

# International relations



Group 1

# What is International Relations?

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- International relations is the study of how the different actors of the international community interact with one another on a daily basis.
- International relations refers to the collective interactions of the international community, which includes individual nations and states, inter-governmental organizations such as the United Nations, non-governmental organizations like Doctors Without Borders, multinational corporations, and so forth.



# History of International relations

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- As political activity, international relations dates from the time of the Greek historian Thucydides (c. 460–395 BC), and, in the early 20th century, became a discrete academic within political science.
- The history of international relations based on sovereign states is often traced back to the Peace of Westphalia of 1648, a stepping stone in the development of the modern state system



- The centuries of roughly 1500 to 1789 saw the rise of the independent, sovereign states, the institutionalization of diplomacy and armies.
- An alternative model of the nation-state was developed in reaction to the French republican concept by the Germans and others.
- The contemporary international system was finally established through decolonization during the Cold War.

# What Is Globalization?

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Globalization is a process of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology. This process has effects on the environment, on culture, on political systems, on economic development and prosperity, and on human physical well-being in societies around the world.



# Advantages of Globalization

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There are numerous advantages of globalization. As alluded to earlier, through globalization, individuals are able to communicate with others throughout the world at much easier speeds. This has allowed the sharing of information with people that in years past would have taken much longer, or cost much more. In addition, with mobile video services, communication quality has also increased. Furthermore, with a globalizing world market, the ability to network in regards to new ideas and business

# Concerns and Criticisms of Globalization

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While there are many excellent benefits to globalization, not everyone has been excited about the effects of globalization. Some of them see the “advantages of globalization” as actually being “disadvantages of globalization,” whereas others find that while there globalization has brought about a number of life improvements, for some, there are also negative consequences of increased technological advancements when discussing globalization.

# Normative theory of IR

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In the academic discipline of international relations, Smith, Baylis & Owens (2008) make the case that the normative position or normative theory is to make the world a better place, and that this theoretical worldview aims to do so by being aware of implicit assumptions and explicit assumptions that constitute a non-normative position and align or position the normative towards the loci of other key socio-political theories such as political liberalism, Marxism, political constructivism, political realism, political idealism and political globalization.



# School of thoughts in IR

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IR theories can be roughly divided into one of two epistemological camps: "positivist" and "post-positivist". Positivist theories aim to replicate the methods of the natural sciences by analysing the impact of material forces. They typically focus on features of international relations such as state interactions, size of military forces, balance of powers etc. Post-positivist epistemology rejects the idea that the social world can be studied in an objective and value-free way. It rejects the central ideas of neo-realism/liberalism, such as rational choice theory, on the grounds that the scientific method cannot be applied to the social world and that a "science" of IR is impossible.

# Positivist theories

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- Realism
- Liberalism
- Neoliberalism
- Regime theory

# Realism

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- Realism focuses on state security and power above all else
- Cooperation between states is a way to maximize each individual state's security. Similarly, any act of war must be based on self-interest, rather than on idealism.
- Political realism believes that politics, like society, is governed by objective laws with roots in human nature.

Major theorists include E. H. Carr, Robert Gilpin, Joanne Gowa, Charles Kindleberger, Stephen Krasner, Hans Morgenthau, and Kenneth Waltz.

# Liberalism

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- According to liberalism, individuals are basically good and capable of meaningful cooperation to promote positive change.
- Liberal theory stresses interdependence among states, multinational corporations, and international institutions.
- Liberals also view the international system as anarchic since there is no single overarching international authority and each individual state is left to act in its own self-interest.

Major theorists include Montesquieu, Immanuel Kant, Robert Keohane, Michael W. Doyle, Francis Fukuyama, and Helen Milner.

# Neoliberalism

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Neoliberalism seeks to update liberalism by accepting the neorealist presumption that states are the key actors in international relations, but still maintains that non-state actors and intergovernmental organizations matter. Proponents argue that states will cooperate irrespective of relative gains, and are thus concerned with absolute gains. This also means that nations are, in essence, free to make their own choices as to how they will go about conducting policy without any international organizations blocking a nation's right to sovereignty.

# Regime theory

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- Regime theory is derived from the liberal tradition that argues that international institutions or regimes affect the behaviour of states (or other international actors). It assumes that cooperation is possible in the anarchic system of states, indeed, regimes are by definition, instances of international cooperation.
- While realism predicts that conflict should be the norm in international relations, regime theorists say that there is cooperation despite anarchy
- Not all approaches to regime theory, however, are liberal or neoliberal; some realist scholars like Joseph Grieco have developed hybrid theories which take a realist based approach to this fundamentally liberal theory.

# Post-positivist/reflectivist theories

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- International society theory
- Social constructivism
- Feminism
- Marxism

# International society theory

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- Focuses on the shared norms and values of states and how they regulate international relations.
- Unlike neo-realism, it is not necessarily positivist. Theorists have focused particularly on humanitarian intervention, and are subdivided between solidarists, who tend to advocate it more, and pluralists, who place greater value in order and sovereignty



# Social constructivism

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- Social constructivism encompasses a broad range of theories that aim to address questions of ontology, such as the structure-and-agency debate, as well as questions of epistemology, such as the "material/ideational" debate that concerns the relative role of material forces versus ideas.
- Constructivism in IR can be divided into what Ted Hopf (1998) calls "conventional" and "critical" constructivism.

Prominent social constructivist IR scholars are Rawi Abdelal, Michael Barnett, Mark Blyth, Martha Finnemore, Peter A. Hall, Ted Hopf, Margaret Keck, Elizabeth Kier, Kathleen McNamara, Kathryn Sikkink and Alexander Wendt.

# Feminism

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- Feminist IR considers the ways that international politics affects and is affected by both men and women and also at how the core concepts that are employed within the discipline of IR (e.g. war, security, etc.) are themselves gendered.
- Many IR feminists argue that the discipline is inherently masculine in nature.

Prominent scholars include Carol Cohn, Cynthia Enloe, Charlotte Hooper, Sara Ruddick, J. Ann Tickner and Jacqui True.

# Marxism

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- Marxist and Neo-Marxist theories of IR reject the realist/liberal view of state conflict or cooperation.
- instead focusing on the economic and material aspects. It makes the assumption that the economy trumps other concerns.
- Marxists view the international system as an integrated capitalist system in pursuit of capital accumulation.

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Thank you  
for your  
attention