

## The Individual

## Three Groups of Individuals

- ❑ Foreign-policy elites
- ❑ Private individuals
- ❑ Mass publics

2

## Foreign-Policy Elites

- **Most Foreign Policy Analysis Centers on the Executive Branch.**
  - ❑ The head of government is responsible for making policy.
  - ❑ The country needs to have a single voice abroad.
  - ❑ Heads of government tend to make foreign policy because they control the executive branch of government.

3

## Foreign-Policy Elites

- **The Liberals: leaders do make a difference.**
  - ❑ Individual leaders and their personal characteristics do make a difference in foreign policy, and hence in international relations.
    - EG: Nicolae Ceausescu
    - EG: Mikhail Gorbachev

4

## Foreign-Policy Elites

- **Constructivists: individual elites are important.**
  - ❑ The monumental changes in the Soviet Union result not only from Gorbachev's "New Thinking", but also from new ideas of the policy entrepreneurs, the networks of Western-oriented reformists and international affairs specialists.

5

## Foreign-Policy Elites

- **Realists and radicals: individual leaders do NOT make much of a difference in foreign policy because the structure of the international system is more important than individuals.**
  - EG: Romania
  - EG: the Soviet Union

6

## Foreign-Policy Elites

### ➤ Two questions are most pertinent to determining the role of individuals in international relations:

- ❑ When are the actions of individuals likely to have a greater or lesser effect on the course of events?
- ❑ And under what circumstances do different actors (in terms of personal characteristics) behave differently?

7

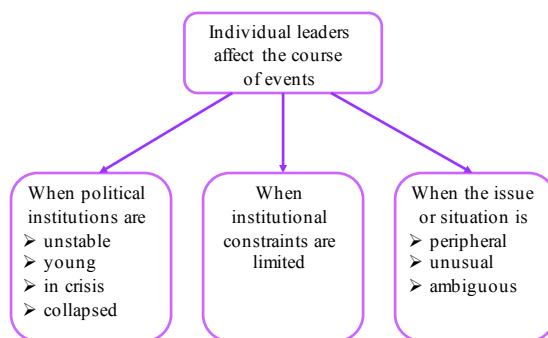
## Foreign-Policy Elites

### ➤ The Impact of Elites: External Conditions

- ❑ Leaders are more likely to affect the course of events when at least one of several factors is present.

8

## The Impact of Individual Elites



9

## Foreign-Policy Elites

- ❑ When political institutions are unstable, young, in crisis, or collapsed, leaders are able to provide powerful influences.

- George Washington
- Vladimir Lenin
- Mao Zedong
- Adolf Hitler
- Franklin Roosevelt
- Mikhail Gorbachev

10

## Foreign-Policy Elites

- ❑ When they face few institutional constraints, leaders they have a stronger influence on foreign policy
- In dictatorial regimes
- In democratic regimes
- EG: Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger and US-China rapprochement in 1972

11

## Foreign-Policy Elites

- ❑ When the issue is peripheral rather than central, when the issue is not routine, or when the situation is ambiguous and information is unclear, decision-makers' personal characteristics have more influence on outcomes.
- Crisis situations
- EG: the Cuban missile crisis

12

## Foreign-Policy Elites

### ➤ The Impact of Elites: Factors

- ❑ Personality
- ❑ Degree of control over foreign policy
- ❑ Sense of political efficacy
- ❑ Amount of available information
- ❑ Ability to deal with crises

13

## Foreign-Policy Elites

### ➤ The Impact of Elites: The Personality Factor

- ❑ Margaret Hermann has found a number of personality characteristics that affect foreign-policy behaviors.

#### Personality Characteristics of Leaders

Nationalism	Perception of control
Need for power	Need for affiliation
Conceptual complexity	Distrust of others

14

## Foreign-Policy Elites

- ❑ These personality characteristics orient an individual's view of foreign affairs, either an independent or a participatory orientation.
- ❑ These personal characteristics and their respective orientations are related to the foreign-policy behavior of the leaders.

15

#### Foreign Policy Orientations

Independent leader	high in nationalism high in perception of control high in need for power low in conceptual complexity high in distrust of others
Participatory leader	low in nationalism low in perception of control high in need for affiliation high in conceptual complexity low in distrust of others

16

## Foreign-Policy Elites

### ➤ Individual Decision-making

- ❑ Elite images, perceptions, or operational codes – a belief system – influence how the decision-maker process information, which is neither perfect nor complete.
- John Foster Dulles and US policy toward the Soviet Union (rollback & liberation)
- Henry Kissinger and the Vietnam War

17

## Foreign-Policy Elites

### ➤ Information-Processing Mechanisms

- ❑ Image and perception are continually impacted by new, overwhelming, and discordant information.
- ❑ Images and belief systems are not generally changed.
- ❑ Thus, individual elites utilize a number of psychological mechanisms to process information.

18

Psychological Mechanisms Used to Process Information	
Technique	Example
Cognitive consistency	Prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor
Evoked set	The Korean War as a precedent of the Vietnam War
Mirror image	U.S. view of the Soviet Union in the Cold War
Groupthink	Planning group for the Bay of Pigs operation against Cuba
Satisficing	NATO's action in Kosovo

19

## Private Individuals

### ➤ Private individuals carry out independent actions in IR.

#### ❑ Positive role in conflict resolution

- EG: track-II diplomacy (Ethiopia, Israel and Palestine, NK, Northern Ireland)
- In 2002, President Carter received the Nobel Peace Prize for his work “to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to promote economic and social development” through the Carter Center.

20

## Private Individuals

### ➤ Private individuals carry out independent actions in IR.

#### ❑ Positive role in international cooperation

- EG: “flying tigers”

21

## Private Individuals

#### ❑ Negative role in threatening security

- EG: terrorist activities

#### ❑ Negative role in destroying cooperation

- EG: George Soros and 1990s Asian Financial Crisis

#### ❑ Critical theorists, postmodernists, and constructivists pay much attention to private individuals.

22

## Mass Publics

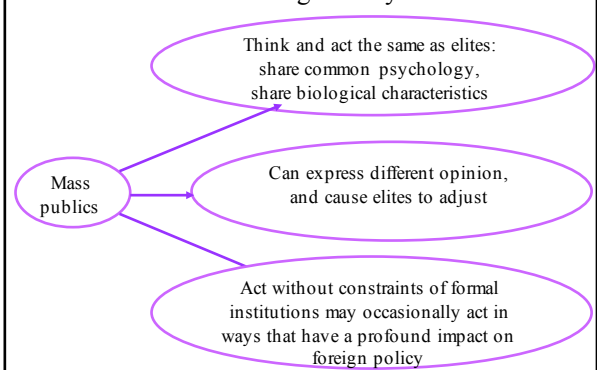
### ➤ Mass publics do have influence on foreign policy.

#### ❑ Mass publics have the same psychological tendencies as elite individuals and small groups.

#### ❑ They think in terms of perceptions and images, they see mirror images, and they use similar information-processing strategies

23

## Public Influence on Foreign Policy



24

## Mass Publics

### ➤ Elites and Masses: Common Traits

❑ Common psychological and biological traits:

- Individuals and masses are said to have an innate drive to gain, protect, and defend territory—**the territorial imperative**.
- Both also share the **frustration-aggression syndrome**: when societies become frustrated, just as with individuals, they become aggressive.

25

## Mass Publics

### ➤ Elites and Masses: common traits differentiated by gender

- Male elites and masses possess characteristics common to each other, while female elites and masses share different traits from the males.
- However: Are these differences rooted in biology or learned from culture?

26

## Mass Publics

### ➤ The Impact of Public Opinion on Elites

❑ Publics do have general foreign-policy orientations and occasionally may vote directly on an foreign-policy issue.

- Popular referendums in Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Ireland.

❑ Even though elite-made policy is not a direct reflection of public attitudes, public opinion does act as a constraint on elites.

27

## Mass Publics

### ➤ Mass Actions by a Leaderless Public

❑ At times, the masses, essentially leaderless, take collective actions that have significant effects on the course of world politics.

- EG: It was the individual acts of thousands fleeing East Germany that led to the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, and it was the exodus of East Germans through Austria that led to the tearing down of the wall in 1989.

28

### PARADIGM IN BRIEF

#### Contending Perspectives on the Individual

	Realist	Liberal	Radical
Foreign policy elites	Constrained by anarchic international system and national interests	Significant impact on international relations through choices and personality factors	Constrained by international capitalist system

29

### PARADIGM IN BRIEF

#### Contending Perspectives on the Individual

	Realist	Liberal	Radical
Private individuals	Actions of private individuals only have effect in aggregate, as reflected in national interest	Secondary role, but may be involved in two-track diplomacy and may fund important initiatives	Individual capitalists may be influential

30

PARADIGM IN BRIEF			
Contending Perspectives on the Individual			
	Realist	Liberal	Radical
Mass publics	Actions may be reflected in national interest	May affect international relations through mass actions that pressure state decision-makers	Agents of potential change

31

### In Sum: How Much Do Individuals Matter?

- ❑ Realists and radicals do not recognize the importance of individuals. They see individuals as primarily constrained by the international system and by the state.
- ❑ For liberals, the actions of individuals matter significantly.
- ❑ Individual's international role via IGOs, NGOs, and international law

32