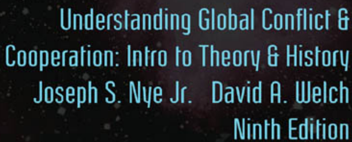

Understanding Global Conflict & Cooperation: Intro to Theory & History

Joseph S. Nye Jr. David A. Welch

Ninth Edition

Pearson New International Edition

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Table of Contents

1. Glossary
Joseph S. Nye Jr./David A. Welch **1**

2. Are There Enduring Logics of Cooperation in World Politics?
Joseph S. Nye Jr./David A. Welch **7**

3. Explaining Conflict and Cooperation: Tools and Techniques of the Trade
Joseph S. Nye Jr./David A. Welch **43**

4. From Westphalia to World War I
Joseph S. Nye Jr./David A. Welch **85**

5. The Failure of Collective Security and World War II
Joseph S. Nye Jr./David A. Welch **119**

6. The Cold War
Joseph S. Nye Jr./David A. Welch **149**

7. Post-Cold War Cooperation, Conflict, Flashpoints
Joseph S. Nye Jr./David A. Welch **201**

8. Globalization and Interdependence
Joseph S. Nye Jr./David A. Welch **265**

9. The Information Revolution and Transnational Actors
Joseph S. Nye Jr./David A. Welch **297**

10. What Can We Expect in the Future?
Joseph S. Nye Jr./David A. Welch **329**

Index **363**

GLOSSARY

Actor Any person or body whose decisions and actions have repercussions for international politics. States, nongovernmental organizations, multinational corporations, and even occasionally individuals qualify as international actors.

Alliances Formal or informal arrangements made between sovereign states, usually to ensure mutual security.

Anarchy The absence of hierarchy. The Westphalian system of sovereign states is anarchic because there is no authority above states. When used in the study of international politics, anarchy is generally not used as a synonym for chaos, since anarchic systems can be very orderly.

Appeasement Generally, the act or policy of accommodating the demands of an assertive power in an attempt to prevent conflict; more specifically, when referring to British policy between the two world wars, the policy of satisfying Germany's legitimate grievances.

Arab Spring The wave of protests and uprisings against authoritarian regimes in North Africa and the Middle East that began in Tunisia in December 2010.

Asymmetry Situations in which states or other actors with unbalanced power capabilities are in opposition to one another. The U.S. war against al Qaeda is widely regarded as an asymmetrical conflict.

Balance of power A term commonly used to describe (1) the distribution of power in the international system at any given time, (2) a policy of allying with one state or group of states so as to prevent another state from gaining a preponderance of power, (3) a realist theory about how states behave under anarchy, or (4) the multipolar system of Europe in the nineteenth century.

Bipolarity The structure of an international system in which two states or alliances of states dominate world politics. The Cold War division between the United States and the Soviet Union is often referred to as a bipolar system.

Bretton Woods New Hampshire resort where a 1944 conference established the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

Cold War The standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union that lasted from roughly the end of World War II until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Though proxy wars were fought on behalf of both sides around the globe, U.S. and Soviet troops did not engage in direct combat, making this a "cold" war rather than a "hot" shooting war.

Collective security A means of maintaining peace in which a group of states agree on an institutional framework and legal mechanism to prevent or respond to aggression. Two examples of collective security actions under the auspices of the United Nations were the Korean War (1950–1953) and the Persian Gulf War (1991).

Congress of Vienna An 1815 agreement that marked the end of the Napoleonic Wars and established the general framework for the European international system in the nineteenth century.

Constructivism An analytical approach to international relations that emphasizes the importance of ideas, norms, cultures, and social structures in shaping actors' identities, interests, and actions. John Ruggie, Alexander Wendt, and Peter Katzenstein are considered constructivists.

Containment A foreign policy designed to prevent a potential aggressor from expanding its influence geographically.

Containment was the cornerstone of American foreign policy toward Soviet communism during the Cold War.

Cosmopolitanism The view that individuals, not sovereign states, are the relevant moral units in world affairs, and that moral principles such as human rights are universal rather than culture-specific. Charles Beitz is a prominent cosmopolitan theorist.

Counterfactuals Thought experiments that imagine situations with a carefully selected change of facts. These are often phrased as “what if” questions and are employed in the analysis of scenarios in international relations to explore causal relationships.

Crisis stability A measure of the pressure leaders feel to escalate to war during an international crisis.

Cuban missile crisis A standoff in October 1962 between the United States and the Soviet Union over the deployment of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. The crisis was resolved when the Soviets removed their missiles, partly in exchange for a secret agreement that the United States would remove similar missiles based in Turkey.

Dependency theory A theory of development inspired by Marxism, popular in the 1960s and 1970s, that predicted wealthy countries at the “center” of the international system would hold back “peripheral” developing countries.

Deterrence A strategy of dissuading a potential aggressor through threat or fear.

Economic interdependence Situations characterized by reciprocal economic effects among countries or actors in different countries. See *Interdependence*.

Fourteen Points Woodrow Wilson’s blueprint for a settlement at the end of World War I. Among its most important features was a call for an international institution that would safeguard collective security. See *League of Nations*.

Game Theory The analysis of how rational actors will behave in contexts of strategic interaction.

GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) An international agreement on tariffs and trade that began in 1947 and was replaced in 1994 by the WTO (World Trade Organization).

Geopolitics A theory of international politics that considers the location, proximity, and power of a state a key cause of its behavior.

Globalization At its broadest, the term is used to describe worldwide networks of interdependence. It has a number of dimensions, including economic, cultural, military, and political globalization. It is not a new phenomenon—it dates back at least to the Silk Road—but due to the information revolution, its contemporary form is “thicker and quicker” than previous ones.

Global Public Goods Extension of the public goods concept in economics, which refers to goods that are nonrival and nonexcludable. Examples include knowledge and a stable climate.

Hard power The ability to obtain desired outcomes through coercion or payment.

Hegemony The ability to exercise control within a system of states. The United States is often said to exercise military hegemony today.

IGO (intergovernmental organization) An organization whose members are sovereign states. The United Nations, IMF, and World Bank are examples of IGOs. Commonly referred to as *international institutions*.

IMF (International Monetary Fund) An international institution set up after World War II to lend money, primarily to developing countries, to help stabilize currencies or cover balance-of-payments problems. See *Bretton Woods*.

INGO (international nongovernmental organizations) A subset of NGOs with an international focus. See *NGO*.

Interdependence Situations characterized by reciprocal effects among countries or other actors.

International Court of Justice (ICJ) An international tribunal for settling disputes between *states* and for providing legal opinions on questions submitted to it by the UN General Assembly and other authorized bodies. The Statute of the International Court of Justice is an integral part of the UN Charter (Chapter XIV). Based in the Hague, the ICJ is the successor to the League of Nations' Permanent Court of International Justice.

International Criminal Court (ICC) A permanent tribunal of last resort for trying *individuals* charged with genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes. Established by the Rome Statute (1999) and in operation since July 1, 2002.

International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) An ad hoc tribunal established by the UN Security Council to prosecute those charged with committing genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes during the violent breakup of Yugoslavia (1991–1995).

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) An ad hoc tribunal established by the UN Security Council to prosecute those charged with committing genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes in Rwanda (1994).

International institutions See *IGO*.

International law The collective body of treaties and accepted customary practices that regulate the conduct of states. International law can also apply to individuals who act in an international context.

International society A way of conceptualizing the international system that stresses the importance of international law, norms, and rules (including rules of protocol and etiquette), as well as the rights and obligations of states. Constructivists and British scholars of the "English School" of International Relations theory (some of whom are classical realists) generally prefer to speak of international society rather than the international system. Neorealists prefer the opposite.

International system See *System*.

Intervention External actions that influence the domestic affairs of a sovereign state. Most often this term is used to refer to forcible interference by one or more states in another state's domestic affairs.

Jus ad bellum That part of just war doctrine that specifies the conditions under which states may morally resort to war. Traditionally, these include just cause, right intention, legitimate authority, last resort, and reasonable chance of success. From the Latin "justice to war."

Jus in bello That part of just war doctrine that specifies the ways in which wars may morally be fought. Traditionally, these include observing the laws of war, maintaining proportionality between the amount of force used and the objective sought, and observing the principle of noncombatant immunity. From the Latin "justice in war."

Just war doctrine An intellectual tradition with origins in ancient Rome and the early Christian church that provides moral guidelines for the resort to force and the use of force in war. St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas are important historical figures in this tradition; Michael Walzer is a well-known modern just war theorist. Sometimes called "just war theory." See *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*.

League of Nations An international organization dedicated to collective security founded at the end of World War I. Woodrow Wilson, the League's chief advocate, called for its creation in his Fourteen Points at the end of the war. The League failed owing to its inability to prevent the aggressions that led to World War II.

Liberalism An analytical approach to international relations in which states

function as part of a global society that sets the context for their interactions and that stresses the domestic sources of foreign policy. Classical liberalism has intellectual roots in the writings of Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, and John Stuart Mill. Richard Rosecrance is considered a liberal.

Marxism An analytical approach to international relations, inspired by the writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, that sees economic classes as the primary actors, and that explains patterns and events in world affairs in terms of the interactions between classes. Immanuel Wallerstein is a prominent Marxist international relations theorist.

Milieu goals Intangible goals such as democracy or human rights, in contrast to tangible possession goals such as territory.

Multipolarity The structure of an international system in which three or more states or alliances dominate world politics. Many scholars describe nineteenth-century Europe as multipolar.

NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) A 1994 agreement among the United States, Canada, and Mexico that created a free-trade zone in North America.

Nation A group of people who have some combination of common language, culture, religion, history, mythology, identity, or sense of destiny, as well as strong ties to a particular territory, and, usually, aspirations for political autonomy. All nations are peoples (see *People*). Confusingly, the word "nation" is often used to mean "state" (see *State*).

Nation-state An ethnically homogenous state; that is, a state whose citizens are all, or virtually all, members of a single nation. Used both descriptively (e.g., with respect to Korea, Japan, and other ethnically homogenous states) and prescriptively (i.e., as a philosophical ideal—impossible to realize in practice—that all nations should have states of their own).

National interest A state's perceptions of its goals in the international system. Realists, liberals, and constructivists all have different accounts of how states formulate their national interests.

Nationalism A celebration or assertion of national identity that commonly finds political expression in the claim of a right of self-determination or self-government. See *Nation, Self-determination,* and *Self-government.*

Neoliberalism An analytical approach to international relations in which the actions of states are constrained by economic interdependence and international institutions. Robert Keohane is considered a neoliberal. See *Interdependence* and *International institutions.*

Neorealism An analytical approach to international relations, inspired by the objectivity and rigor of natural science, that sees the actions of states as constrained primarily by the distribution of power in the international system. Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer are well-known neorealists.

NGO (nongovernmental organization) In the broadest definition, any organization that represents interests other than those of a state or multinational corporation. Most references concern transnational or international groups (sometimes referred to as INGOs). Examples of well-known NGOs include the Catholic Church, Greenpeace, and the International Red Cross.

Nuclear deterrence A strategy used by both the United States and Soviet Union during the Cold War to dissuade each other from provocative acts by threat of annihilation. See *Deterrence.*

OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) An organization of the world's largest oil-producing states that tries to coordinate policy on oil production and pricing among its members.

Peacebuilding A term coined by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali

in 1992 describing a range of activities by foreign military and civilian personnel intended to stabilize war-torn societies, build durable governance structures, and lay the groundwork for long-term peace, security, and development.

Peace enforcement The deployment of well-armed foreign troops to compel one or more warring parties to comply with UN resolutions calling for a cessation of hostilities.

Peacekeeping The deployment of neutral, lightly armed foreign troops or police to prevent conflict or maintain peace in a state or between states. Many peacekeeping operations are conducted under UN auspices, but peacekeeping can also be conducted by a regional organization or a group of countries acting outside the United Nations.

Peace of Westphalia The 1648 treaties that formally concluded the Thirty Years' War and established state sovereignty as the chief organizing principle in the international system.

People A group united by common culture, tradition, or sense of kinship (though not necessarily by blood, race, or political ties), typically sharing a language and system of beliefs. A people with a sense of territorial homeland and a shared political identity are a *nation*.

Peloponnesian War More accurately, the Second Peloponnesian War, documented by Thucydides; a conflict between Athens and Sparta lasting from 431 to 404 BCE that resulted in the defeat of Athens and the end of the Golden Age of Athenian democracy. See *Thucydides*.

Power Generally, the ability to achieve one's purposes or goals; more specifically, the ability to affect others to get the outcomes one wants. In a more restricted definition, Robert Dahl defines power as "the ability to get others to do what they otherwise would not do."

Prisoner's Dilemma A classic strategic interaction in which two independent decision makers, each attempting to pursue his or her rational self-interest, will choose not to cooperate with each other (i.e., to defect) and will thereby end up worse off than if they had both chosen to cooperate. Since the best possible outcome in Prisoner's Dilemma is to defect while the other cooperates, the noncooperative outcome is a function of their inability to trust. See *Game theory*.

Realism An analytical approach to international relations in which the primary actors are states and the central problems are war and the use of force. Thucydides, Otto von Bismarck, E. H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau, and Henry Kissinger are all considered realists.

Self-determination The right of a people to decide their own political fate.

Self-government The right of a people to rule themselves.

Sensitivity The degree and rapidity of the effects of interdependence. Describes how quickly a change in one part of a system leads to a change in another part.

Skeptics Those who believe that moral categories have no place in discussions of international relations because of the lack of an international community that can sanction rights and duties.

Soft power The ability to obtain desired outcomes through attraction or persuasion rather than coercion or payment.

Sovereignty An absolute right to rule.

Stability See *Crisis stability* and *System stability*.

State A sovereign, territorial political unit.

State moralism The view that international morality depends on a society of sovereign states playing by certain rules, even if those rules are not always obeyed; that moral obligations within state borders are much greater than across them.

Structure The configuration of units within a *system*. Structures characterize how units relate. Realists consider the

distribution of power the most important structural feature of the international system; constructivists emphasize its social dimensions (e.g., norms, rules, and identity relationships).

Symmetry Situations in which states or agents with relatively balanced power capabilities are in opposition to one another. The latter half of the Cold War is widely regarded as a symmetrical conflict because of the rough nuclear balance between the United States and the Soviet Union.

System A set of interrelated units that interact in a regular way. The international system is a particular system whose units are international *actors*, of which sovereign states are currently the most significant, and whose processes of interaction include such things as diplomacy, negotiation, trade, and war.

System stability Generally, a measure of the ability of a system to absorb shocks without breaking down or becoming disorderly; with respect specifically to the international system, a measure of its war-proneness.

Thirty Years' War A series of European wars fueled by international, religious, and dynastic conflicts that took place from 1618 to 1648. See *Peace of Westphalia.*

Thucydides An Athenian commander whose book *History of the Peloponnesian War,* a chronicle of the war between Athens and Sparta, is one of the earliest known works of history and international relations. Thucydides is widely considered the father of realism.

Transgovernmental relations Relations between sub-units of national governments.

Transnational actor Any nonstate actor that acts across international borders. See *Actor*.

Treaty of Rome The 1957 treaty that laid the groundwork for European integration, which led first to the creation of a European Common Market and eventually to the European Union and the common euro currency.

Treaty of Utrecht The 1713 treaty that ended the Wars of Spanish Succession and established the legitimacy of both British and French holdings in North America.

Treaty of Westphalia See *Peace of Westphalia.*

Unipolarity The structure of an international system in which one state exercises preponderant power. Some analysts refer to the current military power structure as a unipolar system dominated by the United States.

Virtual history A particular style of counterfactual analysis that infers what would have happened had something been different (the counterfactual) from what actually did happen beforehand.

Vulnerability The relative cost of changing the structure of a system of interdependence. Can also be thought of as the cost of escaping or changing the rules of the game.

Westphalia See *Peace of Westphalia.*

World Bank An institution set up after World War II to provide loans, technical assistance, and policy advice to developing countries. See *Bretton Woods.*

WTO (World Trade Organization) An international organization created in 1994 to regulate trade and tariffs among its member states. See *GATT.*

Are There Enduring Logics of Conflict and Cooperation in World Politics?

Marble relief commemorating Athenians who died in the Peloponnesian War

From Chapter 1 of *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation,* Ninth Edition. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., David A. Welch. Copyright © 2013 by Pearson Education, Inc. All rights reserved.

The world is shrinking. The *Mayflower* took three months to cross the Atlantic. In 1924, Charles Lindbergh's flight took 33 hours. Fifty years later, the Concorde did it in three hours. Ballistic missiles can do it in 30 minutes. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, a transatlantic flight cost one-third of what it did in 1950, and a call from New York to London cost only a small percentage of what it did at midcentury. Global Internet communications are nearly instantaneous, and transmission costs are negligible. An environmentalist in Asia or a human rights activist in Africa today has a power of communication once enjoyed only by large organizations such as governments or transnational corporations. On a more somber note, nuclear weapons have added a new dimension to war that one writer calls "double death," meaning that not only could individuals die, but under some circumstances the whole human species could be threatened. And as the September 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington in 2001 ("9/11") illustrated, technology is putting into the hands of nonstate actors destructive powers that once were reserved solely for governments. As the effects of distance shrink, conditions in remote, poor countries such as Afghanistan suddenly become highly relevant to people around the globe.

Marble memorial commemorating Americans who died in the Vietnam War

Yet some other things about international politics have remained the same over the ages. Thucydides' account of Sparta and Athens fighting the Peloponnesian War 2,500 years ago bears an eerie resemblance to the Arab-Israeli conflict after 1947. Pliny the Elder complained about imbalances in Rome's (mutually beneficial) trade with India nearly 2,000 years ago in almost exactly the same language with which members of Congress today complain about imbalances in the United States' (mutually beneficial) trade with China. There are basic logics to conflict and cooperation that have remained surprisingly constant over the millennia, even if the forms they take and the issues that give rise to them change (the ancient world never had to worry about nuclear weapons, HIV/AIDS, or climate change). The world is a strange cocktail of continuity and change.

The task for students of world politics is to build on the past but not be trapped by it—to understand the continuities as well as the changes. We must learn the traditional theories and then adapt them to current circumstances.

> "I found in my experience in government that I could ignore neither the age-old nor the brand-new dimensions of world politics."
>
> —Joseph S. Nye, Jr.

World politics would be transformed if separate states were abolished, but world government is not around the corner. And while nonstate actors such as transnational corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and terrorist groups present new challenges to governments, they do not replace states. The peoples who live in the nearly 200 states on this globe want their independence, separate cultures, and different languages. In fact, rather than vanishing, nationalism and the demand for separate states have increased. Rather than fewer states, this century will probably see more. World government would not automatically solve the problem of war. Most wars today are civil or ethnic wars. In the two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, 220 armed conflicts occurred in 75 different locations around the world. Nine were interstate wars, and 24 were intrastate wars with foreign intervention.[1] In fact, the bloodiest wars of the nineteenth century were not among the quarreling states of Europe but rather the Taiping Rebellion in China and the American Civil War. We will continue to live in a world of rival communities and separate states for quite some time, and it is important to understand what that means for our prospects.

WHAT IS INTERNATIONAL POLITICS?

The world has not always been divided into a system of separate states. Over the centuries there have been three basic forms of world politics. In a *world imperial system*, one government controls most of the world with which it has

contact. The greatest example in the Western world was the Roman Empire. Spain in the sixteenth century and France in the late seventeenth century tried to gain similar supremacy, but they failed. In the nineteenth century, the British Empire spanned the globe, but even the British had to share the world with other strong states. Ancient world empires—the Roman, Sumerian, Persian, and Chinese—were actually regional empires. They thought they ruled the world, but they were protected from conflict with other empires by lack of communication. Their fights with barbarians on the peripheries of their empires were not the same as wars among roughly equal states.

A second basic form of international politics is a *feudal system,* in which human loyalties and political obligations are not fixed primarily by territorial boundaries. Feudalism was common in Europe after the collapse of the Roman Empire. An individual had obligations to a local lord, but might also owe duties to some distant noble or bishop, as well as to the pope in Rome. Political obligations were determined to a large extent by what happened to one's superiors. If a ruler married, an area and its people might find their obligations rearranged as part of a wedding dowry. Townspeople born French might suddenly find themselves Flemish or even English. Cities and leagues of cities sometimes had a special semi-independent status. The crazy quilt of wars that accompanied the feudal situation did not much resemble modern territorial wars. These wars could occur within as well as across territories and were shaped by crosscutting, nonterritorial loyalties and conflicts.

A third form of world politics is an *anarchic system of states,* composed of states that are relatively cohesive but with no higher government above them. Examples include the city-states of ancient Greece or Machiavelli's fifteenth-century Italy. Another example of an anarchic state system is the dynastic territorial state whose coherence comes from control by a ruling family. Examples can be found in India or China in the fifth century BCE. Large territorial dynasties reemerged in Europe in about 1500, and other forms of polities such as city-states or loose leagues of territories began to vanish. In 1648, the *Peace of Westphalia* ended Europe's Thirty Years' War, sometimes called the last of the great wars of religion and the first of the wars of modern states. In retrospect, we can see that the Peace of Westphalia enshrined the territorial sovereign state as the dominant political unit.

Today when we speak of the international system, we usually mean this territorial system of sovereign states (or simply the "Westphalian system" for short), and we define *international politics* as politics in the absence of a common sovereign—politics among entities with no ruler above them. International politics is a self-help system. The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) called such an anarchic system a "state of nature." For some, the words *state of nature* may conjure up images of a herd of cows grazing peacefully on a farm, but that is not what Hobbes meant. Think of a Texas town without a sheriff in the days of the Old West, or Lebanon after its government broke down in the 1970s, or Somalia in the 1990s. Hobbes did not think of a state of nature as benign; he saw it as a war of all against all, because there was no higher ruler to enforce order. As Hobbes famously declared, life in such a world would be nasty, brutish, and short.

Because there is no higher authority above states, there are important legal, political, and social differences between domestic and international politics. Domestic law is relatively clear and consistent. Police and courts enforce it. By contrast, international law is patchy, incomplete, and rests on sometimes vague foundations. There is no common enforcement mechanism. The world lacks a global police force, and while there are international courts, they can do little when sovereign states choose to ignore them.

Force plays a different role in domestic and international politics as well. In a well-ordered domestic political system, the government has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. In international politics, no one has such a monopoly. Because international politics is the realm of self-help, and some states are stronger than others, there is always a danger that they may resort to force. When force cannot be ruled out, mistrust and suspicion are common.

Domestic and international politics also differ in their underlying sense of community. In a well-ordered domestic society, a widespread sense of community gives rise to common loyalties, standards of justice, and views of legitimate authority. On a global scale, people have competing loyalties. Any sense of global community is weak. People often disagree about what is just and legitimate. The result is a great gap between two basic political values: order and justice. In such a world, most people place national concerns before international justice. Law and ethics play a role in international politics, but in the absence of a sense of community norms, they are weaker forces than in domestic politics.

Some people speculate that of the three basic systems—world imperial, feudal, and Westphalian—the twenty-first century may see the gradual evolution of a new feudalism, or less plausibly, an American world empire.

Differing Views of Anarchic Politics

International politics is anarchic in the sense that there is no government above sovereign states. But political philosophy offers different views of how harsh a state of nature need be. Hobbes, who wrote in a seventeenth-century England wracked by civil war, emphasized insecurity, force, and survival. He described humanity as being in a constant state of war. A half century later, John Locke (1632–1704), writing in a more stable England, argued that although a state of nature lacked a common sovereign, people could develop ties and make contracts, and therefore anarchy was not necessarily an obstacle to peace. Those two views of a state of nature are the philosophical precursors of two current views of international politics, one more pessimistic and one more optimistic: *realism* and *liberalism*.

Realism has been the dominant tradition in thinking about international politics for centuries. For the realist, the central problem of international politics is war and the use of force, and the central actors are states. Among modern Americans, realism is exemplified by the writings and policies of President Richard Nixon and his secretary of state, Henry Kissinger. The realist starts from the assumption of the anarchic system of states. Kissinger and Nixon, for

example, sought to maximize the power of the United States and to minimize the ability of other states to jeopardize U.S. security. According to the realist, the beginning and the end of international politics is the individual state in interaction with other states.

The other tradition, *liberalism*, can be traced back in Western political philosophy to Baron de Montesquieu and Immanuel Kant in eighteenth-century France and Germany respectively, and such nineteenth-century British philosophers as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. A modern American example can be found in the writings and policies of the political scientist and president, Woodrow Wilson.

Liberals see a global society that functions alongside states and sets an important part of the context for state action. Trade crosses borders, people have contacts with each other (such as students studying in foreign countries), and international institutions such as the United Nations mitigate some of the harsher aspects of anarchy. Liberals complain that realists portray states as billiard balls careening off one another in an attempt to balance power. They claim that this explanation is not adequate, as people do have contacts across borders and because there is an international society. Realists, claim liberals, overstate the difference between domestic and international politics. Because the realist picture of anarchy as a Hobbesian "state of war" focuses only on extreme situations, in the liberals' view it misses the growth of economic interdependence and the evolution of a transnational global society.

Realists respond by quoting Hobbes: "Just as stormy weather does not mean perpetual rain, so a state of war does not mean constant war."[2] Just as Londoners carry umbrellas on sunny April days, the prospect of war in an anarchic system makes states keep armies even in times of peace. Realists point to previous liberal predictions that went awry. For example, in 1910, the president of Stanford University said future war was no longer possible because it was too costly. Liberal writers proclaimed war obsolete; civilization had grown out of it, they argued. Economic interdependence, ties between labor unions and intellectuals, and the flow of capital all made war impossible. Of course, these predictions failed catastrophically when World War I broke out in 1914, and the realists felt vindicated.

1910: THE "UNSEEN VAMPIRE" OF WAR

If there were no other reason for making an end of war, the financial ruin it involves must sooner or later bring the civilized nations of the world to their senses. As President David Starr Jordan of Leland Stanford University said at Tufts College, "Future war is impossible because the nations cannot afford it." In Europe, he says, the war debt is $26 billion, "all owed to the unseen vampire, and which the nations will never pay and which taxes poor people $95 million a year." The burdens of militarism in time of peace are exhausting the strength of the leading nations, already overloaded with debts. The certain result of a great war would be overwhelming bankruptcy.

—*The New York World*[3]

Neither history nor the argument between the realists and liberals stopped in 1914. The 1970s saw a resurgence of liberal claims that rising economic and social interdependence was changing the nature of international politics. In the 1980s, Richard Rosecrance wrote that states can increase their power in two ways, either aggressively by territorial conquest or peacefully through trade. He used the experience of Japan as an example: In the 1930s, Japan tried territorial conquest and suffered the disaster of World War II. But after the war, Japan used trade and investment to become the second largest economy in the world (measured by official exchange rates) and a significant power in East Asia. Japan succeeded while spending far less on its military, proportionately to the size of either its population or its economy, than other major powers. Thus Rosecrance and modern liberals argue that the nature of international politics is changing.

Some new liberals look even further to the future and believe that dramatic growth in ecological interdependence will so blur the differences between domestic and international politics that humanity will evolve toward a world without borders. For example, everyone will be affected without regard to boundaries if greenhouse gas emissions warm the planet. Problems such as HIV/AIDS and drugs cross borders with such ease that we may be on our way to a different world. Professor Richard Falk of Princeton argues that transnational problems and values will alter the state-centric orientation of the international system that has dominated for the last 400 years. Transnational forces are undoing the Peace of Westphalia, and humanity is evolving toward a new form of international politics.

In 1990, realists replied, "Tell that to Saddam Hussein!" Iraq showed that force and war are ever-present dangers when it invaded its small neighbor Kuwait. Liberals responded by arguing that politics in the Middle East is the exception. Over time, they said, the world is moving beyond the anarchy of the sovereign state system. These divergent views on the nature of international politics and how it is changing will not soon be reconciled. Realists stress continuity; liberals stress change. Both claim to be more "realistic." Liberals tend to see realists as cynics whose fascination with the past blinds them to change. Realists, in turn, think liberals are utopian dreamers peddling "globaloney."

Who's right? Both are right and both are wrong. A clear-cut answer might be nice, but it would also be less accurate and less interesting. The mix of continuity and change that characterizes today's world makes it impossible to arrive at one simple, synthetic explanation.

Realism and liberalism are not the only approaches. For much of the past century *Marxism* was a popular alternative for many people. Originally developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and subsequently enhanced and adapted by other theorists, Marxism focused on the domestic economic structure of capitalist states. Its concentration on economic class, production, and property relations has sometimes been called "economic reductionism" or "historical materialism." Marxists believed that politics is a function of economics and predicted that the greed of capitalists would

drive important events in international relations, ultimately proving their own undoing as socialist revolution swept the globe. But Marxists underestimated the forces of nationalism, state power, and geopolitics. Their lack of attention to the importance of diplomacy and the balance of power led to a flawed understanding of international politics and incorrect predictions. Even before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the failure of Marxist theory to account for peace among major capitalist states and warfare among various communist states undermined its explanatory value. For example, it was difficult for Marxists to explain clashes between China and the Soviet Union in 1969, the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1978, or the Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979.

In the 1960s and 1970s, *dependency theory*, which builds on Marxism, was popular. It predicted that the wealthy countries in the "center" of the global marketplace would control and hold back poorer countries on the "periphery." According to dependency theorists, the global economic and political division between the First World (rich, liberal, capitalist countries) and the Third World (developing countries), also known as the North-South divide, is the result of both historical imperialism and the nature of capitalist globalization. Dependency theory enjoyed some explanatory successes, such as accounting for the failure of many poor countries to benefit from global economic liberalization to the extent that orthodox liberal economic theory predicted. It also drew attention to the curious and important phenomenon of the "dual economy" in developing countries, in which a small, wealthy, educated, urban economic elite interacted with and profited handsomely from globalization, while the vast majority of impoverished, largely rural farmers, laborers, and miners did not. But while dependency theory helped illuminate some important structural causes of economic inequality, it had difficulty explaining why, in the 1980s and 1990s, "peripheral" countries in East Asia, such as South Korea, Singapore, and Malaysia, grew more rapidly than "central" countries in North America and Europe. South Korea and Singapore are now wealthy "developed" countries in their own right, and Malaysia is a rising middle-income country. These weaknesses of dependency theory were underlined when Fernando Henrique Cardoso, a leading dependency theorist in the 1970s, turned to liberal economic policies after being elected president of Brazil in the 1990s.

In the 1980s, analysts on both sides of the realist-liberal divide attempted to emulate microeconomics by developing formal, deductive theories. *Neorealists* such as Kenneth Waltz and *neoliberals* such as Robert Keohane developed structural models of states as rational actors constrained by the international system. Neorealists and neoliberals increased the simplicity and elegance of theory, but they did so at the cost of discarding much of the rich complexity of classical realism and liberalism. "By the end of the 1980s, the theoretical contest that might have been was reduced to relatively narrow disagreements within one state-centric rationalist model of international relations."[4]

More recently, a diverse group of theorists labeled *constructivists* has argued that realism and liberalism both fail to explain long-term change in

world politics adequately. For example, neither realists nor liberals predicted the end of the Cold War, nor could they explain it satisfactorily after the fact. Constructivists emphasize the importance of ideas and culture in shaping both the reality and the discourse of international politics. They stress the ultimate subjectivity of interests and their links to changing identities. There are many types of constructivists, but they all tend to agree that neither realism nor liberalism paints a true picture of the world and that we need not just explanations of how things are, but explanations of how they come to be. Constructivists have focused on important questions about identities, norms, culture, national interests, and international governance.[5] They believe that leaders and other people are motivated not only by material interests, but also by their sense of identity, morality, and what their society or culture considers appropriate. These norms change over time, partly through interaction with others. Constructivists agree that the international system is anarchic, but they argue that there is a spectrum of anarchies ranging from benign, peaceful, even friendly ones to bitterly hostile, competitive ones. The nature of anarchy at any given time depends upon prevailing norms, perceptions, and beliefs. As the prominent constructivist scholar Alexander Wendt puts it, anarchy is what states make of it. That is why Americans worry more about one North Korean nuclear weapon than 500 British nuclear weapons, and why war between France and Germany, which occurred twice in the last century, seems unthinkable today.[6]

Realists and liberals take for granted that states seek to promote their "national interest," but they have little to say about how those interests are shaped or change over time. Constructivists draw on different disciplines to examine the processes by which leaders, peoples, and cultures alter their preferences, shape their identities, and learn new behaviors. For example, both slavery in the nineteenth century and racial apartheid in South Africa in the twentieth century were accepted by most states once upon a time. But both later came to be widely condemned. Constructivists ask: Why the change? What role did ideas play? Will the practice of war go the same way someday? What about the concept of the sovereign state? The world is full of political entities such as tribes, nations, and nongovernmental organizations. Only in recent centuries has the sovereign state been dominant. Constructivists suggest that concepts such as "state" and "sovereignty" that shape our understandings of world politics and that animate our theories are, in fact, socially constructed; they are not given. Nor are they permanent. Even our understanding of "security" evolves. Traditional international relations theories used to understand security strictly in terms of preventing violence or war among states, but in today's world "human security"—a relatively new concept—seems at least as problematic. Moreover, a wider range of phenomena have become "securitized," that is, treated politically as dire threats warranting extraordinary efforts to address them. Scholars and politicians worry today not only about interstate war, but also about poverty, inequality, and economic or ecological catastrophe.

Feminist constructivists add that the language and imageries of war as a central instrument of world politics have been heavily influenced by gender. *Feminism*