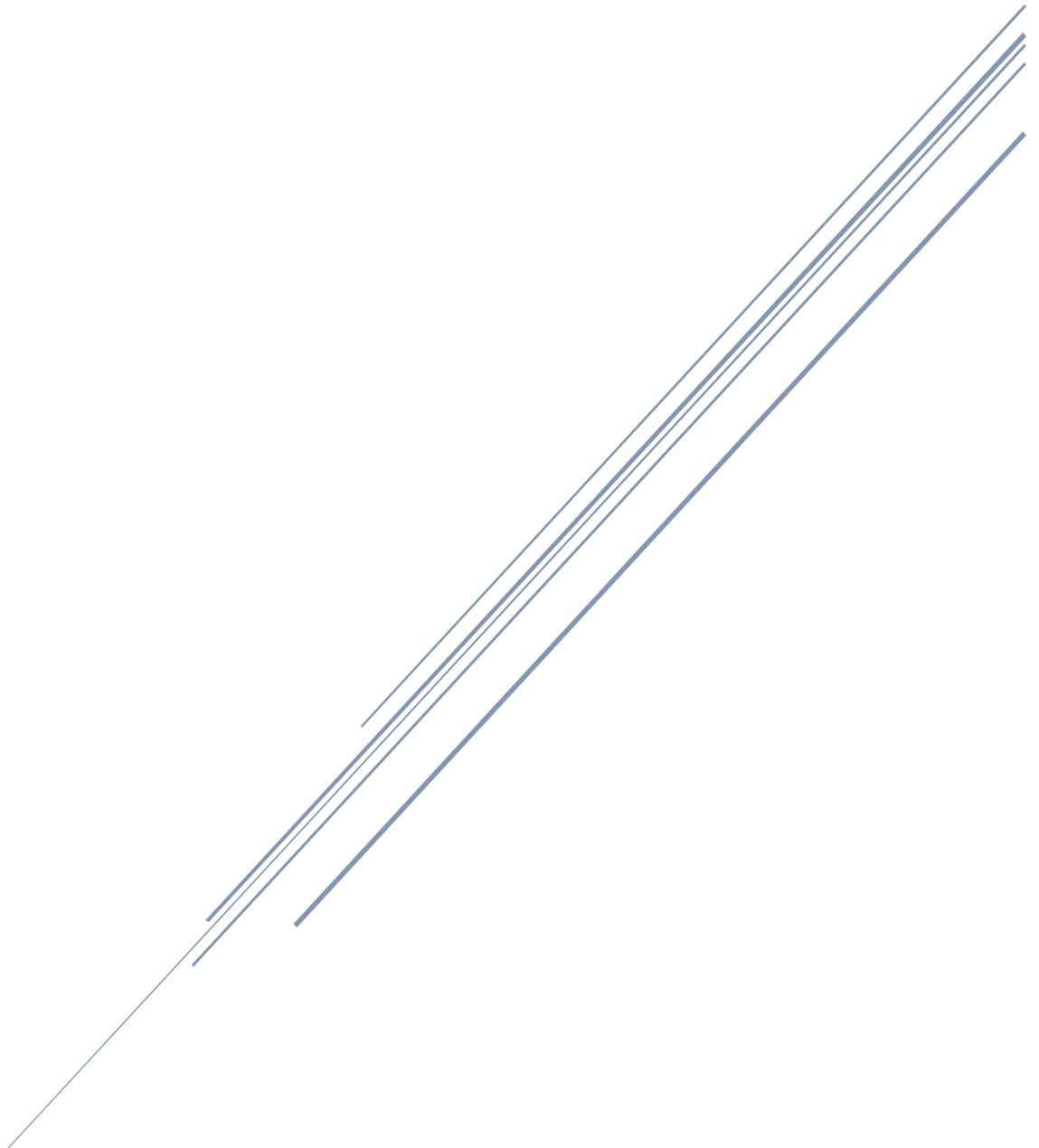


INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: CONVENTIONS AND CHANGE

Complete Course Notes



UNSW
ARTS1810

1: Discipline – Studying IR, its Origins and Context

Outline a basic understanding of what the discipline of International Relations is about, and how it relates to other parts of Social Science;

- **IR is an art form**, something not to be looked at as a science but something which is interpreted differently by everyone.
- A way of interpreting international relations, including various different approaches.
- IR today includes studies in:
 - International peace and security;
 - International (global) political economy;
 - Human rights and humanitarianism;
 - Governance and IOs;
 - International law;
 - International R/relations theory and history;
 - The environment;
 - Foreign policy and diplomacy;
 - Region-specific studies, e.g. Australia's place and role within the Asian region.

Begin to recognise and problematise the way you and others talk about international politics;

- IR is about 'the questions about world politics that puzzle all of us. There are no easy answers to be had [...]. There are only difficult and challenging questions – that lead to more difficult and challenging questions. [...] Many textbooks behave as if the 'great minds' have come up with the answers: they haven't. The questions remain open and intractable, there for each new generation to formulate and tackle for themselves.' – **Edkins and Zehfuss 2014.**
- **Aberystwyth (UK) – First Department of International Politics established in 1919.**
- **Establishment of the 'Woodrow Wilson Chair'.**

Begin to recognise that there are a number of competing approaches within International Relations;

Idealism (Liberalism)	Realism
Engineering the world to be how it ought to be (collaborative and positive-sum)	This is how the world really is (conflictual and zero-sum)

- Liberalism – Alfred Zimmern 1919-21.
- Realism – E.H. Carr 1936-47.

2: Diversity – The House of IR and the ‘Great Debates’

Demonstrate knowledge of the historical and political context of theoretical debates in IR;

The First ‘Great Debate’ (Between WW1 & WW2) – Liberalism vs. RealismCharacteristics of Liberalism

- **Primacy of liberalism in the inter-war period.**
- **Woodrow Wilson, US President 1913-21 (winner of the 1919 Nobel Prize for Peace).**
- **Human nature is fundamentally** good and has positive potential.
- **Humans can be rational**, and rationality is good.
- Self-interest is not necessarily antagonistic, and **co-operation is possible.**
- **Democracy and transparency are essential** to good governance.

Important Liberal Philosophers

- **John Locke (1632-1704): *Two Treatises of Government***
- **Adam Smith (1732-1790): *The Wealth of Nations***
- **Immanuel Kant (1724-1804): ‘Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch’**
- **David Ricardo (1772-1823): *Doctrine of Comparative Advantage***

Different Liberal Theories

	Context	Notable Advocates	Essence of Theory
Idealist/Utopianism	Post-WWI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodrow Wilson • Norman Angell • International Lawyers 	WWI caused by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of democracy. • Lack of military logic. • Overarching international institutions. ‘Great Illusion’: no gain in armed conflict.
Sociological/Pluralism	1950s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karl Deutsch (‘Security Communities’) • John Burton • David Mitrany 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transnational relations w/ increasing interdependence. • Cooperation through interaction mostly in functional spheres. • Basic, functional needs of people and states. • IOs developed according to state’s needs. ‘Form follows function’
Republican/Democratic Peace Theory	Modern Times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immanuel Kant (1795) • Michael Doyle • Bruce Russett 	‘Democracies do not fight each other’ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens in democracies are pacifists.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democracy ensures peace through democratic foreign policy.
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Characteristics of Realism

- IR should be concerned with human nature **as it actually is rather than as it ought to be.**
- 6 Principles of Political Realism (**Morgenthau 1948: 4-15**):
 1. Politics are governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature.
 2. The concept of national interest defined in terms of power is the most important foreign policy goal.
 3. While interest defined as power remains unaffected by historical change, the exercise of power is permanent.
 4. Universal moral principles cannot be used to judge the actions of states in their abstract formulation. Prudence is the morality proper to politics.
 5. 'Political realism refuses to identify the moral aspirations of a particular nation with the moral laws that govern the universe.
 6. Politics is an autonomous sphere, distinct from, and not subordinate to the standards of, economics, law, morality and so on.
- Human nature is **inclined towards conflict, competition and war.**
- Cooperation is **possible, but not likely or lasting.**

Important Realist Philosophers

- **Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679): *Leviathan***
- **Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778): *Parable of the Stag Hunt*.**
- **Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527): *The Prince***
- **Thucydides (circa. 460 BC): 'Melian Dialogue' in *History of the Peloponnesian War***

	Realism	Liberalism
Main actor	States	Individuals
Contextual focus	Anarchy	Institutions
Fundamental value	Security	Liberty
Elemental behaviour	Conflict	Cooperation
Outlook	Pessimism	Optimism
View of history	Recurrence and repetition	Progressive change