

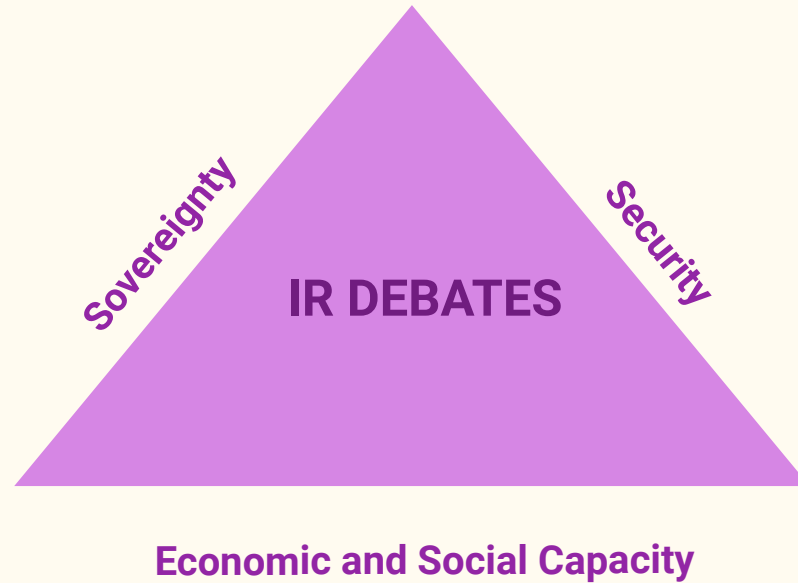
IR Theories in Debates

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Sources etc

Contemporary Security Studies - Alan Collins
IR Theorists, articles, etc.

POWER BALANCE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



Sovereignty - the autonomy a state has over its people and control over its territory

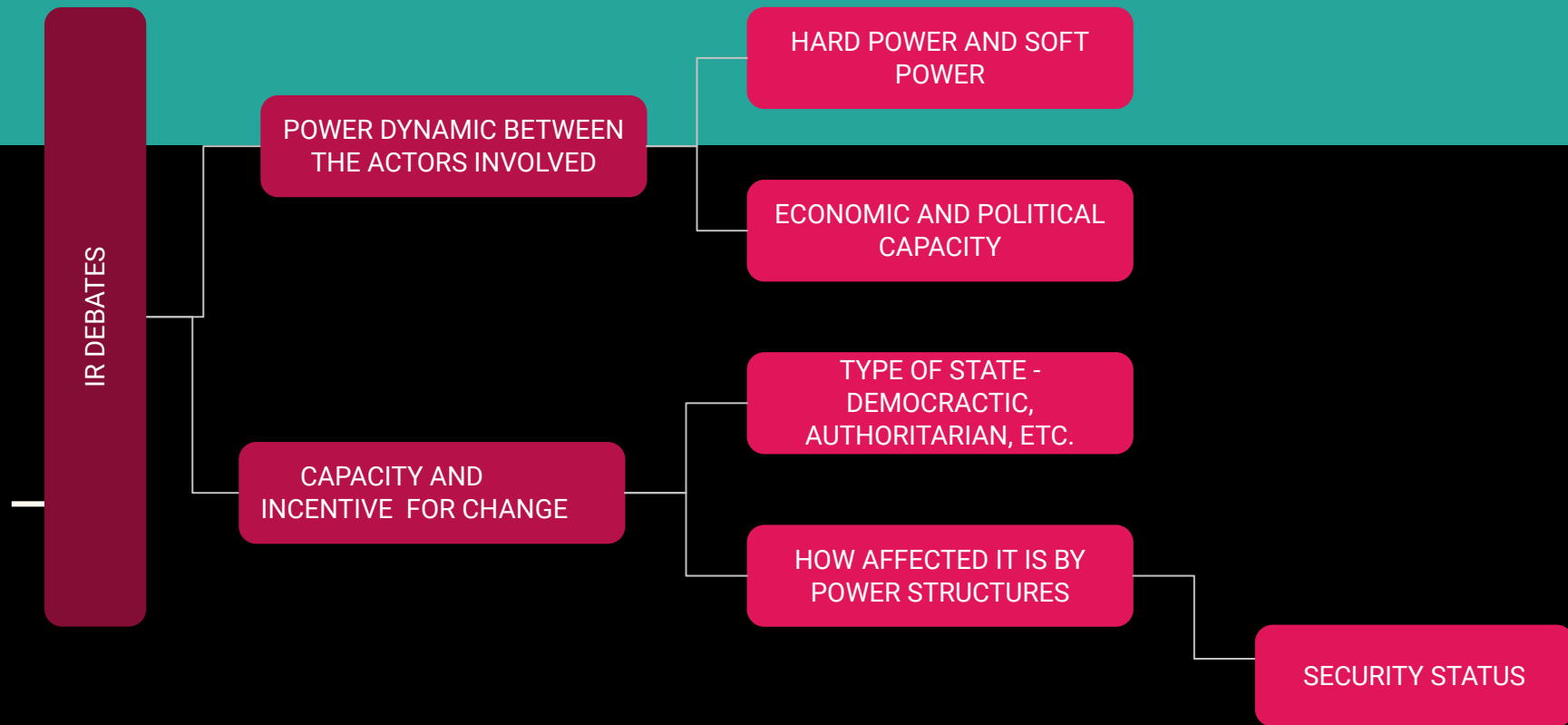
- ❑ Do all states actually have sovereignty? (Krasner)
- ❑ Just vs unjust wars and interventions (English School)

Security

- ❑ Different models and approaches - military, terrorism, environmental, energy, domestic, political, cultural, etc.
- ❑ Determines control over sovereignty and independent actions

Economic and Socio - Political Capacity

- ❑ Defines risk taking nature
- ❑ Defines political action and degree of rationality of actions
- ❑ Suggests burdens for development, retribution, etc.
- ❑ Defines capacity to have control over sovereignty



Levels of Analysis

- Level One — human characteristics
 - Explains events by considering human nature, perception, personalities, psychological analysis
- Level Two — the characteristics of states
 - An explanation through the type of state, such as democratic, authoritarian, capitalist, domestic structure
- Level Three — using the characteristics of the system, in which states operate
 - Common example: looking at the international system as characterized by anarchy with no higher authority, which prevents the occurrence of war
 - Explanations focusing on the Balance of Power
 - A scientific nature

Realism

Multiple theories, have basic shared elements:

- ❑ Emphasis on international system being anarchic
- ❑ Power as a defining feature of international environment that states face
- ❑ Envisions states as unitary actors
- ❑ States are rational actors
- ❑ 'Black boxes' opposing states
- ❑ States as the key actors in IR

This can be useful for analysis, but there are other actors like governors, economic institutions, etc.

- State action vs action of other actors
- Persuasiveness/ability of other actors to create change

Are they?

Rationality can depend on:

- Security and political stability
- Incentives for cooperation
- Predictability of actions from the outside
- Rationality for one actor might not be rational for the other

Structural Realism

Focus on structure of the international system vs other theories that focus on states' motives

"The structure and architecture of the international system forces states to pursue power"

- Never-ending struggle among states due to the natural human urge to dominate others
- The ideal situation is to be as powerful as possible
- Waltz – *"at a minimum, seek their own preservation" and are socialized to imitate each other, which helps to explain recurring international patterns and outcomes*
- Predicting the actions of states — how states will react to X policy
- Aspects such as Geography are also considered
 - Continental powers are more likely to face balancing coalitions
 - Hegemonic states tend to be naval powers, e.g. The Dutch, The UK, the United States

Offensive Realism

vs

Defensive Realism

Mearsheimer (2001) - states face uncertainty about others' intentions, but in addition that states should assume the worst about these intentions

States attempt to maximize power

Cooperation and restraint are a state's best option

Risks of competition can make cooperation a state's best strategy

States balance against threat and not power

Liberalism

- ❑ Optimism in improving international politics - interdependence, cooperation, peace, security
- ❑ States are the most important actor, but highlights other actors like NGOs, private economic entities, etc
- ❑ State behaviour is a result of perceptions, preferences and decision of elites
- ❑ Strongly supports democracy, private property, free enterprise, human rights

Critiques for liberalism

Creation of ‘separate peace’

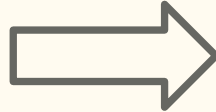
‘Democracy promotion’ as a mask for ‘imperial power’ maintained through state and non state actors

The liberal argument for democracy promotion

Liberal Peace Theory

Sharp distinction between
Democracies and Autocracies

The Democracy Promotion Paradox



Three main points of imperialism:

- Justification of the desire to change the system
- Argument for the disregard of the lack of consent
- Use of force or threat, even in form of military intervention

Clear Distinction

Liberal states
Peaceful
Cooperative
Duty to spread
liberal ideas



Non-liberal states
Aggressive
Irrational
Competitive

“must have no liberal enemies and no unconditional alliances with nonliberal states”

Consent

3 different arguments for disregarding the right of consent:

1. **Beitz-** Right of non-intervention “based on respect for the rights of persons to associate in the pursuit of common ends, or to live in just regimes,” unjust states cannot claim this right; they can be intervened in, provided the intervention itself fulfils certain conditions
2. **Rawl-** ideal liberal domestic regime as the precondition for the constitution of the Law of People
3. **Cosmopolitan democracy thesis-** Autocracies do not enjoy the same rights with regard to the more highly developed sections of international society

Historical Materialism - Marxism

Central focus of analysis is class conflict within capitalism

Sees capitalism itself as involving structural violence

Sees idea of human security as potentially being employed either by dominant capitalist actors to justify policies which reinforce structural violence, or by those opposing that structural violence

Capitalism is based on insecurity of workers access to means of production

Social Constructivism

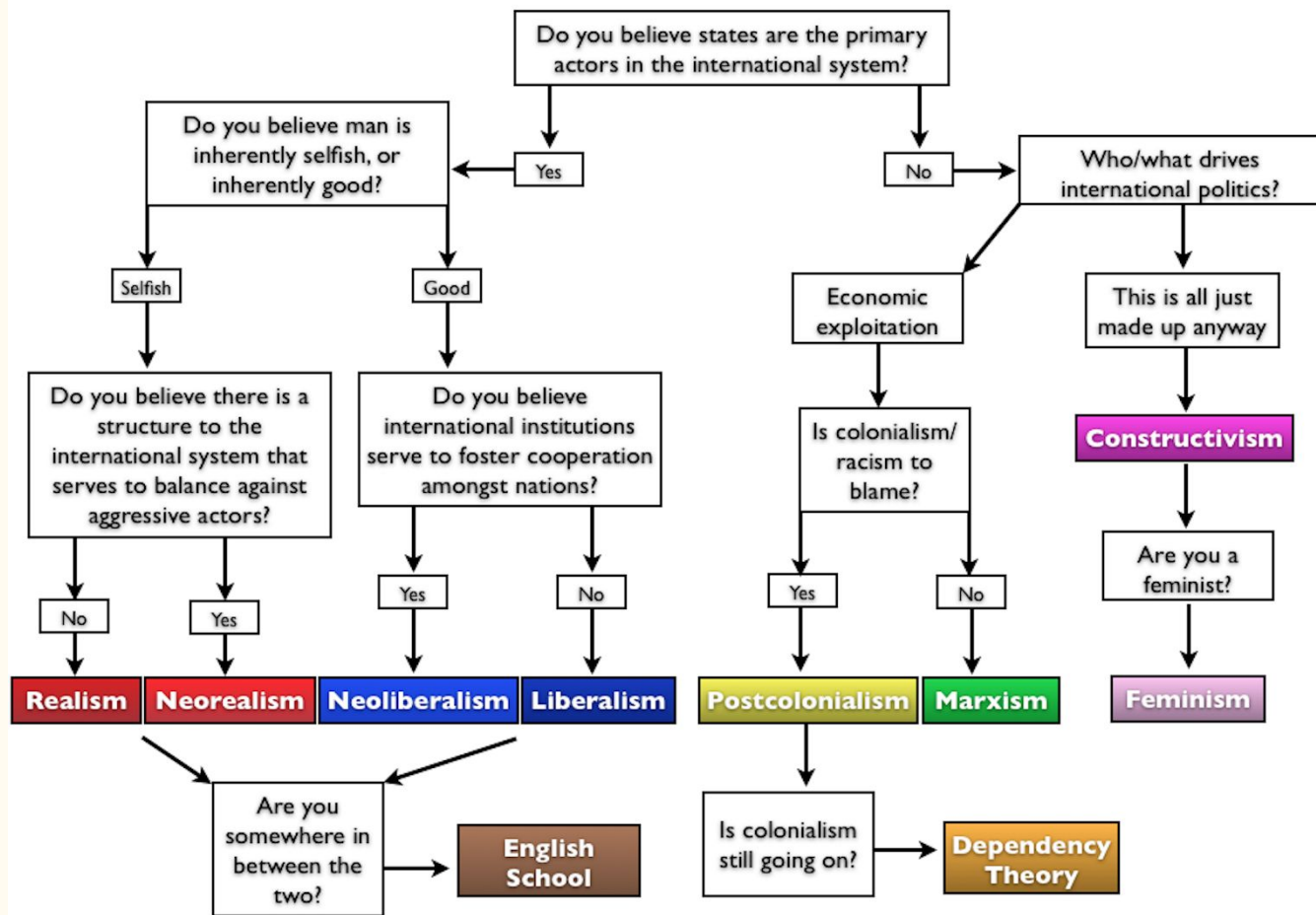
- ❑ Importance of ideas, identity, interaction
- ❑ 'Anarchy' itself is socially constructed
- ❑ Norms in a society and how the society is built overall (even politically and economically) is because we want it to be that way

Postcolonialism

- ❑ Differs from marxism - focuses on inequality between nations instead of classes
- ❑ Focuses on role of violence in world politics in imperialism's shaping of people, places and relations (helpful in IR debates about certain actors)
- ❑ Recognizing viewpoint of the global south, instead of the eurocentric understanding of these countries

IR theory flow chart

Source: bookdown.org



Types of motions

Actor and Policy Motions (the most usable w mainstream IR theories in predicting state behaviour)

- ❑ Economic incentives
- ❑ Political and Security incentives
- ❑ Developmental incentives

Examples:

Astana EUDC - TH, as Israel, would form a strategic military alliance with the Kurds in Syria.

Tallinn EUDC - TH, as the Kremlin, would commemorate the 1917 Russian Revolution as a tragedy rather than a triumph for the nation.

Trinity IV - THW welcome the end of American Interventionism

THBT MOTIONS (THR, THS as well)

- ❑ Are related to discussion on ‘balance of power’
 - > why is this motion good for the general good?
 - > often gives some sort of balance, or retributive, or developmental benefit in general

Examples:

Athens EUDC - THBT it is the interest of the Kremlin to take measures to reduce Russian dependency on China

Mexico WUDC - THBT ASEAN should negotiate all investment deals with Chinese government entities as a bloc (with decisions made by majority vote of its members), so that no member state can enter into investment deals without the rest of the bloc

Macau Tournament of Champions - THBT states formerly under the rule of the Soviet Union should NOT emphasize their history of struggle against Russian imperialism in constructing their national identity

IR Theories

Boring, long, sometimes sadly inaccessible

Other sources to make this fun:

- ❑ Youtube Videos!
- ❑ Reading op-eds once a week (and trying to figure out the line of analysis)
- ❑ Watch interviews of theorists on specific issues