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Introduction to International Relations

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Introduction

When we begin to study International Relations, we may ask questions: What do we study in international relations? What distinguishes the study of international relations from the study of history, law, economics, or political science? When did international relations emerge as a phenomenon and as an academic discipline? How have international relations changed over time? What does international relations contribute to the totality of human knowledge? And why has it become one of the most popular social sciences of the twenty-first century?¹

The first thing we will notice is that International Relations is a relatively “new” discipline, being just over 100 years old. However, many of the topics, questions, and problems it attempts to address are much older than that. International Relations scholars and researchers rely on ancient ideas about human nature, society, and power. Therefore, analyzing and interpreting International Relations requires not only knowledge of current events, but also an understanding of history and some familiarity with ideas about how the world works and why people, groups, and states behave the way they do².

1- Why do we study international relations?

Understanding the complexities and challenges of contemporary international relations requires drawing on the specializations and ideas of many theorists, thinkers, and even activists and political leaders. Therefore, the study of international relations always includes insights from various disciplines, including

¹ Michael Cox, **Introduction to international relations**, UK, University of London, 2016, p1.

² Ibid, p4.

political science, economics, history, and sociology, in addition to learning about the ideas and theses of thinkers across the ages³.

Some scholars argue that the main reason we study international relations is that the entire world's population is divided into separate political communities or independent states, which profoundly affects the way people live. At present, there are approximately 200 independent states, with very few exceptions. Every person on Earth not only lives in one of those states, but is also a citizen of one of those states, and rarely a citizen of more than one state (i.e., more than one nationality). Every man, woman, and child on Earth is therefore connected to a particular state and through that state to a system of states that affects their lives in various and influential ways of which they may not be fully aware⁴.

While states are independent and sovereign—at least legally—this does not mean they are isolated from one another. On the contrary, they are neighbors and influence one another, and therefore must find ways to coexist and interact with one another. In other words, states constitute an international system that is one of the fundamental axes of international relations.

Moreover, states are usually an integral part of international markets that affect the policies of their governments, the wealth, and well-being of their citizens. This requires states to enter into relations with each other to break the barrier of isolation between them. When states are isolated and separated from the international system - either by their government or by foreign powers - the peoples and societies of these states will suffer. There are many examples of this state of isolation and its results, such as what happened in Burma, Libya, North Korea, Iraq, Iran and Syria.

³ Julia Welland, (3/2/2020), why study international relations? BISA (British International Studies Association), <https://www.bisa.ac.uk/articles/why-study-international-relations>, (24/12/2020).

⁴ Robert Jackson, Georg Sørensen, **Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches**, UK: oxford university press, fifth edition, 2013, p4.

The system of international relations, like any other social system, may have advantages and disadvantages for the states and peoples comprising it. Therefore, one of the most important reasons and advantages of studying international relations is to understand the nature of these relations and their outcomes. Understanding international relations and recognizing their importance is, in fact, understanding the essence of life within states.

2- What topics does international relations study?

International Relations (IR) as a discipline deals with the relationships, activities, interactions and events that cross and transcend the borders of nations. The student studies and analyzes international political economy, global governance, the relationship between cultures, national and ethnic identities, foreign policy, development, the environment, international security, diplomacy, terrorism, media, social movements and more topics and interests on an international scale. It is a multidisciplinary field with international interests.

3- The relationship between IR and international events.

Just as thinking about international relations is influenced by other disciplines such as philosophy, history, law, sociology, and economics, it is also influenced by historical and contemporary developments in the real world. The two world wars, the Cold War between East and West, the emergence of close economic cooperation between Western countries, and the continuing development gap between North and South are examples of real-world events and problems that stimulated scholarly research in the twentieth century, and we can be sure that future events will spark new thinking about international relations.

4- The beginning of the academic study of international relations

The story of the academic study of international relations usually begins with an account of the First World War (1914–18), a war so terrible that many people thought it was the war to end all wars. The study of international relations arose from the belief that war was the most serious problem facing humanity and that something must be done to ensure that wars would never be resorted to in the future⁵. In this regard, David Davies (British Parliament) in a letter to Sir John Williams (Chancellor of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth) in which he donated £20,000 to establish the Wilson Chair in International Politics said: “The armistice has been signed, and statesmen will soon meet to undertake the task of concluding a covenant of peace which we all hope will herald a new world free from the threat of war... Old problems must be faced in a new spirit, prejudices and biases must be removed, understanding and tolerance need to be greatly developed. It is a very difficult task, and a large number of agencies will have to prepare for it. Our universities must be among them...”⁶.

There is almost a consensus among researchers that the academic study of international relations began in Britain in 1919, i.e. after the end of World War I. The aim was to understand the world in a scientific way in order to find the means and methods through which international wars could be prevented in the future. This science moved to the United States of America in the 1920s and witnessed the peak and various stages of its development there, and from there to the rest of the world, where international relations became an academic specialization inseparable from the departments of economics, politics, and law in all universities in the world.

⁵ Jills Teans and Lloyd Pettiford and Thomas Diez and Imad El-anis, **An Introduction to International Relations Theory: Perspectives and Themes**, England, Pearson Education Limited, 3 rd edition, 2010, p1.

⁶ Michael Cox, op.cit, p19.

Concept of international relations

1- Naming

The term "international" or "inter-national" first appeared in 1789 in two important texts: in the French Revolution Declaration of the Human Rights, which stated that "all sovereignty has its source in the Nation", and in the footnote to Jeremy Bentham's Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, which marked the end of relations between families and the beginning of relations between states⁷. Since then, thinkers have used the term "international" to describe the various relationships and interactions that occurred between states.

Today, we find many terms that include the description "international", such as International Relations (IR), International Affairs (IA), and International Studies (IS). In academic institutional terms (i.e. its location within the disciplines or scientific branches present in universities), it is either a field of political science, a multidisciplinary academic field, or an independent academic discipline that studies the social and human sciences in an international context.

International relations has often been considered a branch of political science but it is also a subject studied by historians (international or diplomatic history), economists (international economics), a field of legal studies (public international law) and a field of philosophy (international ethics). From this perspective it is clear that international relations is a multidisciplinary discipline with a single name: "International Relations" or IR for short⁸.

⁷ Heikki Patomäki, **After International Relations: Critical realism and the (re)construction of world politics**, London, Routledge, 2002, p2.

⁸ Robert Jackson, Georg Sørensen, op.cit, p4.

2- The emergence of international relations

It is not possible to accurately determine when the phenomenon of international relations began, as some researchers consider it to be as old as human existence itself. Since man organized himself into distinct human groups, relations arose between these groups and were a mixture of conflict and cooperation, even if their form differed from what we know today.

Some researchers trace their origin to the relations that existed between Greek cities in the fifth century BC and considered the wars that took place between Sparta and Athens, which Thucydides chronicled in his book "History of the Peloponnesian Wars", a prominent example of the phenomenon of conflict and war, which was the most important feature of relations between states throughout the ages. These researchers focused on the availability of the state element as a basis for establishing international relations without requiring that there be an independent international system within which these relations take place.

While the third category of researchers linked the emergence of international relations to the establishment of the modern international system following the emergence of the modern state (nation-state) in Europe in the seventeenth century, specifically after the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, which ended 30 years of religious wars between the European kingdoms. These researchers wondered about the possibility of talking about the existence of "international relations" in Western Europe during the Middle Ages? They answered in the negative because the Christian world in the Middle Ages was more like an empire than an international system. States existed, but they were not independent or sovereign in the modern sense of the word because there were no clearly defined geographical areas with drawn and agreed-upon borders. State authority was divided and divided and organized on a religious and political basis. In the Latin Christian world, the Pope and the Emperor were heads of two parallel and connected bodies, one religious and the other political. Kings and other rulers were subjects of these supreme authorities

and their laws. They were not completely independent, and often local rulers were somewhat free from the rule of kings. They were semi-independent, but not completely independent. The fact is that territorial political independence as we know it today did not exist in medieval Europe as there was no territory exclusively controlled and there was no clear conception of nationhood or national interest⁹.

So what did the political change from the Middle Ages to the modern era essentially involve? The short answer is the sovereign state. At the beginning of the modern era, European rulers freed themselves from the all-encompassing political and religious authority of Christianity and from their dependence on the military power of the barons and other local feudal leaders. Kings subjugated the barons, defied the Pope and the Emperor, and became defenders of their sovereignty against internal unrest and external threat. Their sovereignty later evolved into state sovereignty. The peasants began their long journey to escape their dependence on local feudal rulers and become direct subjects of the king. They eventually became "the people." In short, power was concentrated in a single entity, the king and his government. The king ruled an area with borders that were defended against external interference. The king thus became the supreme authority over all the people of the country and no longer had to work through intermediary authorities and governors. This represented the fundamental political transformation of the early modern era¹⁰.

After the religious wars that Europe experienced in the period between 1618-1648, the "Westphalian Settlement" came to legitimize the gathering of sovereign states and to be considered a victory for the state in controlling its internal affairs and its independence externally. This was the ambition of the princes [rulers] in general and especially the German princes, Protestants and Catholics in relation to the Empire (Holy Roman or Habsburg). The Treaty of Westphalia stipulated many

⁹ Ibid, p14.

¹⁰ Ibid, p16.

of the rules and political principles of the new community of states (the modern international system) . . . The settlement was concluded to provide a basic and comprehensive charter for all of Europe.

So, the historical end point of the Middle Ages and the starting point of the modern international system are usually identified - in a very general way - with the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) and the Peace of Westphalia that ended this war. As a conclusion, it can be said that the emergence of international relations in their modern sense was linked to the emergence of the modern state, and the latter was linked to the elimination of the duality of political power: temporal (the emperor) - religious (the church), and the state enjoying the status of sovereignty that allows it not to be subject to any foreign authority except its own authority.

3- Definition

One of the definitions states that international relations is the study of relations and interactions between states, including the activities and policies of national governments, international governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, etc. This definition appears to be too general and does not precisely define what is meant by international relations. Consequently, it does not enjoy scholarly consensus. Furthermore, the nature of international relations itself and the subjectivities of researchers and thinkers prevent a comprehensive, exhaustive, and agreed-upon definition from being available. This forces us to always resort to a set of definitions to define the aspects, components, and nature of international relations.

Issam Abdel Shafi identifies six basic trends in defining international relations:¹¹

¹¹ عصام عبد الشافي، مفهوم العلاقات الدولية: إشكاليات التعريف. المعهد المصري للدراسات السياسية والإستراتيجية، 2016، ص.ص

- 1- International Relations as "relations between states", and is interested in researching the types of states and the patterns of relations that exist between them and the role of each of the groups and individuals in making policy and taking decisions in these states.
- 2- International Relations as "relations between nations", that is, between governments or between groups and individuals belonging to different nations that raise the issue of state power. This definition ignores some relations that do not necessarily raise the issue of state power, as while international trade includes that dimension, it does not arise in another issue such as postal communications, for example.
- 3- sees international relations as "relations between groups with power", and this definition is characterized by its broad scope to the point that it becomes necessary to distinguish between the patterns of political, economic and cultural relations... and to more precisely define what is meant by the group with power.
- 4- international relations as "transnational relations", and this definition does not limit the subject of international relations to official relations between states, and thus it indicates the broad borders and scope of the field of study of international relations, while some see the need to focus on the relations of power between political units in the world.
- 5- international relations as "the relations between all groups that concern the international community, but with an emphasis on the relations between groups that have real weight in influencing this community." This raises the difficulty of defining what is meant by the international community and the hierarchical analysis (descending order) of the communities that make it up.
- 6- international relations as "the relations between the basic groups into which the world is divided, especially those capable of independent action."

It can be said that the definition of international relations revolves around two main axes: the types of relations, their scope and nature, and the basic units between which these relations fall. This raises the question about the basic units in international relations studies, the levels of analysis of the international phenomenon, and the scope of the field of international relations studies. Does it include all types of relations between all international units?

For his part, Anwar Mohamed Faraj classified the definitions used in the field as follows¹²:

- 1- Definitions that focus on the actors of international relations:** The question that arises is: Are international relations limited to relations between states or do they extend to include relations between citizens of these states? Some researchers have focused on the individual as a unit of analysis. For example, Nicholas Spykman defined international relations as "relations between individuals belonging to different states, and international behavior is the social behavior of individuals or groups that target or are affected by the presence of the behavior of individuals or groups belonging to other states." While a large number of thinkers have focused on the state as a unit of analysis, such as Hans Morgenthau, Raymond Aron, Stanley Hoffman, Quincy Wright, and others. Aron, for example, believes that international relations are "relations between independent political units in the world, and that the specificity of these relations stems from the fact that they deal with relations between political units, each of which claims that it is right and that it has the sole say in the decision to resort to war or not." The third section of researchers focused on the international system as a unit of analysis. Roberto Mesa defines international relations as "the science that studies the dynamic and static international society," that is, studying the international society as

¹² أنور محمد فرج، نظرية الواقعية في العلاقات الدولية: دراسة نقدية مقارنة في ضوء النظريات المعاصرة (السليمانية: مركز كردستان للدراسات الإستراتيجية، 2007)، ص.ص 47-58.

an independent unit on the one hand and studying the dynamic interactions that occur within it on the other hand. Morton Kaplan made the international system as a whole the focus of analysis in the study of international relations, and Kenneth Waltz made the concept of “international anarchy” the basic feature of the so-called field of international politics, as did Immanuel Wallerstein, who set out to define and specify international relations from the concept of “world systems.”

2- Definitions that focus on the nature of international relations: The question that arises here is related to the fields of international relations: Are they limited to political relations or do they include other relations such as economic, commercial, cultural relations, etc.? The first trend focuses on political relations as a subject of international relations, where we find, for example, Muhammad Sami Abdul Hamid defining them as “any relationship of a political nature or that is likely to cause political repercussions and effects that extend beyond the territorial borders of a single state.” While the second trend focuses on a comprehensive definition of all dimensions or fields of international relations, Antonio Troyol, for example, defines them as “those human relations of an international nature,” while Boutros Ghali says, “We prefer not to describe international relations as political, because if the political aspect is predominant in them, then some other elements, such as cultural, economic, and social, have an impact no less than political ones.”

3- Definitions that focus on the purpose of studying international relations: we find two types of definitions: The first type focuses on the theoretical objectives of the study¹³, such as the definition provided by Walter Sharp and Grayson Kirk in the 1940s when they claimed that the mission of

¹³ It should be noted that the definitions presented in this element do not speak directly about international relations as a phenomenon or as a subject of study, but rather about the science that studies this phenomenon. The difference between them is clear.

international relations (as a science) "is limited to researching and diagnosing the main factors driving foreign policy to be studied in an organized manner." Mohamed Taha Badawi, for his part, provided a definition of the (science) of international relations as "the science that deals with the reality of international relations and their induction through observation, experimentation or comparison for the purpose of explanation and prediction." In the same vein, John Burton goes so far as to say that it is "a science concerned with observation, analysis and theorizing for the purpose of explanation and prediction." The second type of definition focuses on the practical objectives of the study, and the subject of international peace has received great attention in this regard, as George Shakharnazarov, for example, believes that the issue of maintaining international peace under conditions of growing social revolution is one of the most important issues facing humanity, so achieving peace remains the supreme goal of international relations.

4- Change and Constancy (Continuity) in international relations

Are international relations dynamic or static? International relations reflect aspects of both change and continuity. By change we mean the transformation of key structures and processes that have a major impact on the nature of world politics. When there is significant and rapid change, there are discontinuities between past and present, with features of the present being unrecognizable in the past. For example, the shift from the medieval European system of rights, privileges, and property to a world of sovereign states with exclusive legal authority over internal affairs was a major shift in world politics, as was the shift in security and military strategy that resulted from the introduction of nuclear weapons after World War II. More recently, the end of the Cold War has produced a dramatically different world, with the United States emerging as the world's sole superpower and

Russia, China, and the countries of Eastern Europe joining the global economic system. Globalization has linked the fates of people around the world as never before, and suicide bombings have created unprecedented security problems. None of these developments were anticipated and therefore little was planned to deal with them¹⁴.

Aspects of Constancy or Continuity refer to the gradual evolution of structures or processes so that the present retains key features of the past. Although world politics is constantly changing, with new events and new actors emerging all the time, there is much to be learned from the past experiences of states and other actors. For example, Terrorism is not new, although some features of contemporary Terrorism are. In fact, there are many events, no matter how unexpected, that do not come out of nowhere. Much that seems new has its roots in the past. Knowing history makes the present more understandable, helps us plan for the future, and allows us to avoid making the same mistakes again. Although some aspects of each event are unique, history provides important parallels and vital experience¹⁵.

¹⁴ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, **Introduction to Global Politics**, (London and New York, Routledge, 2008), p6.

¹⁵ Ibid, p6.

International relations Science and its relationship with other Sciences

1- The concept of Science and the Scientific extent of International Relations

The concept of science is closely linked to the concept of the scientific method, as science is known by its method, not its subject¹⁶. On the one hand, it refers to the concepts, propositions, laws, and theories that reflect the necessary and essential connections that are (relatively) fixed in and/or between the different elements of reality (nature, society, thought); and on the other hand, it refers to the set of methodological rules that thought has followed in arriving at this result (scientific knowledge). Just as there is a definite difference between the subject of science and its method, they are at the same time two complementary aspects, as scientific issues can only be studied by means of the scientific method, and the rules of the scientific method can only be used and applied to scientific issues¹⁷.

Some of the rules or foundations on which the concept of science is based can be extracted from the definition provided by the Webster Dictionary of science as "the systematic knowledge that arises from observation, study, and experimentation, and is carried out for the purpose of determining the nature, foundations, and origins of what is being studied." Science or scientific knowledge requires going through the processes of observation and experimentation, and it is also a purposeful activity that searches for the facts and essence of things. Truth is the goal of science, or as Karl Popper said, "Science is the search for truth"¹⁸.

As for the "science of international relations," Mohamed Taha Badawi defines it as "the science that deals with the reality of international relations and their

¹⁶ عصام سليمان، مدخل إلى علم السياسة (بيروت: دار النضال للطباعة والنشر والتوزيع، ط2، 1989)، ص122.

¹⁷ محمد أحمد الزعيبي، "إشكالات البحث العلمي للظواهر الاجتماعية".

http://www.al-moharer.net/moh249/m_zoobi249.htm

¹⁸ كارل بوبر، بحثا عن عالم أفضل، ترجمة: أحمد مستجير، (القاهرة: مكتبة الأسرة، 1999)، ص59.

induction through observation, experimentation, or comparison for the purpose of explanation and prediction.” Thus, the goal of the science of international relations is limited to the objective analysis of these relations and what it ends up with in terms of theorizing the events of international reality objectively, as it is based on concrete reality, and this is in contrast to philosophical theories that are based on axioms or postulates that do not achieve experimental verification¹⁹.

Considering the history of international relations as a science, it has known two main stages: the first stage before 1919, when the topics of international relations were scattered and dispersed among a number of specializations such as political science, (international) economics, (international) law, and (diplomatic) history. The study of international relations during this period did not receive much attention and was not subject to the rules of scientific study as in other scientific branches. After 1919, the date of the end of World War I, the first specialized chair (department) in the study of international relations was established at the University of Aberystwyth in Wales, Britain. The goal was to study international relations in a scientific manner so that the outbreak of world wars in the future could be avoided. Since then, international relations - with the passage of time and the efforts made by scholars - has had its own topics, methods, and a set of concepts, theories, and ideas ... that researchers and students use in studying everything related to international relations. In this regard, it is worth noting the great efforts made by realist thinkers to transfer the specialization or field of international relations to the ranks of disciplined sciences bound by the rules of scientific (experimental) methods.

2- International relations as a science

There is no agreement among researchers and specialists on the issue of the independence of international relations as a science. Some of them see its

¹⁹ محمد طه بدوي، مدخل إلى علم العلاقات الدولية، دار النهضة العربية للطباعة والنشر، بيروت، 1972، ص 73.

independence because it meets the conditions and requirements for that, while others deny such independence and attach international relations to existing sciences such as political science, economics, and even sociology.

The first trend is based on a set of criteria that are supposed to be available in any field of knowledge that claims independence from other branches of the social sciences, and they are as follows:²⁰

- The establishment of a specific field of knowledge is linked to the development of theory in it, i.e. the necessity of having a scientific practice and theoretical processes through which a theory or a set of theories can be reached, through which the phenomena belonging to the field can be analyzed and understood.
- The existence of research methods and approaches that can be adopted in study and research, as any independent scientific field tries to invent new research methods of its own or develop what exists.
- The necessity of defining and clarifying the meanings of concepts and terms used in the field.

Airy Ransome identified the specifications that must be available in international relations as an independent field of study in:²¹

- The existence of a distinct and different subject of study from others.
- The existence of generally agreed upon abstract models and ideas.
- The existence of semi-private concepts for analyzing international behavior.
- The existence of a specialized academic language.
- The existence of precisely defined definitions and standard analytical methods that contribute to repeating the test and study experiment within the same standards used in the basic analysis.

²⁰ سعد حقي توفيق، مبادئ العلاقات الدولية (الأردن: دار وائل للنشر والتوزيع، ط 3، 2006)، ص ص 31-32.

²¹ محمد نصر عارف، إستراتيجية السياسة المقارنة: النموذج المعرفي، النظرية، المنهج (بيروت: المؤسسة الجامعية للدراسات والنشر والتوزيع، ط 1، 2002)، ص 80.

- Finally, the existence of a central system for classifying, evaluating, and displaying the status of the research and its results.

It seems that finding a field of knowledge in the social sciences that responds to some of what Ransom stipulated is extremely difficult. For example, we find that disagreement over description, definition, and specification is the basic characteristic of all branches of the social sciences without exception. The nature of complex social phenomena, in addition to the subjectivity and bias of researchers, is what makes this disagreement inevitable.

Saad Haqi Tawfiq believes that what encourages the independence of international relations science is represented by three factors, which are:²²

- Contemporary studies in international relations tend to search for causality more than searching for legal factors.
- There is an attraction and interest in the idea of "behavioral social sciences", i.e. moving towards the idea of specialization and independence in studying social phenomena.
- The trend of other fields of knowledge towards independence was a motive for dozens of researchers and scholars to tend towards independence in the field of international relations.

In general, we can say that three basic pillars are necessary for the independence of a particular field of knowledge to be recognized, namely:

- The existence of a group of phenomena that the field studies independently from others, or at least studies a specific topic from the topics circulating in other fields of knowledge, but from a different and previously untouched angle (based on the fact that the social phenomenon is a whole with multiple aspects and dimensions).
- The existence of a method or a group of methods characterized by scientificity that can be used in research and analysis, and it is not necessary

²² سعد حقي توفيق، مرجع سابق، ص 32-33.

for them to be original or specific only to the field or produced by it, as all social sciences, for example, adopt the scientific/positivist method (to varying degrees) and try to benefit methodologically from what is developed in the natural and physical sciences.

- The existence of cognitive and scientific production of theories, concepts, terminology, etc., that reflects the efforts made and contributes to the cognitive development of the field itself.

If we return to these conditions, the field of international relations can be considered an independent scientific field, as it isolates a field of social phenomena that it independently studies, foremost among which is the phenomenon of the absence of authority at the international level. According to Stanley Hoffman, the study of international relations revolves around the phenomenon of "absence of authority" in the international society, and thus he considers it a distinct science in its own right²³. It uses scientific methods in research and analysis that vary between traditional methods that are based on reaching theoretical generalizations through the extensive use of history, or behavioral methods that start in building their theories from the use of quantitative methods and statistical techniques (through traditional methods, what are called general or major theories in international relations were built, such as realism, for example, and through behavioral methods, specialized or partial theories were reached in the sixties and seventies, such as theories of decision-making, foreign policy analysis, etc.). As for the cognitive and theoretical production, it can be said that the field is full of a group of competing theories that provide important insights into understanding and analyzing international politics, and even provide practitioners in the practical reality of international relations with guidelines and directives upon which many of the positions and behaviors of states were built, and on the basis of which international organizations and bodies were established, etc.

²³ مبروك غضبان، المدخل للعلاقات الدولية (الجزائر: دار العلوم للنشر والتوزيع، 2007)، ص 37.

The second trend opposes the idea of the independence of international relations as a distinct field of study. Morton Kaplan denies the existence of an independent field of international relations because there is no core common field that can be enriched as is the case with political science. Therefore, for him, international relations is considered part of political science²⁴. George Kennan goes further than Kaplan when he considers that international relations is not a science because it studies the behavior of governments, which in turn are also the subject of human behavior within the political framework of his environment²⁵. Therefore, it is not possible to talk about the possibility of a scientific study of this human behavior.

Those who deny the independence of the field disagree about its inclusion in existing scientific branches. A large number of them go to link it to political science²⁶, as R. Platig, for example, says: "International relations are nothing but an appendix to political science." The UNESCO meeting in 1952, held in the English city of Cambridge, agreed to consider the subject of international relations as part of the subject of political science, based on the following arguments:²⁷

- Both international relations and political science share one goal, which is the study of power and the group.
- The research methods and foundations of study in each are the same.
- Political science is concerned with the study of the state, and international relations focus on the relations between states.
- The study of foreign policy is considered part of the study of international relations and at the same time is one of the subjects of public policy science.

²⁴ سعد حتمي توفيق، مرجع سابق، ص33.

²⁵ المرجع نفسه، ص34.

²⁶ أنور محمد فرج، مرجع سابق، ص76.

²⁷ مبروك غضبان، مرجع سابق، ص34.

Anwar Mohamed Faraj points out that the connection between international relations and political science can be traced back to the period of the brilliance of the realist school, where the term international relations expressed those that occur between states only or are the interactions of the foreign policies of governments. Many Anglo-Saxon researchers used the term "international politics" instead of "international relations" to express this meaning²⁸.

There are researchers and writers - especially Europeans - who consider international relations a branch of sociology, headed by Schwarzenberger, who defined "international relations" as a branch of sociology that studies international society²⁹. Marcel Merle, for his part, also emphasized the social nature of the study of international relations, asking: "We cannot really understand why a science that deals with social issues should stop at the borders of states, and forbid itself from crossing those borders in an attempt to understand the social relations that take place on a universal level"³⁰. So these people consider that the essence of international relations is international society, and therefore it requires a sociological approach that defines its nature as a scientific subject.

Saad Haqi Tawfiq attributes the reason for denying the existence of an independent field of international relations to the involvement of many branches of social sciences - each to a certain extent - in the study of international affairs. Each of them focuses on studying a specific aspect of it, which makes the study of international relations fragmented among them, and this is what hinders the establishment of an independent field for it³¹. A quick look at the specializations of the most prominent writers and thinkers who left clear imprints in the field of

²⁸ أنور محمد فرج، مرجع سابق، ص 76.

²⁹ المرجع نفسه، ص 77.

³⁰ المرجع نفسه، ص 78.

³¹ سعد حقي توفيق، مرجع سابق، ص 35.

studying international relations reveals that they are distributed among the basic branches of social sciences such as political science, sociology, and economics.

This debate about the independence or dependency of international relations should not distract us from the reality of the efforts made by specialists in the field of international relations, their achievements in this field, and the research dynamism that characterizes it (the successive major discussions as evidence of the ambition of a field of knowledge that seeks to acquire the status of mature sciences, in Kuhn's expression), in comparison with the period of time it took to do so, the extreme complexity that characterizes its phenomena, and the degree of division and dispersion it suffers from, especially in terms of the methodology that must be followed in achieving scientificity and independence.

3- International Relations and other sciences

International relations is taught at many universities as part of political science courses. However, political scientists' attempts to impose a monopoly on the subject are theoretically and practically impossible. A serious student of international relations must possess some knowledge of international history, law, economics, foreign policy, and international politics.

3-1- International Relations and Diplomatic History

Diplomatic history studies the history of international relations between states, focusing on detailed past events to understand their context and impact. It relies heavily on archival documents to construct its narratives, and is mostly concerned with the historical study of a single state's foreign behavior. International relations, on the other hand, is more concerned with current events and how they can be analyzed and interpreted through various prevailing theoretical concepts and approaches, focusing on the various relationships existing between two or more states.

3-2- International Relations and Foreign Policy

If the term "international relations" is a broad and comprehensive term that includes all international structures and behaviors, interactions and events... that have occurred or are occurring on an international or global scale, then "foreign policy" has a more specific meaning, as it refers to the sum of goals, decisions, activities and procedures ... taken by a country towards other countries or towards various international organizations, or in other words towards its external environment. These procedures vary according to the political and economic agenda of the country in question. The differences between them can be mentioned as follows:

- While international relations seek to explain the entirety of relations between countries, foreign policy is what determines relations between countries.

- International relations provide many theoretical frameworks for analyzing and understanding foreign policy.

- The term "international relations" is neutral (international relations are neither good nor bad, they just exist and need to be analyzed), while foreign policy is never neutral, it is the opposite, as it is the way in which countries seek to achieve their goals and interests in their international environment.

- Foreign policy is one of the main areas of interest to international relations.

3-3- International Relations and International Law

International law is the set of rules that are generally accepted as binding in relations between states. It is a framework for the practice of stable and organized international relations. The concept of international law intersects to a large extent with the concept of international relations, so that some courses are called "International Relations Law", but there are differences between them, which are:

- International relations include all types of relations between states. They can be political, economic, geographical, strategic, legal, etc., and international law is

considered one of the aspects of international relations and has been developed within them.

- International law is the field of law that governs and regulates a large part of relations between states. It is the framework within which all relations of a peaceful nature (political, economic, cultural, sports, etc.) take place, and even relations of a conflictual nature, including war, are regulated by international law.

3-4- International Relations and International Political Economy

Economic activities and trade exchanges are one of the main areas of relations between countries and greatly affect various other areas of relations. International political economy is a branch of economics that studies the interaction and mutual influence between economics and politics on the international scene. This can be observed by knowing and tracing the impact that both liberalism and Marxism have had as economic and political philosophies - at the same time - on the entirety of international relations and the prevailing ideas, concepts and theories about them.

Levels of Analysis in International Relations

Levels of analysis are a tool that simplifies the process of understanding, analyzing and explaining what is happening in world politics by classifying the main factors in world politics at the level of the entire international/global system or some of its component parts (individual, state)³².

The classification presented by Kenneth Waltz is based on three different sources of explanations for the outbreak of wars. If we focus on the level of the international system, the explanation is based on the characteristics of that system (such as the distribution of "power") or international and regional organizations and their relative strengths and weaknesses. If we focus on the level of the state or domestic factors, the explanation is derived from the characteristics of the state such as the type of government (e.g., democratic or authoritarian), the type of economic system (e.g., capitalist or socialist), the interest of groups within the country and/or the national interest. If we focus on the individual level, the personality, perceptions, choices and activities of individual decision-makers and individual participants provide the explanation³³.

There is another classification by Barry Buzan in which he added two levels of analysis within the framework of the previous classification, as he added the level of bureaucratic analysis that lies between the level of individual analysis and the level of state, and the level of regional analysis that lies between the levels of state and international system. However, the tripartite classification is the common and followed in most international relations research and studies.

³² Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, op.cit, p5.

³³ Karen A. Mingst and Heather Elko Mckibben and Ivan M. Arreguín- Tof, **Essentials of International Relations**, 8th edition, Canada, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 2019, p109.

1- Individual Level

At the individual level of analysis, researchers look at characteristics of individuals such as personality traits, decision-making processes, and beliefs. For example, research focusing on individuals might ask whether leaders make rational decisions, how their personal weaknesses affect policy, whether they allow their biases to influence their decisions and attitudes, and whether humans are generally programmed to fight each other. Such questions reflect the individual level of analysis.

Many theorists have assumed that leaders often act rationally. This may be a (and some would argue a necessary) simplification of reality on the part of theorists. However, rationality is an assumption that can only be tested by looking at actual decision-makers within nations. The assumption of rationality means that leaders choose the best alternatives in policy making based on a comparison of costs and benefits, and thus they appeal to expected utility theory and mathematical modeling. However, this assumption is questionable because leaders have limited time and information. At best, decision makers with limited time choose the best of all available or known alternatives, a procedure called “satisfaction” that results in what is called “bounded rationality.” At worst, decision makers are driven by neuroses, coercion, emotions, and personal whims that seem far from rationality and sometimes from reality³⁴.

2- State Level

At the State-level analysis, researchers focus on governments, decision-making groups, or agencies that contribute to the foreign policymaking of states and on the societies on whose behalf these groups or agencies act. Examples of such actors include states such as the United States and agencies such as the U.S. Department of

³⁴ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, *op.cit*, p10.

State. Key factors studied at this level include political systems, ideology, wealth, military power, territory, population, social identities such as religion and ethnicity, and government organization.

Typical questions raised at this level of analysis include whether democratic states are more peaceful than non-democratic states, whether strong states behave differently than weak states, whether ethnic or religious diversity leads to greater civil conflict, and whether leaders enter into conflicts with other states in order to overcome domestic unpopularity.

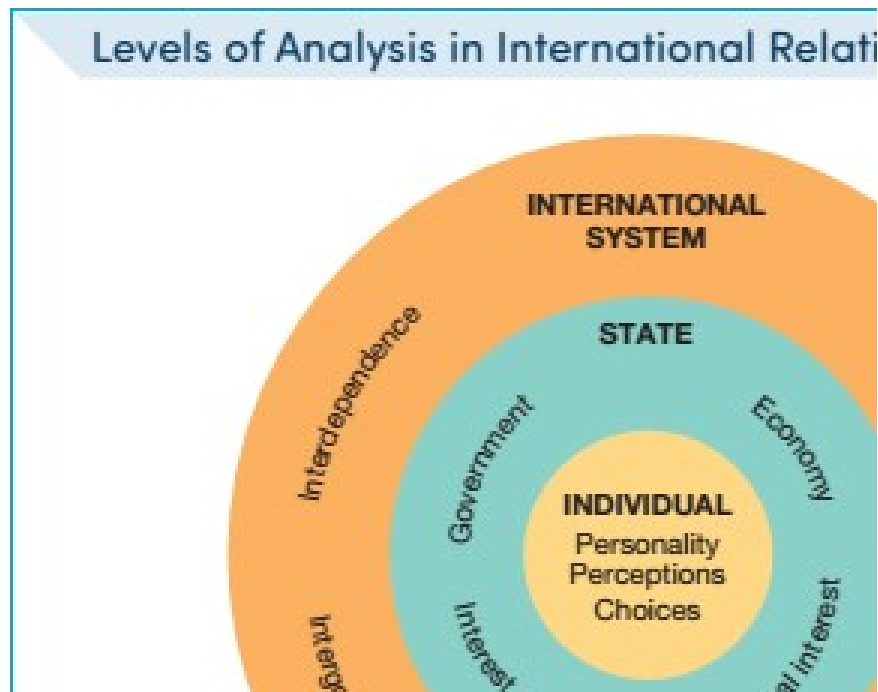
States and other actors may also be parts of larger groups such as alliances or regions that can be considered to constitute a separate level of analysis. During the Cold War, for example, observers spoke of the "Free World" or First World consisting of the United States and its allies, the Soviet Bloc or Second World including the Soviet Union and its allies, and the Non-Aligned Bloc or Third Bloc. The world included countries such as India that were not members of the other blocs. Depending on the purpose of the researcher or policy maker, countries may be classified by geography (Asian, European, Middle Eastern, African, etc.), by religion (Muslim, Christian, Hindu, etc.), or by ideology. Theorists create such classifications because they want to point out selected similarities and differences between countries.

3- International (Global) Level

At the International level of analysis, researchers focus on the structure and distribution of power, wealth, and other key features of the world as a whole. The International level is the ultimate "whole" in which actors and individuals are "parts." Researchers who use this level of analysis are interested in patterns of events and behavior around the world. They believe that other levels, while useful, cannot tell the whole story of what is happening in world politics, because these levels cannot account for so-called emergent properties, or features of world politics that emerge only because of the interactions of actors and/or individuals. As a simple example,

consider the Cold War. Many observers expected it to end in World War III, because Washington and Moscow feared and mistrusted each other, had different ideologies and political systems, and were heavily armed (all state-level features that lead to war). However, despite numerous conflicts between them, the two superpowers never resorted to war (although they came close on several occasions). Here, many scholars argue that peace between them was an emergent feature of the interaction between two nuclear-armed states. Peace was not the result of the policies or intentions of the great powers (state-level interpretation) but rather the product of the possibility of retaliation and nuclear annihilation promised by nuclear weapons (a feature of the international system). The logic of nuclear weapons thus imposes the same constraints on all states regardless of their ideologies, political systems, or weapons. Thus, to the surprise of observers, it was the very weapons that were feared to lead to the outbreak of World War III that prevented it from happening.

Below is a figure that summarizes the levels of analysis in international relations.



Source : Karen A. Mingst and Heather Elko Mckibben and Ivan M. Arreguín- Tof, **Essentials of International Relations**, 8th edition, Canada, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 2019, p109.

Factors affecting international relations

1- Geographical factor

A country's geographical location, climate, and size play a major role in determining the orientations and positions of its foreign policy in dealing with other countries. Indeed, there are many international relations scholars - who have geographical backgrounds and formations - who have claimed that the geographies of countries decisively determine the foreign policies of countries, and thus the form and nature of international relations in general. For example, geographical factors were decisive in the course of British history and determined and outlined the basic principles of British policy in its international relations. If a country has a good geographical location, a diverse climate, and is rich in food and raw materials, this allows it to pursue an independent foreign policy.

If a country is in a “strategic” geographical location with natural barriers such as seas, mountains, terrain, deserts, etc., it is usually not vulnerable to foreign invasion and thus allows it to pursue an independent foreign policy in dealing with other countries. Conversely, if countries lack all of the above geographical advantages, they cannot pursue their own independent foreign policy and have to bear the consequences of what is dictated to them by other countries. Thus, it becomes clear that countries with unfavorable geographical locations cannot maintain their isolation from events occurring in their neighboring countries. A typical example of a country with a strategic location is Great Britain, which is surrounded by seas on all sides, and the English Channel is considered the most effective barrier against foreign invasion of the British Isles due to the fact that Great Britain is still safe and still a great power. At present, it can be considered that the location and geographical features of the United States of America have greatly contributed to its being the undisputed superpower in the world.

Although globalization and the great development in technology and means of communication have reduced the importance and influence of geography in international relations, they have not completely eliminated it. Geography still plays a prominent role in many international issues and problems, such as border disputes, sea lanes and straits, oil and energy materials, the environment, water resources, etc.

2- Demographic factor

The demographic factor represented by the size of the population and the racial and ethnic composition is one of the factors influencing international relations in ancient and modern times, as a state becomes strong if it has a large population and effective industrial production. The Soviet Union and the United States of America were treated during the Cold War period as great powers because of their large population and industrial development. In contrast to these two countries, other countries, despite their large populations, did not become great powers because they did not advance industrially enough to meet the needs of their populations. An example here can be given by China and India during the same period, i.e. during the Cold War period. So it can be said that the size of the population combined with the size and quality of industrial production determines the form and nature of the foreign policies pursued by countries and also determines the status and position of countries in the international system and ultimately the form and nature of international relations as a whole.

The second demographic factor is the ethnic and racial composition of the state, as states that have one ethnicity or nationality are stronger and more cohesive internally, and therefore have a degree of freedom to pursue a strong foreign policy. However, states that have different ethnicities or nationalities face many internal problems, not the least of which is the risk of internal division and disintegration, which negatively affects their foreign policy and relations with other states. This can be illustrated by the case of the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the late

nineties and the division of Pakistan into two states, Pakistan and Bangladesh. However, ethnic and racial pluralism does not necessarily lead to the risk of internal division and disintegration if this problem is solved according to rules that guarantee the rights of all these ethnicities and nationalities, such as India, which succeeded in solving this problem constitutionally.

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3- The economic factor

Economic factors play a major role in influencing the relations between countries. The main elements of economic factors that determine the status of a country in relation to other countries are: (1) Self-sufficiency, (2) The ability to provide food, clothing and shelter for the population. Since the distribution of wealth among countries is uneven, no country can claim to be completely economically self-sufficient. A country may be agricultural and rich in raw materials and food only, but lack mineral resources such as coal, iron, etc., and thus these countries cannot advance industrially. A country may be rich in mineral resources that enable it to establish huge production centers, and thus may be industrially

advanced countries. There is a third category of countries that can be classified as balanced countries that are able to produce enough food for their population and establish industries from the resources available within their territories, such as the United States of America. But at present, there is no country that can achieve complete self-sufficiency or does not depend on other countries to secure some of its needs, no matter how little or much.

While huge supplies of raw materials and natural resources are necessary for a country to become a great power, a large population is also necessary to achieve greater industrial and agricultural production as well as to build a strong army. The great development of China is an example of this point which has become one of the five great powers of the world and has taken its seat in the United Nations Security Council. Population alone cannot make a country strong if it continues to increase day by day without a corresponding increase in production. The case of India - previously - is a pioneer in this point. If a country does not control the increase in its population corresponding to the increase in its production, it must look for some other regions to accommodate its increasing expansionist policy. With this motive, Japan invaded Manchuria, China occupied Tibet for a similar ambition, and Germany clashed with the Allied Powers for the same motive.

Today, economic globalization (with its various mechanisms and engines, especially multinational corporations, the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund) is the artery of international relations. The global economy has become highly globalized and interdependent, and trade exchanges between countries have become so dense and interdependent that it is impossible for any economy in the world to remain isolated from it. Many researchers and scholars even argue that the economy is the primary driver and determinant of everything that happens in global politics.

4- Strategic (military) Factor

Military power plays the most important role in international relations. Building military power is necessary for every country to maintain its national security and protect its interests. Building power is primarily based on the possession of weapons, as it is essential for every country and is used to measure its status, strength, and ability to assert itself as an effective and influential player in international relations.

This factor is closely linked to the ability and economic status of the state. A rich state with a strong economy and huge material and human potential can outperform other states in possessing and developing weapons. This can be illustrated by the arms race between the United States and the (former) Soviet Union during the Cold War. Without a strong and solid economic and industrial base, these two states would not have been able to develop and manufacture modern and high-tech weapons such as missiles, nuclear bombs, submarines, aircraft, etc. The economy is the real pillar of military power.

Military power needs political support to gain legitimacy for its use, especially in convincing the people, because military power drains a lot of effort and expenses that may negatively affect the standard of living of the people. Therefore, it must gain support, satisfaction and endorsement at the official and popular levels in the country.

One of the important elements of military power that may play influential roles in international relations is the number (size) of armed forces maintained by the state, as the large number of the army in a state gives it power over a state with a small army and makes it feared by its opponents and enemies. Military power, with all its human and material elements, has played and continues to play a major role in changing the form of relations between the countries of the world and imposing new concepts and situations that were not known before. An example of this in our contemporary history is the military power of the United States, which

has come to be used in many major roles in various parts of the world, such as combating terrorism and getting rid of dictatorial regimes, as happened in its wars with the Taliban in Afghanistan and Iraq, and its threat to use military force against countries that may possess nuclear weapons or that may threaten international security and peace, such as Korea and Iran. This intervention by the United States in the affairs of countries and peoples is one of the evidences of its military power. Here we recall the words of US President Kennedy from the deck of the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk: "Control of the seas means security and peace and can mean victory." This is what prompted the United States to realize that defending its oil interests in the region can only be achieved by controlling the Mediterranean Sea. This situation is similar to that of the English, who realized at some point that it was in their interest and to ensure the stability of their navigation to control the Suez Canal³⁵.

³⁵ هائل عبد المولى طشطوش، مقدمة في العلاقات الدولية، دار الكندي للنشر والتوزيع، الأردن، 2010، ص.ص 30-32.

International relations actors

Analyzing international relations requires to think carefully about who and what constitutes an actor in the international system or society? International relations scholars have thought a lot about this issue, with some of them arguing in favor of the state as a primary actor in international relations as the basic form of political society on this planet, while others rejected this statist approach that confines the parties and actors of international relations only to the state and argued that the development and complexity of international society has produced many other non-state actors that play important roles on the international scene, and a third party of them went to the point that globalization has radically changed the environment and nature of international relations, especially after 1989, which forces us to think about the world from the perspective of non-state actors³⁶.

The study of international relations today forces us to ask what constitutes our field of study? That is, what actors, issues and processes do we consider important? The study of contemporary international relations has become more difficult because there is no consensus on these matters. A narrow definition of international relations, which is concerned with states (countries) and how they interact, has the advantage of clearly defining the subject of research and limiting the interest in the international system, by focusing on states as the central actors and limiting the study to how states manage their relations with “others” through foreign policy, diplomacy and war, for example³⁷.

Some scholars prefer to study the world by dividing it geographically into clearly defined ‘bounded spaces’ such as nation-states and regions (e.g. Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Eastern Europe). Others argue that it is increasingly difficult to justify such clear distinctions between the international, the regional and the

³⁶ Michael Cox, op.cit, p155.

³⁷ Jills Teans and Lloyd Pettiford and Thomas Diez and Imad El-anis, op.cit, p9.

national and prefer to use the more flexible terms such as world politics to describe their field of study. Still another way of approaching the subject is to focus on 'issues' such as health, water, population, nuclear proliferation, trade and so on. There are also a number of distinct sub-fields of international relations such as peace studies, international political economy, diplomatic history or security studies. As a result, the range of issues, interests, and research directions that can be integrated into this field of study becomes very broad.

However, this definition will not satisfy most scholars of international relations today, and it will effectively exclude many issues and areas in which new approaches and research agendas have generated new insights. A very broad definition of the subject may be that the field of international relations is concerned with the human condition on a global scale. This definition is relatively comprehensive and demonstrates the value of international relations as the only field of social science that is concerned with the peoples of the world as a whole, but it also largely blurs the boundaries between the discipline of international relations and other fields of the social sciences and humanities such as politics, sociology, economics, history, law, and geography. International relations tends to be to some extent inter- (or at least inter-)disciplinary, including elements of geography, economics, history, and politics in particular.

1- States

States are considered the main and most important actor at the level of international relations. It is impossible to imagine international relations without states. Therefore, we will devote an important space of explanation and detail to the State in the following element related to the basic concepts in international relations.

2- International Organizations

International organizations include both intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). IGOs have official representatives appointed by member states, while NGOs consist of individuals or private institutions.

According to the British political scientist Peter Willetts, "many NGOs . . . have members in the millions, while the population of 37 countries in the United Nations is less than one million people"³⁸. This is evidence of their great importance in world politics.

Intergovernmental organizations depend on states for their creation, management, and survival, which has led realists to believe that IGOs can be no more than tools of powerful states and can only exist as long as those states wish them to. Liberals, by contrast, believe that IGOs can become larger than the sum of their members and therefore can and should act independently of states³⁹.

We can imagine three types of IGOs: **the first** fits the realist model and does no more than the leading member states ask of them. **The second** are organizations that can cooperate with states to achieve collective goals that are difficult for states to address and coordinate alone, such as preventing the spread of epidemic diseases and environmental hazards such as pollution, for example. In cases of conflict, semi-autonomous intergovernmental organizations may mediate in arbitration of disputes, suggest ways to reach an agreement, provide forums for diplomats to meet, or separate adversaries, helping them to resolve and resolve disputes. **The third** are intergovernmental organizations that have acquired real independence and can pursue their own policies⁴⁰.

³⁸ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, *op.cit*, p443.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p404.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p404.

3- Non-State Actors

The state often does things that no other international party can, wants or is allowed to do, but this does not mean that other non-state actors do not have a role or influence in the international system or community. In this regard, we can talk about:

3-1- Transnational corporations

Globalization has made national economies more interconnected than ever before, with significant trade in goods and services crossing international borders. In a global capitalist system, Big corporations can operate in several countries at once, moving people, goods and money between offices, factories and stores in many countries. These multinational corporations, or TNCs, may have their headquarters in a “home country” but operate in many other countries at the same time. As a result of these cross-border activities, vast amounts of private capital move around the world every day. The growth of private financial markets and TNCs is dwarfing the national economies of most small and medium-sized countries, leading some to ask how much autonomy can countries realistically claim in the face of modern economic power? As an example of the influence that some of these companies (especially financial ones) have come to have, Standard and Poor’s, a private credit rating company, downgraded the US government’s debt in April 2011, causing financial turmoil that shook the world’s most powerful country. This effect indicates that the state's independence is more limited than classical definitions of sovereignty would have us believe⁴¹.

As another example, IBM, a US-based company, operates in over 170 countries and spans every continent except Antarctica. Hyundai, a Korean automobile manufacturer, has manufacturing, engineering, research and design facilities throughout the United States. These companies not only invest in other

⁴¹ Michael Cox, op.cit, p163.

countries by operating within them but may also have interests in foreign companies or engage in mergers or joint ventures with them. Multinational companies also trade with each other within and across national borders, creating important economic links between countries⁴².

3-2- Non-Governmental Human Rights Organizations

A large number of NGOs participate in modern international relations, providing aid and services across state borders. Examples include Amnesty International which campaigns for human rights, and the Red Cross which provides emergency relief to those in dire need, particularly in conflict zones. Some NGOs seek to minimize their involvement with political issues and focus exclusively on helping individuals in need, while others, such as the environmental group Greenpeace, may have more explicitly political aims. The scale of NGO operations and the resources available to them – particularly when compared with those of the poor and underdeveloped states in which they often operate – can make them actors at the local, regional and international levels. In some parts of the world, the unequal distribution of NGO and state capacities has led to non-state actors assuming some state responsibilities, particularly in the provision of public goods. This raises the question of the extent to which some governments are dependent on goods and services provided by the non-state sector⁴³.

3-3- Terrorist Groups

Since the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, terrorism has become a subject of intense focus for states around the world. The prevailing sentiment before September 11 was that terrorism was a serious but manageable problem, but it has now taken on a much greater significance for governments around the world. The “new terrorists,” as they are now referred to in the literature of international relations, combine several characteristics: a strong

⁴² Karen A. Mingst and Heather Elko Mckibben and Ivan M. Arreguín- Tof, op.cit, p71.

⁴³ Michael Cox, op.cit, p164.

ideology, the element of surprise in their attacks, a global network of allies and supporters, and a great understanding and control of modern technology. This has led to a terrifying scenario for counterterrorism planners in the event that weapons of mass destruction—i.e., nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons—are acquired by one of these non-state or (terrorist) groups. The threat of weapons of mass destruction is so frightening because the familiar concept of deterrence, whereby states respond to other states by threatening severe retaliation, is difficult to apply against non-state individuals and groups. Mutually assured destruction (MAD) is of little use against any actor that has no strategic resources to threaten destruction, allowing terrorist groups to circumvent the normal constraints on interstate violence in the international community⁴⁴.

3-4- Transnational Crime

Another type of non-state actor that has been studied with great interest includes all those who engage in transnational criminal behaviour for financial gain. The activities of these groups should not be confused with the petty crime of small gangs and isolated individuals, but what we are looking at here is a multi-billion dollar industry that trades in black market weapons, drugs and, increasingly, human beings. These activities have global implications. Criminal financial flows can be so large and the profits involved so enormous that those who possess these surpluses can engage in a range of activities – such as bribing officials or killing police officers – that threaten the integrity of states. Indeed, there is a close relationship between the power of organised crime and the existence of failed states around the world. The transnational nature of criminal activity means that it threatens the ability of states to control the flow of people, goods and ideas across their borders, threatening sovereignty and the Westphalian order⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p165.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p165.

Basic Concepts in International Relations

1 - State

State is considered the primary actor in international politics in many international relations theories. States are sovereign entities in the international system that have independent control over their decisions, meaning that they are not subject to the orders of others. For a political entity to be considered a state, it must have a defined territory, a stable population, sovereign authority, and other states must recognize it as having the ability to enter into relations with it. Some theories look at the characteristics of the state and its internal policies in order to explain various phenomena in international politics⁴⁶.

It is useful to examine our daily lives as citizens of particular states to see what we generally expect from the state. There are at least five basic social values that states are typically expected to uphold: security, freedom, order, justice, and welfare. These are social values that are so fundamental to human well-being that they must be protected or guaranteed in some way, perhaps by social organizations other than the state, for example by families, clans, ethnic or religious organizations, villages, or cities. However, in modern times the state has usually been involved as the leading institution in this regard and is expected to guarantee these basic values.

For example, people generally assume that the state guarantees the value of security, which includes protecting citizens from internal and external threat, and that this is a primary concern or interest of states. However, the very existence of independent states affects the value of security. We live in a world of many states, almost all of which are at least somewhat armed, and some of which are great military powers. Thus, states can both defend and threaten people's security. This

⁴⁶ Karen A. Mingst and Heather Elko Mckibben and Ivan M. Arreguín- Tof, op.cit, p71.

contradiction in the state system is often referred to as the “security dilemma.” In other words, just like any other human organization, states pose problems as well as provide solutions⁴⁷.

The sovereign state is a contested theoretical concept. When we ask the question, what is a state? There will be different answers depending on the theoretical approach adopted. The realist answer is different from the liberal answer, and both answers are different from the international community answer and from the answer given by theories of international political economy (IPE). None of these answers is strictly speaking correct or incorrect because the truth is that the state is a multifaceted entity. There are different concepts of the state, there is disagreement about the scope and purpose of the state and so defining what a state is is not an easy subject to understand and can be understood in different ways and with different focuses⁴⁸. However, there are ways to simplify it, and here it is useful to think of the state as having two different dimensions, each divided into two categories: the state as a government versus the state as a country.

If we look at it from the inside, the state is the national government, it is the highest ruling authority in the country and has local sovereignty, and the main questions related to the internal aspect are related to the relations between the state and society: How does the government govern the local community? What are the means of its authority and sources of legitimacy? How does it deal with the demands and concerns of the individuals and groups that make up that local community? How does it manage the national economy? What are its local policies? And so on.

If we look at it internationally it is not just a government but a populated area with a national government and a local community, in other words it is a country. From this perspective both the government and the local community constitute the state, if the state is a sovereign state it will be generally recognized as such. This is

⁴⁷ Robert Jackson, Georg Sørensen, *op.cit*, p5.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p22.

the external aspect of the state where the main questions concern relations between states: How do the governments and communities of states relate to each other and how do they deal with each other? What is the basis of those relations between states? What are the foreign policies of particular states? How do people of different states interact with each other and engage in transactions with each other? And so on⁴⁹.

This brings us to the second dimension of the state, which divides the external aspect of the sovereign state into two broad categories⁵⁰:

- The first category: views the state as a formal or legal institution in its relations with other states. This state is a constitutionally independent entity from all foreign states, recognized as sovereign or independent by most of those states, enjoys membership in international organizations, and possesses various international rights and obligations. We should refer to it as a "legal" state.
- The second category looks at the state from a practical and realistic perspective (military, political, and economic). This category relates to the extent to which states have developed effective political institutions, a solid economic foundation, and a high degree of national unity—that is, popular unity and state support. Some states are very strong in terms of the aforementioned components and characteristics, and most states in the West are this way. Many of these states are small, for example, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. A strong state—in the sense of a high level of internal cohesion—must be separated from the notion of strong power in the military sense. Some strong states, such as Denmark, are not militarily strong, and some powers in the military sense, such as Russia, are not strong states. Canada is an unusual case of a highly developed state with an effective

⁴⁹ Ibid, p23.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p24.

democratic government but a significant weakness within its state: the threat of Quebec seceding. The United States, on the other hand, is considered a strong state and a strong power; in fact, it is the strongest power on Earth.

So, this distinction between the state in fact and the state in law helps identify important differences that exist among the nearly 200 states in the world that are currently independent and legally equal.

A state has exclusive authority over a clearly defined territory and population. However, other states must recognize this authority, and this recognition is often based on political considerations⁵¹.

Political scientists argue that the modern state is a "sovereign state." This term implies that states could have taken another form in their development. In fact, the modern state is the product of a specific historical experience and can be said to have been a European invention. The past three centuries are considered the European age of international politics. Although non-European political forms, customs, and political ideas in regions such as Asia and the Middle East have come to challenge the concept of the state in its European form, the central importance of the state in world politics is that we first study the state in its original European context⁵².

2- Sovereignty

Many international relations scholars still consider state sovereignty to be the foundation of their field. Much of Western political philosophy has focused on the state itself and its relationship to citizens, and the field of international relations has been a logical extension of relations between states. In fact, sovereignty has always been more ambitious than reality from the beginning. For many rulers, sovereignty

⁵¹ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, *op.cit*, p 6.

⁵² *Ibid*, pp55-56 .

has been a useful legal tool, as the realist Stephen Krasner has argued. It was used to legitimize the ruler's right to tax, which meant strengthening the state and denying the church these rights, and as a result weakening the position of the papacy.

Realists considered sovereignty as the organizing principle of international politics and a source of anarchy. Liberals argued that it must be transcended to achieve goals such as protecting human rights, intervening in authoritarian states to promote democracy and eliminate violence and tyranny, promoting free trade, and imposing global rules to end undesirable practices. Constructivists, on the other hand, view sovereignty as an institution devised by European political leaders as a prerequisite for the establishment of the territorial state, and today it is the primary criterion that confers legitimacy on states. As Tim Dunne notes, sovereignty is "the founding moment of politics," representing the fault line between society and anarchy⁵³.

The search for the origins of the idea and concept of sovereignty takes us back to the writings of the French philosopher Jean Bodin (1530-1596). For Bodin, sovereignty is "the absolute and permanent power vested in a commonwealth⁵⁴". Sovereignty does not reside in the individual but in the state and is therefore permanent. It is "the distinguishing mark of the absolute ruler who can in no way be subject to the commands of another, since he is the one who makes the law, repeals a law already promulgated, and amends an old law".

Although sovereignty is ideally absolute, in reality, according to Bodin, it is not without limits or restrictions. Leaders are bound by both divine and natural law (All princes are subject to the laws of God and nature). It is also bound by the type of regime, whether monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy. Finally, leaders or rulers are bound by covenants and contracts with the ruled and treaties with other states, although there is no supreme authority in relations between states. Bodin thus

⁵³ Ibid, p757.

⁵⁴ A commonwealth today means any political grouping of more than one country.

provided the conceptual framework for sovereignty that would emerge with the Peace of Westphalia⁵⁵.

Today, sovereignty tells us little about real (de facto sovereign) states. Of the nearly 200 countries in the world, there is a single superpower, a handful of great states, and the rest are small. There are approximately 87 countries with fewer than five million people, 58 with fewer than 2.5 million, and 35 with fewer than 500,000.

Sovereignty, which provides legal independence, is often confused with real authority and autonomy. Sovereignty asserts that foreigners should not interfere in a state's internal affairs and that citizens should respect its legitimacy and obey its laws, but there is no guarantee that they will follow these standards. In general, and especially in recent decades, sovereign independence has provided only modest protection against external military intervention and constant border changes.

Regardless of the legal or theoretical concept of sovereignty, states have rarely enjoyed anything like complete control over their citizens and resources. Sovereignty has not prevented states from interfering in each other's. For example, neither King Louis XIV of France nor Napoleon Bonaparte respected the sovereign borders of neighbors. In fact, Portugal was the only European state whose borders remained unchanged after the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648.

The use of violence by states in their relations with each other has been a central theme of the founding documents of the League of Nations and the United Nations, as well as of both customary and positive laws of war, such as the Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928), which outlawed war. In regulating state violence, a distinction is made between aggression and self-defense, with Article 51 of the UN Charter recognizing the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense only in the event of armed attack, after which the UN takes such action as it deems appropriate, and countries routinely defend even blatant acts of aggression as "self-defense."

⁵⁵ Karen A. Mingst and Heather Elko Mckibben and Ivan M. Arreguín-Tof, *op.cit.*, p21.

It is clear that sovereignty never provides states with the protection it was promised. There is a clear difference between sovereignty as an essential feature of states and the reality of international politics. In many countries, citizens mock the authority of their governments, and participating directly in world politics through terrorist groups and corporate giants to humanitarian organizations and protest groups. Such activity is a far cry from the idea that citizens only participate in global politics indirectly by pressuring their governments and voting. British political scientist Susan Strang argues, "Today, it is increasingly doubtful that the state—or at least the majority of states—can still demand a degree of loyalty from the citizen greater than that given to a family, a company, a political party, or even, in some cases, a local football team."

3- International System

International system can be considered a distinctive way of organizing International political life, it has deep historical roots as there have been international systems at different times and places in different parts of the world, for example ancient India, ancient Greece and Renaissance Italy. However, the International system traditionally dates back to the early modern period (16th and 17th centuries) in Europe when sovereign states (nation-states) were first established, and since the 18th century the relations between these independent states have been called "international relations".

International system was originally European and later became Western. However, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries it expanded to encompass the entire world. It can be said that it is a distinct type of political organization based on many different governments that are legally independent from one another. The only large region that is not a state is Antarctica, which is governed by a federation

of states. We can say that international relations today is the study of the International (World) System from various scientific perspectives⁵⁶.

International system is a historical institution. It is not the work of God or of nature, but rather it was made by particular people at a particular time. It is a social construct. People have not always lived in sovereign states. Throughout history, they have organized their political lives in different ways, the most common of which is the political empire such as the Roman Empire or the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire. In the future, the world may not be organized into an international system either. People may eventually abandon the sovereign state and the International system. Throughout history, people have abandoned many other ways of organizing their political lives, including city-states, feudalism, and colonialism. It is not reasonable, at least at the present time, to assume that one form of global political organization is better or more advanced than the state and the International system.

Some scholars believe that such an international transformation linked to the increasing interdependence of states (i.e. globalization) is already underway, but the international system has been a central institution of international politics for a very long time and continues to be so. Although international politics is in constant change, and states and the international system have always been able to adapt to important historical changes in the past, no one can be sure that this will continue to be in the future⁵⁷.

Since the mid-seventeenth century, states were seen as the only legitimate political systems in Europe based on their separate territories, independent governments, and political subjects (citizens). The emerging state system had several notable characteristics that can be summarized as follows⁵⁸:

⁵⁶ Robert Jackson, Georg Sørensen, op.cit, p5.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p10.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p17.

- It consisted of neighboring states that mutually recognized each other's legitimacy and independence.
- This recognition did not extend to states outside the European international system, because non-European political entities were not members of the international system, but were viewed as foreign and politically inferior, and most of them eventually came under European imperial rule.
- Relations between European states were governed by international law and diplomatic practice, and they were therefore expected to adhere to the rules of the international game.
- There was a balance of power among the member states which was aimed at preventing any state from destroying this balance and attempting to dominate, and thus re-establish an empire on the continent.

As Europeans established an International System in Europe, they simultaneously built vast empires and a global economy through which they dominated most non-European political societies. Western states, unable to dominate each other, succeeded in dominating much of the rest of the world politically and economically. This external domination began at the beginning of the early modern era in the sixteenth century, at the same time as the emergence of the European International System, and continued until the mid-twentieth century, when a small number of non-Western peoples liberated themselves from Western colonialism and achieved political independence. No Western state has been able to achieve absolute domination over the European international system, but several countries have been able to impose European sovereignty and control over almost every entity outside Europe. This characteristic was crucial to shaping the modern international system. The supremacy of the West is vital to understanding international relations even today, as the expanded membership of the United Nations reached nearly 200 states by the end of the twentieth century. It can be said that today's international system

is an institution that impacts really every person in the world, whether they realize it or not.

Global expansion of the International System

- Starting from 1600 AD: Europe (European system).
- Starting from 1700 AD: Including the countries of North America (Western system).
- Starting from 1800 AD: Including the countries of South America + the Ottoman Empire + Japan (a system towards globalization).
- Starting from 1900 AD: Including the countries of Asia + Africa + the Caribbean + the Pacific Ocean (a world system).

Source: Robert Jackson, Georg Sørensen, **Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches**, UK: oxford university press, fifth edition, 2013, p21

The international system has three forms in terms of polarity (i.e. the number of power centers in an international system):

- Unipolarity: an international political system dominated by one power.
- Bipolarity: an international political system with two powers.
- Multipolarity: an international political system with three or more dominant powers.

4- International Society

International society emerges when a group of states, recognizing some common interests and shared values, form a community. They are bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another and participate in the work of common institutions. In short, international society is an approach that tells us something about a world of sovereign states where both force and law exist side by side.

There are common expectations and even understood norms of state behavior, and so a group of scholars collectively known as the "English School" has long

argued that despite the absence of world government, the predominance of sovereign states, and the distribution of power and authority among states, there is a real international society.

International society, as political scientist Hedley Bull argues, exists when a group of states, conscious of some common interests and shared values, form a community, that is, they perceive themselves bound by a common set of rules in their relations with each other and participate in the work of common institutions. Does such a community exist? Bull answers in the affirmative, arguing that "the system is part of the historical record of international relations" and that "there has always been throughout the history of the modern state system an idea of an international society"⁵⁹.

5- Anarchy

It is a condition in which there is no central sovereign authority that enforces law. Realists are concerned with anarchy at the international level where there is no authority higher than the state⁶⁰. Anarchy does not mean disorder; it simply refers to a state in which there is no authority higher than sovereign states. This state of anarchy resembles the Hobbesian state of nature, where all people are equal, and their equality is the source of conflict.

6- Power

What is power and how do we define it? The concept of power has long been central to the study of conflict and war. Realists, in particular, use the concept of power to explain the external behavior of states, arguing that the field of international relations is defined by the struggle for power, in which the interests of actors are determined by their strength or weakness relative to one another. Realists

⁵⁹ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, *op.cit*, p255.

⁶⁰ Jills Teans and Lloyd Pettiford and Thomas Diez and Imad El-anis *op.cit*, p54.

consider power to be the currency of international politics. Like money, it is a means to achieve goals, a reserve or stockpile for future contingencies, and an asset in itself. They believe that all instruments of foreign policy, including diplomacy, trade, alliances, and treaties, should be judged by how they enhance national authority⁶¹.

According to one scholar, “Power in international politics is like the weather; everyone talks about it, but few understand it.” Most people think they know a powerful international actor when they see one, but not everyone agrees on what makes that actor powerful. It is tempting to think of power as a tangible thing, a capacity that allows an international actor to do whatever it wants. Thus, political scientist Inis Claude defines power as “military capacity, that is, the elements that contribute directly or indirectly to the ability to coerce, kill, and destroy.” Yet this definition confuses the capabilities that might contribute to power with power itself. If we fall into this confusion, we cannot satisfactorily explain how a few thousand Iraqi citizens could resist the American superpower. Most analysts thus agree that power is a relationship in which one actor can cause another to do what it wants. It is, as Kenneth Waltz put it, “the ability to produce the intended effect.” Part of the reason some observers see power as a thing rather than a relationship is that the word is a noun rather than a verb. In contrast, influence can be used as a verb that links the subject of the sentence (the influencer) to something directly (that which is affected) and thus conveys the idea of relationship⁶².

Most states have armed forces and military power is therefore usually considered necessary for states to be able to coexist and deal with each other without being intimidated or subjugated. Unarmed states are extremely rare in the

⁶¹ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, *op.cit*, p270.

⁶² *Ibid*, p270.

history of international systems, and this is a fundamental fact of the state system that we should never lose sight of.

Power is a relational quality that describes the relative influence of two or more actors, meaning that a decrease in the power of one actor will generally indicate an increase in the relative power of the other actors in the relationship.

There are types of power:

- Hard Power based on the use of coercion and material rewards.
- Soft Power based on culture and reputation. Some people call it soft power and it refers to the ability of an actor to attract other international actors, which may give it influence beyond the material threats presented by hard power.
- Smart Power, which refers to a combination of hard power and soft power, where the actor influences the behavior of others through a combination of soft power incentives and hard power coercions.

If sovereignty defines what states are in the international system, then power defines what they are capable of doing, so we find many definitions of power linking it to economic resources, military power, moral influence, etc. In international relations, scholars are not interested in power per se but are mostly interested in how it is distributed among actors in the international system.

There are many ways to think about power. According to British sociologist Paul Hirst, power in the social sciences has three common meanings⁶³:

- First, it describes the relationship between actors that “enables one actor to dominate another.”
- Second, it describes “quantitative power,” which suggests that one actor prevails because it has greater power and can therefore force others to submit.
- Third, power is often used to describe a zero-sum game in which one actor’s gains are offset by another’s losses.

⁶³ Ibid, p210.

Hirst points out that this approach to power has several weaknesses, the most important of which is that it suggests that a stronger actor will always prevail over weaker opponents. History shows that this is not always the case. The defeat of both the United States in Vietnam and the Soviet Union in Afghanistan are examples of great powers being defeated by technologically and materially weaker powers. The same thing happened in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, where the smaller, less populated state of Israel used superior training and tactics to overcome the more powerful and numerous Arab armies it faced.

Hirst also argues that we should not think of power as something concrete and measurable, and as something that international actors hold. There are forms of power that we cannot see, such as the power of an “idea”, nationalism and religious belief. Although nationalism and religion cannot be measured, they can both influence what actors do. The same is true of the norms, rules, and practices of international society. These latter, (norms rules, and practices) represent another form of power in world politics.

Peter van Ham, in his book "Social Power in International Politics", explains that by using these forms of social power, actors can be persuaded to act against their immediate interests, and Ian Clark of the English School has reached the same conclusion. The world is more than just an atomic war of all against all; it is a society in which some behaviors are legitimate and others are not, and so the ability to shape the “rules of the game” is an important form of power in international society⁶⁴.

Finally, there is power in the “social facts” that define our human environment, unlike material facts. There are aspects of reality that are created by human interaction, such as states and wealth. If humans disappeared from the face of the planet, social facts would cease to exist, yet their influence on human behavior is real. Constructivism argues that social facts create the incentives and disincentives

⁶⁴ Ibid, p210.

that shape the behavior of actors. If we think of the economic “market,” for example, it is not something you can visit. It is not a material reality, yet it exerts enormous power over the behavior of firms and states alike, punishing those who violate its rules. The same is true of the idea or concept of power. We cannot take pictures of it, but it nevertheless provides incentives for certain types of state behavior⁶⁵.

7- War

War is defined as organized violence waged by political units against each other, it is a central theme in the study of international relations. C.V. Clausewitz describes war "as a rational tool used by political leaders to achieve their goals". Many realists describe war as a rational response to the anarchy in international relations or the changing distribution of power among states, while other scholars see war as the product of leaders' miscalculations or perceptions of fear, interest, prestige, and revenge.

War are often fought for material gains such as the acquisition of territory or access to resources and markets, to defend the existing economic order, or for moral gains for the sake of faith and identity among members of the same belief or identity.

International relations scholars discuss how to define war, and over time three features or pillars have accumulated on which the concept of war is based⁶⁶:

- 1- First, war involves organized and deliberate violence by a specific political authority. Riots are often deadly but are not considered a "war" because riots by definition are neither deliberate nor organized.
- 2- War is relatively more deadly than other forms of organized violence. Massacres and bombings are considered deliberate and organized, but they are generally not deadly enough to be considered war. Most international

⁶⁵ Ibid, p211.

⁶⁶ Karen A. Mingst and Heather Elko Mckibben and Ivan M. Arreguín- Tof, op.cit, p191.

relations scholars currently agree that at least 1,000 deaths in a single year constitutes a war.

- 3- for an event to be considered a war, both sides must have some real capacity to harm each other, although this capacity need not be equal on both sides. Genocides, massacres, terrorist attacks, are not considered wars because only one side has the real capacity to kill, while the other side is effectively defenseless.

War take many forms and can be fought by a variety of actors. It have had a profound impact on the shape of international relations throughout history. American sociologist Charles Tilly noted that states' relationship with war dates back at least 1,000 years. He argued that states dominate the world today because they have proven themselves the only ones capable of mobilizing the material resources necessary to fight protracted wars in distant corners of the globe. Tilly generally views war as a battlefield in which states have eliminated empires, city-states, and all other political rivals. Thus, Tilly argues, "War makes the state, and the state makes war."

Others disagree with Tilly, pointing out that wars are often fought between non-state actors, and that the only thing one really needs to have to wage war is an armed group willing to fight, with no clear dividing line between state-led warfare and low-level forms of non-state armed conflict. The conflict raging across Syria and Iraq today exemplifies the potential of modern non-state actors to wage protracted conflicts, and even seize territory and populations from existing states⁶⁷.

If wars of national liberation against Western imperialism were common before the 1970s, wars arising from the dissolution of failed states became more prevalent in the years that followed. Some writers argue that military competition before 1989/91 was either between different types of states—such as the Soviet

⁶⁷ Michael Cox, op.cit, p176.

Union and the United States—or for the creation of new states—as in Vietnam. Others point to the importance of civil wars in this period, although these were often driven by the battle between supporters of the United States and supporters of the Soviet Union. Civil wars are nothing new: the United States experienced a brutal internal war between 1861 and 1865 that killed an estimated 650,000 soldiers (The number of American deaths in this war was the largest of any foreign war fought by the United States since 1865). In the centuries before 1945, England, China, Russia, France, and Spain all experienced civil wars in which groups fought either to seize or secede from the state. During the Cold War, these conflicts continued to shake countries from the Congo to El Salvador to Cambodia.

Since the end of the Cold War, these civil wars, or more precisely intra-state wars, have become more common. They are by-products of the long-running local conflicts that the Cold War covered up until the great powers withdrew economic and political support from their clients around 1989/1991. This withdrawal of support caused the collapse of developing countries that had already been traumatized by the Cold War. The resulting civil wars made the social life of the millions affected in these countries literally “poor, dirty, brutish and short⁶⁸”.

These “new wars,” as Mary Kaldor calls them, i.e. wars within states, have several characteristics⁶⁹:

- 1- It occurs in countries whose economies are unable to meet the needs of their citizens. Because of their inability to provide public goods to their citizens, countries lose the loyalty of their populations and armed forces.
- 2- Political power is shifting from the state to local identity groups, each of which tries to defend its gains against its rivals.

⁶⁸ Ibid, p182.

⁶⁹ Ibid, p183.

- 3- Political power shifts from the state to local identity groups, each of which tries to defend its territory against its rivals.
- 4- As violence increases, the line between “soldier” and “civilian” becomes blurred, leading to significant civilian casualties as armed groups attempt to “ethnically cleanse” the areas they control. The result is a “new war” in which the number of civilian casualties and genocide become legitimate tactics in the eyes of political leaders whose main goal is to defend and expand their territorial identity.
- 5- New wars tend not to stay local for long, often drawing international players into their civil conflicts, creating highly complex “international civil wars” featuring a wide range of domestic and foreign participants.

War is the oldest subject in international relations, and it is also one of the most uncomfortable studies of humanity at its most brutal and barbaric. War in one form or another has been a part of human interaction since ancient times, and over the millennia its forms have undoubtedly changed. From the beginning of total war to the revolution in military affairs, the ways in which we fight have been transformed by our forms of social organization and by the material technologies we can bring to bear on the fight. Today’s “new wars” are the latest development of this ancient phenomenon, a negative consequence of globalization that is sometimes overlooked. Will war ever disappear from human experience? Perhaps it will, but perhaps not in our lifetimes. Until then, we must study its causes and effects to make it as rare as possible⁷⁰.

8- Peace

What is peace? It is the opposite of war, the absence of armed conflict between international political entities. This simplistic definition may be useful for

⁷⁰ Ibid, p188.

beginners, but what about periods of international conflict and war that occur interspersed with periods of international peace? What about nations at peace but preparing for war, as was the case during the interwar periods (1918-1939) and the Cold War? Is it sufficient to define peace as the absence of war between nations? Is a refugee residing in a temporary camp in a country not at war truly living at peace?

It is difficult to obtain adequate answers to the above questions, nor to reach a consensus on them. Clearly, our definition of peace requires further reflection. In this regard, the question of the desirability of peace arises, as peace is seen as something worth pursuing and war as something worth avoiding. However, peace is not always positive. For example, when China faced the rise of the Japanese Empire in the 1930s, was it better for China to seek some form of peace, or should it have taken measures to defend itself and thus provoke a full-scale war with Japan? Is it better to accept the aggressor's command and thus maintain peace, or to take up arms to resist him? From a general human perspective and in the general context, peace is preferable to war. However, peace at any price can sometimes be an obstacle to justice.

It may also be helpful to think of peace in non-military terms, as Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung has done, who believes that peace is more than the absence of overt personal violence; it means something more active. Under the rubric of peace, Galtung proposes a set of positive measures by states, individuals, and civil society groups to create a culture of peace that not only excludes war, but also eliminates the structural forms of violence that limit the individual's ability to realize his or her potential and freedom. Peace, in Galtung's view, requires not only the absence of war – which he defines as “negative peace” – but also the absence of social injustice caused by structural violence – which he defines as “positive peace.” As long as people in Somalia are starving or unable to go to school for reasons of gender, class, ethnicity, or identity, they will only be able to achieve peace in its

negative form. Indeed, as long as these structures of violence persist, we will not be able to speak of "peace" in its positive sense⁷¹.

While realists advocate maintaining peace through the acquisition of power and deterring aggression through the threat of severe retaliation, liberals see *realpolitik* as the source of the threat to peace and prefer to appeal to the rules of international law as a substitute for force as a guarantor of state security. Treaties here play an important role in building and maintaining peace. Peace treaties are most successful when the signatories agree on basic values and when all parties clearly understand the meaning of the treaty. Peacebuilding processes are complex negotiations that require significant political will from the parties to the conflict and from external actors who can build and maintain trust among the conflicting parties and are willing to make compromises to reach a peace agreement⁷².

9- Interdependence

It is a relationship in which two or more actors are sensitive to changes in each other's behavior and the actions taken by one of them affect the other⁷³. Nadia Mahmoud Mustafa defines it as "a complex transnational phenomenon that includes multidimensional and multi-sectoral interaction patterns between states, resulting in a high degree of sensitivity of interactions between members of the system to changes occurring within one of them, as well as a high degree of exposure or susceptibility to external forces and events, and thus their ability to confront or not confront the burdens and costs of these external influences depends on it"⁷⁴. If dependency refers to the dependence of one state on another state in everything

⁷¹ Ibid, pp193-194.

⁷² Ibid, p192.

⁷³ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, *op.cit*, p257.

⁷⁴ نادية محمود مصطفى، "نظرية العلاقات الدولية بين المنظور الواقعي والدعوة إلى منظور جديد"، ص 17. على الرابط:
<http://hadaracenter.com/pdfs/pdf.نظرية%20العلاقات>

related to its existence, survival, economic activity, etc., then interdependence is a mutual dependence between two or more states.

Liberals believe that international chaos can be moderated or mitigated by interdependence among actors. These actors have multiple channels of communication between governments and between societies and interact on many issues. As the world becomes more complex, they increasingly depend on each other for security and economic well-being, and the actions of each will ultimately have an impact on the others. Interdependence can be symmetrical, with actors depending on each other equally, or it can be asymmetrical, with some actors depending on others more than others depend on them⁷⁵.

There is “complex” interdependence, which means an interdependent relationship between actors characterized by multiple channels of interaction, multiple issues, and the absence of military force. Neoliberals refer to interdependencies as complex interdependence, a concept that Robert Cohen and Joseph Nye argue is “clearly more liberal than realist” and stands in contrast to a typical realist view of world politics. It means that actors are sensitive to each other’s behavior and may well be influenced. Interdependence has two basic characteristics⁷⁶:

1- **Sensitivity:** The speed with which changes in one part of the world affect other parts and the magnitude of those effects. For example, if the US Federal Reserve raises interest rates at home, the effect will be global, and foreign money will almost immediately flow into the United States in search of higher interest rates.

2- **Vulnerability:** The alternatives that actors have in their quest to limit the effects of change. For example, industrialized European countries suffer from the fragility and weakness of the oil they import, and therefore any shortage or

⁷⁵ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, op.cit, p258.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p258.

disruption in the supply of this material will expose their economies to major problems because there are currently only a few suitable energy alternatives.

10- International Cooperation

Cooperation between states is a central theme in the study of international relations and is viewed as a situation in which actors mutually modify their behavior to accommodate the actual or perceived preferences of others in pursuit of common goals. These preferences cannot be identical and cannot be reconciled (since no modification of behavior can accommodate both sides) so international cooperation exists when states adopt behavior that is consistent with the preferences of other states in order to achieve common goals⁷⁷.

States most often cooperate with each other on a fairly routine basis for mutual benefit. They establish diplomatic relations, trade and support international markets, exchange scientific and technological knowledge, and open their doors to investors, businessmen, tourists, and travelers from other countries. They cooperate to address a variety of common problems, from the environment to the trafficking of illicit drugs, and they adhere to bilateral and multilateral treaties to do so. In short, states interact according to the rules of reciprocity. The liberal tradition in international relations is based on the idea that the modern state, in this quiet and routine way, makes a strategic contribution to international freedom and progress⁷⁸.

⁷⁷ Karen A. Mingst and Heather Elko Mckibben and Ivan M. Arreguín- Tof, op.cit, p234.

⁷⁸ Robert Jackson, Georg Sørensen, op.cit, p29.

Intellectual sources for the study of international relations

1- History

Investigations into international relations often begin with history. Without some historical background, many of the major issues in international relations today will not be well understood. History tells us that the Arab (Palestinian)-Israeli conflict over Palestine is part of a territorial dispute between Arabs and Jews, a conflict that has its origins in biblical times and its modern roots in the usurpation of the land of Palestine and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. The 20-year north-south Sudanese civil war and the Darfur crisis that began in 2003 are the product of long-standing neglect of marginalized areas by the central government, exacerbated by religious differences and magnified by natural disasters. Without historical background, we cannot discuss the appropriate solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and we cannot understand the dynamics between Sudan, Darfur, and within the new state of South Sudan⁷⁹.

History has always been so central to the study of international relations that there was no separate sub-field of international relations until the early twentieth century. Before that time, especially in Europe and the United States, international relations was studied under the umbrella of diplomatic history in most academic institutions. A knowledge of both diplomatic history and national history remains essential for students of international relations.

History invites its students to gain detailed knowledge of specific events, but it can also be used to test generalizations. After deciphering patterns from the past, students can begin to explain the relationships between different events. For example, after a historian has historically documented instances of war and

⁷⁹ Karen A. Mingst and Heather Elko Mckibben and Ivan M. Arreguín- Tof, op.cit, p6.

described the patterns that led to war, he can look for explanations for the war or identify its causes. The Greek historian Thucydides (c. 460-401 BCE) used this approach in his book *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. In distinguishing between the primary and proximate causes of war, he found that what made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power. As Athens grew stronger, Sparta, Athens's greatest rival, feared losing its power. Thus, it was concluded that the changing distribution of power was the primary cause of the Peloponnesian War⁸⁰.

A return to history is necessary to determine the extent of change and continuity in the nature, patterns, actors, and fields of ... international relations. For example, some international relations scholars have looked into the distant past to identify the patterns that these relations have known. George Modelski and William R. Thompson have proposed what they call the long cycle theory, arguing that history indicates that there are recurring cycles of large-scale wars and global leadership that last about 100 years. Each cycle consists of several stages, beginning with a world war that leads to the emergence of a new world leader or hegemon. After that, the hegemon's authority is undermined by the emergence of a group of opponents who ally with each other to challenge this hegemony; the excessive expansion and high costs of hegemonic leadership lead to the decline of the hegemon and a new war erupts from which a new hegemon emerges.

In previous cycles Portugal, the Netherlands and Great Britain were the dominant powers and today the United States plays this role, however given the length of the current cycle the United States should begin to decline and new challengers should emerge, perhaps China or Russia. Modelski and Thompson believe that periods of dominance are relatively peaceful compared to periods of relative equality between the dominant and the challenger. The long cycle theory is based on the theory of power transition and hegemony according to which a

⁸⁰ Ibid, p7.

dominant power will be challenged by another great power at the point where the latter becomes as powerful as the dominant power⁸¹.

Knowing history does not tell us how change happens. Is change a random process, the product of mere chance, or determined by the past? Is history linear and progressive, or does it take the form of long cycles? Such questions remain unanswered. But those who use history must be careful because it is not always clear what history is trying to teach us. We often rely on analogies. For example, we compare the 2003 Iraq War to the Vietnam War. In both cases, the United States fought a long war against an incomprehensible and often unknown enemy. In both, the United States adopted a strategy of supporting state-building so that the central government could continue the fight, a policy called Vietnamization (sowing discord) and obstruction (blocking any possible solutions) in the relevant conflicts. The policy led to quagmires in both places when support for the United States waned and it withdrew. Yet the differences are also clear. There are no perfect comparisons. Vietnam had a long history and a strong sense of national identity shaped by wars against the Chinese and the French. Iraq, by contrast, is a relatively new country with significant ethnic and religious divisions, and its various sects pursue a variety of different goals. In Vietnam, the American goal was to defend its ally (South Vietnam) from the Soviet-backed communist north; in Iraq, the goal was first to overthrow Saddam Hussein, who was suspected of developing weapons of mass destruction, and second to create a democratic Iraq that would ultimately lead to greater stability in the region. In both, while we cannot ignore history, we cannot draw simple, general “lessons” from historical comparisons.

2- Philosophy

⁸¹ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, *op.cit*, p7.

Philosophy can help us answer many questions in international relations. Many classical philosophers focused on the state and its leaders as well as on methods of analysis. For example, the Greek philosopher Plato (427–347 BCE) concluded in his Republic that in the “ideal state” the people who should rule are those who excel in the methods of philosophy and warfare. Plato called these ideal rulers “philosopher-kings.” Although he did not discuss international relations directly, Plato introduced two fundamental ideas in analyzing and understanding the system: class analysis and dialectical thinking, both of which were foundational to later Marxist analyses in which economic class is the main divider between domestic and international politics⁸².

The contributions of his disciple, the philosopher Aristotle (384–322 BC), lie in substance (the search for an ideal domestic political order) and in method. In analyzing 158 constitutions, Aristotle considered the similarities and differences between states, becoming the first writer to use the method of comparative analysis, and concluded that states rise and become strong largely due to internal factors, a conclusion that is still debated in the twenty-first century.

After the classical era, many philosophers concerned with international relations focused on fundamental questions of order. The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), in his Leviathan, imagined a state of nature, which he defined as a world without governmental authority or civil order, where men were governed by passions and lived in a state of constant uncertainty about their security. For Hobbes, human life was solitary, selfish, and even brutal, and society was in a “state of nature” or “anarchy.” In anarchy, there is no coercive authority (monopoly of the instruments of coercion and violence) that is hierarchically superior and can create laws or impose law and order. Extrapolating from the

⁸² Ibid, p 9.

international system, which also lacks such authority, states in this anarchic state behave as humans do in the state of nature. For Hobbes, the solution to this dilemma lies in a unitary state - Leviathan - where power is centrally and absolutely controlled.

The French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) addressed the same problem of the state of nature or anarchy, but he saw a different solution after being influenced by Enlightenment thought. In his *Discourse on the Origin and Foundation of Inequality Among Men*, he described the state of nature as a selfish world where the primary concern of humans is self-preservation, unlike Hobbes' description of the state of nature. Rousseau presented the dilemma in terms of the story of the stag and the hare. In a hunting society, each individual must commit to his assigned task so that the hunters can find and capture the stag in order to feed the entire group. However, if a hare happens to pass by a hunter, he may follow the hare—and abandon his task of hunting the stag—in the hope of getting his meal quickly and not caring much about how his actions affect the group. Rousseau drew an analogy between these hunters and states. Do states pursue short-term self-interest like the hunter following the hare? Or do they recognize the benefits of the common good? Rousseau's solution to the dilemma posed by the stag and the hare was different from Hobbes' Leviathan. Rousseau favored the creation of smaller societies in which the "general will" could be realized. In fact, according to Rousseau, it is only the "general will" and not the Leviathan that can "direct the powers of the state according to the purpose for which it was created, which is the common good." In Rousseau's view, "each of us places his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will"⁸³.

The tradition established by these philosophers has contributed to the development of international relations by drawing attention to fundamental relationships: those between the individual and society, and between the individual

⁸³ Ibid, p 10.

society and the rest of society. These philosophers had diverse and often competing visions of what these relationships are and should be. Early philosophers have led contemporary international relations scholars to examine the characteristics of leaders, to recognize the importance of the internal dimensions of the state, to the analogy between the state and nature, and to characterize international society.

Philosophy allows us to delve into foundational questions about the nature of people and the general characteristics of the state and international society. It allows us to speculate about the normative (or moral) elements of political life: what should be the role of the state? What should be the norms of international society? How can international society be structured to achieve order? When can war be justified? Should economic resources be redistributed? Should human rights be universalized?

Philosophical approaches may not be useful in helping us answer specific questions; They may tell us what to do and provide normative guidance, but philosophy in general does not help us make or implement policy, yet it is a useful tool for international relations scholars.

3- International Law

International law consists of a body of rules and norms that regulate interactions between states, between states and intergovernmental organizations, and in limited cases between intergovernmental organizations, states, and individuals. International law codifies methods of cooperation, provides a mechanism for settling disputes between states, and serves a variety of other functions: establishing a set of expectations, providing order, protecting the status quo, and legitimizing the use of force by governments to maintain order. In addition, international law aims in most

cases to be just and equitable, and to define what is socially and culturally desirable at the international level⁸⁴.

International law has been developing for thousands of years before the advent of modern international organizations, with treaties between city-states and communities found in Mesopotamia. The Greeks and Romans distinguished between different types of law, including international law, and during the Middle Ages the authority of the Catholic Church developed canon law that applies to all believers worldwide. However, international law is largely a product of Western civilization.

Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) articulated a number of fundamental principles that form the basis of modern international law and international organization. For Grotius, all international relations are subject to the rule of law—that is, the law of nations and the law of nature, the latter being the moral foundation of the former. Grotius rejects the idea that states can do whatever they want and that war is the supreme right of states and the hallmark of their sovereignty. Grotius believed that states, like individuals, are essentially rational, law-abiding beings capable of achieving cooperative goals.

Branches and specializations of international relations

⁸⁴ Karen A. Mingst and Heather Elko Mckibben and Ivan M. Arreguín- Tof, op.cit, p246.

1- Foreign Policy

What is foreign policy and how does it differ from the study of international relations in general? The study of foreign policy in the field of international relations dates back to the mid-1950s and early 1960s, and flourished under the title of “foreign policy analysis” (FPA), which refers to the scientific study of foreign policy as a whole, including both comparative foreign policy and foreign policy decision-making.

Foreign policy refers to actions, strategies, and decisions directed at actors outside the boundaries of the domestic political system (i.e., the state). The fact that the primary intended goal of foreign policy lies outside the domestic sphere distinguishes foreign policy from domestic policy. Another definition of foreign policy is “the totality of a state’s policies toward and interaction with the international environment beyond its borders.” A state’s foreign policy covers a wide range of issues ranging from traditional security and economic areas to environmental, energy, foreign aid, immigration, and human rights issues. The actors who initiate foreign policy actions and those who are the targets of those actions are often, but not always, states⁸⁵. Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) is “concerned first and foremost with explaining how and why... decisions came to be as they did? This means that, apart from the broader study of international relations, FPA focuses on the individuals involved in decision-making processes.

Foreign policy involves transforming inputs such as information about the actions of other states or public opinion into outputs such as diplomacy, alliance formation, or higher defense budgets. Some therefore conceive of foreign policy as the process of decision-making—how individuals in positions of leadership and policymaking respond to factors and circumstances outside the state. As political

⁸⁵ Baris Kesgin, Foreign Policy Analysis, In JohnT. Ishiyama and Marijke Breuning (eds), **21st Century Political Science: A Reference Handbook**, USA, SAGE Publications, Inc. 2011, p 336.

scientist Charles Hermann put it, “Foreign policy consists of those discrete formal actions of authoritative decision-makers in a state’s government or their agents, which the decision-makers intend to influence the behavior of other international actors”⁸⁶. In a broad view of the term, foreign policy is the sum of an actor’s goals and purposeful actions in world politics and is virtually inseparable from domestic politics.

These definitions raise a series of common issues about foreign policy analysis:

- 1 - Who makes foreign policy?
- 2 - What are the goals of foreign policy?
- 3 - What generates foreign policy?
- 4 - Who is the target of foreign policy?
- 5 - Is foreign policy different from domestic policy?

Despite the differences in definitions offered about foreign policy, observers have traditionally focused on states and bureaucracies as the primary sources of foreign policy. These actors seek to advance their national interests, a vague and controversial concept that refers to goals that a state or its leaders believe will benefit its citizens collectively, but that are more than just the sum of individual interests.

Realists conceive of foreign policy as resulting from external factors and as a response and reaction to the actions of other states or to the structural features of the world system. In their view, foreign policy differs from other types of public policy in that there is a clear division between the international and domestic spheres. Foreign policies are explicitly designed to influence other states and global actors, while domestic policies are designed to influence or regulate domestic actors.

⁸⁶ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, *op.cit*, p347.

In fact, the answers to these questions are not so simple because states, bureaucracies, and individual leaders are all important actors in foreign policy making, as are societal actors, public opinion, and international non-governmental organizations. Some of these non-state actors play an important role in shaping foreign policy, and foreign policy is designed to balance internal and external factors. Only by examining internal and external policies together can we draw a comprehensive picture of a country's foreign policy⁸⁷.

2- Diplomacy

Diplomacy has existed throughout history. Ancient Greek city-states sent and exchanged envoys to deliver messages and gifts. Diplomacy flourished among Italian city-states in the Renaissance. The use of embassies and ambassadors by rulers can be traced back to the 15th century. In that era, Venice, as a trading center, played a particularly important role in the development of diplomacy. Its merchants and bankers routinely collected information that they then presented to the city's rulers, who kept regular, permanent records called the Venetian Archives. Venetian envoys were carefully selected. They had to be educated, knowledgeable, committed, and completely honest. They had to keep comprehensive records of the political, social, and economic characteristics of the city-state to which they were assigned. Venetian envoys resided abroad for two years and were not allowed to miss any of their assignments⁸⁸.

In 18th-century Europe, countries appointed ambassadors only to the courts of the great powers and sent lesser diplomats to other countries. Today, countries like the United States that can afford to do so send ambassadors to almost every other country, large or small. While diplomats come and go, countries maintain

⁸⁷ Ibid, p348.

⁸⁸ Ibid, p363.

permanent diplomatic missions abroad. The United Nations is especially important to poor countries that lack the resources to send ambassadors to many countries because their ambassador to the United Nations is able to meet and discuss issues in New York with other UN ambassadors from around the world⁸⁹.

Diplomacy means the peaceful management of relations between states through negotiations or the way in which these relations are modified and managed. Diplomacy attempts to achieve the ultimate goals (national interests) at the lowest possible cost in a political system in which war is still possible.

There are two main forms of diplomacy:

- The simplest and oldest is bilateral diplomacy between two states, and bilateral diplomacy is still common in many treaties between two states.

- The other form of diplomacy is multilateral diplomacy involving many states. Formal multilateral diplomacy is usually dated back to the Vienna Congress in the 19th century, since then multilateralism has grown in importance. Today most trade treaties such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), arms control agreements such as the Partial Test Ban Treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and environmental agreements such as the Kyoto Convention are multilateral. The United Nations (UN) can be considered the most important institution of multilateral diplomacy.

The ability to conduct diplomacy is one of the defining elements of a state, and diplomacy has been practiced since the first city-states were formed thousands of years ago (around the 5th century BC). For the majority of diplomats in human history, they were sent only for specific negotiations and would return once their mission was over.

Diplomats were usually relatives of the ruling family or of very high rank to give them legitimacy when seeking to negotiate with other states. Envoys eventually became negotiators rather than mere messengers. During the Middle Ages - the 6th

⁸⁹ Ibid, p364.

to 18th centuries - the scope of diplomacy did not grow much and diplomats were mostly confined to maintaining archives rather than negotiating them. In the late Middle Ages - in Genoa, Italy - the Duke of Milan established the first foreign mission. After the American and French Revolutions, diplomacy became more democratic and less aristocratic as the Congress of Vienna (1815) established procedures for diplomatic immunities and defined the diplomatic hierarchy.

How does diplomacy work? Diplomacy works through a network of foreign officers, embassies, consulates and special missions operating around the world. Diplomacy used to be bilateral in nature but as a result of the growth of international and regional organizations it has become increasingly multilateral.

Regarding the question of the difference between diplomacy and foreign policy, it can be said that diplomacy is the method and process by which foreign policy is pursued but it is not foreign policy itself. The results of diplomatic negotiations can influence foreign policy choices.

As for the difference between traditional diplomacy and modern diplomacy, it can be said that traditional diplomacy assumed that the major European powers had a special responsibility to maintain world peace. Traditional diplomacy was professional but secretive and relied on a limited framework rather than expanded diplomatic channels. But modern diplomacy is more open and democratic, it requires mutual bargaining and concessions, so diplomats cannot state a particular position in advance. Multilateralism is increasingly evident in the practice of modern diplomacy, and the conference includes summit or conference diplomacy with behind-the-scenes preparations by diplomatic officials.

3- International Law

International law consists of principles and rules derived from custom and treaty that states and other groups are obliged to observe in their dealings with each

other. It can be said to be the body of legally binding rules that govern relations between states and other groups and that increasingly also provide rights for individuals in relation to states. International laws are the rules that relate to the action of individuals, institutions and states in the international arena⁹⁰. International law contains various components including general principles of law and justice that are equally relevant to regulating the conduct of individuals and organizations within states and states themselves.

Historically, international law has reflected the absence of any central authority above states and the decentralization of power in international politics, and the rules of international law are mostly, and even today, concerned with the rights and duties of sovereign states, most of which were created by Europeans during the long period of European dominance of international politics.

International law differs from domestic law in a number of ways⁹¹:

- 1- There is no legislative body in international politics that has the authority to enact laws. Rather, the rules of international law emanate from international customs and practices and treaties that states sign with each other.
- 2- There is no executive body or authority that can enforce international law.
- 3- There is no independent judicial authority that has the authority to interpret this law. While some observers believe that the United Nations is developing into a legislator and implementer of international law, states still bear the primary burden of applying and interpreting the law themselves.

Although international law cannot be applied in the same way as domestic law, it does establish and legislate certain rules and expectations of behavior and creates a moral climate in which certain forms of behavior are seen as wrong and unjust. Today, for example, moral and legal norms and rules have developed against aggressive warfare and, increasingly, against the mistreatment of individuals by their

⁹⁰ Ibid, p393.

⁹¹ Ibid, p395.

own governments. Despite the lack of enforcement mechanisms, most states abide by international law most of the time. They do so because it helps them achieve their goals, because they want other states to do the same, and because they fear retaliation and loss of trust⁹².

As for the sources of international law, it deals with a wide variety of subjects, but it is not surprising that much of it over the centuries has dealt with issues of war and peace. The sources of international law are described by the International Court of Justice in Article 38 of its Statute, and so when the International Court of Justice is asked to give advisory opinions on the meaning of international law it draws them from the following sources⁹³:

- 1- International agreements - whether general or special - which establish rules expressly recognized by the disputing states.
- 2- International custom as evidence of a general practice accepted as law.
- 3- General principles of law recognized by civilized nations.
- 4- Judicial decisions and the opinions of the most qualified experts of different states as subsidiary means of determining rules of law.

Historically, in the absence of a universal legislature, custom has been the most important source of international law. Customs and precedents that have been recognized as a source of international law date back to the Roman concept of *jus gentium* (the law of nations). Customary law arises from established and repeated practice over long periods of time that becomes widely, if not necessarily universally, accepted, and international law has thus always been based on a body of practices that are constantly evolving. These practices become habitual because people find them useful in a practical sense and enable actors to cooperate tacitly and informally to achieve desired goals. Habits are often created between actors through the practice of reciprocity; that is, actors treat others as they themselves are treated.

⁹² Ibid, p396.

⁹³ Ibid, p396.

Treaties, like custom, are agreements entered into voluntarily by actors and, like contracts, impose obligations on signatories. However, if treaties are widely adhered to, they may be seen as customary and therefore impose obligations on countries that have not signed them. Today, treaties are more important than custom as sources of international law, and numerous normative treaties have been signed in recent decades, many of them drafted by the United Nations International Law Commission, which has codified and formalized ancient customs. Once signed, these treaties must be ratified by the signatory legislative bodies, which must enact the necessary laws to implement them⁹⁴.

Sovereign states designed international law for their own benefit, to maintain the international order they dominated, and to manage violence so that it would not threaten that order. Statehood requires control of a defined territory and population and the ability to engage in relations with other states, but existing states can decide whether to recognize new states when they emerge. Sovereignty itself is the cornerstone of international law, requiring the recognition that there is no higher authority than that of states, that states are sovereign within their own territorial boundaries, and that other states should not interfere in their internal affairs. Thus, the founders of the United Nations never saw the United Nations as a means of undermining the sovereignty enshrined in Article 2, which states that the Organization is “based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members” (paragraph 1). “Nothing in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state” (paragraph 2). Under Article 51 of the UN Charter, states reserve “the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security.” Thus, the law that states have established for themselves has affirmed their independence and

⁹⁴ Ibid, p397.

equality—two of the essential features of sovereignty—and their unique right to deal with one another.

The first scholars of international law were mainly churchmen, such as the sixteenth-century Spanish theologians Francisco de Vitoria (1480–1546) and Francisco Suárez (1548–1617), but the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) is usually referred to as the "father of international law". Grotius argued that the customs of states also have the force of law, and that, as in contract law, agreements between states are binding. He held that violations of these agreements cause war because they infringe upon the rights of others⁹⁵. Grotius believed that once a body of laws was established and codified, states would be able to form stable expectations of each other's obligations, and as a result would be less likely to go to war out of misunderstanding and misperception. In short, Grotius envisioned an international community of sovereign states bound together by a common set of norms and laws, and his work greatly influenced the scholars of the "English School" who called themselves Grotians.

The development of international law can be traced back to the third and fourth millennia BC. Early rulers had established international rules for the protection of envoys, the initiation and cessation of hostilities, the arrangement of truces, and maritime laws. European states also contributed to the enactment of international law at a later stage in history. By the fourteenth century, scholars were writing about international law. Hugo Grotius, for example, produced a very important work on the laws of war and peace, emphasizing the autonomous nature of law.

During the eighteenth century, three prominent schools of thought emerged regarding international law: the positivists, the naturalists, and the Grotians. The naturalists believed in the preservation of morality through laws, while the positivists focused on the practical aspects and the harmonious nature of these laws,

⁹⁵ Ibid, p398.

and the Grotians combined the views of both the naturalists and the positivists. In the twentieth century, the League of Nations and the United Nations system - and thus the International Court of Justice - made important contributions to the development of international law. Not to forget the contribution of other institutions such as the International Monetary Fund or the World Trade Organization regarding the laws of international economics and trade.

As for the types of international law, there are:

1- Special laws and general laws (in terms of actors): Special law relates to individuals, while general law relates to the behavior of organizations and even states.

2- Procedural and substantive laws: Procedural laws determine the types of behavior that are permitted, while substantive laws relate to the territorial rights of states.

3- Laws of war and peace: There are laws that govern the behavior of states in a state of war (regarding the rights of prisoners of war) and those that aim to prevent the outbreak of violence and promote peace.

4- Special and general laws (in terms of scope of application): General or universal laws are applicable to all sovereign states, while specific laws are determined by bilateral or regional agreements.

4- Integration

This concept emerged in the 1950s and was essentially a description of changes in Europe's political and economic architecture. Researchers and observers quickly realized that what was happening in Western Europe had important implications for international relations in general and for international relations

theory in particular, as it became known as the theory of regional and international integration in international relations, which is one of the most important theses of the liberal trend in international relations. Integration seeks to build a permanent relationship between international units that are mutually interconnected and participate in producing the characteristics of the system that will emerge as a result of the success of the integration and merger process, which they may lack separately. Many scholars such as Karl Deutsch, Ernst Haas, Joseph Nye and others called for more attention to the phenomenon of international integration and merger. The best way to understand integration is to view it as a mechanism that ensures⁹⁶:

- Movement towards increased cooperation between states. - Gradual transfer of power to supranational institutions.
- Gradual homogenization of values.
- Emergence of a global civil society and the building of new forms of political communities with it.

The purposes or goals of integration are:

- Maintaining peace between political units.
- Achieving multi-purpose capabilities through a combination of economic power and resources.
- Creating a new sense of identity

5- International Conflicts Analysis

Conflict in its general sense refers to the apparent incompatibility between the policies and interests of different states, and is a permanent and persistent feature of international relations, as realists argue. One of the traditional and persistent issues

⁹⁶ مارتن غريفيثس وتيري أوكلاهان، المفاهيم الأساسية في العلاقات الدولية، ترجمة ونشر مركز الخليج للأبحاث، الإمارات العربية المتحدة، 2008، ص 89.

that cause conflict between states is territorial disputes (territorial and border disputes). The concept of conflict differs from the concept of crisis, which is the first stage of conflict. A crisis may erupt due to the actions of citizens of one state against another (kidnapping, for example), or due to hostilities at the state level (incursions into borders).

Conflict has many types, which can be distinguished by:

- 1- Number of parties involved: Depending on the nature and/or severity of the conflict, it can involve two or more parties (World War I or the Cold War, for example).
- 2- Issue scope: A range of issues can give rise to conflicts, including territorial, ideological, or economic interests. Conflicts can also have multiple causes.
- 3- Positions: Different positions are important in conflict situations, including the perception of threat, the amount of doubt about the intentions of opponents, the symbolic interests involved in the conflict, and the perception of available alternatives.
- 4- Actions: Denial, protests, demonstrations, and international pressure are actions that can defuse conflicts, while actions such as escalatory steps such as withdrawal of diplomatic personnel, economic blockades, travel bans, and limited use of force, on the other hand, incite a full-scale conflict.

As for the causes of conflicts, some scholars attribute them to the following:

- They can be related to the individual reactions of decision-makers in governments and countries.
- They can occur due to the prevailing international system, such as the polarization witnessed during the Cold War, for example.
- Conflicts that occur at the state level can include a focus on national character, ideological beliefs, imperialist tendencies, or hegemony.

International conflict resolution is an interdisciplinary field of study that allows students and practitioners to examine and formulate effective approaches to conflict

resolution. Conflict resolution is intertwined with development, human rights, security policy, and social psychology, and requires an understanding of the root causes and dynamics of conflict and the seizing of opportunities for conflict transformation. Modern conflicts often involve intra-state rather than traditional inter-state conflicts, presenting new challenges for policymakers and peacemakers alike. The intended outcome of conflict resolution is to reduce despair, enrich alternatives, and enable all dimensions that lead to just, sustainable, lasting, and satisfactory agreements.

6- Geopolitics

Geopolitics refers to the study of the influence of geographical factors on a state's behavior, i.e. how does its location, climate, natural resources, population, and the nature of its land determine its foreign policy choices and its position in the hierarchy of states as well?⁹⁷. The Encyclopedia Britannica defines geopolitics as the analysis of geographic influences on power relations in international relations. The word geopolitics was coined by the Swedish political scientist Rudolf Kjellén in the early 20th century and came into widespread use throughout Europe in the period between the First and Second World Wars (1918–1939), and has come into use throughout the world in recent times. In contemporary discourse, geopolitics is widely used as a loose synonym for international politics⁹⁸.

Interest in the study of the influence of geography on politics—particularly climate, topography, arable land, and access to the sea—has been present in Western political thought since at least ancient Greece and was prominent in the writings of

⁹⁷ المرجع نفسه، ص 161.

⁹⁸ Daniel H. Deudney, Geopolitics, in: Britanika, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/geopolitics>, (22/01/2021).

philosophers such as Aristotle (384–322 BC) and Montesquieu (1689–1745). The most famous body of geopolitical writing is the extensive literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, much of which focused on the impact of the new technologies of the Industrial Revolution on world politics. Chief among them are Alfred Mahan, Halford Mackinder, John Seeley, Karl Haushofer, Friedrich Ratzel, Nicholas Spykman, and others.

Mahan's historical analysis of the rise of the British Empire was the starting point for the geopolitical debate. Arguing that control of sea routes was crucial because of the superior mobility of ocean-going sailing ships over land transport powered by animals, Mahan claimed that there was a tendency for maritime trade and colonial possessions to be controlled by a well-positioned maritime state.

With the advent of the railroad, Mackinder assumed that land power would prevail over sea power, and through his "heartland theory," which focused on the vast interior of Eurasia accessible by rail, Mackinder argued that a state that could control the heartland would control world politics. In contrast, Spykman argued that the "rim" of Eurasia, which stretched in a crescent shape from Europe to East Asia, had a tendency to coalesce into a single state and that the state that controlled it would likely dominate the world.

Haushofer and other German geopoliticians who supported German international hegemony developed the theory of a "pan-area," a continent-sized bloc that included an industrial city (or major power) and a resource ocean. They postulated that there were four pan-areas: Pan-Europe (which also included Africa) dominated by Germany, Pan-Asia dominated by Japan, Pan-America dominated by the United States, and Pan-Russia dominated by the Soviet Union. They also postulated that these pan-areas were likely to emerge as an intermediate stage before German global hegemony.

The advent of the aircraft led some geopoliticians such as Giulio Douhet to downplay the role of both sea and land power in favor of air superiority, and during

World War II some predicted that technological developments would make sea power irrelevant⁹⁹.

The popularity of geopolitical theory declined after World War II due to its association with Nazi German and Japanese imperial aggression, and the advent of nuclear explosives and ballistic missiles, which diminished the importance of geographical factors in the global strategic balance of power. However, geopolitics continued to influence international politics, serving as the basis for the United States' Cold War containment strategy, developed by George Kennan as a geopolitical strategy to limit the expansion of the Soviet Union. Geopolitical scientists also began to expand geopolitics to include economic and military factors.

Geopolitics has gone through two stages that have been considered as a classification for it: the stage of traditional geopolitics and the stage of critical geopolitics. Traditional geopolitics is based on realist political thought that imagines that international politics is based on the idea of anarchy of the international system, and since states are the only (or main in the case of neorealism) actor in international politics, the main role of the state is to provide security and protect the internal space and citizens from the threat of international chaos. In this regard, realism is based on a binary distinction: internal (local, national) and external (anarchic, international). The internal or local space represents a hierarchical authoritarian system characterized by peace, while the global political space is characterized by anarchy, i.e. the absence of any higher authority above the authorities of states.

While critical geopolitics of security discourse makes clear that it is identity differences that threaten states, the essential moment of geopolitics is the division of space into 'our' and 'their', and its political function is to integrate and organize 'us' or 'the same' by distinguishing 'us' from 'them', and 'the same' from 'the other'. In discussing this, critical geopolitics suggests that geopolitics is not simply about

⁹⁹ Idem.

describing or anticipating some form of international politics, but about the ways in which identity is formed and maintained in modern societies. National identity is defined not simply by what binds members of a nation together but also – and perhaps more importantly – by defining those outside as different from members of the nation or homeland. Drawing boundaries around the territory to produce ‘us’ and ‘them’ does not simply reflect the divisions inherent in the world but also helps to create and continually reproduce differences. Some critical geopolitics scholars have thus sought to challenge the centrality of the state in conventional accounts by highlighting the role of actors “above” and “below” the state and those actors and issues that transcend state boundaries such as environmental security.

Theoretical study of international relations

1- Definition of Theory

A theory is an attempt to explain something, perhaps an event or activity. For example, a theory might attempt to explain why war occurs or why and under what circumstances nations engage in cooperative trading strategies.

A theory is a coherent and internally consistent body of ideas that claims to have some knowledge about the nature of the world and how it works. It is distinct from a perspective, which is a particular representation of "reality". A theoretical perspective is thus an attempt to construct a coherent explanation of a particular phenomenon, which in turn is based on a broader belief system or on certain underlying assumptions about the nature of the world¹⁰⁰.

It can be said that theories are merely simplifying devices that we use in international relations to draw general conclusions from a limited number of examples. Different theories answer different types of questions and emphasize different aspects of the world. There is no single theory that is completely correct. Just as different problems in our daily lives require different tools and solutions, answering different questions in international relations requires different theories. A researcher's reliance on one theory to the exclusion of others is like a plumber arriving to fix a problem in a house armed with only a hammer!¹⁰¹ The theoretical analysis of international events and phenomena requires at least two elements: knowledge of the phenomenon being analyzed and a theoretical "map" that helps us focus on the most important elements of the phenomenon¹⁰².

The study of international relations also requires us to confront the question of the nature and purpose of human knowledge and understanding. Contemporary theoretical discussions in international relations focus on¹⁰³:

- What is there or what is real in international politics (an ontological question).
- How can we understand the world and what is the status of the cognitive claims we make about the world (an epistemological question)?

¹⁰⁰ Jills Teans and Lloyd Pettiford and Thomas Diez and Imad El-anis, op.cit, p10.

¹⁰¹ Michael Cox, op.cit, p5.

¹⁰² Ibid, p26.

¹⁰³ Jills Teans and Lloyd Pettiford and Thomas Diez and Imad El-anis, op.cit, p6.

- What methods and approaches should we adopt and follow in our study (a methodological question).

To simplify, there are two main positions in contemporary international relations theory: positivism and post-positivism. Positivists believe that we should seek, as far as possible, to study the world of international relations “objectively” in the same way that a physicist studies the physical world. Post-positivists, in contrast, maintain that the scientific study of international relations is not possible because our social position, values, etc., influence the way we see the world and what we consider the “truth” of the world, which draws attention to the importance of social meanings, interpretations, ideologies, and discourses about world affairs¹⁰⁴.

2- Main Theories

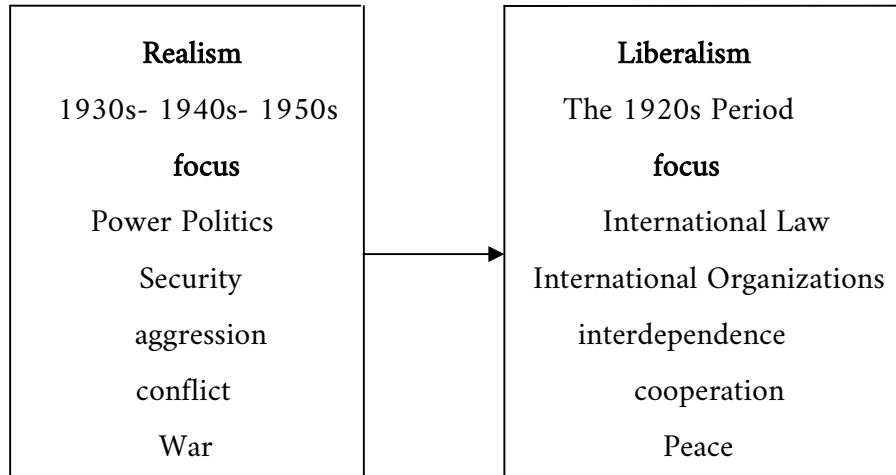
As for the most important theories in the field of international relations, we can talk about liberalism, realism, the English school, Marxism, postmodernism, criticism, feminism, postcolonialism, and constructivism. All of these theories will be discussed in detail in the International Relations Theory course (second semester).

3- Great Debates

The development of international relations theories is usually presented through a series of major theoretical debates between existing theories. Despite the differences in the number of these debates and their parties, we can talk about four major debates: realism versus liberalism, scientific versus traditional, between the three paradigms (liberalism, realism, Marxism), and constructivism versus rationalism versus contemplation. The following figures briefly illustrate these debates, their parties, and the ideas and topics around which the debate revolved.

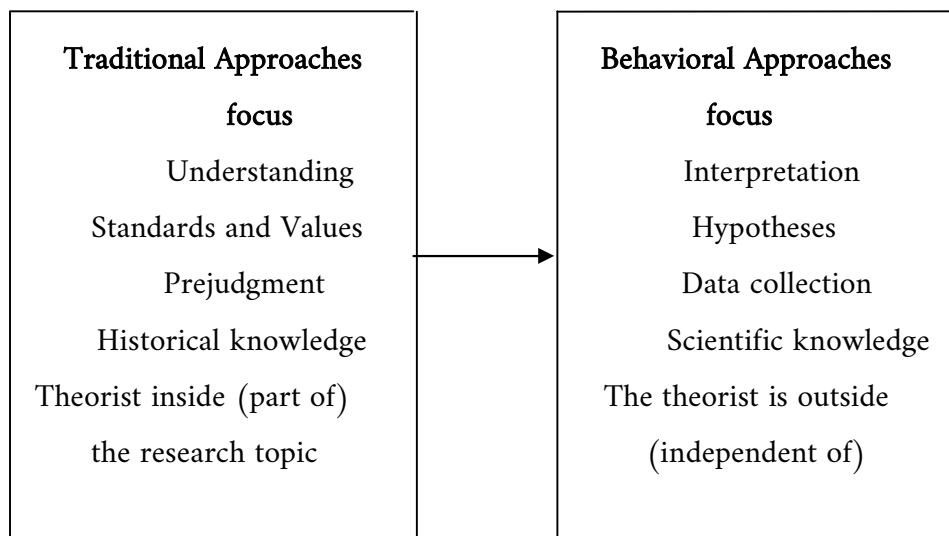
¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p6.

The First Debate in International Relations: Realism vs. Liberalism



Source: Robert Jackson, Georg Sørensen, **Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches**, UK: oxford university press, fifth edition, 2013, p42.

The Second Debate in International Relations: Behaviorism vs. Traditionalism



Source: Robert Jackson, Georg Sørensen, **Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches**, UK: oxford university press, fifth edition, 2013, p45

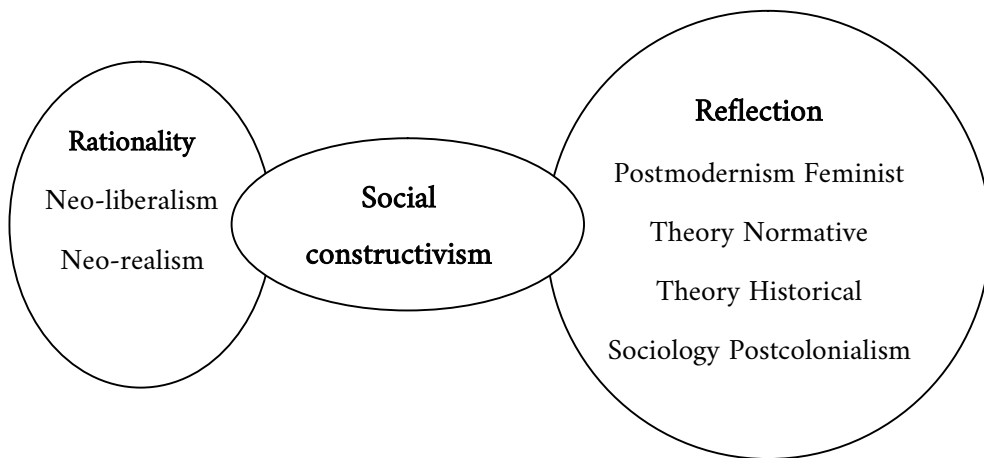
The third debate between the three paradigms

Criteria used	Realism	Pluralism/Interdependence	Marxism/Radicalism
Level of Analysis (as presented by Rosenau)	State Centralism	Polycentricism	Globalism
Key actors	States	A number of sub-state, trans-state, and non-state actors	The global capitalist system (or forces and relations of production) and classes
Image (as provided by Banks)	Billiard Ball Model	Spider Web Model	Octopus Model
View of the state	Unified actor	Fragmented actor	Represents class interests (directly or indirectly)
Behavioral dynamics (as presented by Viotti and Coppi)	The state is a rational actor that seeks to maximize its interest or achieve national goals in foreign policy.	Foreign policy making and transnational processes that involve conflict, bargaining, alliance, and compromise. They do not necessarily result in ideal outcomes or results.	Focus on patterns of dominance within/between societies.
Issues and issues	National security takes the lead	Multiple, not just wealth.	Economic factors
Hardness of reality (objective/subjective)	National interests have an objective existence and statesmen emphasize this and seek to achieve it.	Perceptions and roles are always different from reality, so academic analysis helps to find a rational and preferable policy.	The deep structures of the economy are very stable and coherent. Political actors are systematically misled in their perceptions (ideologically).
repetition/variation	Eternal laws. International relations are a realm of repetition.	Change and the possibility of progress.	A stable and continuous model, but heading towards collapse.
Conflict / Cooperation	Relations between states are essentially conflictual/competitive.	Relations between states are cooperative, and non-state actors always	Relations within and between states are conflictual, because class

		mitigate conflict.	struggle is the dominant model.
the time	Fixed does not affect	evolutionary	revolutionary

Source: Ole WÆVER, «The Rise and Fall of the Inter-Paradigm Debate», In Steve Smith and Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski (eds), **International Theory: Positivism and Beyond** (UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p153.

The fourth debate Rationality, Reflection, Constructivism



Source: Steve Smith and Patricia Owens, «Alternative Approaches to International Theory» in John Baylis and Steve Smith (eds.) **The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations** (UK: Oxford University Press, 2nd edition, 2001), p 285.

Globalization and International Relations

1- Definition of Globalization

Globalization consists of those processes that connect people everywhere and thus produce what is called global interdependence, characterized by the rapid and widespread movement of people, things, and ideas across the sovereign borders of states. Political scientist David Held and his colleagues define globalization as “the

expansion, deepening, and acceleration of global interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life from the cultural to the criminal, from the financial to the spiritual.” In a globalized world, people and their ideas are increasingly connected as a result of advances in communications, travel, and trade that produce mutual awareness among individuals. Under these conditions, many observers believe that states have less control over their own destiny and are vulnerable to forces outside their borders and beyond their control.

2- Aspects of Globalization

Globalization has many features and manifestations, including¹⁰⁵: the spread of global communications, the increasing competence of ordinary people and their participation in global politics, the emergence of a global market throughout the world, the spread of secular and consumer culture, the emergence of English as a global language, the increasing demand for democratic institutions and norms, and the networking of groups to form an emerging global civil society.

3- Characteristics of Globalization

The most important characteristics of globalization can be summarized as follows¹⁰⁶:

- 1- The spread of communication technologies that reduce the role of geographical distance:** Globalization is based on the spread of powerful computers and microelectronic technologies that help individuals and

¹⁰⁵ Richard W. Mansbach and Kirsten L. Rafferty, op.cit, p744.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p749.

groups communicate instantly via e-mail, cell phones, satellites, and fax machines, and the transfer of huge amounts of money and information through these technologies. It also includes the spread of satellite technology for television and radio, as well as the global marketing of films and television programs. In general, these technological revolutions have overcome physical distance in politics, economics, and war.

- 2- **The spread of knowledge and skills and the explosion of political participation:** The spread of media and the revolutions in communications and transportation allow an increasing number of people - even in remote areas of the world - to learn about the world around them, form opinions about international events, and engage in politics in ways that were previously unimaginable. Even the poorest peasants have access to radio broadcasts that provide information, which gives governments and anti-government groups new ways to persuade and win over the population. Cable and satellite television provide exposure to a variety of opinions and information. The Internet may become the most important tool ever in facilitating the exchange of opinions, dissemination of information, propaganda, and coordination of activities because it is relatively cheap and accessible. Blogs (short for weblogs) and bloggers have begun to influence people around the world by transmitting information and opinions online.
- 3- **The global triumph of capitalism** After the end of the Cold War, free market capitalism triumphed as an economic ideology in many parts of the world, including China, Russia, and less developed regions. Its triumph was accompanied by the expansion of transnational corporations, the rapid movement of investments, the "offshoring" of jobs and industries, the spread of global networks of production and distribution, the emergence

of "global cities" such as New York, Tokyo, Frankfurt, and Shanghai, and the emergence of an urban economic elite.

- 4- **The spread of global culture:** Globalization has been accompanied by the spread of a culture that was originally Western, characterized by common standards based on mass consumption, and increasingly societies adopt the secular standards of the West and behave according to the standards of global capitalism. The homogeneity of mass culture can be seen in everything from dress, diet, and education to propaganda and the spread of belief in human rights. Globalization ranges from Big Macs and jeans to hatred of torture and racism. Political scientist Benjamin Barber has written that McDonald's employs 20 million workers around the world every day, attracting more customers each day than the people in Greece, Ireland and Switzerland combined. Yet globalization is undermining ancient local cultures and religious beliefs and causing a backlash among some local political elites. Samuel Huntington argues that modernization, economic development, urbanization and globalization have led people to rethink their identities and redefine them in narrower, more intimate, communal terms.
- 5- **The spread of English as a global language:** English connects elites around the world as Latin and French did in earlier eras and enjoys a special status in 75 countries, spoken as a native language by between 300 and 400 million people and as a second language by another 375 million. Everywhere, demand for learning English is growing because it is the language of commerce, science and technology.
- 6- **The spread of democracy:** Globalization has allowed democratic norms to spread from core regions of North America, Western Europe, and Japan to Latin America, Asia, the former Soviet bloc countries, and even Africa. Although it is too early to declare the global triumph of liberal democracy,

as political scientist Francis Fukuyama did when he wrote about the “end of history” in 1989, globalization is witnessing a growing acceptance of individual rights, including the right to choose one’s rulers. Democracy remains fragile at best in some regions and nonexistent in others, and is opposed strongly and sometimes violently by those whose power would disappear in the face of free elections.

7- **The spread of global civil society:** The spread of nongovernmental organizations has led some to suggest that global civil society is beginning to gain a place and influence in world politics, such a society “advocating the political vision of a world based on nonviolent, legally sanctioned arrangements for power-sharing among many different and interconnected forms of social and economic life that are distinct from governmental institutions.” Although these organizations and movements have different goals, many of them cooperate to address global challenges. Today there are global networks of individuals and non-governmental organizations - made possible by the communications revolution - concerned with many issues such as human rights, women's rights and the environment.

4- Globalization vs Amercanisation

Some have argued that globalization owes much to American dominance in the aftermath of World War II and especially since the end of the Cold War, and that it stems from the desire of U.S. leaders to encourage and support an open trading system, global economic growth, and the spread of American values such as individualism, democracy, free enterprise, and open borders. Others argue that globalization cannot be sustained without the support of the United States and other major powers such as Japan, Germany, France, and Great Britain. They believe that

if today's major powers become disillusioned with globalization, their withdrawal could lead to the collapse of the major public and private institutions that support it. Still others argue that the processes of globalization are so far along that they are irreversible, that they are no longer under the control of any one country, and that the costs to a country of severing the web of interdependence in which it is embedded are too great¹⁰⁷.

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