

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

International relations (IR) is the study of relationships among countries, the roles of sovereign states, inter-governmental organizations (IGO), international non-governmental organizations (INGO), non-governmental organizations (NGO), and multinational corporations (MNC). International relations is an academic and a public policy field, and so can be positive and normative, because it analyzes and formulates the foreign policy of a given State. As political activity, international relations dates from the time of the Greek historian Thucydides (ca. 460–395 BC), and, in the early 20th century, became a discrete academic field (No. 5901 in the 4-digit UNESCO Nomenclature) within political science. However, international relations is an interdisciplinary field of study.

Besides political science, the field of international relations draws intellectual materials from the fields technology and engineering, economics, history, and international law, philosophy, geography, and social work, sociology, anthropology, and criminology, psychology and gender studies, cultural studies and culturology. The scope of international relations comprehends globalization, state sovereignty, and international security, ecological sustainability, nuclear proliferation, and nationalism, economic development and global finance, terrorism and organized crime, human security, foreign interventionism, and human rights.

History

The history of international relations can be traced back to thousands of years ago; Barry Buzan and Richard Little, for example, consider the interaction of ancient Sumerian city-states, starting in 3,500 BC, as the first fully-fledged international system.

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. Prior to this the European medieval organization of political authority was based on a vaguely hierarchical religious order. Contrary to popular belief, Westphalia still embodied layered systems of sovereignty, especially within the Holy Roman Empire. More than the Peace of Westphalia, the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713 is thought to reflect an emerging norm that sovereigns had no internal equals within a defined territory and **no external superiors as the ultimate authority within the territory's sovereign borders.**

The centuries of roughly 1500 to 1789 saw the rise of the independent, sovereign states, the institutionalization of diplomacy and armies. The French Revolution added to this the new idea that not princes or an oligarchy, but the citizenry of a state, defined as the nation, should be defined as sovereign. Such a state in which the nation is sovereign would thence be termed a nation-state (as opposed to a monarchy, or a religious state). The term republic increasingly became its synonym. An alternative model of the nation-state was developed in reaction to the French republican concept by the Germans and others, who instead of giving the citizenry sovereignty, kept the princes and nobility, but defined nation-statehood in ethniclinguistic terms, establishing the rarely if ever fulfilled ideal that all people speaking one language should belong to one state only. The same claim to sovereignty was made

for both forms of nation-state. (It is worth noting that in Europe today, few states conform to either definition of nation-state: many continue to have royal sovereigns, and hardly any are ethnically homogeneous.)

The particular European system supposing the sovereign equality of states was exported to the Americas, Africa, and Asia via **colonialism and the “standards of civilization”**. The contemporary international system was finally established through decolonization during the Cold War. However, this is somewhat over-simplified. While the nation-state system is considered **“modern”**, many states have not incorporated the system and are termed **“premodern”**.

Further, a handful of states have moved beyond insistence on **full sovereignty, and can be considered “post-modern”**. The ability of contemporary IR discourse to explain the relations of these **different types of states is disputed**. **“Levels of analysis”** is a way of looking at the international system, which includes the individual level, the domestic state as a unit, the international level of transnational and intergovernmental affairs, and the global level.

What is explicitly recognized as international relations theory was not developed until after World War I, and is dealt with in more detail below. IR theory, however, has a long tradition of drawing on the work of other social sciences. The use of capitalizations of the **“I”** and **“R”** in **international relations** aims to distinguish the academic discipline of international relations from the phenomena of international relations. Many cite Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* (6th century BC), Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* (5th century BC), Chanakya's *Arthashastra* (4th century BC), as the inspiration for realist theory, with Hobbes' *Leviathan* and Machiavelli's *The Prince* providing further elaboration.

Similarly, liberalism draws upon the work of Kant and Rousseau, with the work of the former often being cited as the first elaboration of democratic peace theory. Though contemporary human rights is

considerably different from the type of rights envisioned under natural law, Francisco de Vitoria, Hugo Grotius and John Locke offered the first accounts of universal entitlement to certain rights on the basis of common humanity. In the twentieth century, in addition to contemporary theories of liberal internationalism, Marxism has been a foundation of international relations.

Study of IR

Initially, international relations as a distinct field of study was almost entirely British-centered. IR only emerged as a formal **academic 'discipline' in 1919 with the founding of the first 'chair'** (professorship) in IR – the Woodrow Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth, University of Wales (now Aberystwyth University), from an endowment given by David Davies, became the first academic position dedicated to IR. This was rapidly followed by establishment of IR at US universities and Geneva, Switzerland. In the early 1920s, **the London School of Economics' department of international relations** was founded at the behest of Nobel Peace Prize winner Philip Noel-Baker, and was the first institute to offer a wide range of degrees in the field. Furthermore, the International History department at LSE, developed as primarily focused on the history of IR in the early modern, colonial and Cold War periods.

The first university entirely dedicated to the study of IR was the Graduate Institute of International Studies (now the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies), which was founded in 1927 to form diplomats associated to the League of Nations, established in Geneva some years before. The Graduate Institute of International Studies offered one of the first Ph.D. degrees in international relations. **Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service** is the oldest international relations faculty in the United States, founded in 1919. The Committee on International

Relations at the University of Chicago was the first to offer a graduate degree, in 1928. Now Universities in USA, UK, Europe, India, Kazakhstan, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Africa, Russia, Indonesia offer Graduate, Post-Graduate & PhD degrees in IR.

Theory

Normative theory

In the academic discipline of International relations, Smith, Baylis & Owens in their *Introduction* (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.

Epistemology and IR theory

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 valuefree way. It rejects the central ideas of neo-realism/liberalism, such as rational choice theory, on the grounds