

Course Title: International Relations Theory¹

Number of Credits: 4

Course Instructor: Professor Sanjay Chaturvedi

Course Description: This course familiarises students with some of the major debates within the discipline. It introduces them to key interdisciplinary conversations between IR and other disciplines such as history, philosophy and sociology. Although the course content is largely theoretical, it refers to historical and contemporary developments as illustrative examples. The course would particularly introduce ‘critical frames’ of enquiry to students, to nudge them to critically engage, for instance, with the broadly Eurocentric, ethnocentric and masculinist character of the discipline.

Minimum prerequisites for this course, if any: This is a compulsory course for students registered for the MA programme in the Department of International Relations.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course, students would be able to:

- (i) A better understanding of the role and functions of theory on the intersection of empirical and conceptual-theoretical.
- (ii) A critical appreciation of the origins and evolution of IR as a discipline, its key foundational myths and Eurocentric inclinations.
- (iii) Developing insights into the complex interplay between the strategic narratives of the Indo-Pacific and China’s Maritime Silk Route strategy and its implications for South Asia.
- (iv) A critical understanding of the so-called ‘mainstream’ IR and ‘critical’ theories/approaches
- (v) Ability to theorize ‘New Regionalism’ *in* and *for* South Asia in the light of some of the common trans-national, global challenges.

Course structure (with units):

I. Why Theory? Thinking Theoretically about ‘International’ Relations

The unit introduces students to the field of IR theory. It seeks to succinctly explain the function of theory and its centrality in the field of International Relations. Underlining the importance of pluralizing the ontology of ‘international’, this unit encourages students to think critically about how the complex and dynamic domain of international relations has been approached in the past and present, and given the contemporary global challenges, how it might look like in future. Students are also encouraged to think critically about the ‘what’, ‘why’, ‘how’ and ‘where’ of theorizing international relations. Are there normative /constitutive questions that we need to be aware of given the politics of knowledge production?

II. The Discipline of IR: Origins, Evolution and Contestation

¹ This is a revised version of the course, with an updated reading plan.

Deploying critical geopolitical perspectives, this unit invites attention to the dynamic and complex intersectionality of space and race in the dominant Western classical geopolitical tradition in the birth of the discipline of IR and its ontological as well as epistemological implications of its Eurocentric bias. It presents the disciplinary lineage of IR through the so-called great debates. It further invites attention to questions of space, power and scale, and encourages students to critically engage with various analytical levels that inform the theoretical postulates of different approaches in IR.

III. Mainstream Approaches in IR

The unit presents a comprehensive overview of the major theories in IR, covering mainstream approaches such as realism(s) and liberalism(s). A further delineation of certain major theories into sub-schools offers a nuanced understanding of the subject. A group exercise using the case study of 'Indo-Pacific' is used to discuss the different theoretical orientations.

IV. Critical Approaches in IR

Recognising developments in the discipline since the 1980s, this unit completes the disciplinary spectrum by focusing on critical approaches such as postcolonialism and feminism. A group exercise titled 'Rethinking Approaches to IR in Anthropocene' is employed to bring clarity to diverse theoretical perspectives within IR.

V. Towards a Non-Western Global IR and New Regionalism for South Asia (Open House)

This unit critically examines the Eurocentric nature of the IR – a discipline critiqued by some scholars as an 'American social science', that neglects the history, politics, experiences and contributions of the non-Western world – accounts for the Western dominance of IR, and identifies the pathways towards making IR a more global discipline, or a Global IR. Students are encouraged to imagine a 'New Regionalism' *in and for* South Asia as we move forward in the 21st century.

Note: This is a student-led open house.

Readings:

(Please note that required and recommended readings will be specified; as and when required, additional readings may be suggested.)

Acharya, A. and Buzan, B. (2007), 'Why is there no non-Western international? An Introduction', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 7, 287–312.

Acharya, A., & Buzan, B. (2009). 'Why is there no non-Western international relations theory? An introduction'. In Acharya, A. and Buzan, B. (eds.) *Non-Western international relations Theory: Perspectives on and beyond Asia*, Routledge.

Acharya, Amitav and Barry Buzan (eds.) (2010), *Non-Western International Relations Theory*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Acharya, A. (2021). Making sense of international relations: Western and non-western approaches. In Mishra, R., Hashim, A. and Milner, A. (eds.) *Asia and Europe in the 21st Century*, London: Routledge, pp. 15-21.

Ackerley, B. and Jacqui True (2008) 'Power and Ethics in Feminist Research on International Relations', *International Studies Review* 10(4): 693-707.

Andrews, N. (2020). 'International relations (IR) pedagogy, dialogue and diversity: Taking the IR course syllabus seriously'. *All Azimuth: A Journal of Foreign Policy and Peace*, 9(2), 267-282.

Asatryan, G.&Kalpakian, J. (2021) The Making of Global International Relations: Origins and Evolution of IR at Its Centenary, *The RUSI Journal*, 166:4, 78-81.

Ashcroft, Bill Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (1999), "Introduction." *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*, London: Routledge.

Ashley, R. and Walker, R. B. J. (eds.) (1990) 'Speaking the Language of Exile', *International Studies Quarterly* 34(3): 367-416.

Axelrod, R. and Robert Keohane (1985)'Achieving Cooperation under Anarchy: Strategies and Institutions', *World Politics* 38: 226-254.

Ayoob, M. (2002), 'Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations: The Case for Subaltern Realism', *International Studies Review* 4:2: 27-48.

Baele, S., & Bettiza, G. (2021). 'Turning' everywhere in IR: On the sociological underpinnings of the field's proliferating turns. *International Theory*, 13(2), 314-340. doi:10.1017/S1752971920000172

Baldwin, David ed. (1993). *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Barnett, M. (2008), 'Constructivism' in John Baylis et al. (eds.), *The Globalisation of World Politics: An Introduction to IR*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baylis, J., Smith, S. and Owens, (2020). Introduction. *The globalization of world politics: An introduction to international relations*. Oxford University Press

Brown, C. (2001) 'The Development of International Relations Theory in the Twentieth Century' in Brown, C. (ed.) *Understanding International Relations*: Palgrave.

Brown, G. W. (2011), 'Bringing the State Back into Cosmopolitanism: The Idea of Responsible Cosmopolitan States', *Political Studies Review*, 9: 53- 66.

Burchill, S. (2005), 'Liberalism' in Burchill et al., *Theories of International Relations*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Buzan, B. (2010) 'Culture and International Society', *International Affairs* 86(1): 1-25.

- Buzan, B.(2014) *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations: The Societal Approach*, London: Polity Press. (Chapters, 1,2,3 & 10)
- Campbell, D. (1998) ‘Why Fight: Humanitarianism, Principles, and Post-Structuralism’, *Millennium* 27(3): 497-522.
- Carpenter, C. (2002) ‘Gender Theory in World Politics: Contributions of a Nonfeminist Standpoint’, *International Studies Review* 4(3): 152-165.
- Carr, E.H. (1946), *The Twenty Years’ Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, New York: Harper and Row.
- Chandler, D., Müller, F., &Rothe, D. (Eds.). (2021). *International relations in the Anthropocene: new agendas, new agencies and new approaches*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chaturvedi, Sanjay and Doyle, Timothy (2015) *Climate Terror: A Critical Geopolitics of Climate Change*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chipato, F. &Chandler, D. (2023) The Black Horizon: Alterity and Ontology in the Anthropocene, *Global Society*, 37:2, 157-175.
- Clark, I. (2009) ‘Towards an English School Theory of Hegemony’, *European Journal of International Relations* 15(2): 203-228.
- Cox, R. (1981) ‘Social Forces, States and World Order: Beyond International Relations Theory’, *Millennium* 10(2): 126-155.
- Darby, Philip (1997), “Postcolonialism” in Philip Darby (ed.), *At the Edge of International Relations: Post-colonialism, Gender and Dependency*, London: Continuum.
- Doyle, M. (1986) ‘Liberalism and World Politics’, *American Political Science Review* 80: 1151-1170.
- Dunne, T. (1995) ‘The Social Construction of International Society’, *European Journal of International Relations* 1(3): 367-389.
- Dunne, Tim (2008), ‘Liberalism’ in John Baylis et al. (eds.), *The Globalisation of World Politics: An Introduction to IR*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dunne, T. (2008), ‘The English School’, in Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of IR*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dunne, Tim and Brian Schmidt (2017), ‘Realism’, in John Baylis et al. (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics*, 3rd ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Epstein, Charlotte (2013) ‘Constructivism or the Eternal Return of Universals in International Relations’, *European Journal of International Relations* 19(3): 499-519.

- Grenier F. (2015) An eclectic fox: IR from restrictive discipline to hybrid and pluralist field. *International Relations*, 29(2):250-254.
- Guzzini, S. (2001), 'The Significance and Role of Teaching Theory in International Relations', *Journal of International Relations and Development*4(2), 98-117.
- Hoffmann, S. (1977) 'An American Social Science: International Relations' *Daedalus*, 106(3): 41-60.
- Holsti, K J. 'Scholarship in an Era of Anxiety: The Study of International Politics during the Cold War', in Tim Dunne, Michael Cox and Ken Booth (eds.), *The Eighty Years' Crisis: International Relations, 1919- 1999*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hurd, I. (2008), 'Constructivism' in Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of IR*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jackson, R. (2000) *The Global Covenant*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Keene, E. (2002) *Beyond the Anarchical Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kegley, C. W. Jr. (1995) "The Neoliberal Challenge to Realist Theories of World Politics: An Introduction." in Charles W. Kegley, Jr. *Controversies in International Relations: Realism and the Neoliberal Challenge*, New York: St. Martin, pp. 1-24.
- Kelly, P. (2006) A Critique of Critical Geopolitics, *Geopolitics*, 11:1, 24-53, DOI: 10.1080/14650040500524053
- Kelly, P. (2019). Rescuing Classical Geopolitics. *Geopolitics, History, and International Relations*, 11(1), 41-58.
- Keohane, R. O. (eds.) (1986) *Neorealism and Its Critics*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Keohane, R. and Joseph Nye, J.(1987) "Power and Interdependence Revisited," *International Organization*, 41(4) (Autumn): 725-753
- Kleinschmidt, J. (2018). Differentiation Theory and the Global South as a Metageography of International Relations. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 43(2), 59–80.
- Linklater, A. and Hidemi, S. (2006) *The English School of IR*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lundborg, T. (2022). The Anthropocene rupture in international relations: Future politics and international life. *Review of International Studies*, 1-18.
- Mearsheimer, J. (2001) *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: Norton.
- Mehmetcik, H., & Haksas, H. (2022). Globalizing IR: Can Regionalism offer a path for other Sub-Disciplines?, *All Azimuth: A Journal of Foreign Policy and Peace*, 11(1), 49-65.

Morgenthau, Hans J. (1948) *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, New York: Alfred Knopf.

Odoom, I., & Andrews, N. (2017). What/who is still missing in International Relations scholarship? Situating Africa as an agent in IR theorising. *Third World Quarterly*, 38(1), 42-60.

Owen, J. M., & Rosecrance, R. N. (2019). *International politics: How history modifies theory*. Oxford University Press.

Oztig LI. (2022) The Global North/South Inequalities in the IR Discipline: Some Reflections and Insights. *Alternatives*. 47(2):123-127.

Parashar, S., Tickner, J.N. and True, J. (2018) *Revisiting Gendered States: Feminist Imaginings of the State in International Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Prakash, Gyan (2000), "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism", in Catherine Hall (ed.) *Cultures of Empire: Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Rosenberg, J. (2006), 'Why Is There No International Historical Sociology?' *European Journal of International Relations* 12(3): 307-340.

Ruggie, J.G. (1998) *Constructing the World Polity*, London: Routledge.

Said, E. (1979) *Orientalism*, Vintage Books.

Simangan, D. (2020). Where is the Anthropocene? IR in a new geological epoch. *International Affairs*, 96(1), 211-224.

Singer, J. D. (1961) "The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations," *World Politics*, 14, 77-92.

Singh, Swaran and Marwaha (Eds.) (2023) *Politics of Climate Change: Crises, Conventions and Cooperation*, New Delhi: World Scientific Publication.

Squire V. (2020) Migration and the politics of 'the human': confronting the privileged subjects of IR. *International Relations*. 34(3):290-308.

Squires, J.&Weldes, J. (2007) 'Beyond Being Marginal: Gender and International Relations in Britain', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 9(2): 185-203

Smith, Steve and Patricia Owens (2008), 'Alternative Approaches to International Theory: Post-colonialism' in John Baylis et al. (eds.), *The Globalisation of World Politics: An Introduction to IR*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Suzuki, S. (2005) 'Japan's Socialization into Janus-Faced European International Society', *European Journal of International Relations*, 11(1): 137-164.

Towns, A. (2010), Chapter two, *Women and States: Norms and Hierarchies in International Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tuathail, G. Ó (1996). *Critical geopolitics: The politics of writing global space*. University of Minnesota Press.

Qin, Y (2020) *Globalizing IR Theory: Critical Engagement*, London: Routledge.

Viramontes, E. (2022). Questioning the quest for Pluralism: How Decolonial is Non-Western IR?. *Alternatives*, 47(1), 45-63.

Young, Robert (2001), *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Waltz. K. N. (1959), Introduction, and Conclusion. *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Waltz, Kenneth (1979), 'Political Structures', *Theory of International Politics*, Reading: MA: Addison-Wesley.

Wendt, A. (1987) "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations," *International Organization*, 41 (2), 335-370

Wendt. A. (1992) 'Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics', *International Organization* 46(2): 391-426.

Assessment: In addition to Examinations (60%), as per SAU guidelines, students are required to write a Research Paper (40%).