

IR Theories

Today's Goal

- Learning about
 - Concepts of theory
 - Definition
 - Aim
 - How to build a theory
 - 2 Types of IR theories
 - structural IR theory, non-structural IR theory
- Start to learn about realism

IR's Main Question

- Why do states sometimes **cooperate** with others and other times engage in **conflict (competition)**?
- International Competition
 - Rivalry: US-SU (Russia), Arab-Israel, Greece-Turkey
 - Hostile->Friendly: US-UK after Revolutionary War, Germany-France after WWII
 - Friendly->Hostile: Honduras-El Salvador (1969), Russia-Georgia (2008), Russia-Ukraine (2014, 2022)
- International Cooperation
 - Global cooperation: UN, IAEA, WTO, IMF, World Bank
 - Regional cooperation: ASEAN, NAFTA, EU, NATO, ECOWAS
 - Bilateral cooperation: Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)
 - Interest-specific cooperation: OPEC, Tin Producer Association (TPA), International Coffee Organization (ICO)

Theory

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 - Generalizability
 - International phenomena are complex
 - Theories simplify complex phenomenon by focusing on important factors
 - Theories are applicable to settings other than the one in which it was originally developed
 - No single theory is capable of explaining everything

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 - Democratic peace theory
 - Background facts
 - (1) Between 1816 and 1991, there were about 80 interstate wars.
 - (2) There was no war between democratic states
 - Modified democratic peace theory
 - Background facts
 - Some democratic states are engaged in war with non-democratic states (e.g., US's Invasion of Afghanistan)

Structural vs. Non-Structural IR Theories

- To study cooperation and competition (conflict) between states, structural theories
 - Look outside of the state as a whole
 - Examine structural features that create the international system
 - Structural features: characteristics of the set of states that make up the international system
 - Do not look inside the state: politicians, bureaucrats, citizens, and their characteristics, organizations of government
- Non-structural theories
 - look inside the state: politicians, bureaucrats, citizens, and their characteristics, organizations of government

Realism

Realism

Classical realism

- Main idea
 - Human nature explains pursuit of power in International Politics
- Exemplary Thinkers
 - Thucydides
 - Thomas Hobbes
 - Hans J. Morgenthau

Neorealism (Structural realism)

- Main idea
 - Anarchical system explains pursuit of power in International Politics
- Exemplary Thinkers
 - Kenneth Waltz
 - John Mearsheimer

Classical Realism

Thucydides

- 『History of the Peloponnesian War』
 - What was the cause of the Peloponnesian War (5thC BC)?
 - The expansion of the Athenian Empire and the fear of Sparta
 - “The growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta” (Thucydides)
 - Athens: Seeking power for the preservation of the empire
 - Sparta: Necessary to go to war to prevent conquest by Athens
- International politics is based on human nature
 - Behavior of individuals and outcomes of relations between states determined by human nature
 - What is human nature?
 - The pursuit of power and the will to dominate

Thomas Hobbes

- “The war of all against all (bellum omnium contra omnes)” (*Leviathan*, 1651)
 - Anxiety in the state of nature
 - Equal rights from birth
 - Freedom to use power
 - Lack of higher authority over individuals in the state of nature
 - Intensifying competition to accumulate more power for being superior to others
 - War between individuals
 - Political task
 - Creating sovereign [Leviathan (state)] to exercise coercion through transferring individuals' sovereignty
- International politics is analogous to human life in the state of nature
 - No higher authority over individual (sovereign) states
 - Competition for more power for superiority
 - War between states

Hans J. Morgenthau

- Power Politics (*Politics Among Nations*, 1948)
 - Human nature is egoistic and selfish
 - Importance of relative power
 - Innately seeks power over others and continually increases one's own power
 - The goal of the state is to maximize power
 - 'International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power,' and 'whatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim (Morgenthau 1955, 25)'
 - Continuous competition and conflict for power
 - Relative power because of self-interested human nature
 - How about cooperation?

Hans J. Morgenthau

- Security dilemma
 - Everyone's power maximization
 - Counterbalancing against rising power and influence
 - Rising power becomes not powerful
- Foreign policy recommendation: Balance of Power
 - Mechanisms for maintaining an equilibrium of power so that no state or coalition of states overwhelms other states and dominates world politics
 - US vs. SU during the Cold War