

Course Concepts defined:

Theory: simplifying device that allows you to decide which facts matter and which do not

Contemporary – Contemporary era as that which had developed since two dates..

1. **1945** – UN created as international organisation and subsequent process (in 1950s) of de-colonisation. The generalisation of a system of interstate order that had originally been created in Europe 2 centuries before – Westphalian order, based on states having relative independence or autonomy. System generalised after 1945, by 1950s universal entry into UN allowed, any entity that seemed like a state was allowed to be a part of the UN.
2. **1989** – the fall of the Berlin Wall – the end of the cold war which was centred in Europe but had been generalised to the whole world – negative ramifications for whole world. Couple of years before end of the Soviet Union. Significant turning point in world politics – still a post cold-war era.

International –Jeremy Bentham (1870) - law of nations – rules of conduct between nations/states. Particularly in contemporary era meaning of international expanded beyond states, states no longer only actors in international

System - refers to the structures of international system, not necessarily ordered.

4 Key Ideas in International Relations

1. **Normative dimension:** All discussion and analysis in International Relations has two aspects: Both empirical (explaining what world is/occurred) and normative (what should be, what should occur)
2. **Continuous change:** Nothing is fixed for ever politically, even if change is often extremely slow
3. **Social construction:** no natural laws - rules that are socially constructed/potentially changeable
4. **Transnational action:** separation between domestic and international politics increasingly tenuous. If have system where no higher authority (anarchy) - doesn't mean can't have order - international society comprised of different sovereign states protecting own autonomy but states abide by norms.

The 20th Century International Order – Evolution of the International System

World War 1

- Dispute between Germany and France, nationality in the Balkans and disintegration of the Austria Hungarian empire.
- **Treaty of Versailles:** Resolved WW1

- Established League of nations – failed to address European security, created instability and financial reparations on Germany.
- Collapse of European Empires and great depression – sympathy for communists and fascists

World War 2

- **Rise of Hitler challenges powerless European leaders**
- **After** - Power vacuum in Europe - no Germany. US and Soviet union remaining.
- **The American conception**
 - Roosevelt believed security problem absence of collective effective security measures
 - Americans gave economic aid in Europe to help economic institutions - Marshall plan
 - Soviet saw this as economic imperialism - use it as a way to influence states
- **Warsaw pact**
 - Economic interdependency and growth - US post war economic plan

The Cold War

1. **Absurd military competitions** occasional extreme crisis - Cuba in 1962.
2. **Entrenched in geopolitical conflict** based on division of Europe and Germany
 - i. International competition for influence - division of Europe and division of Germany
 - ii. Lord Ismay: “to keep Americans in Western Europe , the Germans down and the Russians out”
3. **Underlying political control** - political elites in both western and Stalinist societies using existence of confrontation in two above arenas to limit expression of dissidence within
 - i. Michael Cogs “ very beneficial to the main actors in the cold war” - three actors
 1. **United States** - Provided justification large number of actions - nuclear weapons
 2. **Western Europe** - economic development, overcoming historic animosities between France/Germany, US dealt with defence, allowed eastern Europe to develop
 3. **Old Soviet Union** - wanted to be not disturbed and military, political, social buffer

End of the Cold War

- **Crumbling of the Soviet empire**
 - Europe increasingly aware that consumer goods are terrible - communist reign disillusionment
- **Helsinki Accords**
 - Soviets wanted people to agree that eastern borders were inviolable – included HR agreement
 - Monitor human rights violations – leads to mass movements against communism
 - Opening borders between Austria and Hungary - geographically breaks down barrier
- Fall of the Berlin Wall - official end of the cold war
- **Causes:**
 - **The US won** - Star Wars and Soviet expensive and ineffective Red Army presence in Afghanistan
 - **Soviet internal changes** - Economy broken, Glasnost and perestroika (openness), Gorbachev
 - **Lack of response to the crumbling empire – Gorbachev/busy with Afghanistan commitment**