



POLI 150: International Relations and Global Politics

Steven Saroka

POLI 150

11 January 2024



Today's Class

- Introductions
- Syllabus and Expectations
- Why Study IR?



Introduction

- Instructor: Steven Saroka
- Email: ssaroka@ad.unc.edu
- Office Hours: by appointment via Zoom on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3-4:30 PM. [Sign up link.](#)



Course Structure: Meeting and Readings

- Meeting: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2-3:15 PM, Murphey Hall 104.
- Most classes have readings assigned, listed in syllabus. These are to be completed before the lectures for which they are assigned.
- Textbook: Frieden, Lake, and Schultz's *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions* 4th edition.
 - **Not 5th edition**
- All other readings are posted on Canvas under “Files” then “Readings”



Course Structure: Assignments

Your final grade is composed of:

- 2 midterms worth 15% each.
 - 15-20 multiple choice; open note and book; non-cumulative.
- 10 short reflection papers worth 5% each.
 - One page, single- or double-spaced.
 - Turn in 10 out of 13 prompts; posted on Canvas.
- Final: 20%
 - 15-20 multiple choice; open note and book; cumulative.



Assignment Important Dates

- Reflection papers: generally due 1 week after their associated topic at 11:59 PM. Submit on Canvas.
- Exams: Mar. 7 and Apr. 18. Final available from Apr. 30 to May 3 at 11:59 PM.



Expectations for Papers

- Maximum length of one page.
- Submitted as Word document.
- Double- or single-spaced, 12-point font.
- Citations not required unless using an outside source (non-textbook, non-lecture).
- Use of AI must follow policy in syllabus.



General Expectations

- Contacting me: email or office hours
- Classroom civility
- Attendance and excused absences
- ARS accommodations: please contact me privately via email



What is International Relations (IR)?

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- What is a “political unit” anyway?



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- Understanding the interactions between political units in world politics
- What is a “political unit” anyway?
 - Example from American politics: Congress, Presidency, Supreme Court
- Abstract up to the level of international relations, and it's no longer so simple...



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 - within a specified territory
 - recognized as sovereign by other states
- IR has traditionally examined relationships between states: wars, alliances, trade, commerce, cooperation on global issues (environment, human rights), etc.



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- Interactions of these actors absent states



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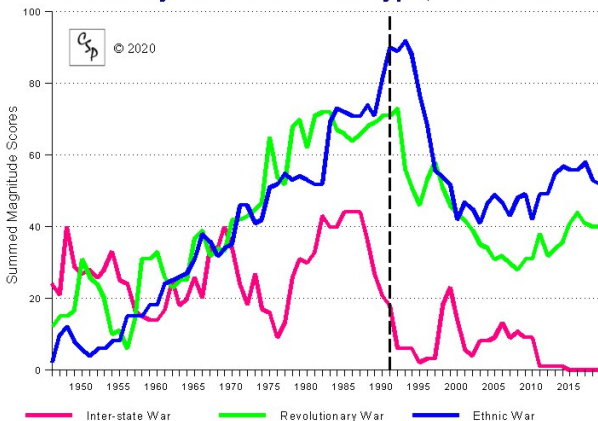
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Still: States remain the foundational actor in most analysis.



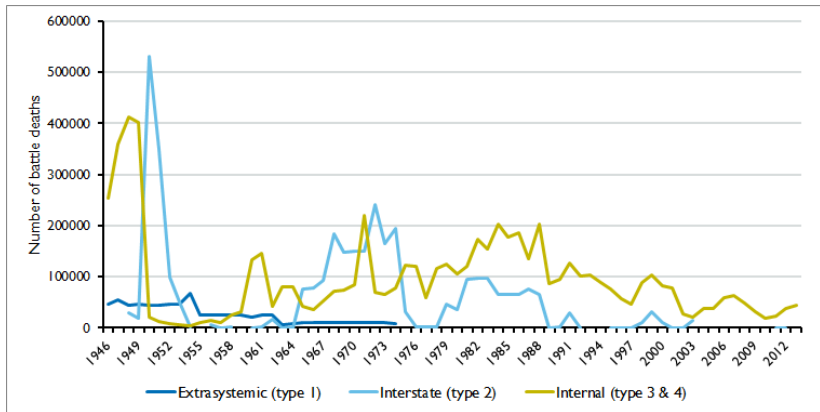
Some class topics

Trends by Armed Conflict Type, 1946-2019





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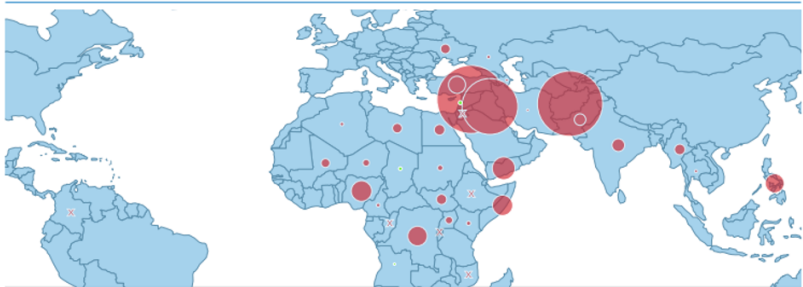
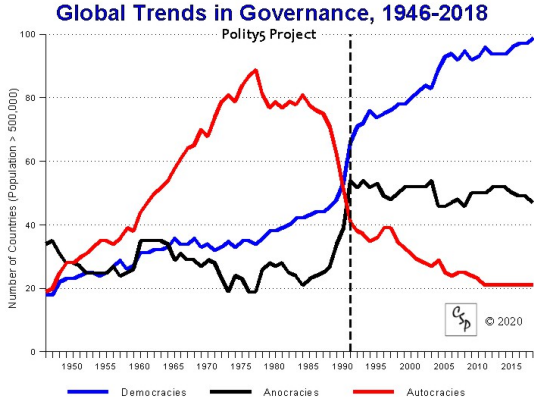


Figure 4: Bubble map of battle deaths in 2017



Some class topics



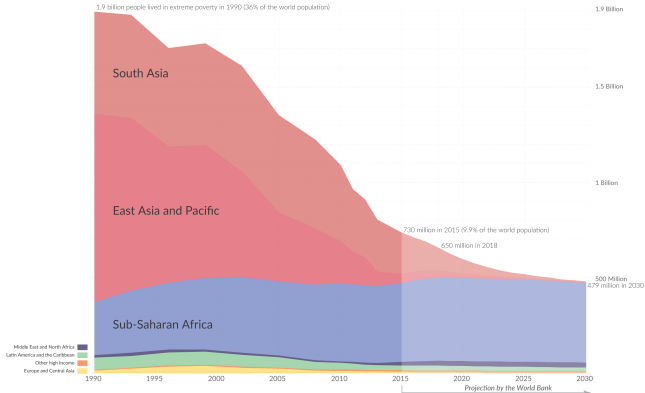


Some class topics

The number of people in extreme poverty – including projections to 2030

Extreme poverty is defined by the 'international poverty line' as living on less than \$1.90/day. This is measured by adjusting for price changes over time and for price differences between countries (PPP adjustment). From 2015 to 2030 the World Bank's projections are shown.

Our World
in Data



Data source: World Bank data from 1990 to 2015. The projections from 2015 to 2030 are published in the World Bank report *Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2018*.

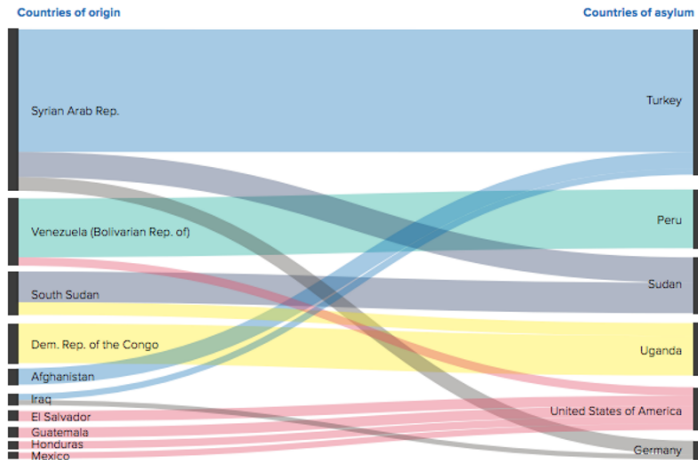
This is a visualization from OurWorldinData.org, where you find data and research on how the world is changing.

Licensed under CC-BY by the author Max Roser.



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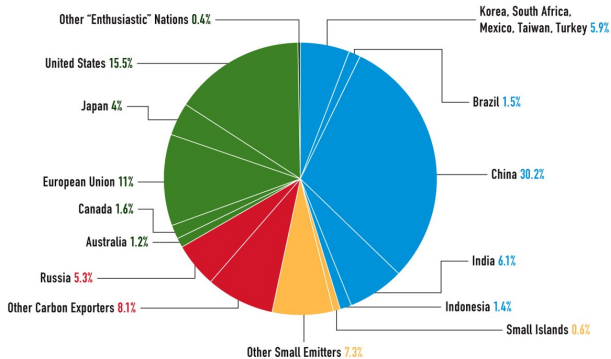
Figure 4 | Key flows of newly registered refugees and new asylum-seekers in 2018





Some class topics

FIGURE 13.1 *National Interests and Carbon Emissions, 2013*



Source: David G. Victor, *Global Warming Gridlock: Creating More Effective Strategies for Protecting the Planet* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 10. Figure based on the 2013 data provided by David G. Victor.



How do we study these topics?

- We look at events, historical and current, and find something puzzling about them — a phenomenon that needs to be explained.



Puzzle: Appeasement





Puzzle: Risk of Nuclear War





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- That being said, our explanations are still **probabilistic**.