
[302] For a more detailed critique see Powell (2004), for a philosophical critique see Shanahan (2005)
[303] See Hurrell (2002). As will be shown, these definitional difficulties, coupled with differences over approach, were a considerable source of problem in the relation between the US and the other case study countries as the policy progressed.
[304] These problems are illustrated in detail in Woodward (2002) or Na (2005)
[305] Bush's impatience for results was a constant feature of Woodward's account. See also Alterman & Green (2004)

president as 'salute and follow orders'[306], whilst Powell was used to a strictly hierarchical command structure as a result of his long military career.[307]

This command and control structure was re-enforced by the way Bush tried to measure progress in the war on terror. He kept scorecards on which he crossed off wanted terrorists as they were killed or captured.[308] In fact, a similar system of control existed throughout the National Security Council. Stephen Hadley, later National Security Advisor to Bush,

'established sort-of matrixes, where you have: what are our objectives? How are we doing in achieving those? Green, yellow, red or A+, B+ etc [...]. Internally, there were these report cards [...]. They did these card evaluations on the big issues'.[309]

In using this kind of model, Bush followed the increasingly common trend for governments to measure progress according to dispassionate audits, whose aim has been to establish 'objective' targets through which progress towards a particular aim can be traced.[310] Once all wanted terrorists were captured or killed, the war would be 'won'.

Once again, the key here is not to deny the importance of leadership or even control. Policies, once developed, need to be evaluated. The key is to challenge the idea that there are singular measures of control which can be applied unaltered across time and space. Applying Complexity Mapping to the broad concept of the War on Terror even within just the United States, it has been shown that Complex Adaptive Systems are, by their nature, unpredictable over long periods of time. As developed and implemented, the concept of the War on Terror does not account for this unpredictability because it assumes an unalterable context across time and space. Yet, as will be shown now and in the following chapters, such an assumption is not only wrong, it also does not achieve the intended results and, through its inherent inflexibility, creates the conditions for the very crises they are intended to solve.[311]

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306 See Weissberg (2008)
307 For a detailed discussion on Colin Powell, see DeYoung (2006)
308 See Woodward (2002)
309 Interview, 4th June 2007
310 For a historical review and critique of such an approach see Mintzberg (2000).
311 See also Kenny (2007)

The War on Terror, having been defined as a global CAS, touches and interacts with Complex Adaptive Systems across a number of levels, time and space. As such, there is an interaction between macro- and micro systems, between multiple variables. This interaction leads to the emergence of multiple contexts for a single policy. It alters even the broadest parameters of both the policy in question and the effectiveness of the instruments used to implement it.

From a Complexity perspective, this distinction between, and interplay of, micro- and macro systems is crucial for the design of crises processes, in particular in relation to the normalisation and, hence, de-centralisation of the policy process after the immediate crisis has passed. As will be shown in the final part of this chapter, far from representing a problem, such constant interaction actually is crucial in constantly generating options to respond to variable circumstances across time and space.

One good way of illustrating the interplay of processes and variables is to use the Fitness Landscape.

Rolling out the War on Terror: The US and Afghanistan

As shown, Afghanistan was seen as the logical first step in the War on Terror. An attack on the country provided the opportunity for making progress in the global war on terror by killing or capturing many of the world's most wanted terrorists. After 'dealing' with Afghanistan, one could then move on to the next target.

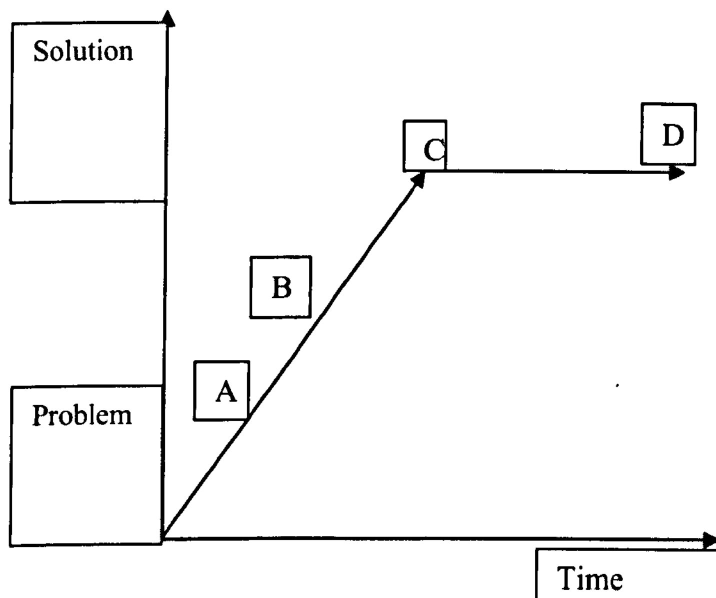
In military terms, the initial war was seen as a success.

> 'In just weeks the military essentially destroyed al-Qaeda's grip on Afghanistan by driving the Taliban from power...The military has destroyed at least 11 terrorist training camps and 39 Taliban command and control sites...Senior al-Qaeda and Taliban officials have either been captured or killed' (Bush 2002b, 11-12).

According to Jason Burke 'two thirds of the Al Qaeda "leadership" has been eliminated one way or another' (Burke 2004: 260). In his State of the Union Address of 2002, President Bush also hailed the political progress in Afghanistan, suggesting that the country was now a 'liberated' nation (Bush, 2002a). It soon had an elected

government. All of this indicated significant progress in the war on terror, the utility of the Bush doctrine and therefore the utility of the highly centralised and quick policy process which led to it.

Figure 5.5: The War in Afghanistan as a typical x-y graph



A: Afghanistan defined as major theatre in war on terror
B: Apply policies: defeat Taliban, destroy terrorist infrastructure
C: Install liberal, democratic governments
D: Maintain this situation

What one has then is a very traditional approach to resolving a crisis, based on a step-by-step process which would yield clearly measurable results. However, this kind of approach ignores the temporal dimension of a Complex Adaptive System, as well as the role of local semi-autonomous agents in influencing the development of such a system. Finally, it ignores the interplay *between* various Complex Adaptive Systems across different levels.

Afghanistan itself is a highly complex and, historically, very disorderly system which, by the time of the US invasion in 2001, 'had been mired in conflict for about 22 years' (Katzman 2001: x-1). The sheer ethnic diversity of the country was a key factor in this instability. Equally, the region within which Afghanistan in located is

an autonomous but interrelated CAS. Afghanistan's neighbours - many themselves unstable countries - often had wildly differing strategic objectives.[312]

These strategic factors led to a significantly different fitness landscape in relation to the planning and execution of the particular policy in Afghanistan. One of the key initial problems was the refusal of the President of Uzbekistan, Karimov, to grant over-flight rights to the U.S. In return for granting these, he used the concept of the war on terror to take action against his internal opposition, forcing the U.S. to align itself with a leader who could hardly be described as the ideal personification of the liberty doctrine propagated by Bush.[313] Equally, Pakistani President General Musharraf, who had come to power through a military coup, used the demands of the U.S. to support the war on terror to consolidate his power base and quell internal opposition.[314]

Within Afghanistan, too, serious challenges presented themselves: For instance, its terrain made it an extremely difficult place to fight in (as had been shown by the previous experience of the Soviet Union) and risked a large number of American lives, which was very difficult to sell domestically. Therefore, the U.S. had to engage with local actors who knew the terrain and local circumstances. This meant giving a key role to Taliban resistance groups such as the Northern Alliance, even though this group, too, was hard to reconcile with the doctrine of liberty and democracy.[315]

Bush therefore faced a problem: His seemingly orderly and unambiguous global policy (the War on Terror) faced serious practical challenges when applied to particular local circumstances. The landscape he confronted in Afghanistan was anything but a straightforward trajectory. Instead it was full of areas of low fitness.

To navigate this very different landscape, Bush had to show considerable flexibility and adaptability. By engaging with actors such as the Northern Alliance or the president of Uzbekistan, Bush often *did* show such flexibility and waded into areas of low fitness.

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[312] Again, see Katzman (2001)
[313] Hannan described him as a 'ruthless dictator'. *The Spectator*, 29th November 2003
[314] See Hadar (2002)
[315] See Woodward (2002), Danspeckgruber & Finn (2007)

However, this left him facing other problems, exposing one of the key weaknesses of his rhetoric. The war on terror, just like the concepts of liberty and democracy, are not zero-sum games. Rather, the question of whether and in what form other actors joined this war, and what the U.S. would have to do to pursue its objectives, was determined by innumerable semi-autonomous agents at local level which required differentiated approaches.

At the same time, though, the war on terror and the Bush doctrine were defined as a zero-sum games, leaving the country open to charges of hypocrisy:

> 'The fact that the U.S. preached the virtues of democratisation in relation to some countries but, at the same time accepts the human-rights violations in... [others] undermines the standing of American politics' (Rudolph, 2002).

This charge of hypocrisy would become a key issue as the War on Terror went on.[316] Bush confronted local fitness landscapes within an overall framework which was static. He had to respond flexibly to local circumstances within an inflexible framework. Bush was often not able to respond to this assertion of complexity, largely due to the way the policy process which had given rise to the policy, was structured. Bush confronted a constant tension between the general rules of the War on Terror (international power relations, with us or with the terrorists etc.) and the specific circumstances within which these were applied. The discrepancy between the two was often hard to bridge.

The second fundamental belief in relation to Afghanistan was that, once terrorism (and those who harboured terrorists) had been defeated, the new status quo could be maintained. In his State of the Union Address in 2002 Bush said: 'Terrorists who once occupied Afghanistan now occupy cells in Guantanamo Bay. And terrorist leaders who urged followers to give their lives are running for their own' (Bush, 2002a).

What was at work here was a classic 'unfreeze-change-freeze' model discussed earlier. Once major combat operations had ended, all one had to do was to change the environment to one that is more favourable -the desired state such as democratic

[316] See Runciman (2006b)

government, training national armed forces, reconstruction of the infrastructure of the country etc- and this would ensure a maintenance of the status quo, i.e. a terrorist-free country. To this end, the United Nations approved a mandate for the creation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) which, since August 2003, is led by troops under NATO command.[317]

This focus on fast, easily measurable variables did not allow for an appreciation of local complexity. The exclusive focus on the overall framework (the War on Terror) allowed Bush to quickly move on to the next target in the War on Terror. Soon after 9/11 the debates about what this target should be were in full flow, without, however, rendering clear results.[318]

The apparent ease of the victory in Afghanistan served as a powerful semi-autonomous agent in guiding the debate. The victory had also made Bush incredibly popular, with his approval ratings often being around the 80% mark.[319] As such, there was an expectation that what had been achieved in Afghanistan could be repeated elsewhere. In February 2002, William Kristol, then chairman of the Project for the New American Century, stated that 'Iraq is next' in the war on terror. Arguing that '[a] military campaign against Iraq is [...] something we know how to do', he suggested that 'American and alliance forces will be welcomed in Baghdad as liberators.' Going further, he claimed that 'reconstructing Iraq may prove to be a less difficult task than the challenge of building a viable state in Afghanistan' (Kristol, 2002).[320]

Yet, even Bush was acutely aware that any move on Iraq would be controversial, both domestically and internationally: '[It] would have ignited a firestorm, the president knew' (Woodward 2004: 3). There were long-standing anxieties by some from within the administration about any military strike against Iraq.[321]

Despite this, Bush asked for an update on war-plans for Iraq on 21st November 2001 in a private conversation with then Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, a process

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317 For details on the mandate, see http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/mandate/index.html
318 There is extensive literature to show this. See, for instance, Clarke (2004).
319 See http://www.pollingreport.com/BushJob1.htm
320 See McFaul (2002)
321 See Ricks (2006)

which became a 'policy by [its] own momentum, especially with the intimate involvement of both the secretary of defence and the president' (*ibid*: 3).

As history would show, Bush was right in believing that such a policy would be hugely controversial.[322] As will be shown in the following two chapters, the almost instant move from the conflict in Afghanistan to the conflict in Iraq proved a defining moment in the attitudes of many countries (including the two other case study countries) towards the broader War on Terror. The question for this part of the study is not whether it was right or wrong to go to war but how Bush confronted this controversy.

Iraq and Afghanistan: Trying to control an increasingly complex Complex Adaptive System

Even within the CAS that is the elite actors of the US government, therefore, there was a re-assertion of complexity.[323] From the perspective of a Complexity approach, such normalization would not only be expected but actually is healthy and necessary. It allows for the generation of multiple options and therefore for the flexibility and adaptability necessary to respond to different and changing local boundary conditions.

As such, the question is not whether or not such normalization occurs, but when and how. It is here one comes to the crux of the hypothesis about the need to quickly de-centralise the policy process after the initial crisis since failure to do so will not enable more control over any such process but rather make the naturally occurring process of self-organisation within Complex Adaptive Systems less coherent across time and space.

Bush tried to respond to this re-assertion by *extending* the crisis-decision making process which had kicked in after 9/11.[324] As just mentioned above, one of the key issues in relation to this was secrecy. War plans for Iraq were drawn up in response to a private conversation between the president and his defence secretary who,

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[322] See Packer (2006) or Gordon & Trainor (2007).
[323] See also Mann (2004).
[324] See Bolton (2007)

according to all available accounts, had been an early advocate of an attack against Iraq in any case.[325]

A policy was defined (that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction and needed to be disarmed as an essential part of the War on Terror) which was then 'sold' both domestically and internationally. In a way, Iraq was the embodiment of the Bush doctrine, using U.S. power in order to facilitate regime change, followed by the installation of a liberal-democratic government. Again, therefore, the aim of developing a seemingly clear and unambiguous policy had been achieved. Congress approved a Resolution on the use of military force in October 2002 (White House, 2002).

Yet again, however, some of the key concepts of Complexity were ignored. Bush simply did not see Iraq as a Complex Adaptive System, or as part of the CAS which is the War on Terror. The intervention in Iraq had several knock-on effects across time and space which not only impacted on the chances of success in that country itself but also in Afghanistan and the broader War on Terror. It provoked multiple reactions within the coalition who initially supported the War on Terror as well as in the United States.[326] In short, Iraq led to innumerable feedback loops through which many semi-autonomous agents sought to influence the process of self-organisation. These feedback loops could not be controlled.

It is worth looking at this issue in a little more detail.

The fact that Bush managed to go to war in Iraq *despite* strong resistance internationally and the fact that he managed to push this plan through domestically with relatively few formal constraints suggests that *power* was still a key concept in determining political action. Bush did what he did because he *could* do so, even against fierce opposition in some quarters.[327] As such, there was no indication that the *broad overall* context within which policy was made had changed. What *did*

[325] See Woodward (2004) or Inderfurth & Loch (2004).
[326] For a debate on the longer-term consequences for the US, see Leffler & Legro (2008) or Glaser (2006)
[327] And, as will be shown later, there was a realisation in some parts of government in the other case study countries that resistance to any plan would have at best marginal impact on the policy decisions taken in Washington.

change was the *effectiveness* of these policies (both broadly and specifically) when applied to particular local conditions.

For instance, in military terms, the United States and her allies easily defeated and overthrew Saddam Hussein's army and government, as one would have expected given the relative military strength. However, more than 6 years after the American-led invasion, Iraq has still not been pacified.[328] The reasons for this are manifold but there is a general consensus that there was little planning for the aftermath of the war.[329] There was little appreciation of the particular *local* conditions that would be confronted and the factors (agents) driving these conditions.[330] Iraq did not conform to expectations, with no apparent ability to adjust the general framework to the particular situation.

In terms of this study, however, the more important question concerns the wider impact of these events on the concept of the War on Terror. As will be shown particularly in the German case study, the intervention in Iraq led to a significant change in German attitudes, both in relation to the United States and the War on Terror. Much of the sympathy the U.S. received worldwide in the aftermath of the attacks evaporated.[331] This, in turn, made the use of power to pursue particular policies and objectives much more difficult.[332]

The key again is to see the interlocking nature of Complex Adaptive Systems. Whilst it is perfectly possible to apply power and resources *to* a social CAS in pursuit of a particular aim, such as killing terrorists or changing regimes, this does *not* guarantee a particular *outcome*, such as the end of terrorism or the establishment of a liberal-democratic system in any particular country. This is because, in simple terms, what happens *to* social Complex Adaptive System does not mean that there is control over what happens *within* the same system.[333]

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328 See, for instance, *The Guardian*, 9th July 2009
329 See Omar (2005), Phillips (2005) or Tripp (2004)
330 On the importance of this and the consequences of the failure to do so see, for instance, Burke (2006)
331 For a discussion on this see, for instance, Gaddis (2005a)
332 Several interviewees argued that the *way* the U.S. pursued, in particular, its Iraq policy made other countries much more determined to be as difficult as possible. See Kegley & Raymond (2006)
333 On the importance of this distinction, see Ramo (2009)

This is a key point of the Complexity approach: Whilst broad concepts, such as power inequalities within the international system, are important, their exact *expression* depends on micro-processes between semi-autonomous agents within local boundary conditions. There is constant interaction between the general rules of a system and the local conditions within such system, one constantly influencing the other.

The key is to be *aware* of this interaction, something that Bush was not in relation to Iraq: For instance, according to one former German minister, 'There was a belief in the States that we would support them regardless as part of the War on Terror'.[334] There was a belief that, once the global conditions were set (i.e. you are either with us or with the terrorists in a global war) these would be maintained indefinitely. However, as will be discussed in chapter 7, the local boundary conditions in Germany - for instance its very different political culture and process- meant that the global framework set by Bush had lost much of its impact in Germany by the time Iraq became a serious item on the political agenda.

A Complexity approach would have been beneficial in allowing for the possibility of recognising this interplay and its consequences in relation to particular proposals for political actions. By stressing the importance of local circumstances in relation to global conditions, and thereby by *not* attaching more importance to one level of analysis over another, Complexity allows for a much more comprehensive analysis of crisis events like 9/11. From the point of view of Complexity, the reaction of the German government to the plan for an invasion of Iraq was hardly surprising simply because, within the particular local context, the bureaucratic hurdles to be overcome, and the domestic political costs that would have had to be paid far outweighed the importance and impact of the power of the United States in the international system post-9/11. As such, bureaucratic politics was at least as important as systemic power distribution.[335]

Similar problems occurred in Afghanistan where the process of self-organisation has continued apace.

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[334] Interviewed in May 2007

[335] This argument will be developed in much more detail in chapter 7. See McCartney (2002)

Far from being permanently defeated, the Taliban have re-grouped, many arguing that the situation in the country has steadily deteriorated in the last few years. According to a briefing by the United States Institute for Peace, 'Taliban fighters have re-emerged in full force in Afghanistan and insurgency-related violence has increased to record levels' (Cole & Morris, 2007). As a result, the United States has steadily increased the number of its forces on the ground.[336]

The wider knock-on effects of the problems in Afghanistan have also been significant. The conflict has increased regional instability, particularly in Pakistan, and has led to serious problems for the Western security alliance.[337]

With regards to Al Qaeda, the actions in Afghanistan and Iraq have actually contributed significantly to strengthening of bin Laden's ideas. As Burke states:

> '[The war on terror] is going very well from bin Laden's point of view....The world is a far more radicalized place now than it was before 11 September. Helped by a powerful surge of anti-Americanism, by Washington's incredible failure to stem the hemorrhaging of support and sympathy, and by modern communications, the language of bin Laden and his concept of a cosmic struggle has now spread among tens of millions of people, particularly the young and angry, around the world' (Burke 2004: 273-4).[338]

Al Qaeda has moved from being a quite tightly-knit organisation to being an idea. In short, it has responded and adapted to the changing circumstances within the Complex Adaptive System. As a result, the War on Terror shows no signs of ending. According to the State Department's own figures, the number of terrorist attacks worldwide showed a steady increase in the years following 2001, as did the number of people killed in these attacks.[339] The War on Terror therefore has been notable principally for its failure to reduce global terrorism.[340]

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[336] According to a CBS News Report there were 24,000 U.S. soldiers stationed in Afghanistan at the beginning of 2007, the highest number since the war began. See CBS News, 17th January 2007

[337] See Wilkinson (2006), Herd (2004)

[338] Omar (2005) makes very similar points.

[339] See Department of State (2005)

[340] For the wider impact of this failure, see Peleg (2009)

As such, *despite* the construction of a clear and unambiguous policy through a clear and orderly decision-making process, and despite the attempts to extend this process, it has not been possible for Bush to control the development of the War on Terror across time and space. The unambiguous global policy framework has not been able to adapt to local circumstances. The particular situation which confronted Bush in places like Afghanistan and Iraq did not conform to the plan he had devised. There was little to no awareness of the variable development of the War on Terror across time and space or the de-centralising effect of this ongoing process of self-organisation. Bush's orderly vision suddenly did not fit the reality he found.[341]

Again, none of these conclusions are particularly original and been widely acknowledged and commented upon.[342] What Complexity allows one to do, however, is to construct a new framework to explain *why* this is the case and what this implies for political action.

The US, the War on Terror and the process of self-organisation

If one looks at the above conclusions one can see that what is being described are all the elements and characteristics of a typical social Complex Adaptive System. One can summarise the War on Terrorism as displaying:

- *Partial Order*: There is basic agreement on the concept of the War on terror but no agreement on what this means *specifically* across time and space
- *Reductionism and Holism*: 'Terrorism' is a basic explanatory term but it cannot be broken down into clear, manageable and separate units which will form a 'whole'.
- *Predictability and Uncertainty*: One can predict the fall of the Taliban or Saddam Hussein but not the longer-term consequences of such actions
- *Probabilistic*: As such, the outcome of the War on Terror in its totality is uncertain
- *Emergence*: The War on Terror as a concept changes across time and space, adapting to differing local boundary conditions
- *Interpretation*: the War on Terror is being interpreted differently across time and space and therefore leads to different reactions, re-enforcing its partial predictability.

In short, the War on Terrorism is a Complex Adaptive System which self-organised. The question therefore becomes *what type* of process of self-organisation occurred

[341] Robert Kagan (2007) conceded that 'the world has become normal again.'
[342] See Rogers (2007)

and it is here that the issue of continued centralisation of the policy process becomes important.

As shown, the almost seamless transition from the war in Afghanistan to the war in Iraq allowed President Bush to extend the heavily centralised policy process instigated directly after 9/11. In doing so he succeeded in pushing through a very controversial policy both domestically and internationally. However, he did *not* manage to prevent the re-emergence of complexity and therefore of a process of self-organisation. What he *did* achieve was to change the *manner* of its re-introduction. Complexity re-emerged into the policy process in a less cohesive and more destructive manner. Other agents re-engaged in the process by essentially reacting *against* the president, his decision-making process and his policy. This, according to the senator interviewed, was the case in Congress[343], with domestic public opinion in general[344], and internationally.[345]

The reason they did so was because the continued centralisation of the policy process meant that the emerging differences had no forum to be expressed, no outlet within the process. As such, they were expressed outside it, directed *against* the same process. The result was a progressive loss of coherence with severe political consequences for Bush: the defeat of the governing party in the 2006 Congressional elections, his diminishing popularity etc. Internationally, as will be illustrated, exchanges also emerged and new alliances formed to express differences about the U.S. with Germany a particularly good example of this.

This lack of exchanges brought about by continued centralisation also re-enforced other factors critical to the failure of the Bush policy and policy process. It meant, for instance, that the local circumstances which determine the shape of a Fitness Landscape in a particular situation were not recognized. The containers used by Bush to define his policy (US power, the concept of the War on Terrorism etc) had little traction in either Afghanistan or Iraq. Others however, such as powerful anti-Americanism, nationalism, ethnic and religious ties, regional power structures etc,

[343] Interview June 2007
[344] See Engelhardt (2008)
[345] See Barnett (2009), van Evera (2008)

negated or, at least, changed the impact of the features upon which Bush had based his policy.[346]

This meant that the process and the policy lacked the flexibility to respond quickly to changing circumstances. Not only was Bush unable to prevent the re-emergence of complexity, and therefore to sustain his policy across time and space, his inability to react quickly meant that the process of self-organisation increasingly became one of low constraint, resulting in a loss of coherence, undermining the effectiveness of the policy still further.

As such, one had a situation in which the Complex Adaptive System normalised whilst the *policy process* did not, leading to the loss of coherence described above.

Using the CDE model one can track this process across time as follows:

[346] See Bhatia & Sedra (2008), Herring & Rangwala (2006)

Table 5.5 CDE model of US foreign policy process before, on and after 9/11

Conditions for Self-organisation	**Normal times (medium constraint)**	**Crisis (9/11) High Constraint (desired)**	**Maintenance of crisis mode over time (post-9/11) (consequence, low constraint)**
Container	Many and entangled: mission statements, bureaucratic loyalties etc	Few: President, Oval Office, War on Terror	Large and many: bureaucratic and national loyalties, cultures etc
Difference	Many, some significant: departmental priorities, power and resource differentials etc	Few: Presidential power, resource differentials etc	Innumerable: definition of terrorism, extent and tactics of War on Terror, political priorities, local circumstances etc
Exchange	Loose and ambiguous: NSC meetings, bi- and multilateral meetings etc	Tight, clear: hierarchical decision-making, use of White House structure etc	Arbitrary and meaningless: communication, not discussion, of decisions, lack of exchanges
Emergent Behaviour	Emergent patterns and structure, complex cause and effect, loose coupling (flexibility, adaptability, successive adjustments of policy)	Fast decision-making, unambiguous, clarity of pattern (War on terrorism, clear choice, with us or with the terrorists)	Uncoupling Random No cause and effect (increasing incohe-rence of War on Terrorism, dissolu-tion of containers, too many differences across time and space)

Bearing this in mind, how can such a loss of coherence be addressed or, if possible, prevented? Essentially, there has to be an acknowledgement that managing Complex Adaptive Systems 'is a social activity' (Rihani 2007: 140). In order to make the response to 9/11 a social activity, any process will have to take account of the differences discussed above and allow them to emerge into the system in a less destructive way. This requires two things: First, a reformulation of the policy framework. Second, and related, a de-centralisation of the policy process which would facilitate such a re-formulation. Many people have suggested how this might be done. One example was given by Donald W. Goodrich, chairman of the board of the 'Families of September 11'. He stated that

> 'Nearly all the discourse in this country about terrorism centres around the expression "war on terrorism" [...]. But thoughtful examination of the words used in these phrases shows they have no clear meaning. "Terrorism" is a method of waging war. One can never engage in a war, to say nothing of win a war, on a method of war' (Goodrich, 2006).

Crucially, in continuing, there is no talk of the eradication of terrorism. Rather, according to the testimony, the aim should be to 'marginalise' terrorists so that 'their numbers [can be] depleted' (*ibid*). Finally, this marginalisation can only be achieved through opening 'our minds to other ways of thinking about the world and its people' (*ibid*).

Goodrich is hence arguing for *engagement.*[347] Such a simple re-formulation opens the way for a very different approach to the issue of terrorism. 'Engagement' allows for multiple strategies in the pursuit of multiple, local objectives. Often, these objectives may not be directly related to terrorism. Different actors may set different priorities focussing, for instance, on infrastructure development, economic development, education etc. Which objectives to pursue would be something that would emerge at a local level far away from decision-makers sitting in Washington.[348]

The key task for any government and its leaders would, as such, be to *facilitate* such a process of engagement. This, in turn, would again require a de-centralisation of the

[347] Engagement has also been discussed by the Obama Administration. See Todd (2009).
[348] See also the 'Terrorism" chapter in Geyer & Rihani (2010)

political response and, as such, the political process. Such a de-centralisation can be facilitated in numerous ways but some simple changes could greatly assist such a process. Amongst them could be:

- Defining the issue at hand in less absolute terms
- Involving other parts of government and the international community in the process of policy formulation,
- Acknowledging the existence of differences across time and space and seeing them as a positive part of a Complex Adaptive System.
- Encouraging the involvement of local actors to give expression to these differences

This would allow for different containers across time and space, for the emergence of differences into the process and for exchanges to allow for expressions of these differences across different levels. Such type of process, with an emphasis on local engagement, would allow for the very spontaneity upon which Complex Adaptive System depend. In this respect, it is interesting to note the literature that has emerged on the lessons to be drawn from the Northern Ireland peace process, a classic example of an imperfect and evolving CAS. One of the key lessons from this conflict was the need for 'reliable partners for peace' within respective local communities, as well as the need for governments to 'support those at the grassroots' who are trying to create a safer and more secure society within those local communities (Reiss & Green 2005: 469-76).

In relation to September 11th the key action for a policy-maker would therefore be to ask what different actors, groups and people across space and time need in order to pursue their own particular objectives. That way, rather than having a top-down process, one can, potentially, establish a multi-level process which is mutually beneficial for all sides and which allows for learning and adaptation. This kind of engagement would again vary across space and time. In terms of its resources, reach and influence, the U.S. government is actually in an excellent position to facilitate such a process of self-organisation. Be it through political representation, the defence

establishment, business or other societal actors, the country has a reach into virtually all parts of the world.[349]

At a local level, the capabilities and resources of the U.S. government could become the 'difference that makes a difference'. These could be financial, political or economic, cultural or social. The options here are infinite. Often this may be very small-scale, practical support, such as the provision of meeting space (physical containers), thereby allowing for the development of alternative strategies within a local setting.[350]

In such a process of engagement political leaders, in this case the president could still play a crucial, if significantly different, role in order to ensure a coherent process of self-organisation:

- Ensure a normalisation of the policy process in order to allow adaptation to changing circumstances
- Formulate general rules according to which a process of self-organisation should function and which would allow for the definition of local objectives
- Stress the importance of local actors in defining and implementing these objectives
- Make interventions in the organisation of the policy process in order to allow for and encourage the emergence of differences and exchanges both within government and between government and other actors

Such actions will lead to a policy process which could look something like this:

[349] See Knopf (2003) on the importance of learning
[350] Examples of this kind of work do exist within the context of the war on terror in general and the war in Iraq in particular. See Gavrilis (2005).

Table 5.6: A post-crisis self-organising foreign policy process of medium constraint

Conditions for Self-organisation	Medium constraint	Examples
Container	Many and entangled	Discourse of Engagement, NSC meetings to coordinate, General rules, visionary leadership
Difference	Many, some significant	Variable objectives across time and space, Different interpretations about meaning and scope of engagement, differing interpretations of general rules
Exchange	Loose and ambiguous: NSC meetings, bi- and multilateral meetings etc	Meetings between and across various levels of government, international engagement, targeted engagement at local level to facilitate self-organisation
Emergent Behaviour	Emergent patterns and structure, complex cause and effect, loose coupling	Flexibility and adaptability, successive adjustments of polices

Crucially, with such an approach, containers, differences and exchanges are capable of adapting across time and space. It allows for local engagements to become the key containers in a way that presidential rhetoric about a war on terror never can. It

allows for the establishment of local exchanges in a way that 'you are with us or you are with the terrorists' does not. It would allow for the establishment of continuous feedback-loops, taking account of the continuous development of Complex Adaptive Systems. There is no endpoint in such a system at which to 'freeze' the process. There is scope for on-going adjustments of policy and a differentiated approach to dealing with a political issue across time and space.

Two points stand out from looking at the above table: One, what is being advocated here is a process of self-organisation of medium constraint, something which, as shown at the beginning of the chapter, already exists in the United States during non-crisis times. As such, what is being suggested here is a return to normality.

This is related to the second point, the role of Complexity. As shown throughout this chapter, after the initial shock of 9/11 and the centralisation this brought about, the Complex Adaptive System *did* normalise. As one would expect from a Complexity perspective, other actors once again tried to engage in the process of self-organisation. The fact that they could not, and the results this inability brought about, suggest that there *is* a crucial role to play for political leadership: that of facilitator, of an agent for a return to normality in political terms, i.e. a *different* role than was bring played by George Bush for years after 9/11.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the response of the US government to the events of 9/11 in the sphere of foreign policy. The chapter shows the changes that occurred in terms of the policy process after 9/11 in comparison to the 'normal' American foreign policy process.

This normal foreign policy process in the US is marked by a process of self-organisation of medium constraint. Whilst the president has an elevated position, various actors and institutions can and do play a significant role in the policy process. As a result, the process is marked by various containers and several significant differences. The tensions created as a result find expression through numerous exchanges which allow for change, adjustment and flexibility.

In line with the historical evidence presented in the literature review, the policy process changed significantly after 9/11, marked by strong centralisation around the president. This centralisation led to a policy process which was marked quick decision-making and the development of an unambiguous, seemingly orderly policy (the War on Terror) which was set at a global scale. As such, centralisation had achieved its objective. As one would expect, the policy developed (the War on Terrorism) received strong support both domestically and internationally.

However, through the application of Complexity, it was shown that, even within the confines of the American political system, the War on Terror was a classic Complex Adaptive System which developed through a process of self-organisation. As such, one must reject the idea of the War on Terror as a singular concept which can be applied equally across time and space, leading to a clearly defined and predictable outcome. Complexity shows that the utility of the policy depends strongly on local boundary conditions which, as in the case of Afghanistan or Iraq, severely negated the impact of the core features of the post-9/11 world, namely the abundant power of the United States.

As such, local circumstances (what happens *within* a particular CAS) can be as, if not more, important than the general rules of that system (what happens *to* a CAS). This chapter has shown that such recognition has crucial implications for the development

of the policy process after the occurrence of a crisis. It was shown that the multitude of factors that determine the process of self-organisation cannot be controlled across time and space, even if, as in the case of the US after 9/11, political centralisation is maintained over long periods of time. Such process does not *prevent* a process of self-organisation from re-occurring, but merely changes the *nature* of its re-occurrence. In the case of the US and the War on Terror, the lack of de-centralisation increasingly led to a loss of coherence of the process of self-organisation with severe consequences both for President Bush personally, as well as the chances of success for the War on Terror generally. It did so because there was no appreciation of the *interdependence* of variables, of the massively entangled nature of the system across which the War on Terror was meant to be implemented. There was no appreciation of the fact that, in social Complex Adaptive Systems, innumerable variables across various levels of analysis can have a significant impact on the utility of a global policy or that a concept such as the War on Terror will illicit different reactions across time and space.

In order to address these issues and facilitate a more coherent process of self-organisation, the chapter showed the importance of a quick *normalisation* of the policy process after the initial crisis in order to address the problems identified in a manner which allows for multiple solutions across time and space. In order to achieve such a normalisation, political leadership, both domestically and internationally, is vital. It was shown that, through its resources, the US is actually in a great position to pursue flexible policies which can be adapted to particular circumstances within specific local boundary conditions. As such, the key is not to diminish the importance of the role of the United States in dealing with the issue of terrorism. Rather, the chapter has argued for a different *kind* of role, with the country facilitating a process of self-organisation across time and space, with a de-centralised policy process being the key to achieving such objective. De-centralisation allows for the involvement of many agents across time and space, which permits the generation of multiple policy options across time and space and, as such, the very flexibility and adaptability which has historically marked normal American foreign policy processes.

In the following chapter the response of the United Kingdom to the events of September 11th will be analysed. Are there lessons that can be learned from the way the UK makes foreign policy in response to crises when looked at through a complexity perspective? How does the system compare to that of the United States? These questions will be addressed now.

Chapter 6: The British Case study

The shock and the response

As the terrorist attacks were unfolding in the United States, British Prime Minister Tony Blair was in Brighton, preparing for his address to the annual conference of the Trade Union's Congress (TUC). Upon realising the gravity of the situation, Blair 'resolved to cancel his speech' (Seldon 2005: 484). He declared that 'mass terrorism is the new evil in our world today' (Guardian, 12th September 2001). His Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, also declared upon seeing the second plane fly into the South Tower of the World Trade Centre that 'the world will never be the same again' (Seldon 2005: 485).

According to Seldon (2007), upon returning to London, Blair had a meeting with the leaders of the British intelligence services. It seemed highly probable that the attacks had been carried out by Bin Laden and his al Qaeda terrorist organisation. Blair began thinking about the international action required against Bin Laden and the worry that 'Bush would be put under enormous pressure to do something irresponsible' (Campbell 2007: 561). As such, Blair was keen to get in contact with Bush as soon as possible. For this reason Blair spent much of the morning of 12th September studying intelligence reports prepared for him by the intelligence services overnight, followed by a briefing which was attended by 'Whitehall's best brains from the intelligence services, the FCO and Ministry of Defence' (Seldon 2007: 49). The result was that 'Blair's mind was clear: "We'll just have to do something about Afghanistan, wont we"?' (*ibid:* 49).

Blair left no doubt from the outset that he would commit the British government to absolute solidarity with the United States in its response to the attacks. Speaking outside Number 10 in the evening of 11 September, he stated that the attacks represented a battle 'between the free and democratic world and terrorism. We, therefore, here in Britain stand shoulder to shoulder with our American friends in this hour of tragedy and we, like them, will not rest until this evil is driven from our world' (Blair, 2001a). This was a wide-ranging commitment which 'had been forming in his mind within moments of the second plane hitting the South Tower' (Seldon 2005: 488). According to Sir David Manning, Blair's principal foreign

policy advisor after 2001, Blair 'believed that every country would have to take a stand' in the battle against terrorism (Seldon 2007: 57). He also believed that this was a 'clear-cut moral struggle in which the forces of good were pitted against evil' (*ibid*: 57).

The basic tenets of the British response, therefore, were being put in place almost immediately after the attacks. This meant, principally, solidarity with the American government. According to one senior commentator who observed Blair closely in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, Blair saw it as an 'article of faith to work closely with the American President'.[351]

Blair did indeed manage to be the first world leader to speak to Bush on 12th September at 12.30pm British time. He was 'strongly multilateralist and sounded [Bush] out on holding a special G8 to forge a united front against terrorism; Bush, tellingly, did not seem keen' (*ibid*: 50).

Upon finishing the call, Blair sent a memo to Bush. He argued that the president should proceed in a measured way, carrying both public- and international political support behind him. Blair urged the President to release the evidence showing Al Qaeda's links to the attacks. Whilst stating again that Afghanistan was an obvious first target for action, he cautioned that 'they had to ensure that countries surrounding Afghanistan would be prepared to back tough action' (Seldon 2005: 491).[352] This, according to Blair, principally meant dealing with Pakistan. However, he also stressed the importance of improving relations with Iran, and, crucially, that 'restarting the peace process in the Middle East would help build Arab support for the war on terrorism' (*ibid*: 491). Blair also committed himself to 'act against all who financed, supported or sponsored terrorism, wherever they existed in the world' (*ibid*: 491). Finally, he again urged the involvement of international organisations, such as NATO and the United Nations in order to capitalise on the outpouring of international sympathy for the US following the attacks (*ibid*: 491). The memo

[351] Interview May 2007, see also Gamble (2007). Blair himself made this point repeatedly over the years. See speech to the Lord Mayor's Banquet (2006).
[352] The potential difficulties of getting such agreements were highlighted in a BBC briefing in 2001. See http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/1548452.stm, BBC (2001a)

represented a clear expression of his position 'from which he deviated little in the weeks and months to follow' (Seldon 2005: 491).[353]

His position was further defined in his speech to the House of Commons on 14th September 2001. Emphasisin that the attacks represented 'a tragedy of epoch making proportions', he argued that those 'who harbour or help [terrorists] have a choice: either to cease their protection of our enemies; or be treated as an enemy themselves' (Blair, 2001b), echoing the statement Bush would make on 20th September. He also repeated his commitment to solidarity with the United States in this 'time of need, trial and tragedy' (*ibid*). The universal outpouring of sympathy for the United States after 9/11 'should be maintained and translated into support for action' (*ibid*). He once again urged that 'now more than ever we have reason not to let the Middle East Peace Process slip still further but if at all possible to reinvigorate it and move it forward' (*ibid*). Finally, Blair again stressed the importance of international organisations in dealing with the aftermath of the attacks.

British support for the U.S. was to be focussed on different levels. Most generally, he committed Britain to support the war on terrorism which he defined as the 'destruction of the machinery of terrorism wherever it is found' (Blair, 2001d). The outcome in this war would leave no room for doubt: 'defeat [terrorism] or be defeated by it' (*ibid*).[354]

On a more practical level, British support was essentially two-fold: On the one hand, Blair was committed to providing military support in Afghanistan.[355] On the other hand, the support translated into diplomatic activity to ensure international support for the actions of the United States. Blair undertook 54 meetings with foreign leaders in the 8 weeks after 9/11 (Riddel, 2003). However, there is some debate about whether the coalition of countries that initially supported the United States in its actions, particularly in Afghanistan, was as *a result of* Blair's diplomatic activity.[356] Nevertheless, he *himself* saw it as his role to help construct this coalition in support

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[353] See also Coughlin (2006), particularly Chapter 6.
[354] There has been considerable debate on Blair's use of strident language in order to justify his positions during the War on Terror. See Runciman (2004).
[355] See, for instance, his statement on 25th September, Blair (2001c).
[356] See, for instance, Seldon (2005, 2007) or Kampfner (2004)

of American policy and act as a 'bridge' between the U.S. administration and the rest of the world.[357]

Just like Bush, Blair saw action in Afghanistan only as a first step in a broader war on terror. As he announced the start of the military campaign in the country on 8th October, he stated that '[e]ven when Al Qaeda is dealt with, the job is not over. The network of international terrorism is not confined to it' (Blair, 2001e).

Taken together, then, Seldon summarised Blair's policy as follows:

> 'sticking by the US and consolidating Britain's position as its closest ally; an unequivocal commitment to defeating al-Qaeda and other similar terrorists, initially in Afghanistan and then beyond; doing so multi-nationally by building an international coalition of support; the search for a breakthrough in the Middle East peace process, and winning over world opinion through the release of intelligence of al-Qaeda's complicity in the 9/11 attacks' (Seldon, 2005: 493).

Echoing Bush further, Blair also stated that the key to winning the war on terrorism was not just military power. He defined the war also in terms of what he called a 'set of global values.' For Blair, these global values are essentially 'democracy and freedom [...] in the broader sense of each individual having the economic and social freedom to develop their potential to the full' (Blair, 2001d).[358] The similarities to Bush here are obvious. He, as shown in the previous chapter, argued that a society based on democracy and liberty is a model which 'is true for every nation in every region.'

To achieve this spread of 'global values' Blair consistently advocated a process of 'nation building', starting in Afghanistan. As he stated on 13th November 2001, as the initial war in Afghanistan was drawing to a close,

> '[T]his time we will not walk away from you. We have given commitments. We will honour those commitments, both on the humanitarian side and in terms of rebuilding Afghanistan. We are with you for the long term. You, the people, must agree your own government, and your own future, but we the coalition must give you the help and support that you need as you seek to

[357] Several interviewees confirmed this. See also Bentley (2003)
[358] He made similar arguments repeatedly over the years, see Blair (2007)

> rebuild your troubled country, and that support will be forthcoming' (Blair, 2001f).

Therefore, the approaches of Blair and Bush seemed remarkably similar. Both believed that terrorism represented a 'new evil' in the world, both committed themselves unequivocally to 'defeating' this 'evil', and both argued that, to do so, one had to spread a set of 'global' values, essentially democracy and liberty, both believing that the defeat of one needed to be followed by the spread of the other. Both also saw Afghanistan as a crucial first battle to 'role out' this policy. After that one could 'move on' to the next stages in this conflict.

The next question therefore is whether these similarities in policy are also the result of similarities in the policy process. Did the process in the UK differ significantly from that of the U.S?

The decision-making process: Pre-shock

Historically, the United Kingdom has a 'long tradition of prime ministerial domination in foreign policy'.[359] Such domination only increases in times of crisis, according to one senior academic: 'The precedent for such a process is substantial'.[360]

One key factor for such domination is the way the British constitution has developed over the centuries. It has been described as one which is 'not, in any sense, a benchmark. It is simply, for better or worse, a state of affairs – "what happens"' (King 2007: 9). This is a critical difference between the British constitution on the one hand, and the American and German constitution on the other, where it represents a clear 'normative and legal standard' (*ibid*: 9). In short, Britain does not have a unified document, a singular, codified constitution. Rather, the British constitution has evolved over centuries and its provisions are found across a number of key documents, such as the Carta Magna, or the Bill of Rights. Bogdanor (2009) has contended that the constitution is an evolving entity and lists numerous bills he describes as 'constitutional' in nature.[361]

The result of such a 'small c constitution', according to King, has been the fact that the government 'was expected, and expected itself, to have a view about everything [and] to take all major policy initiatives…' (King 2007: 49). This has lent itself, potentially at least, to prime ministerial domination. For instance, there are no guidelines or rules on either what constitutes a 'crisis' or who should do what when a crisis situation arises: 'Of course, the [Prime Minister] decides [all of that]'.[362] The result, according to one official at the Foreign Office, is 'a very fluid system' of foreign policy-making.[363] Essentially, the Prime Minister can decide when and how to get involved in foreign policy issues: 'Number 10 gets what Number 10 wants'.[364]

359 Senior academic at seminar, November 2006.
360 Senior academic, interviewed May 2007
361 See particularly chapters 1 & 2.
362 Former government minister, interviewed March 2007
363 Senior Foreign Office official, interviewed May 2007. On the role of the FCO specifically see Johnson (2005)
364 *ibid*

Therefore, if the Prime Minister takes a personal interest in a particular story, 'that's it'.[365]

However, there *are* guidelines, on how the policy process should work. According to Andrew Blick, the *Ministerial Code* states that substantive policy decisions should only be taken after full consideration by the Cabinet. However, 'drawing up and interpreting the *Ministerial Code* is the responsibility of premiers themselves' (Blick 2005: 16). An outline of a 'normal' policy process to compare to a crisis process is therefore difficult. However, some general observations can be made:

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[365] *ibid*

Table 6.1: British Foreign Policy Process in 'normal' times[366]

Chain of command	Role	During the process input may be received by
1. Desk Officer	1. Monitoring developments in his or her region 2. Offer policy advice 3. First submission of draft policy	1. Special advisors Political advice and implications, for instance timing. At times, the advice of special advisors 'will conflict' with that of civil servants
2. Head of Department	Amends/signs off policy advice from desk officer	2. Other government departments Resource and policy implications for their respective areas
3. Director	Will sign off policy advice from Head of Department	3. Press Offices Have a 'crucial role'. Often, the press office of FCO and Downing Street 'will work together' on media implications The seniority afforded to a policy will often be determined by the level of media interest generated
4. Junior Minister Secretary of State Prime Minister	One of these will sign the policy and make it 'government policy' How far up the chain of command a decision will go 'is a judgement call', depending on numerous factors	4. Other interested parties May be interest groups or others. Their input and impact can vary widely

[366] This process was described to me in interviews with an official at the Foreign Office and a former advisor at the Foreign Office. Quotes in the table are from these interviews. Several books also describe this process, though with different graphics. See Leach *et al.* (2006), ch. 26

The British foreign policy process, then, can be seen as a typical Complex Adaptive System, though with some important distinctions from the normal American system outlined in the previous chapter. One can use Complexity mapping to illustrate the orderly, complex and disorderly elements of this system:

Figure 6.1: The British foreign policy process as a Complexity map

Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Physical complexity	Order

Examples

Detailed long-term development of UK foreign policy system	Multiple interpreta-tion of policy objectives within policy system	Interaction and competition between different actors and institutions	Decision-outcomes and dynamics	Basic power and institutional relations

The basic power structures are the most orderly aspect of the system. The Prime Minister sits at the apex of the system and, as shown, can get involved in pretty much any policy decision he chooses. Interestingly, Blair was generally known as a centralising prime minister, especially in the sphere of foreign affairs. In evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Liaison in 2002, Blair stated:

> 'One thing I do say though very strongly is that I make no apology for having a strong centre [...] in relation to foreign policy and security issues. I think again the simple fact of the matter is that in today's world there is a lot more that needs to be done at prime ministerial level. You need [...] a strong centre' (Blair, 2002a).

However, despite this, the British system allows for a coherent process of self-organisation of medium constraint. There is the potential for intense interaction between different actors and institutions. As one official put it, 'policy is not made in a vacuum'.[367] There is, hence, an acknowledgement that any policy developed will have an impact across a number of levels and in a number of areas.

[367] Senior Foreign Office official, May 2007

This interaction allows for different interpretations of particular issues to emerge into the policy process. Interestingly, this recognition of differences does not only pertain to those that may be encountered between governmental actors within the British system, but also to cultural, social and political differences internationally. For instance, one former minister at the FCO argued that one thing emphasised to British ambassadors worldwide is to be 'a good listener and a good persuader'.[368] The role of government, accordingly, is to set the broad policy goals but allow for 'greater variety in the ways that we [achieve them]'.[369] This fostering of variety is one of the key aims of a process of 'public diplomacy' and recognition of the importance of organic and conscious complexity across time and space.[370]

The detailed long-term development of the British foreign policy system is unpredictable. Whilst the basic power relations, with the prime minister at the apex, have stayed the same, there would, for example, have been no way of predicting the impact of the European Union on British foreign policy at the time the organisation was founded in 1951. Equally, there is no way of knowing what the policy process will look like 50 years from now.

What is notable about the British system is the way the basic power structures can be reinforced through prime ministerial preference. He has a lot of scope to dominate the policy process even during normal times, a point which was made in all interviews conducted for this part of the work. Some attributed this to Britain's imperial past, others to the generally centralised nature of the British political system.[371]

<u>*Britain's foreign policy actions as a Fitness Landscape*</u>

Britain's imperial past and associated status, such as permanent membership of the UN Security Council, has other consequences, principally the myriad of interests across the world which are a legacy of this past.[372] From this legacy also stems a *desire* on the part of British governments to get actively involved in world affairs.

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[368] Former Foreign Office Minister at seminar, April 2007; see also Welsh & Fearn (2008).
[369] *ibid*
[370] One former minister talked extensively about this concept and its importance during the war on terror and post-Iraq invasion at a seminar attended by the author. For a more detailed discussion of public diplomacy see, for instance, Wolf & Rosen (2004).
[371] See Steiner (1987) or Heferman (2005).
[372] See Addison & Jones (2007)

Blair's government, for instance, came to power in 1997 promising to be a 'force for good in the world' (Rawnsley 2001: 69).[373]

This has meant that successive British governments have been willing to involve themselves in question in many parts of the world. This has included a willingness to deal with 'difficult' regimes, those that do not pursue a set of 'reasonable strategies', as defined in Britain, in order to try and advance particular political objectives.[374]

However, this willingness to be active in international affairs also faces the reality of the relative decline of British power within the international system since the 2nd World War. Britain has 'tried to punch above its weight for the past half century' (Lord Wallace of Saltaire, 2004). As such, Britain's influence is often limited, presenting a significant area of low fitness in the policy landscape.

There are, therefore, considerable tensions between Britain's *willingness* to engage across the globe as a general rule, but its limited influence in relation to many particular issues. As a result, there has long been a debate about what Britain's realistic aims within the international system can be and how it should go about achieving them. One key theme to emerge out of that debate has been the attempt to better coordinate 'normal' foreign policy across government in order to allow for a maximisation of resources.[375]

As such, just like the US, Britain operates within a variable landscape with a mixture of areas of good fitness, low fitness and flatlands. Its dense network of diplomatic and other relations allow for the opportunity to navigate this landscape with flexibility. However, one key difference in the landscape of the United States and the United Kingdom are the respective power-resources. Britain's relatively limited resources mean that it does not have the range of options available of the US. It is partly these limits which have led to the renewed interest maximising the impact of public diplomacy. At the same time, as will be shown below, there are many within the political establishment who still regard Britain as a leading power. This tension is also an important feature of the British foreign policy system.

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[373] See Buller (2004) for a discussion of Labour's record on this issue.
[374] See Kampfner (2004)
[375] For a Foreign Office perspective on this debate, see Braithwaite (2008)

The British foreign policy system as a CDE model

One can identify several containers across the normal foreign policy system. Just like in the US, these containers can be personal (for instance, the Prime Minister or indeed the Foreign Secretary), bureaucratic or could concern particular policies or issues. In the case of recent British foreign policy, all three of these have been prominent: In 1997, for instance, the desire to pursue an ethical foreign policy provided a political 'mission statement' around which the government could develop policy.[376]

However, on this, as well as other issues, there soon emerged tensions about what this ethical foreign policy should mean, how far it should be extended and who should determine such questions.[377] Other, but often overlapping, differences include power- and resource differentials, differing political priorities between and across departments etc.[378]

A key role in coordinating policy across the departments and in bringing together the different views to develop a coherent policy is assigned to the Foreign- and Defence Policy Secretariat. Defining its role as 'to support the Prime Minister in delivering the Cabinet's Office's wider responsibilities for providing support to the Cabinet in delivering the coherence, quality and delivery of foreign and defence policy across departments', one of its key objectives is to develop and coordinate 'cross Government Strategies in support of Cabinet Government'.[379]

As such, the government has a mechanism in place through which such differences can be brought into the policy process and actualise the potential for change. Other such mechanisms include Cabinet meetings, bilateral and multilateral meetings between ministers and other government officials, meetings of international organisations etc.

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[376] See Cook (1997)

[377] Questions which led to serious tensions between Blair and Cook that were never fully resolved. See Cook (2004).

[378] See Hennessy (2001)

[379] See website(http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/secretariats/overseas_and_defence.aspx) for details

In summary, the process, as outlined above, allows for the critical elements of any process of self-organisation. Policy is developed across numerous levels between and across departments, who are subject to a number of containers. Differences can emerge into the policy process through a number of exchanges which, again, exist across a number of different levels both within particular governmental structures and between them. As such, numerous actors (semi-autonomous agents) have the opportunity to influence the process of self-organisation as it moves across time and space. Just like in the United States, the vagueness of the constitutional provisions (with Britain having no written constitution) allows for considerable flexibility to adjust polices across time and space to changing circumstances.[380] One can summarise the CDE of the normal British foreign policy process as follows:

[380] The Foreign Office official interviewed repeatedly emphasised the fluid nature of the system and argued that this was one of the main strengths of the British system. See also Peele (2004)

Table 6.2: **The normal British Foreign policy process as a CDE model**

Conditions for Self-organisation	**Medium Constraint**	**Examples of normal UK system**
Container	Many and entangled	Political mission statements, Bureaucratic loyalties
Difference	Many, some significant	Departmental priorities, Power and resource differentials, Differing interpretations of political objectives, Different strategic emphases
Exchange	Loose, ambiguous	Cabinet and committee meetings, Bi- and multi-lateral meetings, Speeches etc Diplomatic missions
Emergent Behaviour	Emerging patterns Emergent structure Complex cause and effect Loose coupling	Flexibility, Adaptability, Successive adjustments of policy

Once again, therefore, the normal British foreign policy process *facilitates* a process of self-organisation. Whilst centralising in nature, it provides enough opportunities for many semi-autonomous agents across different levels of analysis across time and

space to get involved in the policy process. As such, one can see that the Complexity approach often already gets applied in practice, without specifically mentioning the term 'Complexity'. However, as will be shown below and just like in the American case study, an *awareness* of such a process and its core concepts can have a significant impact on political actions in response to foreign policy crises.

To what *extent* this process is used depends on any number of factors, of which the policy-making style of the Prime Minister, is one crucial element. In Tony Blair, Britain had a Prime from the very start, tended to centralise foreign policy, a trend which was accelerated in response to 9/11 due to a combination of personal preference, expectations and particular circumstances.

The decision-making process: 9/11

Just like in the United States, and in line precedents, British foreign policy centralised extremely quickly in the immediate aftermath of the attack. However, this process was helped by a number of specific, situational factors particular to the British case. One of these was a peculiar set of circumstances on the day itself, as outlined by Seldon. Whilst Blair was in Brighton at the TUC conference,

> 'The key members of the Whitehall body responsible for co-ordinating foreign policy, the Defence and Overseas Policy Secretariat [...] were on a coach on their way to Hertfordshire. David Manning, Blair's senior foreign policy adviser, was caught in New York and out of contact' (Seldon 2005: 485).

As such, a common complaint was that no-one was in charge and that 'there was no-one of sufficient authority to brief us' (*ibid*). Departments were essentially waiting for guidance.[381]

There was also a general state of shock and confusion. The unprecedented nature of the events meant that there was 'no manual' on how to respond to the crisis.[382] There was 'complete chaos' in the FCO: 'Certain directorates were paralysed. No-one knew what would happen next.' As such, 'people were just watching telly. There was nothing much that could be done because no-one knew what was going on'.[383]

In terms of the political response, a vacuum had therefore developed. Shocked and confused, departments not only did not know what to do, but where waiting for someone to tell them what to do. This being a crisis situation there was hence pressure for the people at the very top of the system to provide this leadership. Blair, in addition, was a centralising prime minister who was keen to control events. He therefore stepped into the political vacuum.

There was another key factor in the unfolding process of centralisation. Unlike many actors in Whitehall Blair, according to himself, felt a sense of certainty in response to the events. In an interview in 2002 he said: 'Sometimes things happen in politics, an

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[381] This was confirmed by a senior Foreign Office official interviewed in May 2007.
[382] This term was used by Seldon (2005), who provides a detailed description of the chaos in the immediate aftermath of the attacks
[383] Senior Foreign Office official, interviewed May 2007

event that is so cataclysmic that, in a curious way, all doubt is removed. You are very certain as to what has to be said and done. From the outset, I really felt a great sense of that certainty' (Blair, 2002b). As such, Blair was set apart from the general mood.[384]

This contrast between his certitude on the one hand and the state of confusion within, for instance, the Foreign Office (FCO) on the other, was also significant in that it confirmed certain views that Blair had about the machinery in Whitehall in general and the FCO in particular. Blair was 'suspicious' of the Foreign Office and did not trust its political advice. This view was shaped in particular by, as Blair saw it, the failure of the FCO to intervene in the former Yugoslavia: 'He was heavily influenced by the [...] failures of the 1990s'. For Blair, there was a moral duty to intervene in situations such as Yugoslavia and the FCO had failed to provide a lead to do so.[385] As such, the confusion that was apparent in the FCO confirmed and accelerated this process.[386]

This lack of trust was reflected in the policy process that followed 9/11. According to another senior academic the immediate response to 9/11, as outlined above, was developed by Blair 'entirely on his own'.[387] In fact, according to Seldon, the full Cabinet met only twice in the weeks after 9/11 (Seldon 2007: 57). Virtually all policy discussions took place in the Prime Minister's office in Downing Street (*ibid*).[388]

This is not to say, however, that Blair had no advisors to call upon. In fact, following the 2001 general election Blair re-organised his private office so that there were 7 people 'working directly for the Prime Minister on Foreign policy' in Number 10.[389] At times these were people who had moved from the Foreign Office, as in the case of his Special Advisor on Foreign policy after 2001, Sir David Manning. According to

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384 Runciman (2006a) has argued that with 9/11 Blair's worldview 'became set in stone.'

385 Senior academic at seminar, November 2006; also confirmed in an interview with a former advisor at the FCO in May 2007. Interestingly, there has been a long-standing debate about the quality of strategic management and leadership at the FCO, which started before 9/11. For instance, the Annual Report 2005/06, prepared by the Parliamentary Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, refers to internal FCO findings in which only 28% of staff agreed that the FCO is well-managed. In the report, the permanent secretary at the FCO is quoted as saying that many staff 'do not feel that the leadership is of the quality it should be...the higher up you get the less confidence seem to have in the overall management'. As such, several reforms had been instigated to improve strategic management in the department. See Select Committee on Foreign Affairs (2006)

386 See also Seldon & Kavanagh (2005)

387 Interview with senior academic, May 2007

388 Also confirmed by a former minister interviewed.

389 Senior academic at seminar, November 2006

Stothard, such a move is significant because 'more often it seems that [these advisors end up] representing the Prime Minister to the Department [and not the other way around]'.[390] By the time of 9/11, therefore, Blair had in place what the former government minister called 'a parallel structure' for policy-making.[391]

Yet, even within Number 10 the precise role of the advisors needs to be looked at more closely. Peter Stothard contended that Tony Blair expected his advisors to make the running, but not to think for him (Stothard 2003). Asked about this in the interview, he said that

> 'the most vital thing for any leader...is that the people around you stick with you...So, it is absolutely vital for Blair that any doubts that there were...that people kept those to themselves...that would be a basic leadership strategy. That would be true of a corporation'.[392]

One of the former government ministers was clear about the role of Blair's advisors: 'They told him what he wanted to hear'.[393] Interestingly, this former minister was a key supporter of the Blair Labour leadership campaign and, as such, not one of his 'traditional critics', though the minister was, from the outset, very critical of the concepts and policies developed post-9/11.

What, then, developed was a very traditional system of crisis decision-making, just like in the United States. In terms of division of labour this meant that government departments concerned themselves with the practical implications of the crisis, such as internal security or consular maters. Here Britain has a well-developed crisis-management system, based on the Government Emergency Committee (COBRA) which, according to one FCO official is admired: 'We have [other] countries look at it [all the time]'.[394] At the same time, the *political* response was fashioned by the Prime Minister.

Yet, this very predictable process hides some significant factors which are particular to Britain and which, from a Complexity perspective, are critical. The particular

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[390] Interview on 13 April 2007

[391] Former minister, interviewed March 2007. There is an extensive debate about his style and policy-making structure. See Peele (2004)

[392] Interview on 13 April 2007

[393] Former minister, interviewed March 2007

[394] Senior FCO official, interviewed May 2007

circumstances in Britain at the time were different, both in the fact that, in Tony Blair, the country had a centralising Prime Minister in any case, and the fact that, on the day itself, there was a clear power vacuum due to a particular set of circumstances. This *accelerated* a process of centralisation which Blair had already initiated in foreign policy. As shown, Blair was able to initiate such a process because, amongst other things, constitutional provisions in the UK placed a lot of power in the hands of the government in general, and the Prime Minister in particular. The *result* – a policy process almost entirely determined by the Prime Minister on and after 9/11 – was vey predictable. However, the *process* which led to it was determined by numerous local semi-autonomous agents, acting within particular boundary conditions. Such recognition is crucial for understanding what is to follow.[395]

Table 6.3: Centralisation of UK policy process on 9/11

Chain of command	Role	During the process input may be received by
1. Prime Minister	1. Provide political leadership 2. Provide re-assurance	Special advisors in Downing Street: a) David Manning, Strategic foreign policy advice b) Jonathan Powell, Chief of Staff c) Sir John Sawers Prime Minister's Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs d) Alastair Campbell Head of Strategic Communications e) Anji Hunter Special Personal Assistant

Using the three Complexity tools, the impact of this kind of approach becomes immediately apparent and stores significant problems for the future development of the Complex Adaptive System.

[395] The process depicted in the graphic is the result of evidence obtained both through interviews, attending seminars on Blair's policy process and evidence presented in literature.

By emasculating the policy normal policy process Blair strips away the complex and disorderly elements of the Complex Adaptive System. By arguing that countries 'who harbour or help [terrorists] have a choice: either to cease their protection of our enemies; or be treated as an enemy themselves' (Blair, 2001b) he divides the world into clearly definable camps, with one having to defeat the other.

Figure 6.2: The UK Foreign policy Complexity Map on 9/11

Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Mechanical complexity	Order

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Time

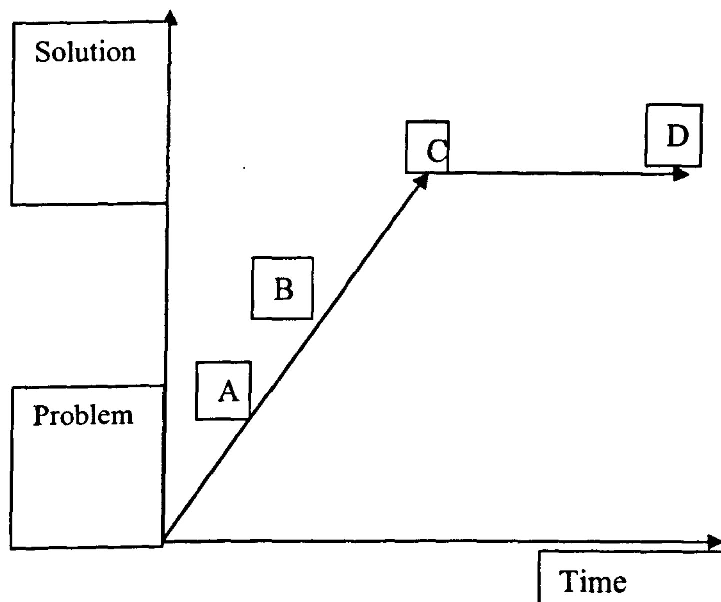
Examples

Attacks of 9/11 represent disorder	None: 'Defeat terrorism or be defeated by it'	None. Those who harbour terrorists 'have a choice to make'.	Some. Tactics and extent of War on Terrorism are subject of discussion within Blair's inner circle	End result: Defeat terrorism

The similarities with the United States are obvious. The War on Terror was seen as a clearly definable policy targeted at a clearly definable enemy across time and space. 9/11 was seen as an event which had 'disordered' the system. The aim therefore was to re-order it as quickly as possible. Just like Bush, Blair defined the policy as global and, as such, at the highest possible level of a Complex Adaptive System, with the boundaries set by the globally applicable definition of 'terrorism'.

The result was, again, a radically simplified policy landscape. The War on Terrorism was seen as a series of sequential steps which would follow logically from one another and could be repeated across time and space.

Figure 6.3: The UK War on Terrorism as a typical x-y graph



A: Terrorism defined as problem
B: Apply policies (military, economic, MEPP etc)
C: Defeat terrorism and install liberal, democratic governments
D: Maintain this situation

Once again, the policy process both reflected and influenced the nature of the policy developed. Just like in the US, the leader of the Executive, in this case Blair acted as a very strong, magnet-like container. His policy of absolute solidarity with the US and his commitment to defeat terrorism also acted as a strong political container which initially received strong support from other political parties.[396]

In developing this policy Blair used his power -obtained both through constitutional provisions, role expectations, and personal preferences for a strong centre- to prevent input of many actors who would traditionally have been involved in the foreign policy-making process. The degree of authority Blair was able to exercise was therefore the significant difference to make a difference. This power differential was further underpinned by the geographical container of policy being made almost exclusively in the prime minister's private office in Downing Street.[397] Finally, Blair's very certainty disinclined him from consulting more widely. As shown, this

[396] The leader of the Conservative Party at the time, Iain Duncan Smith, said that he had 'absolutely no hesitation in giving the Prime Minister my party's full support for his immediate pledge to stand shoulder to shoulder with our strongest friends and allies in the United States' (Duncan Smith, 2001).
[397] Practical concerns here are also crucial. The PM's private office in Number 10 is very small and does not fit many people, as the author knows from personal experience.

certainty contrasted with the widespread confusion within other parts of government. The only key constraint on this process is the fact that one individual cannot focus on too many issues at the same time, a problem which would bedevil Blair as the policy was rolled out after the attacks and which is a crucial issue in relation to the Complexity approach.[398]

This combination of factors also had a significant impact on the exchanges that developed. Internally, the key exchanges were often informal meetings with his closest advisors. Externally, the key exchange was the phone call made to Bush on 12th September and the follow-up fax which was sent the same day and which outlined Blair's policy priorities.[399]

Having set out his policy stall to Bush, Blair opened up another set of exchanges by his diplomatic activity with other world leaders through which he attempted to build a broad coalition in support the war on terrorism. He worked extensively to bring other countries 'on side', to 'sign up' on the 'right' side of the 'clear choice' he had defined in the aftermath of the attacks.

At the time, this kind of process had the desired effect which can be summarised as follows:

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[398] Which goes back to the general problem of 'limits of public leadership'. See Koch & Dixon (2007)
[399] See Couglin (2006)

Table 6.4: The UK policy process on 9/11 as a CDE model

Conditions for Self-organisation	High Constraint	Examples
Container	Few	Prime Minister Downing Street War on Terror Global values
Difference	Few	Prime Ministerial power
Exchange	Tight, clear	Fax and phone call with Bush, Meetings and calls with other world leaders, Hierarchical decision-making and communication systems domestically
Emergent Behaviour	Fast decision-making, unambiguous policy, clarity of pattern	Global applicability of War on Terror, countries have 'clear choice to make'.

Once again, such a process was predictable in the aftermath of a major foreign policy crisis such as 9/11. Yet, as has already been shown, from the very beginning, there were clear differences between the United States and the United Kingdom in terms of *how* and *why* this process developed and the *specific* policies it produced. It is in the analysis of these differences and their specific impact that Complexity can again be of added value.

Post-shock: 9/11, the War on Terrorism and the re-emergence of Complexity

What is remarkable, then, is the seemingly identical structure of the decision-making process between the United States and the United Kingdom. Both were highly centralised around the respective leaders of the Executive and both, as a result, quickly led to the emergence of a seemingly unambiguous and united policy response.

However, as will be shown now, just like in the case of the US, complexity very quickly re-emerged into the policy process, both in Britain itself, as well as in the dealings between the British, the US and other governments. Many of these differences were a direct result of the different local boundary conditions within which Bush and Blair acted. Complexity mapping can be used to start to illustrate this point.

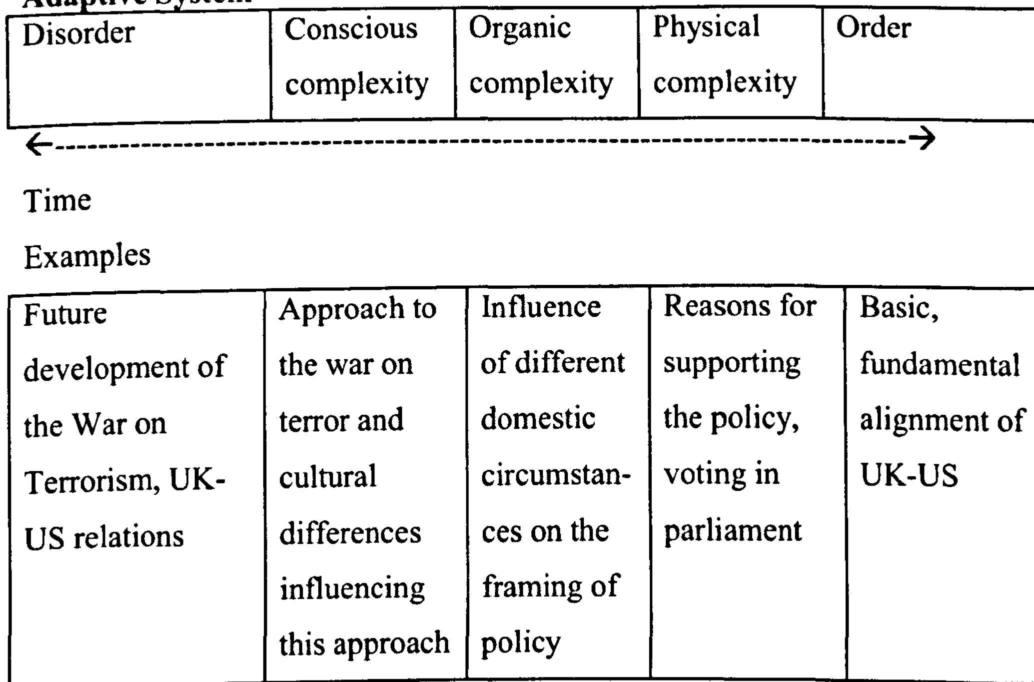

Figure 6.4: British and US perspectives on the War on Terror as a Complex Adaptive System

Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Physical complexity	Order

←---→

Time

Examples

Future development of the War on Terrorism, UK-US relations	Approach to the war on terror and cultural differences influencing this approach	Influence of different domestic circumstan-ces on the framing of policy	Reasons for supporting the policy, voting in parliament	Basic, fundamental alignment of UK-US

Supporting the United States in the immediate aftermath of September 11th was an obvious thing to do politically. Even Blair's harshest critics conceded that he 'very rightly [...] expressed his solidarity with the American people. His support for the American action in Afghanistan followed naturally, and that action was [...] legally justifiable, militarily feasible and in any case politically inevitable' (Wheatcroft

2007: 81-2).[400] The United States being the only remaining global superpower Blair believed it was essential for Britain to stay close to the country politically in order to have *any* chance of influencing its political choices. The power of the United States, then, heavily influenced the policies pursued by Britain, a middle-ranking European power.[401]

Yet, the *precise* reasons for Blair's unconditional support were subject to local complexity and clear particular *British* interests. As shown, Blair was keen to be the first leader to speak to President Bush.[402] He was so because there were clear differences between the two countries in their approach to the war on terror, *despite* the apparent unity between the two leaders. As such, Blair needed access to the President in order to bring these differences into play. His general support was also influenced by particular factors. It is at this point that organic- and conscious complexity become important.

The most obvious difference was the aspects highlighted by Blair about what was needed in order to win the War on Terror. First, one had Blair's repeated assertion of the importance of multilateralism and, as such, the involvement of international organisations, like NATO or the United Nations. Blair stressed that the 'world should stand together against this outrage [of 11 September]' and went on to praise the actions taken by NATO in evoking the mutual defence clause of Article 5 as well as the UN Security Council which, through a resolution passed just days after the attacks, set out 'its readiness to take all necessary steps to combat terrorism' (Blair, 2001b). This contrasted sharply, as shown, with the assertion by one American official who described the evoking of Article 5 of the NATO treaty as 'purely symbolic'.[403]

Another critical difference was Blair's repeated assertions that the war on terrorism should be seen in a wider international context and his focus on the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP), a new effort in which he saw as critical in gaining, and maintaining, Arab support for the wider war on terrorism. This opened up a

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[400] Kilfoyle (2007) makes similar points.
[401] See Campbell (2007), Naughtie (2004)
[402] See Campbell (2007), Dyson (2006)
[403] Senior Foreign Service official, interviewed May 2007

significant divide between him and the Bush administration since this was 'not a view that would attract much support in either Washington or Israel' (Coughlin 2006: 156). Seldon quotes one U.S. Defence official as follows:

> 'I always thought that Blair's pleas for progress on the Middle East were a lot of "BS". It was nice listening to Blair talking about it. It was the kind of stuff you'd expect from a European leader. So you kept on saying, "Yeah, OK, OK, we have all the intentions in the world", but the fact is, the players weren't there, the timing wasn't there, the substance wasn't there. Tony Blair would respond, "Yes, but you have to create all those." It just wasn't going to happen' (Seldon 2007: 64-5).

Interestingly, however, in Britain it was the very importance attached by Blair to the Middle East Peace Process led to centralisation, with Number 10 taking ownership of this policy in the British case. According to the official the policy was 'hived off' to Downing Street.[404]

The question, therefore, is *why* these differences emerged so quickly between the two countries, even whilst there was apparent unity between the two leaders. The answer lies in the semi-autonomous agents that shaped their respective Complex Adaptive Systems.

Key to understanding these differences are the political and social cultures confronted by the two leaders. As Kampfner has shown, the language used by Bush to define the war on terrorism (for instance, his declaration that bin Laden was wanted 'dead or alive' or that 'we are gonna smoke him out of his hole') did not go down well in Britain and, for many, it 'reawakened' their 'antipathy' for Bush soon after the attacks (Kampfner 2004: 122).[405] Yet, in the US this kind of approach was hugely popular. Naughtie (2005) has shown how the different cultures, both European and American, shaped the respective styles and perspectives of Bush and Blair. Not only, he argued, are there deep cultural differences which have had a significant impact on their political outlook, but there was a failure on both sides to appreciate and understand these differences or, at least, accept them.[406]

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[404] Senior official at the FCO, interviewed May 2007. See also Select Committee on Foreign Affairs (2001) or Dumbrell (2009)

[405] On Bush's rhetoric see, for instance, *The Daily Telegraph*, 18th September 2001

[406] See, in particular, chapter 5 for a discussion on this issue.

Bearing in mind these social differences, there were also clear differences in *political culture*, which is reflected in the respective views of the leaders on what foreign policy should be about.

Blair outlined his foreign policy approach during a speech in Chicago, where he developed a 'doctrine of the international community' (Blair, 1999). He stressed that 'today more than ever we are mutually dependent [and] national interest is to a significant degree governed by international collaboration [...]' (*ibid*). According to him, one could clearly discern a set of values in a globalised world: liberty, the rule of law, human rights and an open society. The spread and defence of these values, Blair argued, was a concern for all and, as such, intervention in the affairs of another state would be justified when certain conditions are met.[407] Isolationism was no longer an option when political crises in one country could have far-ranging consequences in many other parts of the world. Blair, therefore, called for a foreign policy in defence of global moral values. Blair applied this doctrine to the conflict in Kosovo in the late 1990s, where Serb forces 'ethnically cleansed' the majority Albanian population of the province, to argue strongly for NATO intervention to halt the conflict having already been strongly critical of the what he regarded as weak intervention by the West in the preceding conflicts in the Balkans.[408]

Bush, by contrast, argued that regional conflicts such as the one in Yugoslavia or in Somalia (where the US lost dozens of men in one day of fighting in the capital Mogadishu in 1993[409]) should essentially be resolved by regional and local powers. The United States should focus on maintaining its global strategic advantage and *not* involve herself in 'nation building'.[410]

As such, both Blair and Bush believed that they faced a serious terror threat, as exemplified by 9/11, which both defined similarly and to which they developed seemingly identical responses. Yet, *how* precisely this should be done and how widely this battle should be defined was subject to differences that can be explained

[407] For a detailed discussion of these conditions, see Blair (1999). See also Little & Wickham-Jones (2000)
[408] Again, his speech in Chicago is a good expression of his arguments (Blair, 1999)
[409] In all, the US lost 45 soldiers during fighting in Somalia. See http://americanmemorialsite.com/somalia.html
[410] See Rice (2000)

by the *local* circumstances, the local *semi-autonomous agents*, both leaders confronted.

In Blair's case, one such agent was his own political party. As shown, some Labour politicians were highly suspicious of Bush and, in turn, of Blair's closeness to him.[411] So, in responding to 9/11, Blair

> needed to offer something more than American power and retribution...[As such] he spoke of poverty and debt, proclaiming in one of his most powerful oratorical flourishes [during his speech to the party conference in October 2001] : "The state of Africa is a scar on the conscience of the world...[I]f we don't [heal it] it will become deeper and angrier"...He promised to tackle the problems from "the slums of Gaza to the mountains of Afghanistan"' (Kampfner 2004: 122-3).

Blair, in short, proposed nation-building on an enormous scale, much to the disdain of many within the Bush administration.[412]

Considering the above, it should be unsurprising that, almost from the very outset, doubts were expressed from within the British political system about the feasibility of the war on terrorism, as defined by Blair, as well as his absolute commitment to the United States in pursuing this war. Peter Stothard, for instance, has argued that there has been a long-established debate within the FCO about Britain's relationship with the United States. On the one hand there was a view that

> 'the greatest threat to global stability is not American interventionism but too little of it. [On the other hand], [t]here is also a strong view which says that British interests have been damaged by not being closer to whatever the thinking of our major European partners was and you could [find] people in the Foreign Office who would take both these views'.[413]

According to one senior academic, 'there were [doubts both in the FCO and the Ministry of Defence]'.[414] Others were more forthcoming: One former senior diplomat at the Foreign Office contended that serious doubts about Tony Blair's policy had been expressed in respect to both the Middle East and, later, Iraq, but that

411 See Campbell (2007)
412 As all principal books about 9/11 make clear. See also Tripp (2004)
413 Interview, 13 April 2007
414 Senior academic, interviewed May 2007

'Tony Blair and successive Foreign Office ministers have not listened to, let alone accepted, advice from their officials' (Miles, 2007).[415]

Whilst one has to treat such views with a certain caution, bearing in mind the particular interests and perspectives of the people expressing them (Miles, for instance, is a former FCO advisor), it is notable that these doubts did not confine themselves to some present or former government officials. After Blair's speech to the Labour Party conference in October 2001, Andrew Rawnsley noted sarcastically that 'Missionary Tony will cleanse the planet of disease, poverty and conflict'.[416] Others accused Blair of hubris, arguing that his plans were both over-ambitious and ill-thought out. Kilfoyle quotes the former head of MI5 as arguing at the end of 2001 that 'a war on terrorism implies that you are going to exterminate terrorism and I don't see how anyone can do that' (Kilfoyle 2007: 88).

What one has then is a classic case of complexity re-asserting itself across various levels. On the one hand, applying Complexity mapping has shown that even an apparently unified political approach is the result of different processes of self-organisation. On top of that, the different local boundary conditions within which both leaders had to work actually meant that there were significant differences between them on how the *general* concept should be turned into *particular* policies. Whilst the importance of the systemic level, and the role of the hegemonic power within it is crucial (meaning that the War on Terrorism proclaimed by Bush *had* to be supported in political terms), the *specific* definitions and policies which followed were determined across many levels *below* the systemic one. As such, a global policy self-organised according, often, to domestic factors which, as will be shown, would have a significant impact on the global policy. Different levels of analysis were therefore influencing *each other*, often in unpredictable ways.

From the point of view of Complexity such developments represent a *normalisation* of the Complex Adaptive System after the initial crisis. Politically this was crucial since it meant that Blair was facing a very different political landscape than Bush *despite* the fact that the policy advocated by Blair, and the policy process employed to devise it, were very similar to those used by Bush in the United States. As such,

[415] A view also held by a former special advisor at the FCO interviewed in May 2007
[416] *The Observer*, 7 October 2001

one can see that self-organisation did not *stop* as a result of political centralisation. In fact, the differences touched upon above only amplified as Blair tried to roll out his approach and 'sell' the War on Terror internationally.

Rolling out his War on Terror: Blair and local Fitness Landscapes

As shown, one of Blair's principal roles, according to himself, in the aftermath of 9/11 was to garner support for US policies internationally. Initially, this tactic seemed to be working well: The European Union declared support for the United States and committed itself to fighting terrorism, agreeing for the first time a common definition of the term.[417] Blair claimed credit for the coalition that was constructed and was particularly pleased that he managed to engage with a number of regimes that others regarded as international pariahs, particularly Iran.[418]

However, this unity again was unsustainable even in the short run across time and space. Most fundamentally, some countries did not share his vision of 'global values', or of the necessity to make a 'clear choice' between the 'West' and 'terrorism'. These issues manifested themselves particularly in Middle East, where Blair's efforts were characterised as 'brave, miserable and fruitless'.[419]

As time progressed, there was also growing anger about his self-appointed role as a 'bridge' between 'Europe' and the US.[420] According to Seldon, Blair's proposal to other European leaders shortly after 9/11 that he represent their concerns about the War on Terror to Bush 'did not slide down as easily as the fine Number 10 wine [since] Blair did not hold the EU presidency [...] nor was Britain the temporary chair of the UN Security Council' (Seldon 2007: 66). As such, feedback loops began to show growing resentment towards Blair as the War on Terrorism unrolled.

As time progressed, there was also growing hostility towards the United States, fuelled, in particular, by Bush's policy towards Iraq and the failure to show any tangible progress in the war on terror, both of which will be discussed in more detail

[417] See, BBC News Online (2001b), 20th September 2001
[418] See Coughlin (2006)
[419] *The Times*, 2 November 2001. See Langlois (2002) for the problems of a global discourse.
[420] However, there is some debate about whether this bridge is really based on ideological unity. See Riddell (2003).

later.[421] This loss of support for Bush internationally had a profound impact on Blair's position and his ability to defend his course of absolute solidarity with the United States.[422]

Blair's general policy, then, faced significant particular challenges as he tried to role it out across the globe. The hostility many domestic actors felt towards the United States, the criticism he faced internationally over his self-appointed role as 'bridge' between the US and Europe and his attempts to spread 'global values', as well as the hostility in the United States towards Blair's attempts at multilateralism, nation-building and his broad definition of the war on terror all represented formidable, and often contradictory, areas of low fitness in his path of 'reasonable strategies' (destroy terrorist infrastructure, nation-building, spread of global values). In short, there was a significant re-assertion of complexity, determined principally by variable local boundary conditions across time and space, all this *despite* the fact that the *global* conditions, especially the power of the United States, had not changed.

Such contradictory pressures are typical of social (in this case political) Complex Adaptive Systems as numerous variables and agents across different levels of analysis re-assert themselves into the process of self-organisation. It showed that system was normalising. The question therefore becomes how would Blair deal with this normalisation and the tensions this brought to the surface?

Tony Blair and Complexity: Trying to change a Fitness Landscape

Essentially, Blair attempted to assert control over these apparent contradictions through a further assertion of command and control, drawing on some of his key personal characteristics.

One of the consistent threads running through all interviews was the characterisation of Blair as a person with enormous self-belief. Kampfner quotes a senior French official as saying that '[t]here is not a single problem that Blair thinks he cannot solve with his personal engagement' (Kampfner 2004: 128).[423] In terms of any

[421] The crudeness of Bush's policy was something often referred to in the interviews conducted, and will be important in the German case study.
[422] For a detailed discussion on the impact on Britain's relationship with Europe, see Marquand (2003) or Lieven (2003). For a review of the 'Special Relationship' see Gamble (2006)
[423] A point confirmed by the former government minister.

process of self-organisation, Blair therefore believes in himself as an incredibly strong personal container through which he can control and eliminate differences and which allows him to construct very tight exchanges. Change, then, can be brought about by personally creating the conditions in which it can be affected. As such, his job would be to convince others of the correctness of his policies.

One of the tactics Blair used repeatedly in order to do so was another essential element of traditional crisis management: the need for speed. In his speech to the Labour Party conference in 2001 he stated that 9/11 was crucial because '[t]he Kaleidoscope has been shaken. The pieces are in flux. Soon they will settle again. Before they do, let us re-order the world around us' (Blair, 2001d).

This is a classic expression of the 'unfreeze-change-freeze' theory already discussed in this work. For Blair, 9/11 represented a 'window of opportunity', the time between the end of a 'previous' and a 'future' system. It therefore provided the chance to re-order the pieces in the desired fashion which would then allow for the 'freezing' of a 'new', more stable and benign world order. As such, maximum concentration of power and effort was needed in order to affect the desired change before it was 'too late'. Key was to 'lock in' as much of his vision into the 'new world order' as possible. Crises, then, are seen as junctures, points at which much, or everything, changes.[424]

Yet, his vision of what should be done during this period did not tally with the vision of Bush. At the same time, the vision of the United States created hostility both domestically and, as time progressed, internationally. Blair, therefore, had to perform a double act of persuasion: He had to persuade the United States of the 'correctness' of his approach to the War on Terror whilst, at the same time, showing to his domestic audience and his European partners that he could influence the political choices of the US.[425] It is here that another core feature of his beliefs becomes a core part of an evolving Fitness Landscape: power.

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[424] For a recent review on critical junctures see, for instance, Hogan (2006)
[425] See, for instance, Shearman & Sussex (2004)

According to numerous interviewees, Blair is 'fascinated by power in all its forms'.[426] As shown, he made it an 'article of faith' to stand close to the most powerful country on earth in response to 9/11. For him, 'any deviation from absolute support [for the United States] risked the entire alliance', it was 'an all or nothing proposition' (Dyson, 2006). Blair therefore hoped that, by displaying absolute loyalty to George Bush, he would be able to influence his policies and therefore placate discontent at home.

However, Blair did not manage to exert any significant influence on Bush, nor sell his vision of global values. Heseler argued that 'Blair might have had the President's ear [...] but he was not able to influence US policy' (Heseler 2004: 54). At the end, 'the voice that ultimately counts in the American executive decision making process is that of the President' (Azubuike, 2005).[427] The power of the United States, then, became a significant area of *low* fitness for Blair's 'reasonable strategies'.

Why, then, was Blair left in this position? Two inter-locking factors are crucial here. One is the fact that Bush and Blair have very similar styles. According to Stothard Bush's style was 'very much the "are you with me or against me" [type]...[He]'s got a view here, this is what [he is] setting out'.[428] Blair, as shown, has a similar 'all or nothing' style. As such, persuading Bush that he should do something different is very difficult, especially when one considers the other crucial factor which the above hints at: the power resources at the disposal of Bush and Blair.

Put simply, the power of the United States in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 was such that the country could essentially afford to ignore any advice it received. There are numerous accounts of discussions within the Bush administration about the *actual* value of British support in the conflicts that followed the announcement of the war on terror. There were, in fact, those voices who urged a completely unilateral

[426] Former minister, interviewed March 2007. Many interviewees concurred that Blair has an attraction to power and the powerful and that this influenced his political choices in the aftermath of 9/11. See also Meyer (2006)
[427] Kampfner (2004) states that even some of Blair's closest advisors were of the opinion that, at best, British influence on American foreign policy choices is limited. This assertion of 'Realpolitik' evident in the post- 9/11 relationship between the two countries has led to much comment on the state of the 'Special Relationship' between the US and the UK. See Gardiner (2008), Danchev (2007)
[428] Interview 13 April 2007

approach, so as not to impede American independence of action in any way, though there was agreement that *symbolically* some support was useful.[429]

On the other hand, British power resources were very limited.[430] Militarily, the United States did not need Britain for either the conflict in Afghanistan or later in Iraq.[431] Diplomatically, Blair's negotiating position was very weak, first, because he is tied too closely to the United States.

This means that, on the one hand, he receives significant blowback from the deep resentment towards the US which is felt in large parts of the world, particularly the Middle East. Rather than being seen as an independent actor who may help to *counterbalance* or, at least, *moderate* the actions of the US, he is seen as someone who does the bidding on the US' behalf. His failure to alter the course of US policy in the war on terror, particularly in regards to the Middle East Peace Process, is especially significant in this regard.[432]

The second, and related point, is that Blair cannot bring anything unique to the table. As such, as time progressed, he was increasingly seen as irrelevant and isolated. Why not talk to the United States directly? A situation developed where 'British diplomacy has been emasculated'. The 'Special Relationship' 'has become a liability, reducing Britain's freedom of manoeuvre in foreign policy [...]' (Azubuike, 2005). Blair has no room for manoeuvre either in his dealings with the United States, nor in relation to his European partners.

What one has, then, is a classic expression of a Complex Adaptive System self-organising. Blair's core commitment to the United States and its policies was a logical step to take for a middle-ranking power such as Britain. However, as the War

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[429] Woodward (2002, 2003) shows this repeatedly. Interestingly, such debates ignored how broader support may have been useful in sharing the costs and effort of subsequent nation building, a factor which, according to all British interviewees, was totally ignored or, at best, misunderstood and underestimated in the United States.
[430] See Casey (2009) or Boulton (2008).
[431] A point widely made in interviews, especially those conducted with British, American and German officials currently serving at NATO headquarters.
[432] On the broader question of 'blowback' in relation to the War on Terror see Johnson (2004) or Kennedy-Pipe & Vickers (2007)

on Terror was rolled out across time and space it provoked variable reactions which, in turn, had an impact on the overall concept and policy.

As such, the political landscape, and as such the Complex Adaptive System Blair confronted, was changing *constantly*, always reacting to and inter-acting with numerous semi-autonomous agents. Blair's position of absolute solidarity with the US provoked different reactions across time and space, leading to very different patterns within local Complex Adaptive Systems. His *global* policy, therefore, has different *local* impacts. So, whilst his position vis-à-vis the United States was strengthened, his personal, and Britain's political position generally, was weakened considerably.[433] However, since he was locked into *one* position, he could neither account for, nor navigate these differences. His inflexibility means that Blair is inescapably tied to the failures of the War on Terror.[434]

From a Complexity perspective, it was the *un-conditionality* of his support, valid across time and space and defined in absolute terms, which represented the problem. Since he could not account for the constant change which is a feature of social Complex Adaptive Systems, he was unable to adjust his policy framework in order to take account of these differing reactions across time and space. His inflexibility means that, just like Bush, he is unable to reconcile his step-by-step version of the War on Terrorism with the messy process of self-organisation that presents itself in reality. He cannot respond to local conditions because he is totally locked into a global framework. As such, he has difficulties in recognising problems when they occur.

The first example of this was the war in Afghanistan. Blair declared on 13th November 2001 that 'the military strategy aimed at defeating the Taliban is clearly succeeding' (Blair, 2001f).[435] Yet, as shown, the dislodging of the regime has not resulted in the construction of a viable democratic state. In fact, all indicators are showing an increase in violence in Afghanistan. In 2006, the attacks on non-

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[433] One noticeable feature of the interviews conducted in the United States was the very high regard in which Tony Blair is held in Washington as a 'leader of conviction' as one interviewee put it.
[434] On the wider impact of this, see Dunn (2008)
[435] See also Blair (2001g)

combatants in Afghanistan rose by 53% in comparison to 2005.[436] There is no obvious end in sight in regards to the military conflict.

Blair's thoughts, however, had moved to the 'next target' in the War on Terror, with enormous pressure from the United States that this should be Iraq. It is not the intention in this work to go over the arguments about this invasion. The lead-up and consequences of this conflict are still crucial in understanding the implications of a complexity approach to crisis foreign policy decision-making in relation to this British case. *Crucially, the almost seamless transition from the focus on Afghanistan to Iraq led to a situation where the decision-making mode was maintained in 'crisis mode' almost continuously.*[437] As such, Blair is able to maintain his policy of absolute solidarity. However, this maintenance of a centralised system had significant consequences in relation to the policy of the War on Terrorism because, far from controlling the process of self-organisation, continued centralisation *undermined its coherence*, with serious political consequences.

The Iraq War generated a huge amount of controversy, both inside and outside political circles. In his account Kilfoyle charts the attempts by parliamentarians to intervene in the process by drawing attention to a number of issues, ranging from the impact on the wider war on terror, the potential problems faced in stabilising Iraq, as well as broader questions regarding international law and the future shape of the international system.[438] Kampfner also contents that some ministers pushed the Prime Minister to consider alternatives to invasion, worried about the political impact it would have.[439] There was hence an acute awareness within large parts of the British political system that any invasion of Iraq would be problematic.[440]

Once again, what one has here is a sign that, *despite* the centralisation of the policy-making system, there is a normalisation of the Complex Adaptive System, a re-

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[436] Figures quoted in the *New York Times* of 1st May 2007

[437] The control Blair exerts over the policy process in the lead-up to Iraq is a continuous theme of the principal accounts of this period. See Seldon (2007), Stothard (2003), Boulton (2008).

[438] See Kilfoyle (2007). However, the role of parliament in the run-up to the war has also been severely criticised. See Jenkins (2009)

[439] See, in particular, part III of his book (Kampfner 2004). For a detailed account of the British lead-up see Ramesh (2003), Beck and Downing (2003), Short (2004) or Rogers (2005)

[440] On specific issues see, for instance, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2002), Manning (2002) or Rickets (2002)

assertion of complexity. Blair actually shows some awareness of this re-assertion by changing the rationale for the invasion of Iraq.[441] Having first talked about weapons of mass destruction as the key reason for invasion, he increasingly talked about Iraq in terms of the wider aim of regime change first formulated as the central aim of the war on terrorism and based heavily on his Chicago speech of 1998.[442]

Yet, he does not permit this complexity to change the basic policy. The changing of the rationale may be seen as *responding to* doubts expressed about the war, but Blair does not *engage with* all these other agents in order to allow a process of self-organisation which is *emergent*. He pursues a telescopic vision of his policy, with very limited understanding of the possible *multiple* consequences across various levels of analysis. Yet again, his inflexibility leaves him no choice but to associate himself with everything that happens in Iraq, having been unable to influence US policy to any significant degree.

The continued centralisation of the British policy making system around Blair therefore allows for the implementation of the Iraq policy, despite the controversy it generated. [443] As such, the concentration of power around the leader of the Executive had predictable results. However, it *did not* prevent a process of self-organisation. Just like in the US case, it merely changed the *manner* of the process.

The consequences of the Iraq decision are still unfolding but have already impacted on Blair personally, Britain as a country, as well as the war on terror more broadly. For Blair personally, the decision contributed significantly to him resigning as Prime Minister in 2007, the war now regarded as one of his principal 'legacies'.[444] As shown, his uncompromising stance has significantly undermined Britain's international standing and, as such, her ability to influence world events. It has gravely undermined the prospects for further international intervention, as outlined

[441] See Clarke (2007)
[442] And did so right to the end of his premiership. See Blair (2007)
[443] See Stothard (2003) for a detailed account of this process with regards to Iraq
[444] See Riddell (2006), Gamble (2007) or Casey (2009) or Kennedy (2007). It is interesting in this respect that Blair still managed to win a general election in 2005 during which Iraq did not seem to play a huge role; see Kavanagh & Butler (2005). This points to the importance of particular local circumstances at a particular point in time. However, in respect of this work, the key point is the context within which a particular foreign policy was constructed and pursued. It is also worth noting that Bush's popularity continued to plummet but, unlike Blair, he was not able to leave office at a time of his choosing.

by Blair's speech in Chicago.[445] Internally, Britain has suffered a serious terrorist attack in 2005.[446] In terms of the broader war on terrorism, the number of terrorist attacks worldwide has continued to climb with Iraq and Afghanistan accounting for a significant number of this rise.[447]

This leads back to the central argument of this work: that crises in foreign policy are Complex Adaptive System which require a policy system which permits a coherent process of self-organisation in response. Such an objective does not *preclude* a process of political centralisation in the immediate aftermath of an event such as 9/11. As shown, both the geo-political realities, as well as domestic precedent and role expectations make such a process inevitable.

The question therefore becomes what such a process of centralisation is used *for* and *how long* it should last. The key point in this chapter so far has been to show that Blair maintained centralisation for far too long and in pursuit of the wrong objectives. He tried to *control* the process of self-organisation as opposed to enabling it. He did so with the aim of defining and maintaining an unambiguous policy (absolute solidarity with the United States) unaltered across time and space. Yet, this policy and the centralised process through which it was developed did not allow, and could not account for, differing reactions to it across time and space. These differing reactions often pushed the process of self-organisation into unpredictable directions. In short, there was a normalisation of the Complex Adaptive System after the crisis event. In the now following section, suggestions will be made on how a process of self-organisation may be instituted and how this can address the problems identified.

Constructing a process of self-organisation

For Blair there existed a 'final' stage of development: a world free of terrorism in which all countries shared the same set of 'global values'.[448] The key question for him therefore was how to get to this end-point in the quickest possible time, i.e. what needed to be done in order to defeat terrorism and spread 'global' values?

[445] See Rosenthal (2009), Johnson (2006) or Diamond (2008).
[446] Two thirds of British voters believed that the bombings were linked to the Iraq war. See *The Guardian* 19th July 2005. See also Bulley (2008)
[447] See CNN News: 'Global Terrorism up more than 25%', 30th April 2007.
[448] Not unlike Fukuyama (1993)

The above is crucial to understanding many of the problems Blair would eventually face. Since there was *one* set of values that was applicable globally across time and space, he tried to affect change at the highest possible level of complexity, the world, or, in the language of Complexity, the 'super-system'.[449] As will be shown now, a focus at this level makes change much harder to affect.

Having defined his policy at such a level, Blair identified an enormous number of challenges before his vision could be implemented: destroying terrorist infrastructure, fighting poverty, nation building, the Middle East Peace Process etc. From a Complexity perspective, all these issues and others may be important. However, the approach would suggest different way of approaching them.

For Blair, tackling all of these issues was a key justification for centralising the policy process. Persuasion and power were key in order to affect *change* where necessary. As such, centralisation of power was crucial in order to change the local boundary conditions he encountered. Yet, these local boundary conditions often proved resistant to the change he desired. Neither his vision nor his tactics and policies were universally shared.[450] However, since his negotiating position is so narrow (follow the American position) he has nothing to bargain with. As such, the very tactics used in order to exert control and influence after 9/11 end up marginalising him. His attempts to control and direct a global system lead, just as in the US, to a progressive loss of coherence.

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[449] See, again, Eoyang (2001).

[450] Many of these arguments are discussed in Abbott, Rogers & Sloboda (2006)

Table 6.5 CDE model of he UK foreign policy process before, on and after 9/11

Conditions for Self-organisation	**Normal times (medium constraint)**	**Crisis (9/11) High Constraint (desired)**	**Maintenance of crisis mode over time (post-9/11) (consequence)**
Container	Many and entangled: mission statements, bureaucratic loyalties etc	Few: Prime Minister, Downing Street, War on Terror, Global Values	Large and many: domestic political circumstances, differing national priorities etc
Difference	Many, some significant: departmental priorities, power and resource differentials etc	Few: Prime Ministerial power, different power resources	Innumerable: definition of terrorism, extent and tactics of War on Terror, political priorities, local circumstances, differing influence internationally etc
Exchange	Loose and ambiguous: Cabinet meetings, bi- and multilateral meetings etc	Tight, clear: exchanges with Bush and other world leaders, Hierarchical decision-making	Arbitrary and meaningless: communication, not discussion, of decisions, lack of structured exchanges
Emergent Behaviour	Emergent patterns and structure, complex cause and effect, loose coupling, flexibility, successive adjustments	Fast decision-making, unambiguous, clarity of pattern (War on terrorism, clear choice, with us or with the terrorists)	Uncoupling Random: No cause and effect (increasing incoherence of War on Terror, dissolution of containers, too many differences

Bearing the above in mind one needs to return to some of the key principles of Complexity. The first concerns the utility of power in order to affect change. In strict constitutional and political terms, Blair had enough power in order to push through his desired policies, be it absolute solidarity with the United States or participation in the Iraq war. Bearing in mind the structure of the British policy process this was to be expected.

However, this does *not* mean that other factors were *less* important. As shown, Blair increasingly faced domestic resistance, as well as 'blowback' internationally from other allies, something he was not able to control but which was crucial in undermining the coherence of his policy. As such, there was no *hierarchy of importance* attached to the various factors that began influencing the process of self-organisation. Whilst the basic rules remained unaltered (Blair is able to push through his policy preferences), the *effectiveness* of this policy is significantly impacted upon by factors spread across numerous levels of analysis which influence each other in often unpredictable ways. In Blair's case, some of these factors can be located at the domestic level (internal resistance by his party and within his government) and at the level of international organisations (for instance, the problems Blair faced at the European Union or the United Nations[451]). These, or other, factors cannot be *neutralised* across time and space by centralisation. Rather, centralisation will change the *way* they impact on any policy and, therefore, process of self-organisation.

Therefore, the key value of the Complexity approach is once again to provide a context which is *holistic*, which does not try to artificially create distinct, deterministic levels of analysis. In a process of self-organisation variables across many levels influence each other through continuous feedback loops through which patterns will emerge. It is the attempts to control or shut down these feedback loops which lead to the loss of coherence described above. As such, a key objective for any policy-maker dealing with a crisis should be to quickly re-establish, to *facilitate,* a process of self-organisation by, once again, permitting the introduction of differences which are, as shown, an essential pre-condition for any such process.

[451] See Seldon (2007) for an EU example

One of the key barriers to such an introduction was the very tight containers he used to define policy. Both the physical and personal containers constructed by Blair did not allow for any differences because they did not fit many people and that that were involved 'told him what he wanted to hear'. With the almost non-existing use of Cabinet after 9/11 there was an amplification of a process of centralisation which, as shown, was a key theme of Blair's policy-making style. As such, any differences that did emerge did so outside a particular context, outside the 'general rules' which are so crucial to any coherent process of self-organisation.[452]

Interestingly, often such a re-introduction, such normalisation often occurs in response to perceived policy failures. For instance, in the British case, a number of inquiries were set up to look at specific aspects of the decision-making process employed by Blair, with the Butler inquiry, in particular, being critical. One of its key recommendations was for the 'provisions of proper channels for the expression of dissent' (Butler 2004: 143). Butler raised concern that 'the informality and circumscribed character of the Government's procedures which we saw in the context of policy-making towards Iraq risks reducing the scope for informed collective political judgement', a particular problem since often 'hard facts are inherently difficult to come by [in matters of national security] and the quality of judgement is accordingly all the more important' (*ibid*: 611).[453]

In response to these recommendations two developments have stood out: One, there has been an assertion that 'minutes are back' when it comes to decision-making and taking responsibility for those decisions. This implies a more detailed discussion in the lead-up, as well as a possibility for key actors to *trace* the decision-making process and the decisions that flow from them, potentially allowing for more specific interventions to adjust these processes at a later stage.[454]

A second development has been the involvement of parliament in the ultimate decision whether to send British troops to war or not. During the Iraq debate, Blair

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[452] See Eoyang & Yellowthunder (2008)

[453] Blair had always argued that his policies *were* informed by intelligence. See *The Daily Telegraph* 28th September 2003. Several interviewees argued that intelligence was used only to back up existing policy positions and not to inform a genuinely open debate.

[454] One former advisor at the Foreign Office believed there would, at least for a time, be a move back to more deliberative and formal decision-making.

committed himself to a parliamentary vote on the decision to go to war as a way of relieving some of the pressure he was under politically. Whilst there is some debate about the information provided by government upon which the debate was based[455], it is now widely expected that parliament will again have the final say if and when there is a prospect of British troops being sent to war.[456]

These are clear attempts to de-centralise the decision-making process in order to introduce debate and accountability. A Complexity approach would not take issue with any of this but would challenge the retrospective nature of these attempts. From this point of view, the fact that the particular Complex Adaptive System reacts after a long period of strong centralisation is a good sign and shows that the system *is* adaptable. The key argument is that, had this normalisation occurred much earlier many of the problems subsequently encountered may have been avoided. As shown, just like in the United States, the normal foreign policy processes actually is actually well equipped to take account of the arguments made above, and applying Complexity would help in utilising them quicker after a crisis

One potential way of introducing differences would have been the utilization of Cabinet. As shown earlier, Cabinet only met twice in the weeks after 9/11 and, critically, did so the first time only *after* Blair had sent his fax to Bush on 12th September which formed the basis of his policy for the months to come. This, however, did not eliminate doubts or tensions. What it *did* do was create a forceful container between government departments and Number 10, a feeling of 'us' and 'them'.[457] This clearly is a potential tension, but one which ended up *undermining* the coherence of the process of self-organisation rather than enhancing it; all this *despite* the fact that Blair was working with a parliamentary majority of over 170 and was leading a party still desperate to stay in power.[458]

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[455] See Kilfoyle (2007)
[456] Several interviewees believed that 'a precedent has now been set'. See also Casey (2009) for a broader discussion.
[457] See Short (2004) for one account on how departments were shut out of the policy process, a view backed by all interviewees, despite some of them being very critical of Short's behaviour during that time period.
[458] See Baston (2005)

Cabinet could have served as a key exchange which would have had the effect of developing a *government* policy which was carried by the departments, rather than a *Blair* policy which the departments were then told to accept. Departments could have been *active* participants in a process, rather than *passive* recipients of prime ministerial orders.[459]

Utilising the differences that clearly exist between government departments, a tension could be created which would allow the process of self-organisation to move forward. The outcome of such a process would be unknown, yet it would allow for the natural assertion of differences at a much earlier stage of the policy process, therefore enabling these differences to play a potentially transformative role. This way, one could also *begin* to deal with the culture of passivity touched on earlier in this chapter which was one of the most striking features of the interviews conducted.

Again, the above does not dispute the importance of leadership. Facilitating and enabling such a process requires key political decisions which require leadership. However, the *objectives* would be different, taking on board one of the key arguments of Complexity, that is that managing Complex Adaptive Systems is essentially a social activity, that the key actors are its multiple agents acting *within* the system. Political leaders are part of this system and, bearing in mind their power resources, can have an important influence on the development of this system. However, they cannot *control* such system.

Opening up exchanges such as Cabinet would also bring something which, historically, leaders have valued: expertise. As shown, elements of the FCO and other specialist departments such as the Department for International Development, had doubts about the aims and scope of Blair's policy. According to one of the former government ministers such expertise was 'ignored', something confirmed by the former advisor to the FCO.[460]

A quicker de-centralisation and therefore more active involvement of different agents early on in the policy process would also begin to deal with key patterns of behaviour

[459] On this, see Seldon (2007)
[460] Interviewed in March and May 2007, though it is worth stressing again that Blair has always denied ignoring advice.

which *facilitate* the very process of centralisation now often criticised by other actors: Role expectations and the culture of passivity which has been such a prominent feature of the British case study. From a Complexity perspective this passivity is both the result of, and contributes to, the strong and long-lasting centralisation of the British foreign policy system in response to crisis and it is here that any reform of such system should focus. Leaders should encourage debate and differences at a much earlier stage and *within* the general boundaries of the policy process. This would allow for a return to healthy, indeed necessary, complexity. [461]

Both domestic and international political structures actually designed to allow for such emergence and for self-organisation. The key problem for Blair was what he used these exchanges *for*: Blair used them in an attempt to bring countries and other actors 'into line' by presenting his 'clear choice' and asking countries to choose the 'right' side. The result, yet again, was resentment as well as a failure to quell differences across space and time, showing once again that numerous agents can significantly influence any process of self-organisation *despite* the stability of basic international power structures.[462]

Of importance here is Blair's perception of Complex Adaptive Systems not as social systems, which develop through social activity, but as command-and-control systems which can be moulded in desired fashion through the application of enough power. He did not allow for *uncertainty*, an inherent part of a Complex Adaptive System, let alone a *global* one. Yet, it is uncertainty which allows for adaptation, for course-corrections, for adaptive action. Blair did not recognise this and, as a result, his political position, and his ability to affect change, weakened considerably.

Above, some suggestions are made about how doubt and tensions could be introduced into the *policy process* to enhance the process of self-organisation with the aim of increasing its overall coherence. These suggestions pointed to an expansion of personal and physical containers and an introduction of more exchanges which would allow for tensions to emerge which would move the Complex Adaptive System forward.

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[461] Leadership is crucial in order to achieve such a change. See Lichtenstein *et al.* (2006)
[462] The former minister was particularly scathing on this point, as were several German interviewees.

However, in order to accomplish this task, the questions Blair asked in response to 9/11 would have to change. Crucially, he would need to see key terms, such as *terrorism, freedom* and others as Complex Adaptive Systems as well: For him, they were singular terms and, as such, they 'only' needed a centralised policy process to exert maximum pressure for their expansion (or defeat) across time and space.

As such, any policy-system trying to address such issues will have to take account of, and respond to, this complexity. How terrorism is perceived, and how it should be addressed, influences, and is influenced by, the policy processes which seek to deal with it. The attacks of 9/11, terrorism as a whole, and indeed any crisis, are the result of, part of, and change through, a process of self-organisation.[463]

Bearing all of this in mind, the War on Terrorism becomes a Complex Adaptive System which is massively entangled across many different levels of analysis across time and space. Its development is a process of self-organisation in which semi-autonomous agents within local boundary conditions play a key role. As such, it was a policy which had to be applied across a number of highly varied and variable social Complex Adaptive Systems sensitive to local conditions.

It is for this reason that the long-lasting process of centralisation becomes problematic. The process constructed and maintained by Blair and the context through which it was constructed was simply not capable of coping with and adjusting to the highly variable nature of the reality he faced. The process lacked flexibility and adaptability, having been structured in such a way as to maximise only *one* variable: power. Yet, even the concentrated application of this one variable was not enough either to neutralise the much greater power of the United States, nor in neutralising all the local semi-autonomous agents working to undermine the effectiveness of the policy at local levels. The resultant process of self-organisation increasingly led to the disintegration of the system constructed by Blair.
As such, the key question for any leader has to change: What elements are needed for a potentially coherent process of self-organisation and what elements of the system hold back such a process? The answers that would have been received would have pointed to a relatively small number of key interventions that could have enabled in

[463] See Geyer & Rihani (2010)

such a process. Some of these are already touched upon above. They replicate the issues raised in relation to the US case study:

- Defining the issue at hand in less absolute terms
- Involving other parts of government and the international community in the process of policy formulation
- Seeing change in Complex Adaptive Systems as social processes and therefore acknowledging and encouraging the existence of differences across time and space

As far as the British response to 9/11, such recognition implies very different containers, differences and exchanges:

Table 6.6: A post-crisis self-organising foreign policy process of medium constraint

Conditions for Self-organisation	Medium constraint	Examples
Container	Many and entangled	Discourse of Engagement, Cabinet meetings as a way of bringing government response together, General rules, visionary leadership
Difference	Many, some significant	Variable objectives across time and space, Differing interpretations about meaning and scope of engagement, differing interpretations of general rules
Exchange	Loose and ambiguous	Meetings between and across various levels of government, international engagement, targeted engagement at local level to facilitate self-organisation, conversation across time and space
Emergent Behaviour	Emergent patterns and structure, complex cause and effect, loose coupling	Flexibility and adaptability, successive adjustments of polices across time and space

The term 'engagement' is used again here to describe a possible container, just as it was in the US case, because it embraces many of the key concepts of a Complexity approach, be it in relation to discourse, to system or to policy.

Furthermore, it is used here again because the problems identified with the approach adopted by Tony Blair in relation to the War on Terror are remarkably similar to those of George Bush. Both were highly deterministic in their definition of the key policy, both tried to exert control over their respective Complex Adaptive System by working through highly centralised policy processes and both were aided in this

process through a combination of constitutional provisions, role expectations and personality traits which allowed this process to be both instituted and continued virtually without resistance for considerable amounts of time. In both cases, the failure to open this process up again in the end led to an increasingly incoherent process of self-organisation which undermined the very objectives it was meant to achieve. As such, the container of 'engagement' allows for adjustments to be made to this kind of system whilst avoiding the mistake on insisting on *one* alternative.

Once again, what is advocated in the table above is a process of self-organisation of medium constraint, something which, as shown, also already exists in the UK during non-crisis times. As such, there should be a quicker return to *normality*.

This is related to the second point which also applied to the US chapter. Just like in the American case, after the initial shock of 9/11 and the centralisation this brought about, the Complex Adaptive System *did* normalise, with other actors (agents) trying to engage in the process of self-organisation, trying to influence the development of the system. Once again, the prolonged process of centralisation prevented them from doing so from *within* the political process, with the results outlined above. This once again suggests that there *is* a crucial role to play for political leadership, just a different *kind*: that of facilitator, of an agent for a return to normality in political terms and it is here that Tony Blair did not show flexibility and adaptability.

Conclusion

What is remarkable in this chapter are the great similarities between the US an the UK in the way the foreign policy process changed in response to 9/11 and the problems both leaders faced because of the failure to normalise quickly after the initial crisis had passed.

Just like in the United States, the normal British foreign policy process is marked by a process of self-organisation of medium constraint. Whilst the Prime Minister enjoys an elevated position and has considerable freedom to take 'ownership' of policies, the system still allows for participation of numerous actors across time and space. This means there are a number of significant differences between actors in the pursuit of a particular policy. Through its wide interests worldwide and bureaucratic provisions within the domestic context, these differences can be expressed through a number of exchanges. As such, the British government has, on the whole, been able to respond flexibly to changing circumstances. However, as has been shown, the exact *reasons* for the development of British system in this way vary, determined by specific local boundary conditions, a factor which would become significant as the War on Terrorism unrolled.

Once again, the events of 9/11 led to a process of significant political centralisation around the Prime Minister. Just as in the US, this centralisation led to quick decision-making and the development of an unambiguous, seemingly orderly policy (absolute solidarity with the United States and participation in the global War on Terror). As such, the centralised decision-making process had the desired effect of stripping out complexity and placing the UK firmly on the side of the most powerful country on earth. Domestically, Blair received widespread support for his initial stance.

Yet, just like in the US, Blair confronted a classic Complex Adaptive System. Both domestically and internationally, as his policy was rolled out, he faced different reactions and challenges, determined largely by semi-autonomous agents acting within specific local boundary conditions. As such, he confronted a system which self-organised in often unpredictable ways. As a result, the usefulness and

effectiveness of Blair's political actions were often severely compromised despite the fact that the overall context of the policy had not changed.

Once again therefore what occurred was a process of *normalisation.* As the immediate crisis event moved further into the past, other political and social actors tried to engage in the process of self-organisation that unfolded. From a Complexity point of view, such a process is not only to be expected but is actually to be welcomed and necessary since it allows for adaptability and flexibility across time and space which is so vital for acting within a Complex Adaptive System.

However, Blair, just like Bush, tried to control this re-emergence of complexity by extending the process of political centralisation. Whilst this allowed him to push through his policy on the Iraq war, it did *not* stop the process of self-organisation but merely changed the manner of its re-emergence. With other actors trying, but not succeeding, to re-engage with the 'official' policy process, they began to define themselves increasingly *against* this process. As a result, just like in the US, the process of self-organisation increasingly lost coherence, gravely undermining Blair's political ambitions and objectives.

Blair, in fact, faced an even less favourable situation than Bush because he was caught between his inability to influence the US government and its priorities in conducting the War on Terror, and his increasingly weak position both domestically and vis-à-vis other international partners. As such, he was caught up in one of the key concepts of Complexity: the massive entanglement between different levels of analysis as well as the variable impact of general rules (the hegemonic position of the United States) on local circumstances (differing reactions across time and space to the War on Terrorism).

The reason he was not able to adjust his position and respond to the changes constantly happening was his long-lasting process of political centralisation. Whilst the Complex Adaptive Systems within which he was acting normalised, his policy process remained in crisis mode throughout. As a result, he was unable to make the desired changes *to* the system, nor able to control what was happening *within* the systems.

As in the US, the key therefore would have been a much quicker process of de-centralisation after the initial crisis. Differences emerged in particular over the war in Iraq and it is at this point that the system begins to loose coherence dramatically. Here, a return to the normal British system of a process of self-organisation of medium constrained could have helped greatly in airing and addressing many of the differences which emerged, thereby allowing the possibility for an adjustment in policy.

In the following chapter, the German case-study, it will be shown how that system attempts to deal with complexity before, in the last chapter, a summary of the three case studies is made, some general conclusions are drawn and suggestions are made for the management of crises in the sphere of foreign policy.

Chapter 7: Case Study Germany

The shock and the response

When the terrorist attacks in the United States occurred, German chancellor Gerhard Schröder was in his office in the Chancellery preparing for a speech to the lower house of the German parliament, the Bundestag, as part of the budget debate which he was due to give the following day (Schröder 2007: 162). He was informed of the attacks by his bureau chief who told him that 'there is an attack on the World Trade Centre in New York' (*ibid*: 163). Schröder's first reaction was to turn on the television. According to himself he was 'deeply upset [...] I did not think about the deeper implications at this moment' (*ibid*: 163). However, he was clear that 'nothing would be as it was' (*ibid*: p. 164). As such, he was determined that 'we had to work quickly as a government to be clear about the consequences' (*ibid*: 164).[464] German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, watching the events unfold in his office, also predicted that there 'would be a profound conflict' (Hacke 2003: 475), and asked to speak to the chancellor. Schröder asked Fischer to come over the chancellor's office for a meeting (*ibid*: 475). Schröder also called the Minister for the Interior, Schily, and Defence Minister, Scharping, to attend the meeting (Schröder 2007: 164).

During the meeting, Schröder argued that 'Germany has to act in unison' and stressed the importance of convincing 'the Cabinet, the coalition and the opposition of the necessity of unconditional solidarity with the United States' (*ibid*: 164). To this end, Schröder called the President of the German parliament and the leaders of the various parliamentary groups to a meeting in the chancellor's office in the evening of 11th September (*ibid*: 164-5).

In the afternoon, Schröder sent a telegram to President Bush in which he committed himself to 'unconditional solidarity' with the United States (*ibid*: 165). As will be shown later, this term would become crucial as the aftermath of the attacks unfolded. Yet, in the immediately after 9/11 this term became the guiding principle of the German response.

[464] There is broad agreement in the German literature that the fight against terrorism changed after 9/11 and that Germany had to play its part in this fight alongside the United States. See Garcis (2006) , Frank & Hirschmann (2002) or Muenkler (2002)

Schröder then convened a meeting of the Federal Security Council to coordinate the German response to the attacks.[465] After the meeting he made his first public declaration. He echoed the sentiments of Bush and Blair in declaring that the attacks represented 'a declaration of war against the entire civilised world' (Schröder 2007: 165).

Schröder spent the rest of the afternoon talking to European- and other international leaders. In another statement on the evening of 11th September, he underlined the importance he attached to 'organising European solidarity' in response to the attacks. He stressed that all leaders he had spoken to 'were of the same opinion' that the most important thing now was to show solidarity with the United States (Schröder 2007: 165-6).

Schröder further emphasised this point when he met with the leaders of the other parties in the German parliament in the evening of 11th September and in his speech to the German parliament on 12th September. He stated: 'I have assured [the American President] of the unconditional -I emphasise: the unconditional- solidarity Germany's' in responding to this 'declaration of war against the civilised world' (Schröder, 2001a). He further declared that anyone who 'helps or supports terrorists breaks the fundamental values of living peacefully with other peoples' (*ibid*). As such, the declarations made by Schröder in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 were very similar to those made by Blair in the UK.[466]

The support Schröder talked about was focussed on a number of different issues: First, Schröder was keen to ensure the broadest possible political coalition in support of the US. In trying to garner this support, he focussed in particular on international institutions. He praised United Nations Resolution 1368, passed immediately after 9/11 in which the attacks were declared a threat to global peace and security, saying that this represented a 'further development of international law' which creates the conditions 'for decisive, if necessary, military action against terrorism' (*ibid*). Schröder also praised the invocation of Article 5 of the NATO charter. He was clear

[465] The council consists of 9 principal members: The chancellor, his chief of staff, the minister for foreign affairs, defence, finance, the interior, justice, the economy and international development. See http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bundessicherheitsrat. More will be said on the function of the body later in the chapter. See also Pautsch *et al.* (2008)
[466] See also Hein (2004)

that Germany should commit herself to military support in Afghanistan, stressing that Germany had to 'fulfil its responsibility. This includes, and I say this unequivocally, also the participation in military operations [...] This readiness [...] is an important declaration to Germany's partners and alliances' (Schröder, 2001b). Support for the United States was therefore both political, in the sense that Germany tried to assist in the building of a global anti-terror coalition, and practical in that the government offered military support for the action in Afghanistan. Again, the similarity between the German and the British response is clear.

There was also agreement that dealing with terrorism would be both a long process and involve more than just military action. In his speech to the German parliament on 19th September, Schröder stressed that

> 'a fixation on exclusively military means would be fatal. We need and want to develop a comprehensive strategy for fighting terrorism, for prevention and to overcome crises. This concept must be based on political, economic and cultural cooperation, as well as cooperation in questions of security' (Schröder, 2001b).[467]

This linkage of political, economic and cultural issues, the insistence that there should be a combination of military and other means in order to pursue the fight against terrorism was something that Schröder would return to time and again in the months after 9/11.[468] Other government ministers and officials developed a similar argument, stressing the importance of fighting poverty, addressing causes of ethnic conflict, developing democratic structures and institutions and strengthening the capacity for international cooperation.[469]

Taken together, the German position bore striking resemblance to that of the United Kingdom. In the initial response, the focus was on solidarity with the United States. This solidarity was expressed both through seeking to assist in the building of an international coalition and through offering military support, certainly for the coming military action in Afghanistan. Just like in the UK, there was also a belief that terrorism was an issue which merited broader attention than merely destroying Al

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[467] He made the same argument repeatedly, for instance Schröder (2001c). See also Lochbihler (2004)
[468] See Schröder (2002). For a discussion, see Erler (2002)
[469] See Defence minister Scharping (2002), the co-ordinator for German-American relations, Voigt, (2002) or foreign minister Fischer (2002).

Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan. Any serious effort to address terrorism had to tackle its 'root causes', which included poverty, development and, in a broad sense, 'nation building'. This, according to Schröder, could only be done through multilateral responses, be it through NATO, the United Nations or the European Union.[470]

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, therefore, there was apparent unity between the German and British political elites. However, this unity masked some significant differences that will be explored below. A closer look at the decision-making process will help here to set the scene.

[470] All interviewees made this point. Interestingly, all were also surprised by how *little* interest there was on these issues in the US government, a fundamental difference which will be discussed further below but which, according to one senior parliamentarian, 'was not understood on either side'. Interview in May 2007. See also Sloan (2002)

The decision-making process: pre-shock

To understand the German foreign policy process, a look at the German constitution (Grundgesetz) is crucial. Foreign policy-making, as well as other policy areas, is subject to a number of potentially conflicting provisions.[471]

Article 65 sets out that the federal chancellor 'shall determine, and be responsible for, the general guidelines of policy.' At the same time, 'each Federal minister shall conduct the affairs of his department on his own responsibility. Finally, 'the federal government shall resolve differences of opinion between Federal ministers' (Basic Law, 2000, Article 65). As such, the conduct of policy is governed by three principles: the 'chancellor principle' ('Kanzlerprinzip'), ministerial autonomy ('Resortprinzip') and collective government responsibility ('Kabinettsprinzip').[472]

There is, hence, considerable tension built into the normal German policy process which increases when one considers the fact that Germany is a de-centralised federal state. As such, the constituent states ('Länder') have significant autonomy in many policy areas and can influence virtually all of them. For instance whilst 'Relations with foreign states shall be conducted by the federation' (Grundgesetz, Article 32.1), the constitution also states that 'before the conclusion of a treaty affecting the special circumstances of a Land, that Land shall be consulted in timely fashion' (Article 32.2). Finally, the constitution provides for some policy-action on the part of the constituent states in the conduct of foreign policy by stating that 'Insofar as the Länder have power to legislate, they may conclude treaties with foreign states with the consent of the Federal government' (Article 32.3).

However, the federal government is still seen as the key actor in foreign policy. It has the right of initiative and the obligation to act if the national interests of the country are at stake.[473] As such, the relationship between the chancellor and the foreign office is crucial in determining the policy process. Just like in Britain, the extent of a chancellor's involvement in any given foreign policy is variable, depending on interest and numerous other political factors. According to one foreign policy advisor

[471] On the Basic Law, see Moellers (2009)
[472] See Pilz & Ortwein (2000)
[473] See Gareis (2006) for a discussion of the policy process.

who was also closely involved during the administration of Helmut Kohl, there was a big contrast between chancellors Kohl and Schröder. Whilst Kohl 'often relied on a small circle of advisors', Schröder was happy to let the federal foreign office do most of the policy work.[474] Indeed, one common theme in the analysis of Schröder's chancellorship was his inexperience in foreign policy when assuming office and his preference for economic policy.[475] He also had a very good working relationship with his foreign minister, Joschka Fischer -who also served as deputy chancellor- and, as such, was happy for him to lead on many foreign policy issues.[476] Nevertheless, the chancellor has significant power in determining foreign policy, if he chooses to exercise it which, historically, most chancellors have done.[477]

Bearing this and the constitutional provisions in mind, the formal policy process is of key importance.[478]

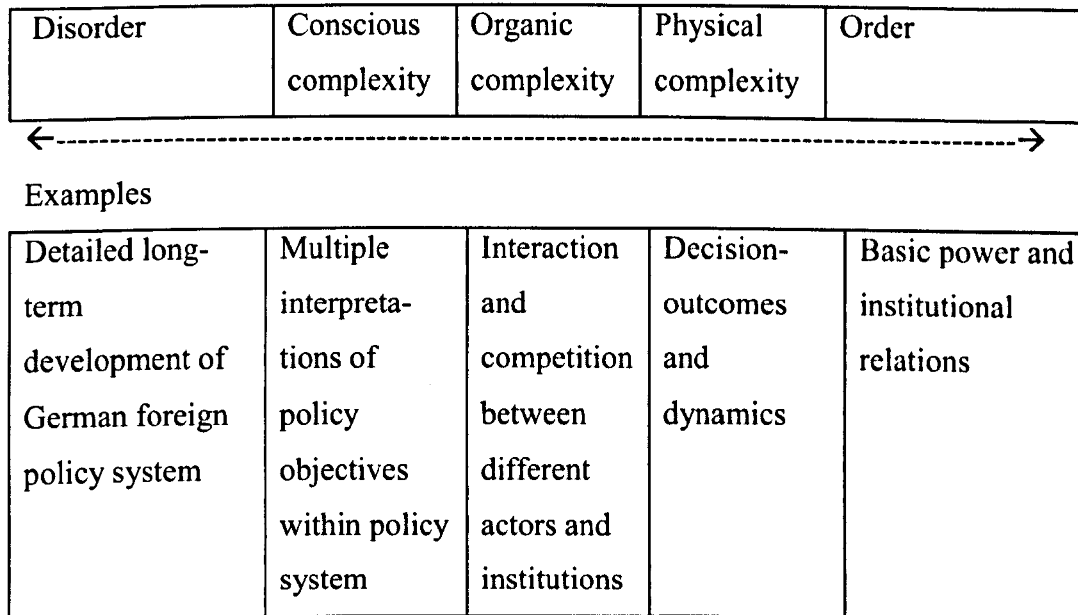
[474] Interview with foreign policy advisor, May 2007
[475] See, for instance, Patzelt (2004)
[476] Several interviewees confirmed this.
[477] See Niclauss (2004)
[478] The table is the result of interviews and other sources. See, in particular, Eberwein & Kaiser (2001), for an analysis of the different facets of the policy process. The structure of the German foreign office can be seen at http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/AAmt/Abteilungen/Uebersicht.html

Table 7.1: German Foreign Policy Process in 'normal' times

Chain of command	Role	During the process input may be received by
1. 'Referate' (Desk Officers)	Daily developments relating to a specific topic are monitored and analysed. Desk officer will: 1. Analyse and filter information 2. Advice working groups and sub-divisions on relevant policy developments	1.Special advisors Foreign minister has several advisors who report directly to him, dealing with specific issues or regions
2. 'Unterabteilungen' (Sub-divisions)	Will deal with specific topics relevant to the main division. These sub-divisions can be topical or geographical and may change according to circumstances. 1. Provide expert advice to divisional directors 2. Present policy options	2. Other government departments Other government departments will have input where a policy touches on their area. Often this input will be coordinated through the Federal Security Council.
3. 'Abteilungen' (Divisions)	Run by a Director, the divisions are responsible for coordinating all activities of the sub-divisions and present policy advice to ministers and/or co-ordinate the running of the ministry as a whole. 1. Co-ordinate departmental activities 2. Formulate and present policy options	3. Other levels of government and public actors Depending on the policy area these may include: parliament, Land-governments, courts, international organisations etc
4. State secretaries State ministers Foreign Minister Chancellor	Final decisions are taken at this political level. Whether, how and when chancellor gets involved depends on many factors	4. Other interested parties Press offices, political parties, interest groups etc

Once again, one can use Complexity mapping to break down the orderly, complex and disorderly elements of the German foreign policy process.

Figure 7.1: The German foreign policy process as a Complexity map



Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Physical complexity	Order

←--→

Examples

Detailed long-term development of German foreign policy system	Multiple interpretations of policy objectives within policy system	Interaction and competition between different actors and institutions	Decision-outcomes and dynamics	Basic power and institutional relations

The most orderly aspect of the process is its basic structure. Here, according to the *Ressortprinzip,* the Foreign Office has a crucial role in developing policy which is then taken to the political level for final decision. How high up a decision is taken depends on the importance of the policy and a host of other factors. In general, the more important the decision, the higher up it will go. The last few decades have seen an increasing trend towards centralisation, with the gradual accumulation of foreign policy expertise in the chancellor's office.[479]

Yet, whilst the basic parameters of the process are clear, the *exact* processes through which these decisions are arrived at differ from case to case. They differ because of the intricate interactions between the numerous institutions and actors that occur during any given process. As shown, the German constitution practically *demands* such interactions, with tensions between different layers of government being built into the basic institutional framework, though the *extent* of this interaction will vary from case to case.[480]

[479] See Siwert-Probst (2001) or Jaeger *et al.* (2007)
[480] See von Bredow (2008)

These tensions give the chancellor a key role in influencing the policy process in a way he or she sees fit. This is a fascinating aspect of the normal policy process of all three case-study countries. Despite their differences, all three have mechanisms which allow for tensions to emerge into the policy process, albeit in different ways and through different structures. All three also assign a key role to the leader of the Executive to resolve these tensions. What is different are the details within this general context.[481]

One of the key factors of the German system is the sheer number of institutions that are, at least potentially, involved in the foreign policy process. According to Schöllgen (2004), 'many institutions, such as the Bundstag (Lower House of Parliament), the Bundesrat (Upper House of Parliament), the Federal Constitutional Court or the Federal Central Bank' influence foreign policy 'to varying degrees' (*ibid*: 11). This represents an 'attempt in foreign policy generally to work together across party lines and stay united...[I]n Germany we now have a close cooperation between parliament and government, in particular through the foreign affairs committee'.[482] However, whilst there was agreement amongst all interviewees that there *was* extensive interaction between various policy actors, there was no agreement on the *relative* importance of each in relation to the process overall, with the role of the foreign affairs committee especially contested.[483]

Another common factor between the three case study countries is the fact that the respective processes allow for the emergence of conscious complexity almost as a matter of course. However, one noticeable difference is the degree to which such conscious complexity in Germany is the result of a *deliberate* attempt to create an inclusive policy process. The emphasis on foreign policy being above party politics was a common theme of the interviews conducted.[484]

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[481] For a historical overview of Germany in this respect, see Hacke (2003)
[482] Interview with senior parliamentarian, May 2007
[483] The foreign policy advisor to the current, CDU-led government, for example, said that, whilst important, the committee is usually swayed by government priorities, being controlled by the government majority.
[484] On this inclusive nature of the process, see also Eberwein & Kaiser (2001).

Finally, the long-term development of German foreign policy is, again, unpredictable. As one foreign policy advisor put it: 'Even 20 years ago, who would have thought that we'd have German troops fighting a war in Afghanistan?'[485]

As such, what one has is a remarkable similarity between the three case study countries as to the general rules of their normal foreign policy process. All three have systems in which orderly, complex and disorderly elements interact constantly to produce a process of self-organisations which has led to stable patterns in all three cases.

Yet, what is crucial from the point of view of the Complexity approach is the way that these systems are the result of very different *local boundary conditions*. In order words, they are the result of the interactions of very different semi-autonomous agents across time and space. *Domestic factors* are therefore important for the understanding of how a particular process develops. As will be shown below, in Germany in particular, these impacted strongly on the development of government policy after 9/11. As a result, Germany faces a very different political landscape.

German foreign policy as a Fitness Landscape

One key factor which has led to the above system and which has a key influence on the Fitness Landscape within which German governments operate is history. In Germany, foreign policy-making has often been a somewhat restricted activity. One reason for this was the 'limited sovereignty' (or semi-sovereignty[486]) the country possessed during partition and the Cold War. This has meant that '[l]ike no second government of a comparable country [Germany] has -has had to- develop an ability to recognise the limits of its freedom to act, and use these [limited possibilities] to further the interests of its own country' (Schöllgen 2004: 16).[487] These limitations were most clearly illustrated by the presence of hundreds of thousands of allied troops on German soil. As such, Germany was dependent for her own defence on foreign powers.

[485] Interview with senior foreign policy advisor, May 2007
[486] For a detailed discussion of this term and what it entailed, see Katzenstein (1987)
[487] See also Hanrieder (1989).

Whilst these *formal outside* restrictions no longer apply since German reunification, the historical experience from which they sprang in the first place and the consequences these restrictions had on the foreign policy processes in Germany over 40 years are still significant today.

A key result has been the fact that Germany has defined itself as a *Handelsstaat*, a trading nation.[488] One of the biggest economies in the world and one of the world's biggest exporters, for many decades the country has pursued a foreign policy which had as one of its principal aims the opening up of international markets.[489] As such Germany, just as the United States and the United Kingdom, has broad and global interests. However, its military limitations, and a crucial difference in political culture, mean that these interests are pursued differently.

One key difference is the deliberate attempt to have an inclusive policy process, referred to above, in order to avoid the kind of centralisation seen during, for instance, the Nazi-dictatorship. Therefore, whilst the chancellor has the power to set the general principals of policy, there is an attempt to coordinate these principals with other key actors within the system.[490]

The role of the foreign affairs committee of the German parliament merits some attention in this respect. According to one senior member of the committee, 'the government is represented in all the meetings of the committee [even though] the level of representation varies [d]epending on the importance accorded to a particular question...[I]f it is a real problem...then the rank of the government representative would be very high'.[491] As such, the interaction between parliament and government is seen as a given, standard procedure during the policy process. It is however noteworthy that the meetings of the committee are held in secret. In fact, often only some senior members of the committee are allowed to meet with the government if particularly sensitive material is being shown and/or discussed.[492]

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[488] See Schmidt *et al* (2007)
[489] See Hellmann (2008)
[490] See also Gabriel & Holtmann (2005)
[491] Senior parliamentarian, interviewed May 2007
[492] This was confirmed both by a parliamentary member of the committee and by a former government minister. However, it is worth noting that some literature sees parliament's involvement, whilst frequent, as not very decisive. See, for instance, Krause (2001)

A second key actor is the federal constitutional court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*). As the guardian of the constitution, and the somewhat general nature of many of the constitutional provisions, 'the court is an important policy-making institution in the German political system' (Kommers, 1994). This has applied in particular to foreign and security policy since reunification where the court has, through some landmark rulings, facilitated and shaped political action. In recent years, the most far-reaching judgement has been the permission for German soldiers to be deployed outside NATO territory in 1994 in response to the planned intervention in former Yugoslavia.[493]

All these factors have a crucial bearing on Germany's ability to confront particular issues. They have left the country with a very different *understanding* of its own role in international affairs. For instance, it has meant that Germany is practically incapable of responding quickly to a 'traditional' security crisis with 'hard power' means. [494] German governments therefore face different kinds of areas of low fitness in response to a particular issue but, as will be shown, are also able and willing to engage with different kind of actors than, for instance, the United States.

This issue will be discussed in more detail below, but it bears emphasising that the importance of, for instance, the rather legalistic nature of the German policy process is not a new discovery.[495] However, these factors, alongside the domestic political and social culture they helped to create, often have an *equal* importance or are *more* important than, for instance, power distribution in the international political system. Certainly in the German case these local boundary conditions would become a *crucial* feature as the War on Terrorism unrolled. As such, once again, the important thing is to emphasise the *interdependent* nature of the variables that make up the Complex Adaptive System.

The German foreign policy process as a CDE model

Just like the process in the US and the UK, the normal German foreign policy process is characterised by medium constraint, marked by ambiguity. Within the basic structure provided through the formal processes of government a lot of

[493] Bundesverfassungsgericht (1994)
[494] See Pally (2005)
[495] See Padgett *et al.* (2003)

flexibility is possible, aided by a written constitution which is deliberately vague in its determination of decision-making authority.

The reference in the constitution to the chancellor principle, the principle of ministerial autonomy and collective responsibility provide a series of containers around which policy can be formed. These competing containers provide for the emergence of significant differences. Just like in the US and the UK, here different bureaucratic loyalties, different interpretations and perspectives on particular political issues can come into play, a process which is emphasised even more by the crucial role that at times can be played by parliament as a whole or parliamentary committees and/or the Federal Constitutional court.

These differences are actualised through numerous exchanges, many of which again are formalised through constitutional or other legal provisions. The continuous interaction between government and parliament, for instance through the Foreign Affairs Committee, is one such example. Another is the constitutional provision of the Cabinet principle which means that decisions are subject to collective responsibility, a principle which, according to one advisor, 'is generally adhered to'.[496]

The result has been a foreign policy system which is highly developed and which has, generally, been seen as a success. According to one foreign policy advisor 'these systems are well established and they work, there are no problems in that respect'[497], though this does not mean that there are no debates about the necessity for reform.[498] The process of self-organisation can be illustrated as follows:

[496] Foreign policy advisor, interviewed May 2007, see also von Bredow (2008).
[497] Foreign policy advisor, interviewed May 2007
[498] See, for instance, Overhaus (2005).

Table 7.2: The normal German Foreign policy process as a CDE model

Conditions for Self-organisation	Medium Constraint	Examples of normal German system
Container	Many and entangled	Constitutional principles, political mission statements Bureaucratic loyalties History of limited sovereignty Legalistic nature of political system etc
Difference	Many, some significant	Departmental priorities, Power and resource differentials, Differing interpretations of political objectives etc
Exchange	Loose, ambiguous	Cabinet meetings, interaction government/parliament/constitutional court, speeches etc
Emergent Behaviour	Emergent patterns Emergent structure Complex cause and effect Loose coupling	Flexibility, Adaptability, Successive adjustments of policy

Despite the great similarities between the general rules of the three case study countries', a couple of the most important specific differences, the specific local boundary conditions, are worth looking at in a little more detail.

For instance, the Constitution of the United States does not talk specifically about foreign policy and the exact policy process is governed strongly by the informal interaction of agents. This is even more the case in the United Kingdom where precedent and personal preferences of leaders play a key role in the determination of the process. In Germany, by contrast, the process is very *legalistic* in nature.[499] The constitution is quite detailed in its provisions about policy processes. At the same time, these provisions allow for adaptation and change as they are open to differing

[499] See Schmidt *et al.* (2007)

interpretations. The results in all three cases have been Complex Adaptive Systems which have been successful in producing coherent patterns of self-organisation.

Recognising the different foundations and different local conditions within which the three foreign policy systems operate is crucial for understanding the differences which unfolded as the War on Terrorism unrolled and shows clearly the interlocking nature of the Complex Adaptive Systems within which this process occurred. As will be shown, some of the key containers of the respective systems became key *differences* in the interactions *between* the respective governments. For instance, as will be illustrated below, the strongly legalistic and process-driven nature of the German system became a clear determinant of German policy in the post-9/11 processes but, at the same time, became an intense source of difference between Germany and the United States. As such, one variable (the legalistic nature of the German foreign policy process) *interacted* across time and space and across different levels of analysis to produce differing impacts. Rather than being dependent or independent, it was *interdependent*, causing differing actions and reactions across time and space, an illustration of one of the key features of a Complex Adaptive System.

The next question therefore is whether these different boundary conditions were also reflected in the decision-making processes after 9/11.

The decision-making process: 9/11

By common consent, the immediate response to 9/11 by the German government was characterised by centralisation around the chancellor.

As seen, the principal decision taken in the immediate aftermath was to offer 'unconditional' solidarity to the United States. According to one former minister this formulation 'was [Schröder's] decision'.[500] One senior foreign policy advisor to the Social Democratic Party also said that this decision 'would have been directed from the chancellor's office'.[501]

According to the chronology provided by Schröder himself, he was clear about this formulation *before* the meeting of the Federal Security Council at 5pm on 11th September.[502] The role of the council, which was founded in 1955, has varied. However, in the coalition agreement between the Social Democrats and the Green Party of 1998, it was stated that its principle role should be 'coordination of German security policy' (Coalition agreement SPD/The Greens, 1998). As such, the council could potentially have a key role in dealing with crises that have security implications for Germany.

According to Schröder, the council, which met both on 11th and 12th September, was united in its support of the creation of an international anti-terror coalition and supported his call for unconditional solidarity, though politically 'it was hardly possible to do anything else'.[503] In terms of practical measures, the council decided to increase security at potential high value targets, such as airports, as well as Jewish- and American institutions and organisations and put several units of the federal army on notice of deployment and ensure increased surveillance of German air space.[504]

There was hence a clear division of labour between the council and the chancellor. Whilst the role of the council was not dissimilar to the role played by the emergency committee COBRA in the UK- focussing on internal security measures, trying to

[500] Interview with former government minister, May 2007
[501] Senior foreign policy advisor, interviewed May 2007
[502] See Schröder (2007)
[503] Interview with former minister, May 2007
[504] See Schröder (2007), page 171

prevent any similar attacks on German soil-, the *political* actions were determined by the chancellor. According to several interviewees, *at most*, the decision of declaring unconditional solidarity would have been taken after consultation with his then security advisor, Steinmeier, and Foreign Minister, Fischer. During the meetings referred to at the start of the chapter, the principal objective was to *communicate* this policy and ask for unanimity in supporting this policy.[505]

Interestingly, this kind of division of labour has been criticised. According to one argument, 'security policy today needs to be understood more broadly.' The Federal Security Council 'should be expanded' so that 'security policy can include economic, financial, health and food supply, environmental as well as national and international societal developments' during its formation (*Focus*, 2002).[506]

However, immediately after 9/11, the centralisation around the chancellor was not disputed and the reasons for the acceptance of such a process are also familiar. One was the need for speed. The former minister said that time 'was an issue. All the decision-making processes led to [Schröder because] the urgency of the situation demanded that it all led to him'.[507] One foreign policy advisor to the current government said: 'Give me one good reason why there *shouldn't* be centralisation?'[508]

A further factor, similar to the UK, was the state of confusion and shock which greeted the events. Parliament was characterised by a sense of 'collective shock ... the world was different from that point onwards, even if we did not realise the scale of the impact of what happened'.[509] The first thing everybody did was to turn on the television because politically there was nothing much at this point that could be done:

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[505] This kind of explanation of the process was given to me during several interviews.
[506] For a more detailed discussion on the policy-making process in foreign and security issues after 9/11see Hirschmann & Leggemann (2003)
[507] Former minister, interviewed May 2007
[508] Foreign policy advisor, interviewed May 2007
[509] Foreign policy advisor, May 2007, also confirmed by former minister. This belief that there was now a different world was widespread. See Stuermer (2001) or Maull (2001a)

> '[M]any members of parliament were just very emotional, solidarity was the overriding emotion, many sent letters and e-mails [to their colleagues in the US] to show their solidarity...even if there were often big political differences, but this was something completely different, obvious for everybody and this was reflected in the public declarations by the various parties'.[510]

Just like in the UK, then, there was a void which needed to be filled and which was filled by the chancellor. He provided the political leadership and set the tone for the political action that followed, aided by a small core group of advisors, whilst the departments provided *practical* assistance, in terms of consular matters, or in terms of requests from other governments. For instance, the former minister said that the first principal request received in the Defence Ministry was by the US that 'her installation in Germany be protected and [the Ministry of Defence] provided troops from the territorial defence to do this'.[511] Furthermore, the department was involved 'in [informing] the parliamentary groups, [so] in the evening I went to the CDU/CSU group to tell them what we knew'.[512]

As such, the policy process constructed in the immediate aftermath of the attacks was remarkably similar to that of the United States and the United Kingdom. It was focussed around the leader of the Executive and his closest circle of advisors. The normal decision-making process, as outlined above, was emasculated. Whilst many of the key departments of government were present when the Federal Security Council met, most of them were not actively involved in the *formulation* of policy. As such, the process leading to the formulation of 'unconditional solidarity' looked something like this:

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[510] *ibid*
[511] *ibid*
[512] *ibid*

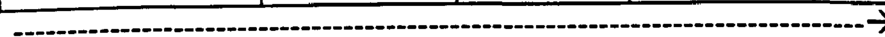
Table 7.3: **Centralisation of German policy process on 9/11**

Chain of command	Role	During the process input may be received by
1. Chancellor	a) Provide political leadership b) Provide re-assurance	a) Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Security Advisor to the Chancellor and Minister for the Chancellor's Office b) Joschka Fischer, Foreign Minister

Again, using the three complexity tools, one can immediately visualise the impact of such a process and of the policy defined.

Figure 7.2: **The German Foreign policy process as a Complexity Map on 9/11**

Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Physical complexity	Order



Time

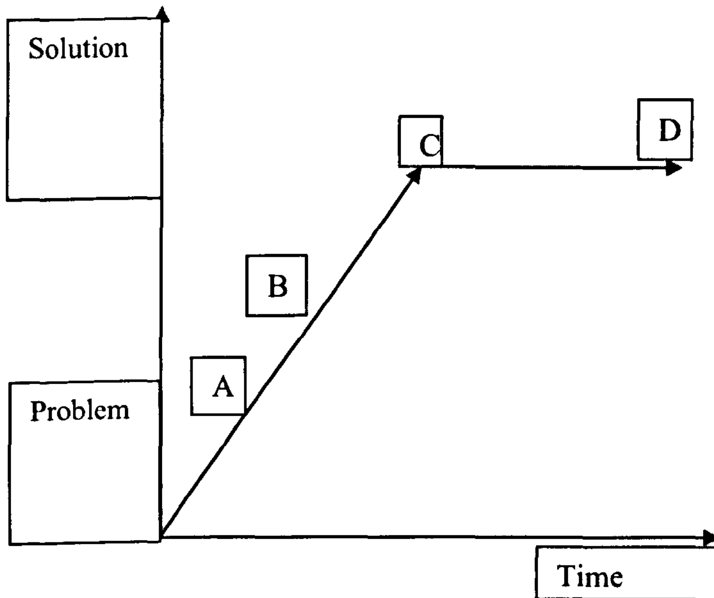
Examples

Attacks of 9/11 represent disorder and attack on civilised world	None: Solidarity is unconditional	None. Policy is decided by chancellor and then rolled out to government	Some. Different governmen t members emphasise different aspects of policy	End result: Tackle terrorism and its root causes

Schröder's insistence on unconditional solidarity and his agreement that terrorism represented a global problem meant that significant parts of complexity were stripped out of the system. A problem was identified, numerous strategies were proposed in order to solve it and the expected end-result was a clear policy to tackle the root causes of terrorism. As such, again, the problem and its solutions were defined at a global level, the super-system.

Just like in the other two case study countries, this way of defining the policy and its extension, radically simplified the policy landscape. Just like Bush and Blair, Schröder emphasised the need for the spread of certain values, such as tolerance, difference and liberty whose spread could counter terrorism.

Figure 7.3: The German War on Terrorism as a typical x-y graph



A: Terrorism defined as problem
B: Apply policies (military, promotion of values etc)
C: Address root causes of terrorism and solidify core values across time and space
D: Maintain this situation

Whilst there were some differences between various government ministers about which particular values they emphasised in defining the policy, overall the combination of few participants in the policy process again resulted in speedy decision-making, clarity of pattern across time and space and a high degree of certainty.

Just like in the US and the UK the leader of the Executive acted as a strong, magnet-like container. All decision-making authority led to him and he used this authority to develop a seemingly clear and unambiguous policy which provided a powerful political container. Geographically, there was also a concentration of political activity in the chancellor's office which helped to solidify the concentration of power around him.

As such, the key difference to make a difference was once again the power and authority of the chancellor. As shown, Schröder very quickly organised the political response around him, a process which was helped by the very strong role expectations that existed that the chancellor *should* take charge. The confusion which prevailed both in parliament and in the Ministry of Defence, amongst others, also solidified this difference.

Having decided upon his policy, Schröder opened up numerous exchanges in order to communicate his decision. The meetings of the Federal Security Council, the meeting with other domestic political leaders, the phone calls to other international political leaders to construct 'European solidarity' etc all served the purpose of underlining the policy Schröder had decided upon. As such, the German CDE model on 9/11 looked as follows:

Table 7.4: The German policy process on 9/11 as a CDE model

Conditions for Self-organisation	High Constraint	Examples
Container	Few	Chancellor Chancellor's Office Unconditional solidarity Core values
Difference	Few	Chancellor's power and authority
Exchange	Tight, clear	Telegram and call to Bush Meetings with small group of advisors Meetings and calls with other world leaders Meetings with domestic political leaders in numerous settings
Emergent Behaviour	Fast decision-making, unambiguous policy, clarity of pattern	Global applicability of War on Terror, Spread of core values to address root causes of terrorism

Therefore, all three case study countries had a foreign policy process in response to 9/11 which, in its basic rules, was highly predictable. Power centralised around the leader of the Executive who "took charge" in order to develop a clear and unambiguous policy around which both the government, the political system as a

whole and the country could unite. There were intense 'role expectations' for such a process to occur, both inside and outside the political system.

However, as will be shown now, just like in the other case study countries, this process of centralisation did not stop complexity from re-emerging. Both *within* Germany and *between* the German government and the governments of the other case study countries, there *were* significant differences both about the *concept* of the War on Terrorism and the specific policies and objectives that should be pursued within such a context. These differences and their impact can best be understood by applying the Complexity approach.

In terms of the particular cases it will be argued that one of the key differences between the first two case-study countries and Germany was the way the German government *responded* to the re-emergence of these differences, effectively embracing the complexity they represented. It is this difference which allowed Germany to avoid many of the problems the US and UK experienced.

Post-shock: German policy in the War on Terror

To develop this argument in more detail, Complexity mapping will once again be used to identify the orderly, complex and disorderly elements of the War on Terrorism from a German perspective.

Figure 7.4: German and US perspectives on the War on Terror as a Complex Adaptive System

Disorder	Conscious complexity	Organic complexity	Physical complexity	Order

←--→

Time

Examples

Future development of terrorism, long-term domestic and international developments	Approach to war on terror and cultural differences influencing this approach. Strong public support	Interplay between different institutions and groups in general in the policy process	Reasons for supporting the policy, parliament's support	'Unconditional solidarity' for the United States. Commitment to fighting terrorism, close links between countries

As already discussed above, the initial response on 9/11 to the terrorist attacks was highly predictable. Support for the US was the logical thing to do and a political and moral imperative. Outside France, the United States remains Germany's most important political partner. Anything other than full support would therefore have been untenable.[513]

Critically, many in Germany still see support for the US as moral obligation, bearing in mind 'it was the Americans who made a decisive contribution to the defeat of national socialism and it was our American friends who allowed us a new beginning in freedom and democracy after the Second World War' (Schröder, 2001b). This

[513] See Mikikis (2007).

sense that the United States had 'saved' Germany and therefore deserved unequivocal support in its hour of need was overwhelming. The former minister said that there were still many in Germany, both inside and outside the political establishment, who believed that 'there must not be a rift between [Germany and the United States]'.[514] The outpouring of public sympathy for the US in the days after 9/11, with huge demonstrations in Berlin and elsewhere, 'was real, it was not faked'.[515] There was, as such, enormous public pressure for such a declaration of unconditional solidarity, much more obviously so than in the United Kingdom.

However, this intense feeling of solidarity, which acted as a powerful local boundary condition to facilitate Schröder's initial policy declaration, soon confronted other crucial factors particular to Germany which meant that the concept of the War on Terror and the policy of 'unconditional solidarity' came under strain.

First, there were intense debates about both the actual objectives of the War on Terror and how far German participation should go. As one foreign policy advisor put it: 'We were sceptical about [the concept] and its chances of success'.[516] In practical terms, the use of the term war and the emphasis on military action – first in Afghanistan- also had a significant impact on the German political process.

As stated above, any deployment of German forces outside NATO territory requires the explicit consent of parliament.[517] The constitutional court added important details to the provision in Article 26 of the Basic Law that 'no German soldier can be sent away without prior parliamentary approval'[518], by requiring that parliament approve the *specific mandate* under which soldiers are deployed, which is subject to regular review. As such, active military participation by German forces in the War on Terror was much more difficult than, for instance, in the UK. The deployment of the army is, essentially, a *parliamentary* affair, and not a chancellor decision. Bearing in mind that the Basic Law was written in the aftermath of World War II and the Nazi-

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[514] Former minister, interviewed May 2007
[515] *Ibid.* Other interviewees agreed
[516] Foreign policy advisor, interviewed May 2007. See also von Erffa (2002) or Guéhenno (2002)
[517] Bundesverfassungsgericht, 12th July 1994
[518] Senior parliamentarian, interviewed May 2007

dictatorship in Germany, it may not be surprising that the future deployment of armed forces would be made more difficult than it had been in the past.[519]

This organic complexity is therefore closely linked to German history which has had a significant impact on German political and social culture, its conscious complexity. As shown, in the aftermath of World War II West Germany defined itself as a *Handelsstaat*, a trading nation.[520] Defence, one of the key responsibilities of a 'traditional' state, was taken over by the United States and handled principally through NATO. This in turn, over time, and in combination with other factors, had a deep impact on German political culture in general, and foreign policy in particular. It meant that German society as a whole became deeply pacifist with the result that for decades '[t]here was a complete absence of [traditional] strategic thinking, of long-term thinking'.[521] As such, German foreign policy has been characterised by a 'culture of reticence -a culture of restraint and accommodation' with a shared world view that 'harmony is latent and cooperation is possible' (Malici, 2006). In the many analyses of German foreign policy post-unification there was still a credo that the country 'confounds Neorealism' (Duffield, 1999). [522]

As a result, there was deep unease in large parts of the German political establishment and German society about the term 'War on Terrorism' and the tactics employed to 'win' this war. Just like in the UK, there was irritation about Bush's 'cowboy terminology': 'It is simply different and it did not go down well here', according to one foreign policy advisor.[523] As a result, a lot of the sympathy for the United States evaporated. There was also deep unease about the term 'war'. According to the same foreign policy advisor 'we did not call it a war [because] politically it is just not possible', referring back to the deeply pacifist nature of German society.

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[519] A further judgement by the German constitutional court makes reference to these issues. See Bundesverfassungsgericht (2003). There are, however, still arguments about these judgements. See Dreist (2002).
[520] This is a commonly used term to describe West Germany's post-war posture. See Padgett *et al.* (2003)
[521] Interview with foreign policy advisor, May 2007; see Staack (2000) or Hellman *et al.* (2006)
[522] For a detailed review of German Foreign Policy behaviour in the post-Cold War era, see Sperling (2003) or Bahr (2003). For an analysis of 'pacifism' as a discourse, see Bruecher (2008)
[523] Foreign policy advisor, interviewed May 2007

Schröder actually came to power in 1998 with a view to challenge this pacifist culture and give Germany a more 'traditional' foreign policy profile.[524] In this he was 'helped' by the events in former Yugoslavia. It was the atrocities committed there that led directly to the ruling by the Federal Constitutional court of 1994, permitting the deployment of German troops outside NATO territory. The judgement was used by Schröder to provide the legal basis for the deployment of German troops in the war in Kosovo in 1998/99. Interestingly, this deployment also had the support of the vast majority of the German population, seeing it as a legitimate intervention to stop genocide. As such, it conformed to one of the principle *Leitmotifs* (guiding principles) of German Foreign Policy: *Nie wieder Auschwitz* (Auschwitz: never again), as opposed to another such principle: *Nie wieder Krieg* (War never again).[525] This was a crucial shift in Germany's foreign policy behaviour and reflected a broader shift in German society.[526] By the time September 11th occurred therefore, there had already been a not insignificant change in German foreign policy culture. In fact, since the deployment in former Yugoslavia, German military presence around the world 'has mushroomed'. By 2002, 60,000 German troops were deployed in a number of missions around the world (Berger, 2002). Yet, as several interviewees pointed out, this apparent new activism did *not* remove German unease about using the military as a major policy instrument or German preference for diplomacy and 'soft power'. [527]

The above is of key importance in relation to the Complexity approach in that it shows the interdependence of variables in determining attitudes to particular broad political concepts. For instance, the cultural shift referred to in the paragraph above could well be explained through Constructivist approaches. [528] From a Complexity perspective, this represents *one* semi-autonomous agent amongst many others. Yet, it is important to recognise that these, or other, factors, like the legalistic nature of the German foreign policy process – in particular in relation to wars -, or German political culture, all potentially have equal importance since they *interact* constantly

[524] See Schröder (2007)

[525] For a more detailed account of the lead-up to the involvement in former Yugoslavia see Berger (2002)

[526] For a discussion of Germany's participation in missions abroad see also Goebel (2000)

[527] See, for instance, Sperling (2003) or, Baralei (2007). On the concept of 'Soft Power' see Nye (2004)

[528] See Kubalkova (2001) for a discussion on Constructivism and foreign policy. Complexity would see these as semi-autonomous agents alongside many others.

with many other agents across time and space. As will be shown, as the War on Terror unrolled, these interactions produced quite different patterns in US-German relations than might have been expected on 9/11.

In short, these interactions created tensions and these tensions are hugely important in relation to *specific* political actions and represented Schröder with significant political problems domestically from very early on.

Schröder, Afghanistan and the Fitness Landscape

As shown, Schröder had left no doubt from the outset that he was in favour of military German participation in Afghanistan. With the huge outpouring of sympathy for the US and the political support this translated into, it might have been expected that turning this commitment into practical policy would have been straightforward. However, in committing German troops, Schröder faced potentially formidable challenges, many related to the interplay between organic and conscious complexity referred to above.

German participation in the war required the explicit consent of parliament, after a recommendation from the foreign affairs committee. '[T]he foreign committee gives the decisive vote and proposes to parliament to agree to the request of the government'.[529] On top of that, committees such as the Defence committee and the Budget committee were also involved in determining the extent of the Afghanistan mandate. As such, there were intense political debates about both *whether* German troops should go to Afghanistan and, if so, under what mandate. As such, parliament can exercise considerable political power. It can force the government to negotiate about 'who goes where'.[530] However, as critics have pointed out, in a practical *operational* sense, the mandate given by parliament provides more of a *general guideline* as opposed to *specific instructions* to commanders in the field.[531]

This is a crucial difference between, in particular, the UK and Germany. Whilst in the UK Blair did not, and did not need to, seek specific parliamentary approval and used the Afghanistan war to prolong the crisis decision-making process, in Germany

[529] Senior parliamentarian, interviewed May 2007
[530] *Ibid.*
[531] See Varwick (2003)

parliament was *brought into* the policy process at this stage, the process began to *normalise* precisely *because* of the prospect of war.[532]

This process of normalisation (i.e. de-centralisation) actually exposed many of the differences and anxieties that still existed in Germany both about the general issue of war and the specific mission in Afghanistan. *Despite* the broad public sympathy for the United States and the desire to 'do something' about terrorism, chancellor Schröder felt compelled to link the vote about German deployment in Afghanistan in November 2001 to a vote of confidence in his government which he won with 336 votes, two more than the majority required. 4 Green Party MPs had threatened to vote against Schröder but changed their minds in the last minute, whilst one MP of the Social Democrats left the party and voted as an independent.[533]

One can see therefore the hugely important influence of *domestic* factors on the general policy. Despite the fact that the broad conditions had not changed, despite the fact that there was overwhelming sympathy for the US the influence of specific local circumstances to significant changes in the political landscape. The specific question of Afghanistan exposed many of the deep-lying issues that influence German political and social culture and, as such, its foreign policy behaviour. [534] In short, even his own domestic political landscape was anything other than straightforward, at a time when there was unity amongst Germany's elite actors about the need for solidarity with the United States.[535]

From a Complexity point of view, these factors that deserve at least as much attention than the broad framework provided by the War on Terror. German political culture represents what has been called a 'slow variable', a variable which can take years or decades to change. In Complex Adaptive Systems 'the things that linger longest often have the most profound impact on the system'(Ramo 2009: 180).

Applied to the War on Terror and the present case study, this will become a critical point since these long-lasting factors have a significant impact on the ability of an

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[532] On the process of deployment see, for instance, Dreist (2002).
[533] See New York Times of 17 November 2001 for the article from which the numbers were taken.
[534] For a discussion on this, see Wittlinger & Larose (2007)
[535] Why these intense debates took place particularly in Germany will be discussed below. However, for a good summary of the issue written at the time, see Neaman (2002) or Elsaesser (2002)

actor to undertake or participate in a particular political action. In Germany's case, the combination of cultural factors and particular political rules meant that the Complex Adaptive System self-organised in a different way to that of the US or the UK. The question is how Schröder confronted this situation and it is here that one can see the most significant differences to Bush and Blair.

Schröder and the Fitness Landscape: Allowing self-organisation

The re-emergence of complexity post-9/11 was therefore neither new nor surprising and mirrored the re-emergence in the US and the UK. As the immediate crisis moved further into the past, there was an increasing expression of difference within and between different Complex Adaptive Systems. However, it is the *manner* in which this complexity re-emerged in Germany which is crucial.

One key factor is the way the German political system *requires* the involvement of different actors, *in particular* when dealing with the ultimate crisis situation, war. As shown, both to go to war and to maintain a war parliamentary support is crucial. As such, there is constant interaction between government and parliament and channels of communications are kept open as any policy progresses.[536] During military operations such as the one in Afghanistan, the foreign affairs committee is briefed every two weeks by the Foreign- and/or the Defence Ministry. Senior members of said committee can have more frequent access to the situation rooms in the relevant ministries.[537] As a consequence 'problems get picked up quite quickly'.[538] Asked whether this constant communication represents a logistical or time problem, the member said that this was not the case: 'We are always able to take the necessary decisions in three days [...] Time is not a serious argument'.[539]

That this involvement at times leads to tensions is undisputed. The danger is that parliamentarians define mandates too narrowly and want too much control:

> 'We have to weigh up whether any intervention is justified; we can have a look if the means and objectives are laid out precisely, if the rules are being

[536] Similar processes existed between the chancellery and the ministry of defence, which had detailed input into the policy process, according to the former minister.
[537] As confirmed by several interviewees
[538] Senior parliamentarian, interviewed May 2007
[539] *ibid*

adhered to, if the law is being respected. But we should not play the role of a commander in the field'.[540]

The above issue about the division of labour between politicians and those executing political decisions the field hints at a certain tension, a tension which, from the point of view of Complexity, is healthy. In any case, there was agreement amongst the interviewees that any such tensions would represent the lesser of two evils, especially in crises that involve the deployment of troops. The senior parliamentarian put it like this: 'The decision to send soldiers anywhere should be made difficult for oneself. The more difficult it is for parliament, the better government has to present its case', thereby improving the quality and coherence of the policy.[541]

There are other, interrelated, factors which also helped in the quick re-establishment of a 'normal' political process, key being conscious complexity. As shown, there was deep unease about the rhetoric used by the Bush government in relation to the War on Terrorism and the concept as a whole. However, unlike Bush or Blair, Schröder *engaged* with the differences expressed and *adjusted* his position in response.

The first notable adjustment occurred in his language. In his first declaration to parliament after 9/11, Schröder characterised the attacks as a 'declaration of war against the civilised world' (Schröder, 2001a). However, he quickly modified his language in subsequent speeches. Speaking to parliament just after the war in Afghanistan had begun in October he stated that 'we are in the middle of a decisive and probably long-term *conflict* with international terrorism' (Schröder, 2001c, my emphasis).[542] In addition, Schröder modified his position of 'unconditional solidarity'. Only a week after the attacks he stated in a parliamentary debate that Germany would not participate 'in any adventures' (Schröder, 2001b), a clear response to the worries about what a broader war against terrorism might entail.

Schröder's definition of the issue of terrorism was also different. Whilst acknowledging that terrorism represented a problem which needed to be addressed, he was convinced that Bush's declaration of a war on terror had the 'primary aim' of

[540] *ibid*
[541] *ibid*
[542] For a detailed discussion on the changing rhetoric of the German political elite, see Jakobs (2005)

determining 'who was behind the attacks, to expose them and apprehend them' (Schröder 2007: 174). As such, he was convinced that 'Afghanistan would be the focus of our efforts for a long time' (*ibid*: 187). Schröder, therefore, saw the initial focus in a much narrower context than either Bush or Blair.

In terms of what should 'take the place' of terrorism, Schröder did not, as did Bush, seek to conduct a war to replace terrorism with a system of society which is 'right and true for every nation in every region'. Rather, Schröder argued that there needed to be 'an assertion of different and differentiated cultural identities' (Schröder, 2002).

Whilst this declaration appears somewhat bland and devoid of specific content is nevertheless crucial in two ways: First, it explicitly acknowledges and encourages the existence of different cultural and social norms across time and space. As such, it significantly changes the container through which any anti-terrorism policy is made. Schröder was not trying to define *one* set of norms which then has to be spread out across the globe. Rather, without making specific proposals on how this should be done, he sought to create the conditions to allow for the emergence and maintenance of difference across time and space. As such, he *avoids* the trap into which both Bush and Blair stepped by assuming responsibility for spreading a certain set of values across time and space.[543] By acknowledging and encouraging difference he stresses the importance of local actors, i.e. of semi-autonomous agents acting within local boundary conditions. In short, Schröder's declarations much better reflected the realities of a global Complex Adaptive System, the super-system.[544]

This brings one back to one other crucial factor, one which is often overlooked in the context of traditional responses but which is a crucial element of Complexity. The rhetoric used by Schröder, as outlined above, is less deterministic and therefore provides a far more dynamic and flexible context within which to act. Whilst recognising terrorism as a problem, he implicitly acknowledges its differentiated expression across time and space. The fact that he *changed* his original rhetoric in this sense was a sign of strength, not weakness, and allowed him crucial leeway as the war on terrorism developed: by being less deterministic, it generated *options* in a

[543] On this point, also see Hacke (2004), especially in comparison to the United States.
[544] For a further discussion of these differences, see Dauderstaedt (2002)

way that Bush or Blair's rhetoric was not. As such, the system was adaptable and flexible.

The flexibility he showed was a direct response to the political realities he was confronting at home. It bears repeating that German participation in the war in Afghanistan nearly cost Schröder his job, at a time when there was universal sympathy with the United States and agreement that *something* had to be done about terrorism. This being the case, Schröder's narrow and legalistic focus was both logical and necessary in a political sense. He had to define Germany's participation specifically within the context of modified international law, as represented by the UN resolution passed in the aftermath of 9/11 which declared terrorist activity a threat to world peace. This, according to all interviewees, was crucial in justifying German participation, since the adherence to international law and a framework of multilateralism represent another key feature of German conscious complexity. They are part of the fabric of German political culture.[545]

In summary, then, both in terms of the political process and the political debate *the normal policy process had reasserted itself by the time the decision to engage militarily in Afghanistan was taken. It had re-asserted itself as a result of the particular semi-autonomous agents essential to tie German political process together.*[546] Critically, it was through this normalisation that Schröder was able to pick up the problems he would confront. He did *not* try to control this process, so that complexity re-emerged *inside* the framework of general rules so crucial to maintaining a coherent process of self-organisation. This re-assertion of complexity and its manner was crucial in relation to the Iraq war.

The first concerns about the direction of US policy with regards to Iraq appeared in response to Bush's State of the Union Address of 2002 during which he constructed the 'axis of evil'. The speech 'fundamentally' shook 'the hope that the United States had a similar view of the situation [with regards to Afghanistan and terrorism than we did]' (Schröder 2007: 196). These concerns were underlined by 'several speeches

[545] This was the unanimous opinion of all those interviewed. Interestingly, elsewhere there was an intense debate about the capacity of the UN to effectively confront terrorism. See Boulden & Weiss (2004)

[546] Interestingly, those close to the Bush administration saw these debates in a very different light, a factor which will be discussed in more detail below. See, for instance, Skiba & Techau (2008).

by the American Vice-President Dick Cheney who spoke in ever more strident terms about the dangers of Iraq and the necessity of war'.[547]

These speeches led, according to all interviewees, to a perceptible change in atmosphere both within government and in the country at large towards the United States. According to the former minister, it was clear from July/August 2002 onwards that 'there will be trouble...[Germany] cannot participate [in any war because]... there is a well-established consensus that the United Nations should [determine such matters which] in Washington obviously [does] not exist'.[548]

Several factors came together here which would have made any participation in Iraq virtually impossible for the German government from a political point of view. Tied to need for the backing of international law and/or international organisations were once again key aspects of conscious complexity. With the Iraq war on the horizon, the pacifism within Germany's political culture once again came to the fore. Equally, the perceived desire by the United States to go to war with Iraq under any circumstances and with shifting rationales also brought to the fore a latent anti-Americanism which had seemed to disappear immediately after 9/11.[549]

Crucial here also was the language used by Bush to justify their actions: For Schröder, the impression began to form that Bush's decisions were 'the result of a conversation with God', a 'problem' since such a justification 'cannot permit that [these decisions] be changed or even adjusted through critique or through the exchange of thoughts.' The 'absolute' clarity in Bush's thoughts and his public declarations 'increased my political scepticism' (Schröder 2007: 200-1). In this scepticism, Schröder reflected the strongly secular nature of much of German society and its chancellors up to this point.[550]

The Iraq War also came into focus in Germany just before the General election of 2002. During the campaign it became a central issue with countless opinion polls

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[547] Former minister, interviewed May 2007

[548] *Ibid.* See also Schröder (2007) or Busse (2003)

[549] There was agreement between all interviewees that both the issue itself, as well as the way it was presented by the Bush Administration, was a crucial factor in turning post-9/11 sympathy into open hostility of a scale unknown in recent times.

[550] On this issue of discourse and political culture in German foreign policy, see Maull (2001b).

showing that the vast majority of Germans were opposed to the war and worried about its wider implications.[551] Schröder used this opposition to his advantage during the campaign. Having first articulated his unequivocal 'no' to any participation by German troops in any war in August, his opinion poll ratings improved markedly.[552] He therefore hammered away at the topic throughout the campaign and, again, managed to tap into deep-seated German pacifism.

The above factors are a classic expression of the massively entangled nature of social Complex Adaptive Systems. The deeply pacifist German political culture, and the commitment to international law, especially in relation to armed conflict, combined with specific domestic circumstances (the upcoming German general election) to essentially completely *negate* the unchanged broad conditions of the post-9/11 world: the enormous power of the United States, strengthened still by virtue of having been the victim of the terrorist attacks. The local boundary conditions which asserted themselves in Germany changed the dynamic (the pattern) of the relationship between the US and Germany.

Such change did not come without its costs. Whilst it is widely credited with helping Schröder win the election[553], he was heavily criticised both in Germany and abroad for putting Germany's long-standing partnership with the United States at risk. One of the most respected newspapers in Germany, *Der Tagesspiegel*, declared in an editorial that

> 'every day brings new evidence how endangered Germany's standing in the world is....Never in the last 50 years has Germany been so isolated..., a disaster for a country, whose very self-understanding is based on European and transatlantic integration' (*Der Tagesspeiegel*, 8th February 2003).

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[551] See for instance Jaeger *et al* (2005)

[552] It is worth noting though that Schröder always denied that his position and clear statement of this position was influenced by the election campaign, stating that he could hardly have gone through the campaign *without* doing so, bearing in mind the importance voters attached to it. See Schröder (2007), ch. V. Equally, two interviewees said that, even though his position and clarity *did* help during the campaign, they were convinced that his position actually reflected his genuine beliefs.

[553] See Güllner (2005) for a detailed analysis of the election

Several interviewees agreed that the stance taken by Schröder, and the manner in which it was presented, had a significant impact on German-American relations, and therefore Germany's relations with arguably its most important ally.[554]

This, then, leads to two questions. First, why was Schröder seemingly prepared to take this 'hit', as far as German-American relations were concerned, in contrast, for instance, to Tony Blair? From this will flow another question: Why *did* such a political decision lead to the deterioration of political relations between two long-standing allies?

In response to the first question, there was a more realistic assessment of Germany's status within the global political context. Schröder concluded that his government would not be able to influence the US to the extent of changing her policy on Iraq once the principal political decision had been taken: He 'received signals that the United States was planning a war against Iraq under any circumstances' (Schröder 2007: 210).

As such, the key focus was on *managing* this process, with the aim of maintaining political capital at home, where the general election was on a knife-edge. Being a member of the Security Council of the United Nations at the time, Germany did argue strongly in favour of an UN-managed process of Iraqi disarmament, but this was not realistically expected to change the course of events.[555] It did, however, mean being *seen* to argue consistently against this, for the German public, hugely unpopular war.

Finally, whilst there was a definite deterioration of relations between Germany and the United States, there was an improvement of relations between Germany and two other principal European countries, France and Russia. The three worked closely together to coordinate their efforts against the war. According to Schröder, this episode helped cement the relationship he had with both French President Jacques

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[554] The member of the foreign affairs committee was particularly critical of the *way* Schröder presented his policy, even though he agreed with the principal decision. Similar arguments have been made by Maull, Harnisch & Grund (2003). For a more recent discussion see Jones (2008). For an impact on British-German relations, see Seldon (2007). For a broader analysis, see Gordon & Shapiro (2004)

[555] As Schröder (2007) stated.

Chirac and Russian President Vladimir Putin.[556] The knock-on effect of this coming together over Iraq between, in particular, Chirac and Schröder could be felt in other areas of policy, in particular with regards to the European Union where the 'French-German axis' was revived during the negotiations about the proposed European Constitution.[557] As such, the deterioration of relations with the United States over a particular issue had a knock-on effect on other relationships since 'one can never do only one thing'.

This shows another crucial aspect of the Complexity approach. One, it points to the importance of being realistic in terms of what can be achieved. With the United States being in such a powerful position, it was unrealistic to expect the government to change its plans because of a German intervention.

However, there was also a clear appreciation of the multiple impacts any particular policy can have. So, whilst the German government arguing against the Iraq war did not prevent it from occurring, it *did* change the environment within which it could operate by establishing closer relationships with two important allies, allowing a perusal of other critical objectives, such as energy security or issues on European integration.[558] At the same time, the position taken by Schröder served clear domestic purposes. As such, there was an awareness that 'one can never do only one thing' and that political actions have to be seen and be decided upon within a multi-level context.

Such considerations are also critical to understanding why the anti-Iraq war stance taken by Schröder led to such deterioration in German-American relations at the time. All interviewees said that there was a lack of appreciation of the *extent* of the political differences between the two governments generally and after 9/11 in particular. One of the interviewees said that there was a lack of understanding of the Bush administration within German political circles: 'They are difficult. They are just [...] different and you need to understand that'.[559] The former minister said that 'the domestic opinion forming process in Washington was not clear to us. It was

[556] Schröder (2007)
[557] For a more detailed analysis of the knock-on effect of Iraq on German-British relations in the European Union see Schweiger (2004).
[558] See Aalto (2008)
[559] Senior parliamentarian, interviewed May 2007

much quicker than was realised here and arrived much quicker at the point that there should be a war against Iraq than we realised'.[560]

However, these differences did not lead to *open* political disagreements between the two governments directly after 9/11, for a number of reasons. One, as already discussed, at the level of meetings between the principal leaders, it was seen as politically impossible to approach such a subject: 'It was never discussed', according to one interviewee.[561] As such, the odd bit of criticism which emerged from within the German political system came from lower down and did not have an impact on the broad goal of unconditional solidarity, according to the foreign policy advisor to the SPD.

Such a situation is entirely predictable bearing in mind the global political situation directly after 9/11. Any open demonstration of dissent would have been politically extremely costly. However, this brings one back to the need for a quick normalisation of the policy process after a crisis and the flexibility and adaptability this permits.

One can demonstrate this importance by looking at US expectations of the German government and in relation to Iraq in particular. According to the former minister there was also a complete lack of understanding within the American system of the debates that did go on within Germany, both about the general direction of the fight against terrorism and about the war in Iraq in particular. Equally, there was a lack of understanding about the nature of the German political process. As such, even in the summer of 2002, when the debate about Iraq was picking up speed as a result of the election campaign, 'I know that there was an opinion in Washington that Germany would stand shoulder to shoulder with the United States under any circumstances, come what may, in particular on Iraq'.[562] When this did not happen, there was consternation and anger. Yet, according to the foreign policy advisor to the current government, this anger was wholly unjustified bearing in mind the particular circumstances faced in Germany. According to him, the Schröder government succeeded in significantly changing German attitudes towards foreign policy. He

[560] Former minister, interviewed May 2007
[561] Senior foreign policy advisor, interviewed May 2007
[562] Former minister, interviewed May 2007

pointed out that, 'in 1991, there were huge demonstrations against the Gulf War; there should be 'no blood for oil'. Yet, in 1998, 'a Red-Green [Social Democratic-Green Party] coalition committed German troops to an out of area mission under the command of NATO', a process repeated in Afghanistan. As such, Germany 'has come a long way, something which is not understood in Washington or London'. Interestingly, this comment came from a foreign policy advisor who primarily works for the Christian Democrats and therefore would have had little interest in emphasising the progress made by a Social-democratic chancellor.[563]

There is hence a need for exchanges at *international* level in order to have a better understanding of the *particular* circumstances within which specific political actors (governments in this case) have to operate. There is a need for understanding and *empathy* which would allow actors to adjust their policies and expectations accordingly.[564] Since, from a Complexity perspective, both Complex Adaptive Systems and the agents that act within them are massively entangled and mutually dependent, there needs to be a concerted effort to promote the *understanding* of such massively entangled systems in place of narrowly focussed debates about power, dependent or independent variables or levels of analysis. What needs to be promoted is a holistic approach both domestically and internationally.

Paradoxically, the German policy process post-9/11 was a well-functioning process of self organisation, which not only maintained its coherence but also managed to predict many of the problems faced by the US and Britain. It did so precisely *because* it reverted quickly back to its normal state of medium constraint. Yet, at the same time, such a normalisation did *not* take place at the bi-lateral and multilateral level, with the results having just been outlined above: a loss of coherence and understanding.

The German policy process as a process of self-organisation

As shown, the initial German response to the attacks of 9/11 was based on very traditional crisis management tools: A small number of players around the chancellor and an easily understandable broad theme (solidarity) which formed the basis of

[563] Senior foreign policy advisor, interviewed May 2007. See also Maull (2000). On German attitudes towards the first Gulf War in 1991, see Oldhaver (2000)
[564] See Ramo (2009) on the importance of empathy for flexibility and self-organisation

policy. This being the case, there was not much difference between the American, the British or the German system.

The key difference then between the first two systems (the American and the British) and the third, German, system was the speed with which the decision-making processes normalised again. As has been shown, in the United States and the UK the crisis decision-making system was maintained practically until after the beginning of the Iraq conflict. In fact, at several stages the respective leaders tried to re-enforce these systems to guard against the re-emerging complexity.

In Germany the opposite happened. The crisis system immediately after 9/11 was *replaced* by a 'normal' process of decision-making precisely *because* of the prospect of a war with German involvement. For instance, whilst Blair sent troops to Afghanistan and *then* informed parliament of the start of their deployment, Schröder had to *negotiate* with parliament about the nature and extent of German deployment. As such, as the ultimate crisis situation (war) approached, the decision-making process in Germany became broader.

The key consequence of these provisions is that there are both numerous exchanges and that these exchanges get used purposefully to introduce differences into the policy process. The process that exists allows for the introduction of these differences in a much more constructive way than was the case in the United Kingdom or in the United States. The result has been a much more coherent process of self-organisation than in the other two countries. The institutional system is marked by an ongoing process of conversation with which the principal actors have to engage. As such, there is an attempt to work with difference since there is an acceptance that in such a process differences will emerge. Schröder himself has stated that, during the lead-up to Iraq he constantly discussed the issue with a range of actors from numerous institutions, parties etc.[565]

This leads to a situation whereby adjustments in policies are seen as a normal part of the political process. Schröder, having started out declaring 'unconditional' solidarity

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[565] Schröder (2007). For a discussion of the interplay between ideas, culture and institutional processes, see Ulbert (1997)

with the United States, quickly qualified his policy. As shown, this change was not picked up in the United States, yet it was a crucial since it acknowledged that, with parliamentary approval needed for all military missions, a course of 'unconditional' solidarity may well be unsustainable in the long-term.

All the above factors are also crucial in understanding the containers which Germany adopted in the aftermath of 9/11. Whilst 'unconditional solidarity' was the key political container on 9/11 and the chancellor was the key personal container to which people looked for leadership, these containers got adjusted both through political processes and through the use of particular rhetoric. There was no telescope through which a singular policy to achieve a singular objective was defined. As shown, with the exception of the speech on 12th September, the use of the word 'war' was studiously avoided. Whilst this was linked as much to historical reasons than to the desire of avoiding the proclamation of unachievable aims, the result was nevertheless that there was no attempt on Schröder's part to *impose* a particular aim on a complex super-system. In fact, he went further, in his speech in New York in 2002, by actually calling for the fostering of difference and differentiation. Whilst he frequently talked about freedom and liberty, he did not define 'a single sustainable model that is right and true for every country in every region.'

These adjustments occurred in *response to* an ongoing domestic conversation which included numerous actors who, through a variety of exchanges introduced differences into the policy process. As such, the process was able to self-organise in a coherent manner.

Table 7.5 **The German foreign policy process before, on and after 9/11 as a CDE model**

Conditions for Self-organisation	**Normal times (medium constraint)**	**Crisis (9/11) High Constraint (desired)**	**Return to medium constraint (post-9/11)**
Container	Many and entangled: mission statements, bureaucratic loyalties etc	Few: Chancellor Unconditional solidarity Core values	Many, entangled: terrorism, fostering difference, solidarity, no adventures
Difference	Many, some significant: departmental priorities, power and resource differentials etc	Few: Chancellor's power resources	Many, some significant: differing political priorities, power and resource differentials etc
Exchange	Loose and ambiguous: cabinet meetings, parliamentary involvement, bi- and multilateral meetings etc	Tight, clear: Telegram and call to Bush Meetings with core advisors Meetings and calls with other leaders	Loose and ambiguous: cabinet, parliament, bi- and multilateral meetings etc
Emergent Behaviour	Emergent patterns and structure, complex cause and effect, loose coupling (flexibility, adaptability, successive adjustments of policy)	Fast decision-making, unambiguous, clarity of pattern (Unconditional solidarity, terrorism as a problem)	Emergent patterns and structure, complex cause and effect, loose coupling (flexibility, adaptability, successive adjustments of policy)

What this quick normalisation allowed was for a return to flexible and adaptable policy-making. It allowed for an appreciation of the importance of local circumstances for the development of a particular policy. It allowed for debate and therefore for the generation of various options. It allowed for the appreciation of the multiple factors across multiple levels of analysis which influence a particular policy decision. In summary, it allowed for the appreciation and the application of *change*, a crucial feature of any Complex Adaptive System.

As a result, it became clear that the Iraq War, under the particular circumstances that existed in 2002 in Germany, was neither feasible nor desirable. What was happening *within* the Complex Adaptive System that was the German political system at the time weighed more heavily than what other agents (for instance, the US government) were trying to do *to* the system (make Germany participate in the Iraq War and, as such, enforcing unconditional solidarity across time and space). This is critical to understanding the Complexity approach.

The differences and doubts brought about by the process of self-organisation described led to a very different political decision and allowed for correctly foreseeing the problems subsequently encountered by the US and the UK. As such, the key question that needs answering is whether Germany's policy process can hold lessons for either or both of the UK and the US? Can the lessons outlined here be applied more broadly? This will be further discussed in the conclusion chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the response of the German government to the events of 9/11 in the sphere of foreign policy was significantly different than that of the US or UK governments. Principally, the German policy-making system normalised and, as such, de-centralised, much quicker after 9/11 than did the systems of either of the other two case study countries. As such, as will be argued in the conclusion chapter, the German system holds valuable lessons for reforming crisis decision-making processes.

The 'normal' German decision-making process in foreign policy is not that different from those of the US or the UK. Whilst the details between the three countries diverge, due to the influence of their specific local boundary conditions, all three can be characterised as self-organising systems of medium constraint, allowing for various containers, significant differences and exchanges through which these differences can be expressed.

In Germany, this process is based on a quite legalistic foundation, strongly shaped by the countries recent history and political and social culture. The reference in the constitution to the *chancellor principle, ministerial autonomy* and *collective decision-making* virtually enshrines tensions into the political system. As a result, the German system, whilst allowing for significant centralisation around the chancellor in foreign policy, is designed in such a way as to bring these tensions back into play wherever possible.

Despite this, the response of the German government to and on 9/11 was initially marked by strong centralisation around the leader of the executive, as it had been in the United States and the United Kingdom. It was Schröder who determined the initial policy of 'unconditional solidarity' with the United States and any meetings he had with other actors within the political system in the immediate aftermath of the events were essentially to *inform* them of this policy, rather than permit a discussion. Equally, as in the US and the UK, there were strong role expectations, putting pressure on the chancellor to 'take charge' of the German response.

Yet, in Germany, too, this centralisation did not prevent the re-emergence of complexity and self-organisation, a process which was strongly shaped by the specific domestic circumstances. As shown, there were soon intense debates about the concept of the War on Terror, the extent of this policy and Germany's participation in it, with particular reference to Germany's deep-seeded culture of pacifism.

However, unlike in the US and the UK, these debates were carried out *within* the political process, not outside it, largely due to the fact that the political system normalised and, as such, de-centralised very quickly. The commitment made by Schröder to have German troops participate in any war in Afghanistan *required* him to engage in a detailed debate about the context and confines of this involvement with other political actors, especially parliament. The legalistic foundation of the German foreign policy process was a key factor which enabled, indeed required, such normalisation and was a key difference to the systems in the United States and the United Kingdom.

This normalisation was crucial because it allowed for an engagement with the concept of the war on terror within the context of a Complex Adaptive System. The German foreign policy system once again became characterised by debate and flexibility and, as a result, allowed for emergence of different political options.

As a result, far sooner than Bush or Blair, Schröder recognised and defined this policy as variable across time and space. Far sooner than the other two leaders he identified the problems that would be faced in Iraq and his own inability to control these issues. In short, Schröder was *part of* a process of self-organisation and neither tried to prevent or completely control such process. He took heed of what was happening *within* the system and allowed for policy to emerge in response to this process of self-organisation. The normalisation of the policy process therefore allowed him to *recognise, embrace* and *respond* to complexity across time and space. He was aware of, and engaged with, the variables and agents that were crucial to the process of self-organisation that was unfolding.

The task now is to bring these three case studies together to see what broader lessons can be learnt, both in relation to foreign policy decision-making process in response to crises in particular and in relation to international relations more generally.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

Overview

In this work the response of three countries (the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany) to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 has been investigated in the sphere of foreign policy.

As shown in chapters 5, 6 and 7, in all three countries the attacks led to significant centralisation of foreign policy around the respective leaders of the Executive who used this authority to, in the US case, develop the seemingly unambiguous policy of the War on Terror or, in the case of the UK and Germany, develop a policy of 'unconditional solidarity' as the United States pursued this war. However, the key difference between the US and the UK on the one hand and Germany on the other was the way the first two maintained a centralised decision-making process for a long period after the initial shock event whilst, in Germany, the decision-making process de-centralised, and therefore normalised, with the onset of the war in Afghanistan.

The aim of this final chapter is, first, to bring together the results from the particular case studies and link these specifically to the hypothesis outlined at the start of this work. It will be shown that, foreign policy crises being typical social Complex Adaptive Systems, a quick process of de-centralisation after the initial shock is necessary in order to allow for the possibility of a coherent process of self-organisation. Maintaining a centralised decision-making process for long periods does not prevent or control such process but rather undermines the coherence of the same.

This conclusion will allow for a discussion of the wider implications of the results in relation to the study of, and response to, foreign policy crises. Finally, areas of further research will be outlined which can take the conclusions from this study further.

Findings

Pre-shock

Table 8.1: Pre-shock mapping

	United States	**United Kingdom**	**Germany**
Key features	Predictable basic power structures Complex interactions between actors and institutions within local boundary conditions Unpredictability of long-term development of US foreign policy	Predictable basic power structures Complex interactions between actors and institutions within local boundary conditions Unpredictability of long-term development of UK foreign policy	Predictable basic power structures Complex interactions between actors and institutions within local boundary conditions Unpredictability of long-term development of German foreign policy
Result	Stable general rules Local variety Interaction between orderly, complex and disorderly elements	Stable general rules Local variety Interaction between orderly, complex and disorderly elements,	Stable general rules Local variety Interaction between orderly, complex and disorderly elements

All three 'normal' foreign policy systems of the case study countries are typical Complex Adaptive Systems: The systems are marked by general rules, such as basic power relations, but, within these basic parameters, all three contain innumerable complex elements. The systems develop through the complex interactions between actors and institutions to form relatively stable patterns. However, the long-term development of these systems remains unpredictable.[566]

As was shown in chapters 5, 6 and 7 these stable patterns are the result of differing local interactions. As such, *why* and *how* these patterns develop differs significantly from case to case, dependent on local boundary conditions in the US, the UK and Germany. These micro-processes will merit further investigation to understand the diverging nature of the response of the three case study countries as the aftermath of 9/11 unfolded.

[566] See p.128 for the US, p.180 for the UK. p. 231 for Germany.

Table 8.2: Pre-shock Fitness Landscape

	United States	United Kingdom	Germany
Key features	Wide variety of interests across the globe Several policy instruments available Willingness and ability to engage in areas of high and low fitness across time and space	Wide variety of interests across the globe Limited military power but several other policy instruments Willingness to engage in areas of high and low fitness within confines of limited power resources	Wide variety of interests across the globe Limited power resources Heavy focus on diplomacy and international economy Willing to engage in areas of high and low fitness within these constraints
Result	Ability to adapt and respond flexibly to specific boundary conditions	Ability to adapt and respond flexibly to specific boundary conditions	Ability to adapt and respond flexibly to specific boundary conditions

Once again, there are striking similarities between the three case study countries in relation to *specific* political issues and problems in foreign policy.[567] Whilst all three countries have worldwide interests, their approach to defending and furthering these interests is marked by diversity. Whilst the US, as shown on page 130, can apply a full range of political instruments, the power resources of the UK and Germany are limited.[568] Whilst in the UK this has led to long-standing debates about its role in international affairs, in Germany foreign policy is made with a heavy focus on diplomacy and the international economy. There is recognition of the limited resources at the disposal of the German government, as shown throughout chapter 7.

Within these different contexts, however, all three countries have traditionally used all the instruments at their disposal in order to engage in particular political situations. As such, during the course of the normal foreign policy process, all three have acted flexibly to respond to particular changing situations, using the dense network of actors and representations across the globe.

[567] Compare pp.129-30 (US), pp.181-2 (UK) and pp. 233-4 (Germany)
[568] See pages 182 & 234

Table 8.3: Pre-shock CDE model

	United States	United Kingdom	Germany
Key features	Presidential domination BUT Many and entangled containers Many differences, of which some are significant Loose and ambiguous exchanges	Potentially strong Prime Ministerial dominations BUT Many and entangled containers Many differences, of which some are significant Loose and ambiguous exchanges	Potential for chancellor domination BUT Strong legalistic foundation of policy system Many and entangled containers Many differences, of which some are significant Loose and ambiguous exchanges
Result	Generally coherent process of self-organisation characterised by medium constraint	Generally coherent process of self-organisation characterised by medium constraint	Generally coherent process of self-organisation, characterised by medium constraint

One noticeable feature of all three case study countries foreign policy-making process is the fact that they all acknowledge and embrace this complexity. Whilst there is scope for domination by the leader of the Executive, especially – as shown in chapter 6 - in the UK, they nevertheless can be classified as process of self-organisation of medium constrained. That is to say, all three have multiple and entangled containers. These allow for the emergence of significant differences and these differences can be expressed through numerous exchanges. As such, each system is marked by tensions and it is through these tensions that the systems continue to self-organise.[569]

There are differences between the countries with regards to the *particular* details of the system, with the rules of the German system, as outlined in the constitution, being more detailed than in the US, whilst the UK is marked by a distinct lack of

[569] See p. 133 (US), p. 185 (UK) and p. 237 (Germany)

specific rules. However, the *outcomes* are similar in that all have a coherent process of self-organisation, marked by flexibility and adaptability.

Shock

Table 8.4: 9/11 Mapping

	United States	**United Kingdom**	**Germany**
Key features	9/11 represents disorder War on Terror as 'clear choice' Unity of actors Some discussion on framing of policy Clear end result: restore order, defeat of terrorism	9/11 represents disorder War on Terror as 'clear choice' Some discussion on tactics and extent of war Clear end result: restore order, defeat terrorism	9/11 represents disorder 'Un-conditional' solidarity with the United States Some discussion on tactics and extent in relation to policy
Result	Strict rules Uni-directional development of system Little to no local variety Little complexity	Strict rules Uni-directional development of system Little to no local variety Little complexity	Uni-directional Little complexity

The events of 9/11 resulted in a traditional response by the governments of all three countries. What is noticeable is how the attacks *simplified* the Complex Adaptive System. The war against terror was presented as a "clear choice", a globally applicable policy its objective being the defeat of terrorism. As shown on pages 195 and 247 respectively, bearing in mind the power of the United States after 9/11, the UK and Germany had little choice but to declare their 'unconditional' solidarity with the US. The *systemic* features of the international political system were therefore crucial in determining the broad political response. Both countries committed themselves to this fight against terror. As such, in all three cases, the system became uni-directional, leading from disorder to order.

Table 8.5: 9/11 Fitness Landscape

	United States	United Kingdom	Germany
Key features	War on Terror as unitary and global policy Sequential step-by-step policy Clear end-point at which point Landscape has to be frozen	War on Terrorism as unitary, global policy Sequential, step-by-step policy Clear end-point at which landscape has to be frozen	Terrorism as a 'global' problem Spreading core values globally Focus on root causes No definition of clear end point
Result	Orderly and predictable policy, applicable across time and space	Orderly and predictable policy, applicable across time and space	Policy applicable across time and space but Possibility of local solutions

This stripping out of complexity had the immediate effect of radically simplifying the policy landscape. Terrorism was defined as a global problem which had to be tackled. As shown on pages 142 and 192 respectively, Bush and Blair in particular emphasized the need for a series of sequential steps in order to, first, defeat terrorism and, second, prevent the re-emergence of terrorists in particular countries by installing liberal-democratic regimes. The spread of 'global values' was key to this process.

Here one key difference can be identified between the US and UK on the one hand and the German government on the other. As shown throughout chapter 8, Chancellor Schröder, whilst emphasizing global 'core values', was never as explicit as Bush or Blair in defining an 'end-point' at which the problem of terrorism would be 'solved'. He left open the door to local solutions in spreading these values. However, on 9/11 these differences were not emphasized. There was apparent unity between all three governments.[570]

[570] See pp. 239-246

Table 8.6: 9/11 CDE model

	United States	United Kingdom	Germany
Key features	Highly centralised system Hierarchical decision-making and assertion of presidential power Few differences Tight and clear exchanges	Highly centralised system Hierarchical decision-making and assertion of prime ministerial power Few differences Tight and clear exchanges	Highly centralised system Hierarchical decision-making and assertion of chancellor's power Few differences Tight and clear exchanges
Result	Highly constrained process of self-organisation Speedy decision-making Clear, coherent, unambiguous policy	Highly constrained process of self-organisation Speedy decision-making Clear, coherent, unambiguous policy	Highly constrained system of self-organisation Speedy decision-making Clear, coherent, unambiguous policy

In all three cases, the policy process on 9/11 was marked by strong centralization around the leaders of the executive who controlled the process, serving as personal and political containers. In other words, the emphasis placed on the various elements which make up the policy process changed. Containers, in the form of leaders, became more important whilst the differences which form part of the usual policy process were stripped out. On 9/11 the process was marked by almost complete unity of actors.[571]

Even if any differences had existed, with the emasculation of the policy process, there were few opportunities to express these as the number of exchanges was radically reduced. In all three cases, the principal policy decision was taken by the leader of the executive and then *communicated* to the rest of the system without allowing for change.

[571] See p. 143 (US), p. 194 (UK), p. 245 (Germany)

The result of this centralisation in all three cases was a very quick decision-making process which produced a seemingly unambiguous policy. The process of self-organisation was highly constrained. Role expectations and confusion also contributed to this situation.

Post-shock

Table 8.7: Post-shock Mapping

	United States	**United Kingdom**	**Germany**
Key features	Short-term unity Debates and differences in respect of definition, scope and tactics of war on terrorism Long-term unpredictability	Basic alignment with the US Debates and differences in respect of focus and tactics of war on terror Long-term unpredictability	Basic alignment with the US German federalism Debates about concept of war, German pacifism Long-term unpredictability
Result	Re-emergence of complex and disorderly elements into the process	Re-emergence of complex and disorderly elements into the process	Re-emergence of complex and disorderly elements into the process

Yet, as shown on pages 145, 195 and 247 respectively, complexity re-emerged quite rapidly in all three case-study countries. Differences emerged over the definition, scope and tactics in the War on Terror, as well as about the absolute commitments in both the UK and Germany to the United States in this war. In Germany in particular the specifics of the political system, as outlined in chapter 8, challenged the previously defined policy context. Both in the UK and Germany, clear differences emerged with the US in relation to conscious complexity, political and social culture and, as such, the concept of the War on Terror.[572]

As such, there was a clear and rapid re-emergence of complex and disorderly elements into the Complex Adaptive System as the policy was rolled out across time and space. Crucially, these differences re-emerged *despite* the *systemic* features being unchanged. The power of the United States was not in question and was still significant in determining the 'next steps' in the War on Terror. However, domestic,

[572] See the respective 'post-shock' sections of chapter 7 & 8.

bureaucratic and other factors *also* played a role and significantly *impacted* on the effectiveness of the overall policy without, however, changing its basic parameters.

Table 8.8: Post-shock Fitness Landscape

	United States	United Kingdom	Germany
Key features	Assertion of local boundary conditions on global policy Inability to control or predict outcome of policy within local boundary conditions	Assertion of local boundary conditions on global policy, both domestically and internationally Inability to control or predict outcome of policy within local boundary conditions	Assertion of local boundary conditions on global policy, both domestically and internationally Recognition of need for flexibility and policy adjustment, importance of difference
Result	Increasing number of areas of low fitness Increasing tension between unitary global framework and local variety	Increasing areas of low fitness Increasing tension between unitary global framework and local variety	Recognition of areas of low fitness Recognition of problems of original policy framework

This normalization had a significant impact on the fitness landscapes faced by the respective political leaders. This was clearly shown in relation to the War in Afghanistan where local conditions severely limited the effectiveness of US power resources, leading to a landscape which was marked by significant areas of low fitness.[573] Equally, in the UK and in Germany, this re-emergence of complexity significantly changed the landscape faced by Blair and Schröder, both in terms of the general policy and in relation to the particular situation in Afghanistan, leading to Schröder nearly losing his job and Blair having increasing difficulty in reconciling his stance of absolute solidarity with the US to the demands of his domestic audience. His position also came under strain internationally as it produced different actions and reactions across time and space.[574] As such, the process of self-

[573] See page 155
[574] See pages 201 and 251 respectively

organisation in many ways *de-centralised*. The key difference between the three leaders was how they responded to this re-emergence of complexity.

Table 8.9: Post-shock CDE model

	United States	United Kingdom	Germany
Key features	Continued centralisation of policy process Attempts by other actors to re-engage with this process Resistance to re-assertion of complexity	Continued centralisation of policy process Attempts by other actors to re-engage with this process Resistance to re-assertion of complexity	De-centralisation of policy process Re-assertion of German federalism Re-engagement with other political actors Embrace of re-emergence of complexity
Result	Unconstrained process of self-organisation Loss of coherence	Unconstrained process of self-organisation Loss of coherence	Process of self-organisation characterised by medium constraint Coherent policy process which predicts and avoids key problems in relation to War on Terror and Iraq

As shown in the 'post-shock' sections of chapters 6 and 7 respectively, Bush and Blair actually demonstrated awareness of the difficulties they faced, in particular in relation to Iraq. However, they tried to respond to these difficulties by *extending* the process of centralisation which had marked the policy process immediately after 9/11. The military conflict in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq were used to perpetuate the traditional crisis decision-making process in the hope of preventing or, at least, controlling, the re-emergence of complexity referred to above.[575]

However, these attempts did not stop other actors within the Complex Adaptive System *attempting* to re-engage with the policy process. Yet, as demonstrated from pages 161 and 209 onwards respectively, the difficulties in doing so led to a re-emergence of complexity which was essentially *negative*. Other agents defined

[575] See pages 155 and 202 respectively

themselves *against* Bush and Blair. This process occurred both within the domestic- and international setting, where Blair in particular was unable to convince Bush of *his* view on what the War on Terror should entail whilst being unable to convince other political actors of the need for unconditional solidarity. As such, *despite* attempts to maintain the political and personal containers established on 9/11, there was a forceful re-assertion of differences without, however, the possibility of expressing these through exchanges within the formal policy process.

As a result, the process in both countries became increasingly incoherent.[576] Self-organisation occurred but did so with little to no constraint. Containers and differences abounded, but in the absence of exchanges within the confines of the respective political processes emerged as 'noise', making the political landscape progressively less hospitable. Again, therefore, one can see the *interdependence* of variables. Bush and Blair were still able to push through their respective policies but did so at a cost, with the result that the policies were far less effective than they had hoped or expected.

In Germany, the prospect of participation in the war in Afghanistan and, later, the prospect of a war in Iraq, by contrast, led to a *normalisation* (i.e. de-centralisation) of the policy process. As shown in the 'post-shock' section of chapter 8, constitutional provisions meant that chancellor Schröder had to once again engage with other actors which form part of this normal process. As such, there were intense debates about the War on Terror, about the Afghanistan mandate and Iraq.

In response, Schröder changed the parameters of his policy, adapting his stance of 'unconditional solidarity', outlining his opposition to the war in Iraq and engaging in a continuous process of evaluation over Afghanistan.[577] Whilst the result of this process, for instance the non-participation in Iraq, did not come without its costs, it managed to predict many of the problems that would beset the US and the UK both in relation to the general policy and the particular issue of Iraq, and *allowed* Schröder room for manoeuvre to make the necessary adjustments. His change in rhetoric after 9/11 can be seen in this light, allowing him the flexibility to respond to changing circumstances domestically whilst maintaining a coherent negotiating position

[576] See the tables on page 163 and 211 respectively.
[577] See p. 253 onwards

internationally. He also showed far more *awareness* both of the domestic environment he was dealing with and his chances of influencing US policy at international level.[578] In contrast to the US and the UK, the German policy process, and the policy that resulted, therefore remained largely coherent, flexible and, as such, open to changes and adjustments.[579] It did so because it returned to a balanced process of self-organisation which did *not* emphasise particular political or personal containers, allowed for the emergence of differences and gave expression to them through numerous, well-established exchanges.

[578] See pages 257-62

[579] See table 7.5 on page 265

Relation to hypothesis

This, then, allows one to confirm the hypothesis outlined at the start of this work.

H1

9/11 and the War on Terror are typical Complex Adaptive Systems which developed through a process of self-organisation. Responding to such events requires a quick de-centralisation of the policy process after the initial crisis event in order to maintain the coherence of the process of self-organisation.

No-one would deny that 9/11 was a significant event or even that it represented a crisis. However, as shown on page 160, this does not change the essential *nature* of the event. 9/11, and the War on Terror, were typical Complex Adaptive Systems characterised by

- Numerous agents and phenomena
- Partial Order
- Reductionism and Holism
- Partial predictability
- Probabilistic nature
- Emergence
- Interpretation

As such, the event, whilst unique, was no different in its nature from previous crises, such as the end of the Cold War. As the immediacy of the event subsided, it provoked differing responses across time and space, even within and between the US, the UK and Germany. It did not represent the 'end' of an old order and the 'beginning' of a new one. Rather it was the result of, and resulted in, a complex adaptive process of self-organisation typical of social systems. As such, it represented 'stability within change', a key issue from within a Complexity framework, i.e. the persistence of stable, general rules but significant local change and variety.

Key to understanding crisis events, then, is to see them as part of an ongoing process of self-organisation which has significant implications for how they should be responded to. It is not argued here that there should not be centralisation in response to such crises. As shown, there are enormous expectations on political leaders to be

at the forefront of responding to any such events. Since crises are generally seen as representing disorder and therefore produce fear and leaders of the executive are charged with ensuring the smooth running and security of their respective state, they have a key role to play in providing re-assurance.

However, it is important to *normalise* any such process as soon as possible. As shown, complexity *will* re-emerge as the immediate event moves further into the past, and it is critical that such a process is *facilitated* rather than *resisted* since it will enhance the chances of a coherent process emerging and being maintained.

Ironically, all three countries investigated here have such foreign policy processes in 'normal' times. That is to say, all three have policy-processes which represent a complex and interdependent mix of Containers, Differences and Exchanges. Yet, since crises are seen as ruptures, it is felt necessary to alter these processes in order to restore 'normal' times. As a result, differences are minimised in the name of speed and coherence of policy development. This is normally achieved through the elimination of the exchanges which normally form part of the policy process. As such, the CDE necessary for any process of self-organisation gets heavily tilted in favour of containers.

However, if one accepts that crises are actually Complex Adaptive Systems which contain orderly, complex and disorderly elements, the key aim for any policy-maker has to be to restore normal foreign policy processes as quickly as possible, i.e. re-establish a process of self-organisation with a balanced CDE. Since crises develop variably across time and space, determined largely at local level through the interplay of semi-autonomous agents, the flexibility which is a hallmark of the normal foreign policy processes has to be re-established. This implies an important, if different, role for political leaders, who can significantly influence the facilitation of this.

In this respect, the contrasting developments in the three case study countries as the War on Terrorism self-organised are crucial pointers. In Germany, the foreign policy process normalised quickly after 9/11, permitting and maintaining a coherent process of self-organisation which both predicted and avoided many of the problems of the War on Terror in general and in Afghanistan and Iraq in particular. By contrast, in

the US and the UK centralisation was maintained for a prolonged period. This did not stop the re-emergence of complexity but merely changed the *manner* of its reintroduction. The result was a process which was significantly less coherent, undermining the effectiveness of any given policy. This re-emergence of complexity is a *natural* phenomenon and the costs of trying to prevent it were very high. Far from maintaining order, the result was an increasingly disorderly process in which a lot of noise was created and energy invested without, however, producing the desired result.

Implications for applicability of Complexity to IR

Such a conclusion has some intriguing wider implications in relation to foreign policy-making in particular and International Relations in general.

The first concerns the question of expectations. The tendency in a crisis to centralise decision-making around the leader is often linked with an expectation of 'solving' a particular issue and 'restore' order. However, since one is dealing with Complex Adaptive Systems, this is impossible because it implies a level of control unattainable in a social system.

As such, the key question becomes what leaders should be expected to do. Re-assurance will remain a key role in response to crises. Apart from that, however, the most important responsibility should be to *facilitate* a quick return of the CAS to 'normal', i.e. a return to a process of self-organisation of medium constraint. This requires a quick de-centralisation of the policy processes. This frees political leaders from unrealistic expectations and allows them to focus on some key interventions to facilitate self-organisation, as outlined through the application of the CDE model.

A similar argument can be made in relation to IR theories. It is fascinating how events such as 9/11 are still seen as crises simply because no one theory was able to forecast and predict its occurrence. Just like the end of the Cold War lots of debates occurred about why such a 'failure' had occurred, what needs to change in order to make IR theories 'better' in explaining such events.

Applying the key concepts of Complexity by utilising three specific Complexity tools, the argument of this study has been that one needs to get away from expectations that theories can explain *everything* about an event or a particular period. Several approaches may be able to shed some light on several aspects of a particular event. As such, one of the key tasks ought to be the facilitation of more tolerant theoretical frameworks that allow for the utilisation of *several* approaches simultaneously. A Complexity approach, as Kavalski has stated, offers intriguing heuristic devices that both challenge conventional wisdom and provoke analytical imaginations' (Kavalski 2007: 435).

As such, it has been shown here that Complexity is not trying to *replace* existing theories but rather incorporate these theories into a much broader IR framework. Theories here are *complimentary* explanatory tools rather than exclusive, monolithic predictive constructs.

Such conclusions have several implications in terms of theoretical parsimony and expectations about what theories can be expected to accomplish. However, the experience of both the end of the Cold War and 9/11 suggest that traditional IR theories were aspiring to unrealistic expectations. As such, a Complexity framework utilises what these theories have to offer in terms of insights whilst allowing for a much better link between political theory and practice, freeing both academics and practitioners from 'totalizing discourses' by volunteering "imaginative thinking" on the complexity of human societies and their interactions' (*ibid*: 451). As such, a Complexity approach provides a context for analysing and responding to a particular situation at a particular time.

Such a change could also facilitate a debate about the term 'crisis' which, currently, is deeply embedded in the traditional orderly framework. Using Complexity, this term can be re-thought, embedding 'crisis events' in a context of continuous self-organisation. This, in itself, should allow for a new approach to crisis decision-making processes and crisis explanation. Critically, from a Complexity perspective, crises are seen as events which usually occur *within* a stable framework. As has been argued by others recently, 9/11 represented a day and an event at which 'nothing much changed' (Dobson, 2006). Complexity would agree to an extent, providing further tools for understanding this 'stability within change', thereby stressing once again the *complimentary* nature of the approach in adding value to the way existing IR theories interpret such events,

Areas for further research

All these arguments leave open several areas for further research which ought to be addressed as part of an ongoing process of applying Complexity to International Relations.

On the particular cases discussed, a more detailed study should be undertaken on how the German approach can be applied to the particular circumstances of the US and the UK. As shown, the particular conditions differ from country to country, but the general lessons of Complexity apply and it would advance the field greatly if these lessons were applied to more specific cases in order to build up the evidence base.

This study, then, has focussed on nation-states' responses to crises. It does not deal with how international organisations like the EU or NATO respond to crises like 9/11. One interesting common feature of the interviews conducted in Germany was the fact that all interviewees lamented that there was no internationalisation of the policy process after 9/11 and that, as such, there was no discussion of the various approaches to this question.[580]

As such, there is also an urgent need to do more work on how international organisations can return to a process of self-organisation of medium constraint in the aftermath of a crisis. Again, more case studies would help in order to make more *specific* suggestions on policy-process reform than has been possible here. This, as stated, can also help in significantly changing the modern definition of 'crises in foreign policy and elsewhere in social systems.

In order to do so, it would also be useful to do some more specific work on the CDE model, showing the interplay between Containers, Differences and Exchanges and illustrating what the *interdependence* between these three variables means in terms of *specific* interventions in policy processes to facilitate a coherent process of self-organisation.

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580 'Name me the forum where this could be done', as one interviewee in Germany put it.

On the more general point of Complexity and IR, the next step should be to build on the conclusions of this work, in combination with others such as Harrison or Gaddis, to construct a Complexity framework for the language of IR. It is not disputed that some kind of framework needs to exist, but it needs to be made more flexible and adaptable than the current language allows.

In sum, the current work provides a basis upon which the applicability of the Complexity approach to international politics in general, and foreign policy-making in particular, can be further developed, thereby opening up the opportunity for some real, if uncertain, progress in the fields of International Relations and Foreign Policy Analysis.

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