BLOCK-III
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

THEORITICAL PERSPECTIVES

There is no doubt that the discipline of IR has made huge strides since the end of the Second World War. You must know, it was not always like this. In fact, during the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries, the discipline of IR remained quite undeveloped. Writings on IR were far and few; they were chronological and often episodic. They were written with the limited purpose of either highlighting the stand of a country on some particular issue, or praise the statesman-like qualities of a leader. There were no attempts at building theories of IR – theories which could be explanatory and perhaps could also tell us something about the coming events; for instance, conflicts and wars.

The origin of modern IR dates back to the formation of nation-states in 17th century. At the Peace Treaty of Westphalia, 1648 emerged the idea of sovereign nation-state, which alone could participate in international conferences and conclude treaties. There thus came the principle of external sovereignty of state and its inviolability. Hence, we often describe the modern state-based international system as the Westphalian system. Scholars have noted several stages in the evolution of the IR. But it won't be an exaggeration to say that use of brute force to settle things was the hallmark of IR prior to the First World War. In the inter-war period, spirit of Wilsonian idealism prevailed for a while. It was believed that creation of international legal norms and organizations shall ensure peace and security. However, it is only after the end of the Second World War, one can say that IR arose as a full-fledged independent discipline. Also, the discipline thenceforth also witnessed the construction of empirical and scientific theories of IR.

Post-Second World War, the discipline of IR became an exciting field for study and research. Formation of new organizations, institutions and agencies, new laws and norms, decline of European imperial states, birth of scores of new nations, Cold War and its consequences in the form of bloc politics, arms race, and development of nuclear weapons, trade negotiations under the GATT frameworks etc. led scholars to look at IR from new and different perspectives. Theoretical approaches to the study of peace and the world order studies acquired important space in International Relation. International politics acquired new dimensions which demanded the discarding of earlier idealistic, moralistic, legal and institutional studies; and their replacement by rational and scientific studies. Secondly, new empirical theories, which involved the study of power in IR, gained ground; together these power-based theories came to be known as Realist School of IR. Others were looking at growing interdependence among states; and how international institutions and processes shaped and circumscribed the choices a sovereign state could have. Such theoretical frameworks together came to be called 'Systems theories'.

And then the Cold War ended, with the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991 and fall of socialism as an ideology. It appears that the end of Cold War had some kind of liberating effect on the world of scholarship. The dominant binary view of looking at IR, as if the choice was between capitalism and socialism only, was given a go-bye. New theoretical perspectives, called Critical theories

emerged: their concern was not merely to theorize the international system but how to change it too. There were defects in the prevailing theories of Realism, Interdependence etc. These dominant theories essentially reflected the interests and experiences of the great powers of Europe and North America. More than half a century after their independence, concerns of the developing countries, the least-developed countries and the small and micro-states were still not the concerns of the IR. Critical theories sought to highlight the drawbacks of the international system and the dominant discourse about it. Theoretical formulations such as Constructivism, Marxian perspectives, post-modernism, feminism, ecological and environmental perspectives, which are of problem-solving nature, gained popularity among scholars and researchers of IR. These varied theories came to be regarded as emancipatory theories. They are aimed at providing answer to questions faced by contemporary International Relations as they obtain since the end of the Cold War. As a result, these theories are purposive in nature and provide a critique of dominant dogmas of IR. These critical outlooks go beyond state and state-based idea of modernization to post-state and post-modernism – to a world where everyone would have place under the sun. Economic globalization in a sense accelerated the demise of the old IR system and has encouraged Critical theoretical outlook. At the same time, however, globalization and its trajectory so far has also invited powerful critique and popular wrath. In its present form globalization is seen serving the profit motives of the global corporate capitalism; there is search for alternative globalization – transparent and just.

In Block III, as many as five Units (7 to 11) lay down these theoretical formulations.

Mainstream theories of IR are essentially Eurocentric. They romanticize power, interdependence, masculinity and war mongering, and suggest building of laws and institutions as the solution for war and conflict. These theories essentially reflect the experiences, biases and interests of former European colonial powers. What about the so-called developing world or the Global South? Why developing country perspectives have never informed the mainstream theories of IR? Is it possible to develop theories; or, at least put on the agenda of IR the concerns and needs of the developing world? These are some of the questions explored in Unit 11.

After going through this block, you may wonder whether traditional IR theories are able to adapt to Global South perspectives and its concerns; and, if not whether new theories and approaches are needed in their place. In answering this question, scholars have taken a wide range of differing positions. While many scholars are united around a call for justice and equality in the way that IR narratives represent the world; it cannot be said that there is one grand strategy for theorizing Global South perspectives.

The arrival of 'Asian Century' means that locus of power is shifting to Indo-Pacific from northern Atlantic. The rise of Asia is characterized by its economic and technological dynamism. Rising powers China and India assume a more prominent role in shaping world affairs and ASEAN countries carry lots of economic and security weight around the association. The rise of Asia has

produced new trends and directions in scholarship; whereupon Asia has become a conceptual anchor for the development of non-Western approaches to the study of world politics. It is, therefore, within the Asian IR context that some of the most exciting theoretical challenges to, and innovations in, IR scholarship are being mounted and produced. Given the vast socio-cultural and political diversity found across the continent, Asian IR is made up of an array of different perspectives. In short, theoretical debates and innovations in IR and regional relations continue, *ad nauseam*.

UNIT 7   CLASSICAL REALISM AND NEO-REALISM*

Structure

7.0   Objectives

7.1   Introduction

7.2   Basic Assumptions of Realism

7.3   Classical Realism

7.4   Neo-Realism or Structural Realism

7.5   Assessment

7.6   Let Us Sum Up

7.7   References

7.8   Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

7.0   OBJECTIVES

Realism has been one of the dominant perspectives in international relations since the Second World War. This unit would shed light on Realist perspective in international politics. After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning of Classical and Neo-Realism

- Know the difference between these two perspectives

- Describe major thinkers associated with them and

- Analyze some of the limitations of Classical and Neo-Realism

7.1   INTRODUCTION

Realism has been one of the main theoretical perspectives in international relations which gained prominence after the Second World War and continues to remain relevant even in the globalized world of 21st century. As the name suggests, Realism explains the reality of international politics (what is), in contrast to Idealist school of thought which focuses on 'what ought to be'. Thus, as Morgenthau has claimed, realism is an empirical paradigm rather than being a normative one. Realism explains the status quo in international relations, how the order is established and maintained. The wider acceptance of realism is because of its ability to explain why states compete and go to war in international relations. Since the signing of Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, there have been over 200 wars

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and conflicts. in international system. Realism is often also called study of power politics as it gives centrality to power in its analysis of international politics. However, there are many variants of Realism. In fact, it is best to describe realism as a set of theories which give importance to factors like national interest, state and military in world politics. It should be mentioned that apart from political thinkers, rulers, diplomats, military strategists and generals have also contributed to growth of realism as a theoretical tradition. The names include military theorist and Prussian general Carl Von Clausewitz, French diplomat Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Perigord, Austrian statesman Klemens von Matternich, former French President Charles de Gaulle and former US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger. Realism has never been a single theory, however, in all its variants, there is centrality of power and military means that states try to achieve through their policies. Realism in general, is pessimistic about the chances of radical reform in international system. There is close relationship between Realism and security studies as both of them study conflict, war and survival. Charles Darwin's 'survival of the fittest' is echoed in international politics by theory of realism. Mainly three distinct schools of thought exist in realism, namely, classical, neo-realism or structural realism and neo-classical realism. This unit would discuss classical and neo-realism in detail.

7.2   BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF REALISM

Realism is an academic approach to study international relations which is not a single, unified theory. As Jonathan Haslam points out in his *No Virtue Like Necessity: Realist Thought in International Relations since Machiavelli* (2002), realism is a spectrum of ideas rather than as a fixed point of focus with sharp definition. Duncan Bell has argued that Realism is possibly best defined in negative terms – in what realists reject instead of what they endorse in positive terms. Realists are united in their collective rejection of morality or ethics in international politics. They would go on to argue that justice does not operate in international relations since they are marked by potential or active competition and conflict among different states. Irrespective of the differences in various strands of realist theories, most of them share some core beliefs and assumptions which are below.

- Realists believe that states are primary actors in international relations and hence, they try to explain behavior of states while giving less importance to other factors.

- International relations are mainly a study of power and security as survival of state is paramount. This is why; states build their hard power (military power). Realism also accepts a distinction between matters of high politics and low politics. High politics includes the areas that are necessary for survival of a state like security. Areas of low politics like trade and social affairs are the ones which are not absolutely necessary for survival of a state.

- Human nature is dominated by ego and like humans, groups and states also have an ego. Politically, states are rational actors which are driven by their narrow self-interest. Moral and ethical considerations make way to *raison d'état* or reasons of state – a situation in which a state's foreign policy is justified on the basis that its national interest is of utmost importance.

- There is lack of government in international relations leading to anarchy. This means there is no authority to protect interests of the global community and ensure rule of law at the global level. The possibility of moral behavior rests upon the existence of an effective government that can deter and punish illegal actions. Hence, states need to rely on themselves to safeguard their national interest.

- To ensure their survival, states resort to balance of power (BoP). BoP does not allow a single state to gain so much military power that it can dictate terms to other countries. Balancing is of two types – external and internal. External balancing is done through building alliances while internal balancing is done by enhancing one's own military power. For instance, India has been balancing China through both, internal and external measures. India is building its military strength on one hand while on the other, it is building close relations with countries like the US, Japan and France to balance China.

- Under anarchic international relations, there exists a security dilemma or spiral mode. The steps taken by one country to enhance its own security would decrease the security of other states. In such zero-sum situation, it is difficult for any state to improve its own survival without threatening the survival of other states. The threatened states then would take steps to increase their own security and this ends up in a perpetual competitive cycle.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

    ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) What do you understand by Security Dilemma?

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7.3 CLASSICAL REALISM

Classical realism has emerged as a major approach in the study of international relations after the Second World War. This approach is mainly reflected in the writings of E H Carr, Reinhold Niebuhr and Hans Morgenthau. Classical realism explains state behaviour from vantage point of human nature and holds human nature responsible for conflicts among states. However, even before realism existed as a theory, its tenets can be found in Western and non-Western political thinkers from ancient to medieval period. In an informal manner, tenets of realism can be traced to the works of ancient Greek philosopher, Thucydides in the 5th century BC. The other prominent realist thinkers in the West include Machiavelli and Hobbes. There have been non-Western thinkers like Kautilya from India and Sun Tzu and Han Feizi from China whose views would fall under the realist paradigm in international politics. Some of the main thinkers in classical realism are discussed below.

7.3.1 Thucydides

Views of Thucydides, Athenian historian and general in 5th century BC, are very often seen as the starting point of realist school in international politics. As a participant in the war between Delian League (led by Athens) and Peloponnesian League (led by Sparta), Thucydides wrote his experiences in a collection of eight books called *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Some of the prominent realist conceptions are reflected in his book which has prompted realists to claim that Thucydides was a realist. One of the central ideas echoed by Thucydides is that the strong should rule the weak as they have the power to do so. This was an articulation of politics based on power. In the words of Thucydides, "The strong do what they can; the weak suffer what they must". In book 5, Thucydides covers the *Melian Dialogue* which is a dramatised version of conversation between Athenians and representatives from Melos (a small island which tried to be neutral in the Peloponnesian war). The Melians represent the idealist thought compared to the realist, strategic and pragmatic Athenians. When Melians resort to ideals of morality and justice while facing an invasion from Athens, Athenians argue that the powerful have a right to rule the weak (might is right) and independent states can survive only if they are powerful enough to protect their independence. They also say that justice can only exist between equals not between unequals. The moral of the dialogue is that whenever there is power imbalance between two sides, the stronger would assert itself as per its own interests. This is human nature.

Around the same time, a similar and radical view of justice had been expressed by Thrasymachus, a Sophist and a renowned teacher of rhetoric. In Plato's *Republic*, Thrasymachus, just like Thucydides, has defined justice as the interest of the stronger. According to realist thinker Robert Gilpin, Thucydides is a realist as he argued that men are motivated by honour, greed and fear. Other values like beauty, goodness and truth will be lost unless there are provisions for one's security in the power struggle among social groups.

7.3.2 Kautilya

Despite having intrinsic theoretical value in international politics, Kautilya's famous work, *Arthashastra* has been largely ignored not only in India but outside as well which reflects the Eurocentric view of international relations. Kautilya can be easily considered as the pre-modern founding father of theory of Political Realism. Roger Boesche in his book *The First Great Realist: Kautilya and His Arthashastra* (2002) has argued that Kautilya was the first great, unrelenting political realist. Max Weber saw no role for any type of ideology in *Arthashastra* and talked about Kautilya's trained ability to relentlessly gaze at realities of life. Supremacy of national interest, anarchic nature of inter-state relations and centrality of power in international politics are some of the ideas that are clearly reflected in *Arthashastra*. Classic realist, Morgenthau identifies ancient political philosophy from Greece, China and India as the starting point of his theory. The methods discussed by him to maintain a favourable balance of power include divide and rule, compensation, armaments and alliances which are similar to four *upayas* given by Kautilya. Henry Kissinger saw Kautilya as a combination of Machiavelli and Clausewitz. Another important point is that *Arthashastra* is generally perceived as a realist treatise but it is very often forgotten that *Arthashastra* frequently uses the word *dharma* which stands for morality or

righteousness. It is not possible for a text not to have normative and moral foundations which cites dharma as part of governance and daily life. Kautilya's approach comes out as a holistic mix of idealism and realism.

7.3.3 Niccolo Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes

Italian diplomat and philosopher, Niccolo Machiavelli (15the century) and English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (16th century) too used realism and pragmatism as a backdrop in expressing their views. Machiavelli was born at a time when values like virtue and ethics were seen as an integral part of politics and inter-state relations. He ushered in modernity by changing this belief and separated politics from ethics and morality. He went on to say that all means (immoral and moral) are justified to attain certain political ends and it's the ends that justify means. Since the Greek Sophists, such rejection of morality had not been seen in Europe. In the 15th chapter of his book, *The Prince*, he refers to the effective truth – the reality that is felt and experienced opposed to imagined and utopian truth of Christians and Greeks. During his life, Machiavelli saw instability and wars and through his book, *The Prince*, advised the King to maintain power, order and stability. Survival of the state is the main theme of his work as he says that the state has no higher duty than of maintaining itself. Primacy of state and its survival is one of the main tenets of realist approach in IR.

Like Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes did not focus on international relations. But his book *Leviathan* had a deep impact on Classical realists like Hans Morgenthau and Neo-realist, Kenneth Waltz. Hobbes was part of the intellectual thinking that wanted to break the tradition of classical political philosophy. Idealism was part of this philosophy which believes that individuals are rational and moral having the capability to distinguish between right and wrong. Hobbes refutes this claim saying human beings are selfish, egoistic, nasty and brutish who are restless to acquire power until they die. He referred to the hypothetical situation of 'state of nature' in which individuals stayed before societies were formed. It was a situation in which there was no government to protect individuals and everyone has a right to everything. They attack each other for gain and to secure themselves, can invade others pre-emptively. It is a situation of war of all against all. Hobbes has said that such a state of nature also exists among all the independent nations at all times. This leads to anarchy at international level in absence of a world government. Views of Hobbes on human nature, anarchy in international relations and power politics became important pillars of realist tradition. However, a careful reading of Hobbes reveals that his approach to international relations is pacifist and he envisioned that cooperation and peace were possible in international politics.

7.3.4 E H Carr

The realist approach can be categorized in four main generations. *First*, the interwar and wartime generation represented by E H Carr and Reinhold Niebuhr. *Second*, the post-war and early Cold War generation that includes Hans Morgenthau and Raymond Aron. *Third* is the detente generation represented by Kenneth Waltz and Robert Gilpin. The *last*, post-cold war generation has names like John Mearsheimer, Steven Walt and Charles Glaser. Led by E H Carr, British historian and diplomat, realism emerged as an approach in IR in response to liberal idealist approach that dominated international studies and policy after the First World War. The realists vs idealists debate is often described as the first

great debate in IR, however, some scholars negate these claims. Idealists or the Liberal Internationalists argued that conflict can be averted by international institutions and respect for international law. Some of the famous idealists include British politician and Nobel laureate Philip Noel Baker, former US President Woodrow Wilson and British academic Alfred Zimmern. From India, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru too had an idealist approach to international politics. Idealism, in general sense, is an idea that is impractical, too perfect to be true. Idealists in IR focused on growing interdependence, unity of human beings and establishing multilateral platforms like the League of Nations. They argued that war was not the result of imperfect human nature but faulty political and social conditions which can be improved. However, with the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the idealist approach to IR lost acceptance. In his book, The Twenty Years Crisis (1939), E H Carr launched an academic attack on the idealists, calling them deluded and dangerous. He argued that morality is not universal but relative. He highlighted the importance of power by saying that order is achieved through power not morality. In words of Carr, morality is product of power. He was therefore critical of the British and the American intellectuals and statesmen for ignoring the role of power in international politics. He argued that states care greatly but not exclusively about power. He rejected pure realism and recognised that there is an idealist dimension to international relations but in case of a conflict between power and ideals, states choose power in policy making.

7.3.5   Hans Morgenthau

E H Carr did not intend to explain the theory of realism and instead, he was more interested in giving a critical analysis of idealism and undermines its influence. The credit for expanding realism into a theoretical perspective goes to Hans J Morgenthau, a realist from early Cold War period. Morgenthau was a Jew who reached the US as a refugee having faced fascism in Germany. Due to his personal experiences, he was strongly against totalitarianism and weak foreign policy methods to deal with such tendencies as reflected in idealist approach to IR. Morgenthau was influenced by Niebuhr and Hobbes and argued that the human desire to dominate is the main cause of conflict. In his 1948 book, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Morgenthau proclaimed that international politics is a struggle for power. American writings on international politics before the Second World War neglected importance of national power. Morgenthau's views on realism can be understood through his six principles of political realism as explained below.

- Politics is governed by objective laws which have their roots in unchanging human nature.

- Realism perceives the world through the concept of 'interest defined in terms of power'.

- Universally, interest is to be defined in terms of power; however, its meaning and interest may change.

- Realism is a perspective which is aware of moral importance of political action.

- Moral aspirations of a community or state may not find universal acceptance.

- As a tradition of thought, realism was distinct in its focus on the autonomy of the political realm and the decisions made within it.

However, there has been a selective reading of Morgenthau as the ethical dimension of his thought has remained neglected which he considered equally important. By mid-1960s, Morgenthau was convinced that the lesson of realism had been overlearned in the US. He argued that realism minus ethical considerations was the reason behind American intervention in Vietnam and that is why; he opposed this move in American foreign policy.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) Discuss E H Carr's critique of idealism.

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7.4 NEO-REALISM OR STRUCTURAL REALISM

Neo-realism attempted to transform classical realism with application of methods and language of modern social sciences. It was impact of behaviouralism that attempts were made to use concepts of science and reasoning in IR theory to replace the normative approach used by classic realists like Morgenthau. In 1950s and 1960s, scholars from diverse backgrounds came to study IR and new research methods like game theory and quantitative research began to creep in the study of international relations. Moreover, in the 1970s, the detente between the US and Soviet Union led to a decline in tensions between the two superpowers. At the same, new actors like the Non-alignment movement, international economic institutions and other non-governmental organisations emerged as prominent actors in international politics. As a result of these developments, pluralism and liberalism once again began to gain influence in the international studies. It is in this context that Kenneth Waltz wrote his book, *Theory of International Politics (1979)*. In this book which was greatly influenced by theories and models of microeconomics, Waltz addressed the defects of classical realism. Drawing a parallel between the market and international relations, Waltz agued that they both operate without any defined order. States are like firms in a domestic market and the primary aim of both (state and firm) is to survive through competition in a system where self-help is the rule.

Neo-realism explains why states despite variation in their internal factors behave in similar ways and why the notion of interdependence is not going to succeed in international politics. Similar behaviour of states is due to the structure of international relations which is anarchic in nature. Absence of any central authority in international politics leads to anarchy which is the ordering principle in IR. Anarchy and egoism impede cooperation between states. States are the primary units in the international system and each unit performs the same function of survival. Hence, there is no functional differentiation between the units. In an anarchic system, each unit (state) performs the same function of survival. In

such a scenario, their relative capability (power) becomes important to perform the same function. A more powerful state has more chances to survive. According to Waltz, there are two main factors which impede cooperation in anarchic international system – insecurity and relative gains. Every state remains concerned about the intentions of the other state leading to insecurity. For instance, since arms control agreements cannot be independently verified, states would engage in costly arms race. A state would also consider whether its own gains under interdependence outweigh those of the others. This would limit the possibility of cooperation. Analysing the nature of America-Soviet Union relations, neo-realists would argue that the US opposed the Russian Revolution and remained hostile to USSR for two decades after it. However, Nazi Germany under Hitler emerged as a common enemy and despite their internal (ideological) differences and history of enmity; both the US and the USSR cooperated against the common enemy. After the Second World War, both the superpowers again became adversaries leading to the Cold War. The rivalry between the two countries was induced by the structure of international politics and not their domestic factors (although they may have intensified it). In a bipolar system, both powers see each other as a threat and would balance against each other. Hence, the Cold War was a natural result of bipolarity.

7.4.1 Differences between Classical Realism and Neo-Realism

The differences between Classical Realism and Neo-Realism are explained below.

- The *first* difference pertains to the question – why states want power? According to the classic realists, the answer is human nature. They would argue that great powers are led by individuals who want to accumulate power and have their state dominate its rivals. Neo-realism traces it to the structure of international system. In an anarchical international system, states cannot trust each other's intentions and it makes sense for them to be powerful enough to protect themselves in case they are attacked. Neo-realism is also called structural realism as it gives central importance to the anarchical structure of international politics.

- *Second*, for classic realists, power is an end in itself while for the neo-realists, power is a means to an end and the ultimate end for a state is survival.

- *Third*, neo-realism followed a different methodology as it relied on methods drawn from microeconomics. It, therefore, claims to be more systematic and scientific than classic realism. Neo-realism was influenced by the behaviouralist revolution of the 1960s while classic realism is based on subjective interpretation of international politics.

7.4.2 Defensive Realism

There are differences within structural realists on how much power is enough for a state. There are two views on this question. The first one is given by the defensive realists and the main proponents include Kenneth Waltz, Jack Snyder and Stephen Van Evera. Defensive realists argue that since states want security, it is possible to have an international equilibrium that is stable through balancing. They reject the argument of offensive realists that states seek hegemony and say that it is strategically foolish to pursue hegemony. States want an appropriate amount of power, not hegemony due to a number of factors. *First*, if any state becomes too

powerful, other states will balance against it. *Second*, conquest is feasible but it would not pay as its costs outweigh the benefits. Due to nationalism, it is difficult to subdue the conquered. These factors would limit the appetite for power of a state, otherwise, they risk threatening their own survival.

7.4.3 Offensive Realism

John Mearsheimer in his *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics (2001)*, has portrayed offensive realism as the successor to Kenneth Waltz's neo-realism. He argues that states seek to maximize power instead of security. States constantly seek opportunities to maximise their power and hegemony is their ultimate goal. This makes it harder to achieve equilibrium in international politics through balancing. Offensive realists argue that often, balancing is inefficient which allows an aggressor to take advantage of its adversaries. Threatened states sometimes resort to buck passing instead of joining a coalition against an adversary. This means that they remain on the sidelines while depending on other states to check the potential adversary. Such behaviour encourages aggression. Offensive realists have also argued that more often than not, history shows that a side that initiates war wins. Hegemony may be difficult to achieve but the US had gained hegemony in the western hemisphere in 19th century.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

   ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1)   What are the differences between classical realism and neo-realism?

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2)   Explain the differences between defensive and offensive realism.

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7.5   ASSESSMENT

The rise of international relations as a discipline and realist approach to IR has been synonymous with each other. With all its shortcomings, realism has been the most dominant theory in IR which has profoundly influenced the other approaches in the discipline. Critics have argued that realism takes an extreme view of human nature by treating humans as selfish and nasty. Realism would

fail to explain why peace and cooperation exists between various states. Responding to neo-realism, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye have given their concept of complex interdependence. They have argued that complex interdependence is closer to reality of world politics than realism. Further, they state that states are not the only actors in international politics and there is presence of multinational corporations and international non-governmental organizations which connect societies. Neo-liberals have accepted that the international system is anarchic but they do not believe it will lead to conflict and emphasis centrality of cooperation in international politics. Realism would not have predicted the fall of Soviet Union and the end of Cold War as it gives more focus to state as a unit and ignores certain actions of citizens that can threaten the survival of a state. One of the main reasons for the fall of USSR was that in many of its republics, citizens revolted against the Soviet leadership and demanded freedom and independence. Realist approach does not address the new threats to a state – climate change and terrorism. Terrorist groups like the Islamic State or Al Qaeda are also called non-state actors and realism does not have much to say about non-state actors. Critical perspective has challenged the inequality and injustice in IR and raised issues that are often ignored by mainstream theories like realism. For instance, feminists have argued that the role of women in creating and sustaining international politics has remained on the fringes and feminist approach tries to analyze international politics from the eyes of women. J N Tickner's critique of Morgenthau has been discussed in Unit 10 of this course. Contrary to materialist and individualist interpretation of IR given by realism, constructivism gives more importance to ideational factors like norms, rules and identity. They argue that identity is socially constructed. Instead of focusing on distribution of power, constructivism gives importance to distribution of identities. Despite all the criticism, realism has an important role to caution policymakers against high idealism and morality so that they do not lose touch with the real picture based on power and national interest. However, if it becomes a dogmatic practice, realism can be used to justify aggression and war.

7.6   LET US SUM UP

Realism as an approach has many strands. However, the realists agree on a number of issues. They agree that international politics is power politics and states are the main actors in IR. They also stand united in saying that anarchy exists at international level and there is security dilemma that states face. Classical realism and neo-realism have certain differences while the neo-realists are further divided in two camps – defensive realism and offensive realism. Realism has an important role to caution policymakers against high ideals but too much emphasis on realism can lead to war and aggression.

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7.8   ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Your answer should highlight following points: i) Exists under anarchic international relations, ii) Also called spiral mode, iii) Steps taken by one country to enhance its own security would decrease the security of other states , iv) Threatened states then would take steps to increase their own security , v) This ends up in a perpetual competitive cycle

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) Your answer should highlight following points: i) E H Carr launched an academic attack on the idealists, ii) Called them deluded and dangerous , iii) Argued morality is not universal but relative, iv) Highlighted the importance of power, v) Morality is product of power.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

1) Your answer should highlight following points: i) Differences over why states want power (human nature vs anarchy), ii) Differences over the concept of power, iii) Neo-realism influenced by microeconomic theory, more scientific.

2) Your answer should highlight following points i) Defensive realists believe it stable international equilibrium is possible via balancing, ii) Offensive realists argue states want maximum power and want hegemony, balancing is not possible.

UNIT 8 LIBERALISM AND NEO-LIBERALISM*

Structure

8.1   OBJECTIVES

Liberalism is an eminent theory of international relations (IR). It has several dimensions. The objective is to explore the definitions, history and the various theoretical standpoints of liberalism. This unit introduces you to the key thinkers on the subject. Besides, it also helps to understand the key concepts associated with it. After reading this unit, student shall be able to:

- Identify the core principles of liberalism in the years before the Second World War

- Describe the major liberal theories that evolved in the post-war period

- Identify the core features of neoliberal approach to study IR

- Identify the core features of the Neo- Neo debate

- Describe the liberal vision of society, state and market

- Explore key aspects of neoliberalism and the evolution of international political economy

8.1   INTRODUCTION

Like Realism, Liberalism (and its current variant neo-liberalism) is a mainstream approach to understand international politics. And, like Realism it is a name given to a family of related theories of international relations. It has a multidimensional tradition dating back to the 17th and 18th centuries. Historically, the liberal tradition emerged as a critique of feudal political rule. It also emerged

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as a critique of mercantilism, the dominant economic strategy of those times. Liberalism is also a rich tradition of thought concerning international relations. In this unit, we are concerned mainly with the latter dimension of liberalism.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, liberal philosophers and political thinkers debated the difficulties of establishing just, orderly and peaceful relations between peoples. A systematic account of the problems of world peace was given by Immanuel Kant in 1795. His ideas have had a profound impact on the development of liberalism in international relations.

In the 19th century, solutions to the problem of war evaded even the most eminent of thinkers. Much of the liberal scholarship became content with diplomatic history until the outbreak of the First World War. The Great War and the destruction that it caused forced the liberal thinkers to find new means to prevent violent conflicts and create conditions in which reason and cooperation would prevail. Basing their premise on the inherent goodness of man, these liberal thinkers focused on negotiations, rule of law and establishing stable international institutions. The widespread anti-war sentiment within Europe and North America which existed in the 1920s provided the necessary support for the liberal enterprise.

However, the failure of the League of Nations and the outbreak of the Second World War led to the marginalisation of liberal thought that was infused with idealism. Realism came to the fore as it seemed to provide a better explanation of the power politics of the Cold War that came to dominate international relations. Nevertheless, innovations in liberal tradition continued leading to the development of a number of theories to explain the developments in international relations. Prominent among them are sociological liberalism (or transnationalism), pluralism, interdependence theory, liberal internationalism, liberal peace theory, world society and neo-liberal approaches.

In the early 1980s when conflict between major powers had receded and cooperation in pursuit of mutual interests had emerged as a prominent feature of world politics, a new paradigm or framework of analysis emerged in the liberal tradition- Neoliberal Internationalism. As this approach emerged in response to the development of neorealism, it is also called as the Neoliberal approach. This new approach infused greater scientific rigor in liberal scholarship.

In the 1990s, regional and international economic integration (globalisation) on the one hand and new issues, such as multiculturalism, democracy, environment on the other, have led liberalism to focus on international order, institutions and processes of governance, human rights, democratisation, peace and economic integration. The focus of this unit is on the dominant features of the liberal tradition in the years before the Second World War and the important trends in the evolution of liberalism in the post-war years, focusing in particular on the neo-liberal approach.

8.2 THE LIBERAL TRADITION: MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

Liberal theorists have strong faith in human reason. This characteristic can be traced back to the ideas of John Locke (1632-1704) who argued that reason is

necessary for arriving at truth and right action. Reason is necessary for understanding and shaping nature and society. According to the liberal theorists, human beings are capable of shaping their destiny, including international relations and moulding the negative ramifications of the absence of a world government.

Secondly, liberal theorists believe in the possibility of historical progress. Human reason and processes of social learning make progress possible. In the liberal conception therefore, mankind is not doomed to live in a state of perpetual conflict, but can choose political strategies to avoid it. In other words, liberal theorists argue that it is possible and desirable to reform international relations.

Thirdly, liberal theorists focus on state-society linkages and claim the existence of a close connection between domestic institutions and politics on the one hand and the international politics on the other. Since the publication of *Perpetual Peace* (1795) by German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) many liberal theorists became convinced that there is a causal link between the form of domestic regime and the possibility of war. Kant had specifically claimed that 'republican' (that is, democratic) states are more peaceful at least vis a vis one another. The contemporary idea of theory of democratic peace can be traced to this idea of Kant

Liberal theorists are pluralists as well. They believe that state is only one actor both in within a society and on the international stage. They challenge the realist assumption that states are the only actors in international politics. Liberals argue that there are many actors in world politics which play a vital role in influencing international outcomes. The liberal tradition highlights the importance of non-state actors such as MNCs and NGOs.

Fifth, some liberal theorists, following David Ricardo ((1772-1823) and Richard Cobden (1804-65), champion free trade as increasing interdependence among states reduces the likelihood of war. They reject mercantilism which regarded economic growth and war as compatible goals. Liberals argue that free trade is preferable to mercantilism as trade produces wealth without war. As we shall see later, these ideas have formed the basis of an entire current of thinking: interdependence liberalism.

Liberal theorists also place great emphasis on institutions. They believe that Institutions are necessary to protect and nurture the core values like order, liberty, justice and tolerance in politics. They therefore championed the creation of the League of Nations after the World War I. They were convinced that the League as an international organisation could prevent war better than the alternatives, including the traditional balance of power politics.

8.3 CLASSICAL LIBERALISM

Classic liberalism is the name given to liberal thought in the pre-Second World War years. As we saw, liberalism bestowed importance on the idea of human reason. It believes that all individuals are rational creatures. Hence, they are in a better position to decide what is for their own good. It is precisely because human beings are driven by the logic of reason that they have a tendency to cooperate with one another, especially in areas where they have common interest. Such cooperation can occur both domestically and internationally (Jackson and Sorensen 2008: 98). Liberalism focuses on the idea of individual liberty. The

basics of classical liberalism can be found in the ideas of Adam Smith, John Locke and Jeremy Bentham.

- John Locke (1688) is known as the father of classical liberalism. He argued that government should rule by the consent of the governed. Locke argued the case of limited government. The main responsibility of the government is to protect the rights and liberties of its citizens.

- Adam Smith (1776) believed in the idea of 'economic man'. Smith believed that if every individual tries to maximize their self-interest, it will lead to overall economic prosperity in the society. Smith coined the term laissez faire economy. According to this idea, the market the state shall not interfere in the activities of the market. Smith visualized that a free market can bring about overall national prosperity.

- Bentham introduced the concept of the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number'. Thus, individuals should focus on those activities which maximizes pleasure and minimizes pain. Bentham also proposed that there should be an international court. The spirit of Bentham's idea can be observed in the structures and functions of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) (Sutch and Elias 2010).

In the early 20th century, liberal thinkers dominated both scholarship on international relations and policy making. In fact, the establishment of the academic discipline to address international relations was essentially a liberal project. The academic discipline emerged specifically in order to improve our understanding of international relations and in turn to improve or reform the relations.

Liberal thinking at that time traced the causes of the World War I to fatal misperceptions among political elite, secret diplomacy and lack of democracy, war prone military establishments, lack of international institutions etc. Liberals played an important role in designing a political programme to address these issues in the immediate years after the World War I. In doing so, they made a significant mark on the dominant foreign policies of the day. Much of their agenda is reflected in the Fourteen Points programme speech delivered by the US President Woodrow Wilson in January 1918.

The main features of the Fourteen Point programme are as follows:

- 'Open covenants of peace openly aimed at' – This means that that the process of international diplomacy should be transparent in character. It means that states shall no longer be able to enter into secret alliances with one another. Following this logic, liberalism gives importance to the formation of international institutions so that it can enshrine laws, and rules for the states to follow.

- 'Removal of economic barriers' – This flows from the liberal belief that as economic cooperation among states increases, they will not go to war.

- 'National Self-determination' – Every state should try to achieve democracy.

- 'Associations of Nations' – States should form associations among themselves which would guarantee their territorial integrity and political independence.

On the basis of these principles, the League of Nations was established in 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference. The League was intended to restore peace and prevent war. Member countries of the League were to protect the territorial integrity of other fellow members on the basis of collective security. Collective security is based on the idea of 'one for all, and all for one', that is, each state in the collective accepts that the security of one is the concern of all, and agrees to join in a collective response to aggression. This is different from Collective Defence or an alliance of a number of states joining together in response to a specific threat or for a specific issue of cause.

The liberal programme succeeded in influencing policy making but failed in avoiding conflict and war. Instead of a bright post-war future, it led to, what is referred to as the 'Twenty Years' crisis (E.H. Carr, 1939) and eventually to the World War II. During these years, with the United States not joining the League and the emergence of Nazism and Fascism in Europe, liberal ideas and strategies could not flourish. The collective security system too collapsed. Towards the fag end of the World War II, the major powers decided to give the liberal agenda a big push by establishing more advanced forms of international institutions, the United Nations and later the European Community.

8.4 LIBERAL APPROACH IN THE POST-WAR YEARS

In the four decades after World War II, the Cold War conflict between the two superpowers assumed global proportions. The Realist school that had come into dominant position in academia and policy making in Europe and North America dismissed the liberal approach as utopian or idealistic. Yet, despite their theory-turned-practice failures, liberal thinkers managed to build new theories and achieve a significant share in the research agenda of international relations. These theories (Sociological Liberalism, Functionalism, Interdependent Liberalism and Republican Liberalism) as well as their assumptions have formed the basis for the emergence of a new conceptual framework, the Neoliberal approach (also known as the Liberal Institutional approach).

8.4.1 Sociological Liberalism

Sociological liberalism came into being during the closing stages of the nineteenth century and continued to flourish until the mid-20th century. The writings of Richard Cobden (1903), Karl Deutsch (1957) and John Burton (1972) elaborately explain the ideas. Importantly, Cobden argues that interactions across the world can take place between different societies. This form of liberalism makes a strong case for pluralism in IR. According to this view, people and social groupings relate with one another and form networks across the globe. As we saw in the last unit, realists give importance only to 'official' and 'formal' relations among states. Sociological liberalism rejects this view as too narrowly focused and one-sided. It points to the other actors, other than states, in IR. Sociological Liberalism puts forward the idea of transnationalism whose key features are as follows:

- Private groups and societies are important agents of international politics

- These groups help states to achieve their objectives in international relations

- The relations between people across different societies are friendlier in nature. They are always eager to support one another.

- It helps them to develop peaceful relations among themselves.

- They can formulate networks among themselves around the world. It can lead to the formation of global societies (Rosenau 1980).

Another key thinker of this school, Karl Deutsch introduced the idea of 'security community'. It means that regular interaction among people can lead to the development of a 'community feeling' among themselves (Deutsch et al. 1957). It would reduce the possibility of conflict among states. John Burton in his book, *World Society* (1972) also discusses the interactions which take place among different social, economic and cultural groups across the globe. This network is known as the 'cobweb' model. It reduces the chances of conflict in world politics (Jackson and Sorensen 2008; Little 1996).

In sum, sociological liberalism believes that overlapping interdependent relations between people are bound to be more cooperative than relations between states because states are exclusive and their interests do not overlap and cross-cut. A world with a large number of transnational networks will thus be more peaceful.

8.4.2 Functionalism

The functionalist theorists such as David Mitrany and Ernst Haas argue that if states cooperate in any one aspect, they would be able to do so in other fields. Although the primary focus of functionalism is on the economic cooperation among states, its underlying assumption was that economic cooperation would allow them to cooperate in the political domain as well (Leiber 1972: 42). In other words, cooperation in one field will have a spill over effect (Jensen 2010: 272) eventually giving rise to a supranational authority (such as the European Union – EU).

Functionalism in International Politics can be understood in a better manner by observing the history of the formation of the EU. It began with the emergence of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952. The European economies which were devastated by the World War II began giving more importance to economic revival. It was based on the belief that cooperation can prevent war and conflict among nations. Peace can be restored if states collaborate with one another in the realm of trade, culture, transport and communication. Indeed, since the establishment of ECSC, there has been a growing economic and political cooperation among European nations leading to common policies in agriculture, currency, security etc. This eventually led to the establishment of the European Union, the EU in 1993. The EU is an example of political, economic and monetary union. The EU makes a strong case in favour of 'pooling of sovereignty'. It means that states are not surrendering their sovereign power. But they are trying to create a condition which can help them to achieve power sharing (Leiber 1973: 42- 43).

8.4.3 Interdependence Liberalism

This concept came into the parlance of international politics during the latter part of the 1970s. Robert O' Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, who developed this concept point out that all actors of international relations – state and non-state

are mutually dependent on one another. International politics works on the basis of collaboration of these various actors. Interdependence takes place due to the transnational flow of money, people, goods, services and communication. In their book, *Power and Interdependence* (2001), Keohane and Nye identify three main features of interdependence:

- There are multiple channels of connection that link societies and peoples. It includes informal ties between a) government officials; b) non-governmental individual; and, c) members of transnational organizations. These classifications communicate the idea that transnational connections important in world politics. This understanding is different from realism.

- There are multiple issues in world politics. It means that in international politics, there is no hierarchy of issues. Liberalism therefore challenges statesmen across the world who give priority only to military and security issues. It argues that there are certain issues of domestic politics of a country that may have a worldwide impact.

- There can be a connection between national issues of a country with an international event. Liberal theorists call this as linkage strategy (Burchill 2013). For example, financial breakdown in one country may have a negative impact on the world economy.

8.4.4 Republican Liberalism

Republican liberalism is inspired by the ideas of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and contemporary American scholar, Michael Doyle. It postulates that democratic governments have positive features and that they do not go to war with one another. This is the central idea of the democratic peace thesis. This thesis poses a challenge to the realist claims that peace depends on the systemic balance of power rather than the domestic nature of the governments.

Michael Doyle (1983, 1986) who has developed Kant's perpetual peace theory explains why democracies are at peace with one another. First, the existence of domestic political cultures based on peaceful conflict resolution encourages peaceful international relations. Government controlled by their citizens, will not advocate or support wars with other democracies.

Second, democracies hold common moral values which lead to the formation of what Kant called a 'pacific union' (not a formal treaty, but rather a zone of peace). Freedom of expression and free communication promote mutual understanding internationally, and help to assure that political representatives act in accordance with citizens' views.

Finally, peace between democracies is strengthened through economic cooperation and interdependence. In the pacific union it is possible to encourage what Kant called 'the spirit of commerce': mutual and reciprocal gain for those involved in international economic cooperation and exchange.

Republican liberalism, therefore, advocates promotion of democracy worldwide to achieve peace, one of the most fundamental values of all political values. In this sense, it is one of theories with a strong normative element.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1)   What are the features of the idea of transnationalism?

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8.5   NEO-LIBERAL APPROACH

We have seen in the last unit that there was a new positivist orientation and shift in the scope of the Realist approach that has come to be called Neo-realism or structural realism. A similar shift occurred in Liberalism, largely as a reaction to the rise of Neorealism. Two seminal works that marked a break from the existing liberal tradition in international relations are Robert Keohane's *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (1984) and Robert Axelrod's *Evolution of Cooperation* (1981). While the former focused on complex interdependence, the latter applied game theory to explain how cooperation emerges and persists. These publications introduced a new conceptual framework in liberal studies which has come to be called as Neo-liberalism. The use of the 'neo-liberal' label is no doubt because the theories developed by Keohane and Axelrod shared a lot with neo-realism. They accepted the two basic assumptions of international anarchy and rational egoism of states to show that it was possible for rational egoists to cooperate even in anarchic systems. They also drew on material from the same kind of sources as the neorealists- in particular game theory, public choice and rational choice theory.

8.5.1   A Break with Tradtional Liberalism

Neo-liberalism differed from classical liberalism in several important ways. To begin with Liberal thought had not addressed the question of anarchy in the international system. Neo-liberals accepted the neorealist proposition that the international system is anarchic, but rejected the realist assertion that this condition would lead to conflict. Instead, Neo-liberals emphasised the centrality of cooperation in international politics. An important question that they pose to the Realists is "If the anarchic international system necessarily creates a self-help environment-a war of all against all as Hobbes suggested -then why is war not more common?"

Neo-liberals also differ from classical liberals on the causes of conflict. As we saw, liberalism had emphasized on the centrality of human nature and argued that conflict and war was the result of bad actors or failure of cooperation. Neo-liberalism, on the other hand, stress on the importance of international institutions in structuring international environment in ways that mitigates against anarchy. In other words, causes for conflict cannot be traced to human nature, but to the

presence or absence of international institutions. Neo-liberals assert that international institutions perform the following tasks:

1) Encourage communication and dialogue between states creating a forum to negotiate their differences.

2) Promote transparency in interaction between states and in the agreements that they negotiate.

3) Help to shape expectations and to develop collective international norms that offer stability and predictability in global politics

4) Establish a framework to promote reciprocity and bargaining between states facilitating the peaceful resolution of disputes. They permit the coordination of policy to address tensions in collective action problems and thus help to avoid the security and prisoners' dilemmas.

It is because of the importance placed on global institutions that the Neo-liberal theory of international relations is also referred to as Neo-liberal Institutionalism.

Secondly, Neo-Liberalism differs with Liberalism on the question of important actors in global politics. Liberalism tends to emphasise the importance of individual agents as actors in global politics. Individual choice and psychology tend to play an important role in the Liberal explanations and analysis. In sharp contrast, Neo-liberals accept the Realist assertion that the state is the most important actor though they add international institutions as essentially as collections of states as well. Other actors would include non state actors like MNCs and NGOs. They accept the Neorealist claim that the state is a rational actor and that it engages in cost benefit analysis in pursuit of defined goals. Liberals would not be necessarily comfortable with this claim.

Finally, Neo-liberalism differs with Liberalism in its analysis of conflicts. Liberalism is generally historical and philosophical in their orientation, explaining conflict in specific historical context. It draws extensively on fields like political theory and philosophy. Neo-liberal explanations of conflicts, on the other hand, tend to be more focused on ahistorical structural explanations. Neo-liberals draw extensively from game theory and behavioural economics rather than history and philosophy in their analysis. Neo-liberals often use concepts from game theory to show how the structure of the international system can force particular outcomes or can lead to situations where rational decision making which may appear to be rational but which lead to suboptimal outcomes.

8.5.2 The Neo-Neo Debate in IR

If we are to examine the emergence of liberalism and neoliberalism as an academic discipline, it is necessary to focus on the Great Debates of IR. The First Great Debate between realism and liberal internationalism showed how the failure of the League of Nations proved that the idea of *harmony of interest* was not correct. Historians such as E.H Carr termed liberal internationalism as '*utopianism*' and '*idealism*' (Brown and Ainley 2009: 26). The Second Great Debate between Behaviouralism and Post-behaviouralism focused on whether IR should be studied by taking help from methods of natural science or it should be done by taking a more value-based approach (Daddow 2013: 70). The third Great Debate in international relations between Neo-realism and Neo-Liberalism (the neo-neo debate) gives a detailed understanding of neoliberalism in IR as an approach to

study. Both neorealism and neoliberalism believe that states are rational actors. But there are certain differences between them. They are as follows:

- Neorealism and Neoliberalism accept that there is anarchy in the international system (Baldwin 1993). Neorealism argues that due to anarchy, states will never cooperate with one another. They will always compete with each other. Neorealists feel that cooperation depends upon the will of the state. The neoliberals on the other hand point out that states do cooperate with one another on those issue areas where they have similar interests (Lamy 2008: 133).

- Neorealism focuses on survival. Hence, use of force cannot be avoided. On the other hand, the neoliberal school believes in the idea of complex interdependence (Baldwin 1993).

- The neorealists have given importance to 'high politics' such as military and diplomacy. For the neo-liberals, trade and economic activities are more important. (Keohane and Nye 2001: 28).

- Neo-liberals are optimistic about cooperative behaviour and therefore argue in favour of absolute gains. When states are conducting economic interactions, it leads to a positive sum game. All parties involved in the process benefit. Neo-realism, on the other hand, holds that states compete with one another and therefore there can be only relative gains (Lamy 2008: 133).

- Neo-realism throws light on capabilities of the states. They feel that states are always uncertain about the intentions of other states. Neo-liberalism gives more importance to the preferences and intentions of states.

- Neo-liberals argue that international regimes play an important role world politics. They can help states to cooperate among themselves. Neo-realism does not agree with this point (Baldwin 1993).

From the above, it is evident that there is much in common between the neo-realism and neo-liberalism. Scholars outside the United States as well as those who work outside these paradigms therefore call it a 'neo-neo synthesis'. Moreover, they argue that the neo-neo debate has not advanced IR scholarship as a whole. Instead it has narrowed the field to a superficial enquiry based on questionable assumptions (such as anarchy) and methodologies that may or may not be suitable to the discipline.

8.5.3 The Darker side of Neo-Liberalism

A number of studies based on the neoliberal approach have emerged since the 1980s. However, almost all studies have focused on the experience of Western countries with international interdependence and regimes. As Robert Cox has observed,

"regime theory has much to say about economic cooperation among the Group of 7 (G- 7) and other groupings of advanced capitalist countries with regard to problems common to them. It has correspondingly less to say about attempts to change the structure of world economy, e.g. in the Third World demand for a

New International Economic Order (NIEO). Indeed, regimes are designed to stabilize the world economy and have the effect, as Keohane has underlined in his work, of inhibiting and deterring states from initiating radical departures from economic orthodoxy, e.g. through socialism." (Cox, 1992,173)

The principal cooperative institution of the Global South during the Cold War, the Nonaligned Movement (NAM) has received scant attention from the Neoliberal theorists. Secondly, these theories would 'assume, rather than establish, regimes as benevolent, voluntary, cooperative and legitimate' (Kieley, 1990, 90), a highly questionable assumption when one considers the exclusionary nature of some of the regimes and multilateral institution, at least from the point of Global South. Consider the case of those Latin American countries which have experienced economic inequality as a result of privatization and Structural Adjustment Policy (SAP). Bolivia, Venezuela and other Latin American nations have expressed their voices in protest of the neoliberal economic policies (Lamy 2008: 136). Moreover, it needs to be remembered that due to the increased mobility of capital, the government of states have faced difficulties in taxing the profits incurring from privatization-led development projects (Rodrik 1997). Had the government been able to earn revenues from these projects, it could have been channelized towards the development of social sectors such as health, education and social security measures. Hence, it can be argued that as a theory, neoliberalism is a construct of the developed world. As Robert Cox famously argued, 'Theory is always for someone and for some purposes' (Cox 1981: 128).

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) List the differences between neoliberalism and neorealism.

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8.6 LET US SUM UP

Liberalism has strong faith in human reason and rationality. They also focus on state-society linkages and argue that there is close connection between domestic institutions and politics on one hand and international politics on the other hand. Liberalism also contradicts the realist claim that states are the only actors in international politics. They champion free trade to increase interdependence among states to avoid war. In its new version, neo-liberal approach differs from liberalism. The liberal approach did not address the question of anarchy in international politics. Liberals and neo-liberals also differ on the causes of conflict

among states. As a theory, neo-liberalism is a construct of the developed world and the perspectives from Global South have not found a considerable mention in this approach.

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8.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Your answer should highlight following points: i) Private groups and societies important in IR, ii) People across societies are friendlier and support each other, iii) It can lead to formation of global societies

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) Your answer should highlight following points: i) Differences over implications of anarchy, ii) Neorealists give importance to military, neoliberalists prefer trade, iiiNeoliberals talk of absolute gains, neorealists favour relative gains

UNIT 9   MARXIST APPROACHES*

Structure

9.0   OBJECTIVES

This unit would discuss the Marxist approaches to international politics. After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the basic assumptions of the Marxist approach to International Relations (IR)

- Describe the evolution of the Marxist approaches

- Distinguish the Marxist approach from the Realist and Liberal approaches

- Explain the Marxist approach to key issues of IR like world order, hegemony, great power wars and imperialism

- Describe the variations in the Marxist approach and how they contribute to our understanding of world politics.

9.1   INTRODUCTION

Theories and approaches to International Relations (IR) are tools that help us to study and understand international politics better. Robert W. Cox has divided IR theories into two categories: Problem Solving and Critical Theory. The problem-solving theories include realism and liberalism, while critical theories encompass a broad range of theories like Marxism, feminism, postmodernism and postcolonialism. Being status quoist, the problem-solving theories primarily focus on analysing how the order is established and maintained in the international system. These theories focus on explaining the status quo hence pay little attention to change in the international system. For instance, liberalism focuses on analysing how international institutions, democracy and interdependence among actors prevent war, the major source of change in the international system. Neorealism charts out major obstacles to cooperation and strategies of great powers through which they establish and maintain hegemony. Believing in continuity, the realists see little prospects of change in the international system.

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For a long time, Marxism and international relations were in a state of mutual neglect. Given the domination of capitalist states in the discipline of IR and their suspicion towards Marxism, largely up to 1970s, Marxism could not secure a place in the syllabus of international relations courses in the West. The belief that Marx and Engels did not develop a theory of international relations was another reason for the exclusion of Marxism from mainstream IR. As a result, there were limited studies on Marxism as an approach to study international relations (Budd 2013: 04). Nevertheless, since the 1990s, things have improved significantly. Now, the Marxist approaches have been included in the syllabus and provide a nuanced picture of world politics.

It is the only theory of IR which is named after a philosopher (Karl Marx). But, the Marxist approach of world politics is not limited to the ideas of Karl Marx. A wide range of theorists such as Vladimir Lenin, Antonio Gramsci, Andre Gunder Frank, Robert Cox, Stephen Gill, Justin Rosenberg, Andrew Linklater and Mark Rupert have contributed to the development of Marxist approaches. The main focus of the Marxist approach to world politics is on divulging the real nature of the state, state-system and how they affect the capitalist world economy and vice versa. Different variants of the Marxist approach to IR and sometimes their competing claims may puzzle a student of international politics. To avoid unnecessary confusions, it would be prudent and helpful to identify some shared assumptions which hold different variants of Marxism together. Let us now identify some of the shared assumptions of different Marxist approaches.

9.2 BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF MARXIST APPROACH

First, International relation is a complex phenomenon. It takes place in a complex and intertwined structure. Changes in one aspect affect the functioning of other elements. In his famous book titled *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Karl Marx has written that "the relations of production of every society form a whole". Society and culture of a state cannot be separated from its economic system. Rather, a change in the *base* (economic factor) renders changes in its *superstructure* (society and culture). Drawing from Marx, Marxists IR theorists believe that world politics can better understand in *totality* than in fragmentation and isolation. Robert W. Cox, a neo-Gramscian theorist, has argued that to have a proper understanding of global issues, it is "necessary to breach sacrosanct interdisciplinary boundaries to draw upon history and sociology and geography, indeed upon all the social sciences and humanities" (Leysens 2008: 142). This is the reason why Marxism opposes neorealist's distinction between domestic and international and constructivists thesis to distinguish material and ideational variables. Division of social sciences into disciplines like history, sociology, political science, economics, and international relations hinders our proper understanding of world politics. Immanuel Wallerstein has presented the most systematic critique of the artificial division of social sciences.

Secondly, who are the main actors in international politics? It is a fundamental question of the IR discipline. Different theories answer this vital question differently. Realists assume that states are the main actor. For liberals, states, groups and even individuals are the main actors. Marxism assumes that it is not the state or individual, but *classes, social movements* and *economic market forces* that are the main actors of world politics. The class structure may take any form

like North vs South, Core vs Periphery, or First World vs Third World. In the capitalist world economy, the group of capital-rich states form bourgeoise class while the capital-poor states form the proletariat class. The capital-rich states own the means of production while capital-poor states are deprived of it. In the capitalist world economy, the proletariat group is reduced to supply cheap labour and raw material to capital-rich bourgeoise class and providing market of finished goods for bourgeoise class.

Third, Marxism is a *structuralist* theory. It assumes that world politics takes place in an environment called world-system. Immanuel Wallerstein has envisioned world-system as consisting of the state system and world-economy. Other structural theories call this structure by different names. For instance, realist calls it *an international system* while English school prefers to call *international society*. Both Marxists and neorealists believe in materialist construction of the structure. Neorealists emphasise that distribution of capabilities (power) in determining the structure of the international system. For them, the structure can be seen in terms of polarity: unipolarity, bipolarity or multipolarity. Marxism sees structure in terms of *core* and *periphery.* They believe that structure of the capitalist world system is determined by who has control over capital and means of production and who is deprived of it. Marxists believe that world politics operates in and is constrained by the structure. Therefore, it seeks to explain the dynamics of world politics by taking structural level factors into account.

Fourth, structural theories of IR see the nature of the international system differently. Realists and liberals assume that the nature of the international system is *anarchic*. Here anarchy means the absence of an overarching authority in the international system to command over states. Marxists assume that the world system is *conflictual*. The world system is conflictual because of the conflicting interests of the capital-rich bourgeoise class and capital-poor least developed proletariat class. Given the difference in interests, both classes vie for control of the capital, technology, natural resources and market. This competition leads to conflict.

Fifth, different theories use different methods and techniques to explain and understand international politics. Rationalist theories tend to use natural science-based positivism and explain the given phenomenon. In contrast, critical theories use post-positivism and focus on understanding any concept or issue than establishing a causal relationship. Constructivists' preferred constitutive and interpretive techniques. The Marxist approach uses *historical materialism* as the preferred method to explain and understand contemporary world politics. It believes that the main concepts of IR, like state and world order, are the result of historical development. Over the period, changing material conditions have shaped and reshaped this process. However, some neo-Marxist theorists like Gramsci and Robert W. Cox believe that ideas and institutions also play an important role. Despite nuances, the historical materialism retains its popularity in Marxist IR circles.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

   ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) Despite the existence of many variants of Marxism in IR, Marxist approaches are not much different. Why?

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9.3   MARXISM AND IMPERIALISM

Marxist scholars and theorists have presented a nuanced analysis of imperialism. Murray Noonan has categorised the evolution of Marxist analysis of imperialism in three phases. The first phase called 'pioneers of imperialism theory' includes writing of John A. Hobson and V.I. Lenin. Despite not being a Marxist, Hobson greatly influenced Marxist thinking on imperialism. In his book *Imperialism: A Study* (1902), Hobson defined imperialism in terms of malfunctioning of capitalism. He noticed that capitalist societies were facing three inter-related problems: overproduction, underconsumption and oversaving. In the capitalist system, a tiny section of society called capitalists controls the production process. By giving mere subsistence wages to workers, this section oversaves. The low wages result in underconsumption and oversaving by the capitalist class. The problem of overproduction and underconsumption can be solved if the capitalists spend a part of their saving on domestic welfare measures. But capitalist prefers to invest their surplus capital (oversaving) in other states to maximize their saving further. This eventually results in imperialism and imperialist wars among capitalist states in the underdeveloped regions of the world. Only capitalists are not the sole determinant of the policy of imperialism. Hobson argues that finance capitalism manipulates and organises non-economic components of imperialism like political, military, and religious for imperialism and imperialist wars.

Vladimir I. Lenin was the first Marxist thinker who explicated Marxist theory of imperialism systematically in his book *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916). According to Lenin, imperialism starts with economic factors, maintained and expanded through wars, and ends with the elimination of capitalism through proletariat revolution. His theory of imperialism is based on Hobson's conception of how overproduction, underconsumption and oversaving compel capitalist class to search for market and sources of raw material aboard and Rudolph Hilferding's idea that imperialist policies of capitalist states are a reflection of the monopoly of few over the capital in that state.

Lenin rejects the thesis that political and military factors mainly drove imperialism. In contrast, he argued that economic forces drive imperialism. With the advancement, 'competition' of old capitalism eventually turns into 'monopoly' of few in the advanced stage of capitalism. The depleting rate of return on investment in advanced capitalist states compels the capitalists to search for new market and sources of cheap raw material and labour so that profit can be maximised. This search ends with the establishment of colonies abroad. He saw wars among advanced capitalist states as an instrument to maintain empires and colonies abroad. Therefore, Lenin envisions imperialism as a phenomenon inevitably rendered by monopoly capital and calls imperialism the highest and last stage of capitalism. On ending of imperialism, Lenin believed that imperialism

could not be reformed through redistributive measures. Instead, imperialism can only be ended with the end of capitalism by the proletariat revolution and the establishment of collective ownership of means of production. Given the significance, Kenneth Waltz has called Lenin's theory of imperialism "elegant and powerful."

The next phase of the Marxist theory of imperialism started with neo-Marxist school in the years after the Second World War. This phase is closely associated with the writings of Paul Sweezy, Paul Baran, and dependency theorists such as Andre Gunder Frank, Samir Amin and Immanuel Wallerstein. Paul Sweezy is regarded as the founder of neo-Marxist theory of imperialism (Noonan 2017: 104). Sweezy thought that the purpose of "imperialism is to bind the middle classes closer to big capital and to widen the gulf between the middle classes and the working class" (Sweezy 1970: 317). By centralisation of capital, growth of military power, and the establishment of the empire, imperialism paves the way for an increase in the state's power and functions. He figured out five stages of the development of imperialism: Competition among advanced capitalist states; monopoly capitalism; capital export; extensive rivalry in the world market; and by dividing unoccupied territories among themselves, the advanced capitalist states establish colonies (Sweezy cited in Noonan 2017: 99).

Sweezy contributed to the Marxist theory of imperialism in three ways. First, he analysed the relationship between fascism and imperialism in a different way. In his analysis, Sweezy found a link between the rise of fascism and the war of division among colonial states. He observed that fascism "grew out of the ashes of the nations that were ravaged or defeated in the inter-imperialist struggle, where the capitalist structure had been severely injured but not overthrown" (Sweezy cited in Noonan 2017: 106). Fascism rose in states in which society was disrupted, and the middle class was caught between organised labour and the ruling class. The middle class used fascist ideology i.e. racism, nationalism, war and foreign conquest to fight the ruling class. Given the socialist rhetoric of fascists, initially, the capitalists were suspicious. But as the fascists came closer to the power centre in their states, capitalist started supporting with the intention that the fascist can be their partner in suppressing organised workers and foreign capitalists. Thus, the fascist state is based on monopoly capitalism.

Secondly, Sweezy presented a nuanced analysis of World War II. He interpreted the Second World War as three wars culminating into one. First, the war of redivision among the established colonial powers (like Britain and France) and rising colonial states like Japan to maintain and distribute existing colonies. Second, the war of capitalism and socialism fought between capitalist states like Germany on one side and socialist state like the Soviet Union on the other. Thirdly, anti-imperialist war taking place between rising Japanese colonialism in Asia and China as a colony. By exposing the metropolitan-colonial relationship, unlike other Marxists, Sweezy showed that imperialism brings stagnation, not development, in the colonies. He found that the colonial economy develops at a very slow pace. Industrialisation in the colonies is so slow that its indigenous handicraft producers cannot compete with the industrialised production of the advanced capitalist states. With the ruining of small businesses, individuals associated with these industries are forced to join agriculture. This problem can be solved by increasing industrialisation and enhancing productivity in agriculture. But "colonial landlords did not support land reform, and metropolitan

manufacturers opposed protective tariffs in the colonies, which resulted in inhibited industrial development in the colonies and stagnant economies" (Sweezy cited in Noonan 2017: 104).

The third phase in the Marxist thinking on imperialism emerged in the post-Cold War years when globalisation had gathered momentum. The publication of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's book *Empire* (2000) and the Western intervention in Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 have brought a renaissance in the Marxist theorisation of imperialism. The criticism of key concepts of Marxism and omission of political factors and state from the theorisation of imperialism by Hardt and Negri have forced the globalisation era Marxists to rethink these concepts and omissions. In addition to Hardt and Negri, prominent Marxist theorists of imperialism in the globalisation era are James Petras, Humphery McQueen, Henery Veltmeyer, John Smith, Tobias ten-Brink, David Harvey, Ellen Meiksins Wood, Leo Panitch and Sam Giddins. Three themes - namely the analysis of globalisation, empire/imperialism and the state and state-system- connect globalisation-era Marxist theorists of imperialism to Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, the leading Globalisation era Marxists theorists of imperialism.

Hardt and Negri believe that with the emergence of Empire, previous manifestations of empires like Roman and British empires and imperialism has become a thing of history because their empire has grown with the erosion of state power. In their book *Empire* (2000), they have argued that given the interface between globalisation and state "sovereignty has taken a new form, composed of a series of national and supranational organisms united under a single logic of rule" (Negri and Hardt 2000: xii). In the "de-centred and de-territorialised vision of sovereignty" there is not a single place of power. Instead, power is defused. Hardt and Negri's nuanced theorisation of empire comes closer to the Marxist theorisation of state-less society. Their contention that the rise of empire has made imperialism redundant has generated a renaissance in studies on imperialism. Based on the critique of Hardt and Negri and first-generation Marxist theorists of imperialism, other globalisation era Marxists have theorised imperialism differently.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) Paul Sweezy is founder of the neo-Marxist theory of imperialism. Discuss.

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9.4 NEO-MARXISM

Like realism and liberalism, Marxism is also not a monolithic approach to IR. Under the rubric of neo-Marxism, many strands of Marxist IR have evolved over the period. Notable among these are the dependency school, critical theory and neo-Gramscianism. We will discuss these three strands in this section.

9.4.1 Dependency School

The core ideas of the dependency school of IR are rooted in Marxism and structuralism. The Marxist scholars have used the concept of dependency to analyse the relationship between developed capitalist and low-income underdeveloped states in the process of development. Neoliberalism assumes that as a result of enhanced engagement among states, there emerges interdependence. In the situation of interdependence, the interests of states are so intertwined that one state cannot develop at the cost of others. Contrary to neoliberalism, the dependency school argues that the cooperation which begins with an expectation to develop a mutually beneficial relationship between developed and developing states eventually ends in establishing dependence of developing states on developed capital-rich states.

Raul Prebisch defined dependence as "the relations between centres (advanced capitalist states) and the periphery (developing states) whereby a country is subjected to decisions taken in the centres, not only in economic matters but also in matters of politics and strategy for domestic and foreign policies" (Prebisch cited in Namkoong 1999: 130). While defining dependency, James A. Caporaso has argued that dependency involves a "complex set of relations centring on the incorporation of less developed, less homogeneous societies into global divisions of labour" (Caporaso quoted in Namkoong 1999: 124). In his essay *The Structure of Dependence* (1970), Theotonio Dos Santos has defined dependency as "a situation in which the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjected". Santos believes that interdependence turns into dependency "when some countries (the dominant ones) can expand and can be self-sustaining, while other countries (the dependent ones) can do this only as a reflection of that expansion which can have either a positive or a negative effect on their immediate development" (Santos cited in Namkoong 1999: 124).

The roots of the dependency school go back to the late 1940s. Raúl Prebisch of the United Nations Economic Commission on Latin America was among the earliest writers who underlined how unfair terms of trade were leading to the development of some states at the cost of underdevelopment of others. This idea was further developed by scholars of this school like Celso Furtado, Osvaldo Sunkel, Theotonio Dos Santos, Andre Gunder Frank, and Immanuel Wallerstein. Dependency school assumes that the structure of the world economy is divided into *core* and *periphery*. The core includes advanced capital-rich states of Western Europe and North America while periphery includes underdeveloped states of Latin America, Asia and Africa. In the international division of labour, the core controls capital and advanced technology. Production in these states is a capital-intensive endeavour and based on advanced technology. They are highly industrialised and manufacture goods in the world economy. In contrast, the newly independent post-colonial states of the periphery are capital-deprived and

less industrialised. Their economy is primarily based on agriculture. In the world economy, the periphery states are the source of cheap labour and raw material and provide a market for goods manufactured in the core. The unfavourable terms of trade (the supply of cheap labour and raw material and import of costly manufactured goods by the states of the periphery) pave the path of dependency. In the absence of capital and industrialisation, the periphery becomes dependent on the core for capital, technology, the export of raw material, supplying cheap labour and import of manufactured goods. Given the unfair terms of trade, the newly independent post-colonial states of periphery remain underdeveloped while the core develops at the cost of the periphery. In the ultimate analysis, the underdevelopment of these states becomes a precondition of the development of the advanced capitalist states.

Immanuel Wallerstein further developed the core-periphery model. In his analysis of the world system, he has described three parts of the structure of world-economy. Between core and periphery, he has added another structure called *semi-periphery*. The semi-periphery category is made of either developing states of the periphery or declining states of the core. These states are less developed than the core but more developed than the periphery. In the world system, the semi-periphery is a link between core and periphery. They export semi-furnished goods to the periphery and import expensive high-end products from the core. The semi-periphery states exploit periphery states but are exploited by the core states.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1)   What is the core-periphery model?

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9.4.2   Gramsci and Neo-Gramscianism

Gramscian school of thought in Marxist approach is named after Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci. He was an eminent Marxist thinker of Italy who was imprisoned by Mussolini. The essays he wrote during imprisonment have been published after his death as *Prison Notebook* (1971). In these essays, Gramsci sought to explain why revolution succeeded in a predominantly agrarian society like Russia and not in the advanced capitalist states as predicted by Karl Marx. He noticed that conditions in Russia and Europe were different. The civil society was strong in European states. In contrast, the state was strong, but the civil society was weak in Russia. In his analysis, civil society was responsible for the failure of revolution in the advanced capitalist states of Western Europe. Gramsci departed from the orthodox Marxism to assert the *relative autonomy* of the state. Instead of explaining the dominance of the bourgeois class through the *base* level

economic factors, he explained the persistence of the hegemony of the bourgeoise class through social and cultural factors working at the *superstructure* level. Given his emphasis on the superstructure, he is regarded as a theorist of the superstructure.

To explain the persistence of the dominance of the bourgeois class, Gramsci developed the concept of hegemony. In his conception, hegemony is a mix of consent and coercion. To maintain its hegemony, the bourgeois class does not always depend on coercion. Instead, the consent of civil society is enough to maintain it. Broadening the concept of state, Gramsci pointed out that the state (superstructure) is made of the political system and civil society. By dividing states into the political system and civil society, Gramsci differentiated between two structures of the state which are called the *structure of coercion* and *structure of legitimation* respectively. The structure of legitimation like family, school, trade unions, and church are consent manufacturing instruments. The hegemony of the bourgeois class depends on the effective functioning of the structure of legitimation. The structure of legitimation makes the ideology of the dominant class acceptable to the proletariat class possible without using the force. Gramsci believed that the structure of legitimation (family, school, trade unions and church) keep people socialising to the norms and values of the dominant class. The dominant class, therefore, will not have to use force. According to Gramsci, the *structure of coercion* consists of state's administrative apparatus, police and military. It uses force to maintain the hegemony of the dominant class. It comes into action only when the structure of legitimation fails to perform its role. In other words, the state uses force only when people start disbelieving and disobeying social, cultural, and political practices, norms and values of the dominant class.

A neo-Gramscian theorist, Robert Cox, introduced Gramsci to world politics. Based on his reading of Gramsci, Cox has tried to explain key issues of contemporary global politics and global social movements. By using the Gramscian conception of hegemony, he has sought to explain the establishment and stability of world orders. Cox assumes that world hegemony is not only an order among state but also an order in the world economy. Hegemony can be described as a political structure, social structure, and economic structure. He argues that three forces- material capabilities, ideas, and institutions- interact in the formation, maintenance and declining of hegemony. While explaining the origin of hegemony, Cox establishes a correlation between social forces, forms of state and world order. For Cox, hegemony is a form of *dominance* or *class rule* linked to social forces in a powerful state. He sees hegemony essentially an outward expansion of hegemony established by a social class in a powerful state. With the internationalisation of production, the hegemony of the social forces (of the powerful state) becomes transnational. Hegemony establishes when other states accept economic and social institutions, culture and technology of the hegemonic state.

Cox believes that "dominance by a powerful state may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition of hegemony" (Cox 1981: 139). Hegemony is based on the management of the inter-state conflicts as well as global civil society. The normative foundation of the world order reflects ideas, ideology and principles of the powerful state. According to Cox, international organisations are the primary mechanism of socialisation and diffusion of these ideas and culture in the global

civil society. International organisations are established by the state that establishes hegemony. They play five crucial roles in the maintenance and expansion of the hegemonic world order. First, the formation of international organisations is the result of hegemonic world order. Second, international organisations contain the norms, rules and principles that help to expand the hegemonic world order. Third, international organisations "ideologically legitimate the norms of world order" (Cox 1996: 138). Fourth, by including elites from the periphery in management, international organisations increase the acceptability of the dominant class in the peripheral states. Fifth, by managing counter-hegemonic ideas, international organisations save the hegemonic world order. In this way, the global civil society institutions help to maintain dominance of the powerful state and its ruling class in the given world order. They help manufacture consent and legitimacy for the powerful state and its ruling classes in the world order without using any coercive measure. Thus, the hegemony may be established by the pre-eminent material power of a state. It is maintained by the ideas, norms and institutions of the state which establishes it.

According to Cox, a challenge to the hegemonic world order should start from a change in the social order within states. Through structural changes in social, political and normative foundations of the state and founding a historic bloc, a *counter-hegemonic vision* can be developed. This counter-hegemonic vision can be extended to other states as well. This counter-hegemonic vision challenges the foundations of the hegemonic world order. Practically speaking, Cox believes that the global civil society institutions of the hegemonic world order sometimes fail to perform their role effectively. The result is *a legitimacy crisis*. For instance, the US hegemony was facing a legitimacy crisis in the later phase of the Cold War. The rise of neo-conservatism and new orthodoxy in the US in the post-Cold War era has furthered this crisis. The rising discontent and resistance in the form of social movements, environmental movements, women movements, and global labour movements have further extended the legitimacy crisis. In this situation, the counter-hegemonic vision not only challenges the foundations of hegemonic world order in the global civil society but also help in sustaining the post hegemonic world order.

Other notable neo-Gramscian thinkers like Stephen Gill, Mark Rupert, Andreas Bieler and Adam David Morton have used Gramscian ideas and concepts or took inspiration from Gramsci to explain and understand new developments in world politics. Among other things, these authors have tried to understand the rise of neoliberalism and the impact of globalisation on the US hegemony through a Gramscian perspective. For instance, Stephen Gill has focused on the systematic study of Gramscian epistemology and Gramscian understanding of the international political economy. Adam Morton has applied the neo-Gramscian approach to study international political economy.

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) How is the hegemonic world order established and maintained according to Robert Cox?

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9.4.3 Critical Theory

The term Critical theory was coined by Max Horkheimer who made a distinction with the traditional theory based on specific practical purpose: a theory is 'critical' to the extent that it seeks human "emancipation from slavery", acts as a "liberating … influence", and works "to create a world which satisfies the needs and powers" of human beings (Horkheimer 1972, 246). Critical theory is not a single theory. Rather a wide range of theories like neo-Marxism, feminism, postmodernism and postcolonialism come under its broad purview. These different theories take inspiration from different sources like Hegel, Marx and Foucault and seek to explain various aspects of world politics. Despite their difference in focus and theme of study what united these theories is (i) their commitment for post-positivist methodology and, (ii) to a large extent, their commitment for *change* and *emancipation* of subjugated people and/or class of society. Critical theorists are suspicious of positivism as a method to gain knowledge. They believe that knowledge cannot be objective. Believing in subject-object unity, the critical theory assumes that knowledge cannot be independent of social context. Therefore, they criticise the positivist's way of framing objects in binaries like Is vs Ought, Fact vs Value and Objective vs Subjective. In contrast to rationalist theories of IR, critical theory seeks "to interrogate the sources of exclusion, violence, and subjugation and to devise radical strategies for resisting such domination" (Steven Roach 2020: 01). For this purpose, critical theorists use post-positivist approaches that take the social context and normative aspect of social life into account.

In the context of Marxism, critical theory evolved in two streams: first represented by the Frankfurt school of Marxism, especially Jurgen Habermas while another by Italian activist and theorist Antonio Gramsci. The Frankfort school was established in 1923 as *Institute for Social Research* in Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany to study Marxism. When the Nazi party came to power in Germany, the institute was forced to move from Germany to Paris. When Germany invaded France, the institute finally shifted to Columbia University in New York City in 1935. Max Horkheimer's essay *Traditional and Critical Theory* (1937) is regarded as an agenda-setting work of the school. In this essay, he argued that traditional theories "are content to describe existing social institutions more or less as they are, and their analyses thus have the indirect effect of legitimating repressive and unjust social practices as natural or objective" (Wolin 2020). In contrast, "through its detailed understanding of the larger historical and social context in which these institutions function" the critical theory "would expose the system's false claims to legitimacy, justice, and truth" (Wolin 2020).

Jurgen Habermas has been the most influential philosopher of the second-generation thinkers of the Frankfurt school. His ideas have the long-lasting impact of the development of critical theory of IR. His *theory of communicative action* and *discourse ethics* are central to critical IR theory. Habermas criticised the

positivist method to gain knowledge in social sciences. He believed the knowledge gained by positivism serves the purpose of social control, whereas the real purpose of knowledge must be human emancipation. He criticised Karl Marx for ignoring the importance of communication in developing class consciousness among the proletariat and understanding its relationship with other classes. For this purpose, he developed a theory of communicative action that became the foundation of the Frankfort school of IR. Communication, meaning "the use of language and the manipulation of symbols" facilitates collective learning and construction of intersubjective knowledge.

Andrew Linklater and Mark Hoffman are two leading figures, who have developed the critical theory of IR based on ideas and concepts of the Frankfort school. Linklater used Habermas's theory of communicative action and discourse ethics to develop different perspective in world politics and advance new research agenda. Using these concepts, he sought to start a dialogue among citizens across the borders to understand the conditions under which global justice can be achieved. Linklater envisages critical theory "which analyses the prospects for universal emancipation" (Linklater 1990: 04). He has identified three core functions of the critical theory. First, based on concepts like freedom and universality, it should build an alternative world order. Second, critical theory should identify significant barriers in the path of developing such an alternative world order. Third, to develop a new world order, the critical theory should work to theorise an 'emancipatory practice'. He asserts that neither the positivist method of realism nor economic determinism of Marxism alone can serve this purpose of critical theory. Therefore, he argues in favour of going beyond Marxism and Realism.

Emancipation is a key theme in the writings of Linklater. He investigates how and to what extent state and state system facilitates or denies the possibilities of human emancipation. According to him, the state is an exclusionary and inclusionary form of the political community. It is inclusionary because by granting equal worth to every citizen, it extends equal rights to every citizen. At the same time, it is also exclusionary because it denies equal worth to foreigners and outsiders. The emancipatory project of critical theory underscores the limits of the state as a political community. Like Habermas, Linklater believes that individuals have a dual moral identity; one as a citizen of states and another potential role of a world citizen. The critical theory "investigates the prospect for a new form of political community in which individuals and groups can achieve higher levels of freedom and equality" (Linklater 2007: 45). Linklater argues in favour of transforming the political community from the state to a new form of democracy based on cosmopolitan citizenship. He also underscores the need for multiple public spheres for debates and discussions in the new form of a good society.

Linklater has identified four achievements of a critical theory of International Relations. First, critical theory is deeply suspicious of the positivist method and its assumption that knowledge is not situated in the social context, and researchers can attain that knowledge through neutral engagement with objects. Trusting on post-positivist methods, critical theorists invite researchers to use interpretive, historical and intersubjective techniques to gain knowledge. Second, unlike the rationalist theories of IR, which assume that structures are unchangeable, critical theory believes that structure is changeable. It accuses that those who claim that

structure is unchangeable want to maintain the status quo and perpetuate the disparity of wealth and power in world politics. Third, critical theory "learns from and overcomes the weaknesses inherent in Marxism". To find out the basis of exclusion, critical theory goes beyond the Marxist conception of class. They also regard the state as a basis of exclusion because, on the basis of citizenship, the state includes a small part of people as a citizen while excluding a large part as a non-citizen. Lastly, unlike rationalist theories which judge state's capacity in terms of material capacity (economic power and military might), critical theory judges a "social arrangement (maybe state or cosmopolitan democracy) by their capacity to embrace an open dialogue with all other" people. The Critical Theory believes in using "discourse to determine the moral significance of national boundaries" of a state (Linklater 2007: 46). The first two achievements of the critical theory are based on the use of Marxist tools and ideas to challenge rationalist approaches of IR while last two on the criticism of Marxism to develop critical theory as an adequate theory of world politics.

9.5 LET US SUM UP

Marxism is a relatively new approach to IR. In terms of basic assumptions, methodology and dealing with the issues, the Marxist approach presents a different and fascinating picture of world politics. Imperialism has been a keen area of interest for Marxists. Earlier Marxists have linked the origin and development of imperialism with the advancement of capitalism. However, based on the analysis of imperialism presented by Marxists after Lenin, it can be said that to have a proper understanding of the Marxist theory of imperialism, we necessarily need to go beyond Hobson and Lenin and include neo-Marxist and globalisation era Marxist account of imperialism in our study. Taking inspiration from Marxism, three variants of neo-Marxism have significantly enhanced our understanding of world politics. The dependency theory explains how unfair terms of trade between developed and newly independent states lead to exploitation of post-colonial states by the developed capitalist states. The neo-Gramscian approach has splendidly shown how the powerful state establishes and maintain their hegemony and suggested the way to end it. Going a step further, the critical theory has underscored the need and way to end the exploitation of human being and realise their emancipation.

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9.7   ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1)   Your answer should highlight following points i) Directly or indirectly, all variants take inspirations from Karl Marx, and ii) All variants of Marxist IR theories share common assumptions.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1)   Your answer should highlight following points i) Sweezy's theorisation of imperialism departs from Hobson and Lenin's conception of imperialism, and ii) His ideas have helped globalisation era Marxists' theorisation of imperialism

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

1)   Your answer should highlight following points i) Characteristics of core and periphery and ii) Describe characteristics of semi-periphery of Immanuel Wallerstein in his world system

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

1)   Your answer should highlight following points i) The role of social forces in the state, and ii) The role of civil society institutions and international organisations

UNIT 10   FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES*

Structure

10.0   OBJECTIVES

This unit aims to familiarize you with the ideas of feminism, the distinction between sex and gender and feminist perspectives to international relations. After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning of feminism

- Distinguish between sex and gender

- Identify the contriution of important feminist scholars in the field of international politics

- Describe the feminist understanding of war, security, economy and global politics

10.1   INTRODUCTION

In the world of increased interdependence resulting from the globalization process, the field of international relations has faced major challenges to its core theoretical structure. The feminist theory is one such challenge. Challenging the status quo, the feminist approach questions the traditional and foundational concepts and assumptions of international relations. It draws our attention to the fact that masculine conception of international relations embedded in in existing theories have marginalised the role of women in creating and sustaining international politics. As we shall see in this unit, the feminist approach takes both women and gender seriously.

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It is therefore a part of critical theories, theories which seek to explain and transform *all* the circumstances that enslave human beings. Its has contributed to international relations (IR) studies by re-assessing the role that gender and women play in the international arena. This unit will explain and analyse international relations from a feminist perspective so that women's contribution to international politics is highlighted.

10.2   MEANING OF FEMINISM

Feminism can be broadly understood as a conglomeration of socio-political movements and academic discourse that seeks to establish equality between the sexes. It is a set of theories and practices that seek to establish equality between men and women at the most preliminary level. In various parts of the world, women historically did not have the same basic rights that were given to men. For example, they could not own property, they did not have a right to vote, they were not allowed education and employment. There are many other restrictions. Such a social order when men dominate the system and where women are discriminated against is known as patriarchy. Feminism seeks to fight against this order both theoretically and practically. Since there are still many areas where women are still subjugated, the feminist struggle is an ongoing one. For instance, there are still cases of domestic violence, rape, acid attack, female foeticide, dowry demand, eve-teasing, lack of education and opportunities for women and other such debilitations in every corner of the world. A person who fights for equality between the sexes is known as a feminist and both men and women can be a feminist. It is a progressive idea and movement that seeks to bring about positive change in both the public and private (family) spheres of society.

10.2.1 Historical Background

The world has witnessed many people who have written about and fought against discrimination meted out to women in various regions and at varied points of time. The term feminism, as we know it contemporarily was first used by Charles Fourier (1772-1837), the French philosopher who argued that all jobs should be open to both men and women based on their skill and aptitude (Goldstein 1982: 98). He also was of the view that in a marriage, women were forced to behave like lifelong slaves owned and dominated by the interests of their husbands. Simone de Beauvoir, another French feminist, published a book titled *The Second Sex* in 1949 where she rejected the idea that women are weaker than men due to their biology. She argued that this understanding that women are weaker is due to our patriarchal socio-cultural understanding.

In the United Kingdom, one of the forceful arguments promoting women's rights came from Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797). Her first published work was a treatise titled *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* published in 1786. She is most well known for her book *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) where she argues that women are not oppressed because they are naturally inferior to men but because they lack proper education. Since men and women were given different types of education since childhood, they went on to develop different mental faculties and overall personalities. Hence, the fundamental difference between the sexes was not something that was innate/inherent/natural but brought about by differences in upbringing and most specifically by differences in education.

In India, Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati published her book titled *High Caste Hindu Women* in 1887 where she exposed cultural customs and traditions that were discriminatory towards women. The year 1905 also saw the publication of a utopian feminist novel titled *Sultana's Dream* by Begum Rokeya, where women are scientists, pilots, engineers in a science fiction-like plot. It depicts an alternative reality where the roles of men and women have been reversed and, in this process, the myth of male superiority is destroyed in the novel.

10.2.2 Distinction between Sex and Gender

Feminist scholars make a distinction between sex and gender. The sex of a person is based on the biological/bodily features whereas the gender of a person is based on the upbringing of that person. Sex is therefore something physical/natural whereas gender is something that is created/nurtured. For example, when a child is born, that child is born with certain physical entities that denote the sex of the child. Depending on whether the child has male or female genitalia, the family and the society at large started treating that child in a certain way. For example, if the child is female, she is given pink clothes and dolls to plays with. If the child is male, he is given blue clothes and guns to play with. Girl children are taught cooking and other household work whereas boys are not given the same training. Girls are taught to be shy, soft-spoken and timid whereas boys are taught to be rough and tough. When boys cry, they are asked not to cry like girls. Such a difference in their upbringing impacts the total personality of the child and makes her/him a particular type of adult. Gender is created by family and societal values. How a man should behave and how a woman should behave in an ideal way is decided by societal values.

Gender is further divided into the concepts of masculinity and femininity. Qualities and behavioural features that are generally ascribed to males is known as masculinity and qualities/behaviours that are generally ascribed to females is known as femininity. Examples of masculinity are strong physical body, toughness in attitude, being rough, liking sports and outdoor physical activities, having better science and mathematical abilities, aggressive behaviour, losing temper easily, being rational and objective, quick decision-maker, having better driving skills, risk-taking abilities, leadership qualities and others. Examples of femininity would be caring attitude, emotional attachment, risk-averse, cooking abilities, compassionate, timid and weak physically and mentally, soft-spoken, lack of interest in sports, interests in shopping, inability to take quick decisions rationally and others. Feminists argue that masculinity and femininity is socially constructed and people belonging to both the sexes can develop either of these qualities, given the nature of upbringing and education. Hence if a girl child is taught to be physically and mentally tough by giving the proper nutrition and training, then she can become capable of equally becoming physically strong, tough and aggressive. This has been proved by many women in the field of sports and armed forces. The same is true for women making scientific achievements and achieving milestones in professions which are usually considered masculine. Similarly, the world has seen many famous chefs who are men, although cooking has generally been a feminine activity. Men are equally capable of showing emotions like crying and being compassionate. Hence feminist started out by arguing that differentiation needs to be made between sex and gender. If sex is something that is physical and cannot be changed, what needs to be changed is the mindset of people. Given the proper environment, men and women can equally do all the tasks that have been historically attached to only one sex.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

    ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) What do you understand by the term feminism?

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10.3 FEMINISM IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Feminist perspectives entered the International Relations discipline at the end of the 1980s, at about the same time as the end of the Cold War. The first international conference on women, gender and the study of International Relations (IR) was held in 1988 in Wellesley College, Massachusetts, United States. Judith Ann Ticker was one of the foremost feminist scholars in international relations who played a central role in the organisation of this conference (Dara Krishna Swamy 2012: 227). This led to the start of a new discussion about gender issues in the discipline of international politics. The growing discussion led to the creation of a new discourse on the feminist perspective to IR with the publication of several foundational texts on the subject. Some of these publications were books like *Women and War* by Jean Betheke Elshtain in 1987; *International Relations Theory: Contributions of Feminist Standpoint* by Robert Ethane in 1989; *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Sense of International Politics* by Cynthia Enloe in 1990; *Gender and International Relations* by Grant and Newland in 1991; *Gender in International Relations* by Judith Ann Tickner in 1992. This led to the establishment of various feminist courses on gender in international politics in various universities all over the world. The Feminist Theory and Gender Studies Section (FTGS) of the International Studies Association (ISA) also launched a new journal, the *International Feminist Journal of Politics (IFJP)* in the year 1999.

Feminist perspectives on international politics fundamentally focus on gender. The first step was to highlight that gender categories of masculinity and femininity are relational concepts. That means that they are dependent on each other for their meaning in a hierarchical manner. The hierarchy is so juxtaposed that masculine qualities are treated as superior and feminine traits are treated as inferior. For example, rational (masculine-[m]) versus emotional (feminine-[f]); strength (m) versus weakness (f); public (m) versus private (f); objective (m) versus subjective (f); protector (m) versus protected (f) and others. Feminist international relations scholars argue that these everyday gendered categories of masculinity and femininity have a deep impact on the nature, theory and practice of international relations. They have provided several examples of how these categories have gone on to influence not only the writings in the field but also the practice of international relations. The fundamental areas of IR, such as war and peace, diplomacy, international and national security, global economy and

trade, and others are profoundly impacted by this hierarchical gendered understanding of the world.

10.3.1 Critique of the Realist Paradigm

One of the most important feminist articles that critiqued the realist theory of international politics was by Judith Ann Ticker. It was published in 1988 and was titled *Hans Morgenthau's Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation*. The first line of this article states, "International politics is a man's world, a world of power and conflict in which warfare is a privileged activity" (Tickner 1988: 429). She brings to the forefront the issue that what is considered central to the practice of international relations, areas such as diplomacy, military service and security issues have been largely domains that are controlled by men. Though the numbers of females in these professions have been increasing throughout the world, these areas are still considered to be masculine and requiring masculine traits. Tickner goes on to challenge each of Hans J. Morgenthau's six principles of the realist theory of international politics. Morgenthau had outlined that political realism believes that politics is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature; interest is defined in terms of power; that moral principles cannot be applied to the action of states and that the political sphere is autonomous (Morgenthau 1948).

Tickner contests each of these principles in her article. First, she argues that objectivity is associated with masculinity whereas human nature is both masculine as well as feminine. Second, national interest cannot be defined only in terms of power as it is a multidimensional concept which at the global level might require co-operation. Third, the definition of power itself needs to be broadened to not only mean domination over others (power over) but also collective empowerment (power with). Fourth, she rejects that there can be a separation between political action and morality. Fifth, while agreeing that moral aspiration of a particular country cannot be universal, there needs to be an emphasis on common moral elements of humanity that would help on building the international community. Last, she argues that focusing on the autonomy of the political sphere makes it exclusionary, especially for feminine issues. Moreover, autonomy itself has been associated with masculinity (Tickner 2014: 17). Overall, Tickner draws attention to how the discipline and the practice of international relations has prioritized masculinity. Hence concepts such as power understood as domination, autonomy, objectivity, competition, zero-sum game, aggressive behaviour, the idea of a strong muscular male leader heading the state, state security and nuclear politics get prioritized in international relations theory and practice. This not only sidelines a plurality of actors in world politics but also completely blinds the discipline to issues central to individual security especially women.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) What is Judith Ticker's critique of Morgenthau's Six Principles of Political Realism?

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10.4 CONCEPT OF SECURITY THROUGH GENDERED LENSES

10.4.1 Re-defining the Concept

Mainstream theories like realism, liberalism and constructivism treat the state as the main actor of international relations. Accordingly, when it comes to security, their focus is mainly on state security and how it can be achieved primarily through military and economic means at the national level. Feminist scholars have argued that the concept of security needs to be understood not only in a top-down fashion but also a bottom-up perspective where individual and communities are also prioritized (Tickner 2014: 265). This is because individual issues completely get hidden in this race for state security. With huge spending on defence budgets, some countries spend very less on basic necessities for their citizens. This negatively impacts all citizens, but women in particular because of the patriarchal system at all socio-economic levels. Also sometimes prioritizing state security can be directly detrimental to individual/women security. An example would be the then South Korean government being complicit in the prostitution racket of South Korean women for the United States soldiers stationed in South Korea from 1950-53 (Sang-Hun Choe 2017). "Scholars who have studied the issue have said that the South Korean government was motivated in part by fear that the American military, stationed in the country to provide a defence against North Korea, would leave" (Sang-Hun Choe 2017). It is evident here that in this case, women security was fundamentally compromised for state security. "In the name of national security, the Korean state promoted policies that exploited these women's lives…and [demonstrated] how national security can translate into personal insecurity for certain individuals" (Katherine Moon [1997] as quoted in Ticker 2014: 263).

10.4.2 Rape as Systematic Military Strategy

Feminist scholars have also highlighted how war and conflicts affect women. "In wartime, women are particularly subject to rape and prostitution. Rape is not just an accident of war, but often a systematic military strategy" (Tickner 2014: 263). Since the patriarchal system thinks of women and their bodies as properties, like the territorial land being conquered in a war, there is also an attempt to conquer and brutalize women's bodies, thereby owning them. Jan Jindy Pettman (1996) has highlighted how in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995), "rape was associated with a policy of ethnic cleansing. The strategy included forced pregnancies to make Bosnia a Serbian state by implanting Serbian babies in Bosnian Muslim mothers" (Tickner 2014: 263). Such a strategy of war reflects a deeply held patriarchal belief that children belong only to their father's religion/ ethnicity. It overrides the biological fact that the babies have the genetic composition of both the parents. Hence, if the mother and father belong to different ethnicity/religion, the system that gives only the father's surname/religion to the child is deeply discriminatory towards women.

10.4.3 Protectors turn Predators

Jean Bethe Elshtain in her book titled *Women and War* published in 1987 examines the different nature of roles that are expected from men and women during a war. Societal expectations dictate that men play the role of a brave soldier and women play the role of a sacrificial pacifist. This reinforces men's position as warriors and women's role as non-combatants which Elshtain challenges through her work. In continuation of such an argument, feminist scholars have challenged the protector-protected relationship during war/conflict. Gender stereotypes have forced us to think of men as protectors and women as those who need protection. "One of the stories that has been told throughout history is that men fight wars to protect women and children" (Tickner 2014: 263). But the actual conduct of a war has shown that these same protectors can easily turn into the greatest threat to women and children safety. Several cases of abuse and assault on women and children have been reported even by the United Nations Peace Keeping Forces during their missions. "Peacekeepers have been accused of engaging in sex-trafficking, soliciting prostitutes, forcing children into prostitution, and having sex with minors" (Ndulo Muna 2009: 129). "The first official allegations about peacekeeper involvement in sexual misconduct came to light during the UN mission in Cambodia in 1992, this was followed by reports from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and East Timor" (Hernandez Brianna Nicole: 2020). Such horrid stories about women and children during conflict have fundamentally challenged the protection myth.

10.4.4 War and Masculinity

What is also important is the masculine language that is used for war and conflict. A soldier is trained to have masculine traits to be aggressive, rough and tough. "Military training depends on the denigration of anything considered feminine—to act like a soldier is to be not 'womanly' (Tickner 2014: 264). But there have been countless wars where women have equally participated in combat. An example would be the civil war in Sierra Leone that lasted from 1991 to 2002 where "evidence shows that women, female soldiers were empowered by their fighting role. They participated in a variety of activities, including killing, using weapons, commanding armed groups, spying, looting, raping, and burning homes" (Tickner 2014: 264). Unfortunately, even when a woman shows more bravery and violence than men on the battlefield, it is still said that she fights like a man. In this context, Professor Nivedita Menon writes in her book titled *Seeing Like a Feminist*,

"And who does not remember that stirring line of Subhadra Kumari Chauhan's—'Khoob ladi mardani, who toh Jhansi wali rani thi.' (Bravely she fought, the Rani of Jhansi/Like a man she did fight). What does this line mean? Even when it is a woman who has shown bravery, it still cannot be understood as a 'feminine quality'. Bravery is seen as a masculine virtue no matter how many women display it or how few men." (Menon: 2012).

Although women are increasingly joining the armed forces in the combat role, they had to fight a long battle to be able to do so. In many places, the resistance came from within the military itself which saw addition of women as affecting the combat capabilities of the group. "It is also a controversial issue for feminists. Most feminists believe that equality dictates that women should be allowed to

serve in militaries. However, some feminists believe that women should reject fighting in men's wars" (Tickner 2014: 265).

What is also to be highlighted is the fact that the association of masculinity with security is not only in the realm of armed forces but also in political life and academic life. For example, generally, most people associate a politician with masculine characteristics like aggressiveness, physical toughness, loud talking and dominant personality with security for the state. The assumption is that such leaders can protect the state from various threats. Politicians who do not show boisterous and arrogant qualities but are more educated with good administrative skills are not favoured by people. This automatically puts dominant males at a better advantage at being voted to power, rather than people with feminine qualities. Such a notion can be completely baseless. During the Covid 19 pandemic in the first year 2020, several articles highlighted how countries with female leaders had relatively fared much better in tacking the virus with regard to the number of deaths and general preparedness. This would include female leaders like Jacinda Ardern (Prime Minister of New Zealand), Angela Merkel (Chancellor of Germany), Sanna Marin (Prime Minister of Finland), Tsai Ingwen (President of Taiwan) (Taub Amanda 2020). Despite such evidence, unfortunately, many people still associate security with masculinity. The same logic percolates to the level of academic discourse where female scholars are taken less seriously than their male counterparts especially in the field of security studies, with the latter being called for more panel discussions, talks, presentations than the former.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) How have feminist scholars redefined the concept of security in international politics?

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10.5 GLOBAL ECONOMY, INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND GENDER

Concerning women and work, there are several variations depending on the socio-economic conditions of the various regions both inter and intra countries. However, there are some translational similarities that can be observed. This is related to the gendered division of labour both within the house and in the public professional sphere. As has been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, it is assumed that women and men are better at doing particular types of jobs. Globally, "women are disproportionately clustered in low-paid jobs in garment industries, services, and home-based work, or subsistence agriculture" (Tickner 2014: 268). In addition to this, women working outside are also expected to do all the household work in the private family sphere which is often taken for granted by

society. This is known as 'double burden' as women are working both in the public sphere as well as in the private sphere. Also, this labour that they do in the private sphere is invisible in the economic analysis (Tickner 2014: 268).

In the realm of international politics, Prof. Cynthia Enloe began by asking a very important question which is "Where are the Women?" This forced international relations scholars to locate the spaces that women inhabit in politics at the global level. In one of her books titled "Bananas, Beaches and Bases" first published in 1990, she looks at the various roles that women play in international politics. These roles are important but secondary. Examples would be that of diplomatic wives, military wives, sex workers on military bases, plantation sector workers, garment factory workers and others. In this huge area of international politics, women are hardly seen in decision making roles especially in the field of what is known as 'high politics' which are issues related to war, peace, nuclear politics, security, trade and others. While the number of women leaders is increasing, still most of the countries have men as the head of the state. This is evident especially in the photographic sessions of intergovernmental organizations like the G7 and G20, where most representatives are men, with just one or two women standing out. For example, among the Group of Seven (G7) countries only one is a female (Angela Merkel as Chancellor of Germany) as of December 2020. The same is true for the Group of Twenty (G20) as of December 2020. It is for this reason that the term 'diplomatic wives' exists, as most of the international diplomacy is being historically conducted by men. There is a gendered division of labour here as men do the negotiations at the high table, whereas women as the wives of these diplomats support their husbands and thereby the state. This whole issue gets complicated as more and more women enter the foreign service of various countries as diplomats. This issue underlines the fact that diplomacy, which is a fundamental part of international politics has been underlined by a gendered division of labour.

Professor Enloe has also underlined that the 'personal is international' and the 'international is personal'. By this she means that politicization of domestic/personal/private life is the pillar that holds up the international system. Hence women's lives are international. She argues that if people truly need to understand the issues of international politics like war, they need to also understand it through the eyes of women who are directly and indirectly being impacted by the war. For example, it is not enough to just analyse the belligerent parties fighting the Syrian War, one can never truly understand this war until one analyses its impact on the refugee women and children. Hence one can never fully grasp the meaning of international politics until one can understand how ideas about femininity and masculinity are holding up the international economic and political system.

The growing realization that international politics needs to take issues of gender seriously has been prompted and in return has prompted many international conventions and conferences on women. The first world conference on women was held in Mexico City in 1975 by the United Nations (UN). This was the first in a series of conferences to be sponsored by the UN. This launched the 'United Nations Decade for Women' from 1975 to 1985 with a resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly. The objective was to focus on the issues and policies that impacted women. In 1979, the UN General Assembly adopted the 'Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women'. The second international women's conference was held in Copenhagen (Denmark) in 1980

and the third was held in Nairobi (Kenya) in 1985. This event saw the participation from 157 member states and a host of NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations). The 'Fourth World Conference on Women' was held in Beijing in 1995. The 'Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action' adopted by 189 countries is an agenda for women's empowerment. This plan of action has built on the ideas of the previous three conferences. The year 2020 was the 25th anniversary of this Beijing Plan of Action and the declaration adopted on this occasion recognized the progress made by gender equality but also stated that no country has achieved full gender equality. The Commission of the Status of Women (CSW) is the international intergovernmental body that exclusively focuses on the issue of gender equality and women empowerment. It was established as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in the year 1946. In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly also created UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women). UN Women supports the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and acts to bring together the participation from civil society representatives and international entities working for equality (United Nations website).

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

    ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) What is Cynthia Enloe referring to when she asks the question, "Where are the women?"

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10.6 LET US SUM UP

Feminism has brought about different ways of thinking about the central issues and processes of international politics like war and peace. It argues that the state is not the only significant actor and opens an entire range of non-state actors right down to how individual men and women are important. Its critique of the realist theory of international politics rests on exposing the underlying gendered assumptions of power and security in realist thought. Feminism hence shares its grounds with other theories of international politics in its critique of the realist paradigm. The notion of security has been reconceptualized to include the elimination of all forms of violence at both international and inter-personal levels. This includes economic empowerment and freedom from all forms of physical and emotional harassment which women have been particularly subjected to. The international feminist movement has brought to the forefront the importance of gender mainstreaming, which is a strategy to evaluate all policies and organizational set-ups in a manner that promotes gender equality at all stages. Feminist scholars have opened several issues in the theory and practice of international politics. They have highlighted how the discipline has been blind to the issues of women from its inception. Feminist scholars have focused on

how ideas of masculinity and femininity have influenced the functioning of international relations. In the process, they have considerably broadened and deepened the scope of the theory and practice of international politics.

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10.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Your answer should highlight i) Feminism seeks to establish equality between men and women, and ii) Feminism is both a practical movement and a theoretical discourse

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) Tickner focuses on how realism has focused on masculine features such as objectivity, power, autonomy, national interest, lack of morality to understand international politics

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

1) Your answer should highlight the fact that Feminists have moved beyond state security to include individual security

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

1) Here Cynthia is referring to i) Women have been relegated to secondary roles in the practice of international politics, and ii) They have not yet been given decision making roles especially in issues of high politics

UNIT 11 EUROCENTRISM AND PERSPECTIVES FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH*

Structure

11.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit aims to familiarize students with the idea of Eurocentrism and Perspectives from the Global South in the discipline of International Relations (IR). After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain Eurocentrism and ideas from the Global South

- Identify and describe some key concepts related to the Global South

- Analyse some of the short-comings of the perspectives of the Global South

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous units have intricately provided a sketch of the numerous International Relations Theories (IRT). As these units have shown, International Relations (IR) is a study of the interaction of states, **more precisely Western nation-states** that are caught in a power struggle. IRT is a West-centric discourse that tries to pass off as a global phenomenon. The reliance of IRT on the knowledge that emerged from Western experiences makes them culture bound and somewhat biased. It is based on western political theories and social realities that mostly emerged with the Age of Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. Thus, IRT can be seen as social constructs from the West that were imposed through colonialism in other parts of the world. There is the presence of strong epistemological issues that relate to how knowledge is generated. IRT are specific knowledge that emerged from the West. There is a strong value embedded within the discipline of IR which is West or ethnocentric.

IRT has emerged from the core states of the West. As these theories have been constructed keeping in mind life in the West, they are not able to explain or

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understand all the key structures and dynamics of different societies or realities. IRT is seen to be narrow as there is no non-Western theory. Non-Western IR theories are seen to be scattered, unsystematic and mostly inaccessible. Acharya and Buzan in their influential book, *Non-Western International Relations Theory – Perspectives on and beyond Asia* (2010), challenge the dominance of West-centric IR theory. They argue that IR theory misrepresents and misunderstands much of world history. They therefore call for introducing case studies from China, India, Japan and Southeast Asia to broaden, diversify and enrich IRT. They argue that the main reason for the absence of a non-Western IRT is due to ideational and perceptional forces; which fuel, in varying ways, notions of Gramscian "hegemonies and ethnocentrism and the politics of exclusion". The West is seen to be monopolizing over knowledge production. It is the model provided by modern European history that becomes the primary model for understanding IRT, thus making IRT highly Eurocentric.

11.2   WHAT IS EUROCENTRISM?

IRT is a highly Eurocentric narrative. Sujata Patel explains Eurocentric or Eurocentrism as an idea that all knowledge emerged in Europe in the context of European modernity. Thus, it entails a linear conception of time which suggested that this knowledge has produced through the values and institutional systems that were universalized in Europe in the past 500 years, in its backyard. Patel writes that this narrative incorporates two master narratives: the superiority of Western civilization (through progress and reason) and the belief in the continuous growth of capitalism (through modernisation, development and creation of new markets). These master narratives are all ethnocentric in nature. It needs to be understood that European knowledge saw itself to be superior to the other which was to be colonised, turned into an object of control and through which it became modern. Under this, Europe saw itself as the origin point of modernity, which became the point of reference for other cultures and civilisations. Europe and the West were painted in terms of the master civilization that had modernity, reason, culture and science while the East was painted as inferior, which was enclosed in space, nature, religion and spirituality. The binary created was one of modernity and tradition. The western European countries were all torchbearers of the modern while the countries of the East were traditional and backward.

Through this, the European societies justified their imperial experience and the colonialism that they had imposed in other parts of the world. This was needed to bring modernity to the rest of the world. We see theories such as Marxism legitimizing the control and domination of large parts of the world to inject them with the ideals of communism.

Check your progress Exercise 1

Note i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips to your answer.

1)   Why is IRT termed as Eurocentric?

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Theoretical Perspectives ....

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11.3 EUROCENTRISM AND DIVISION OF KNOWLEDGE

Eurocentrism is seen to be dividing knowledge between the West and the non-West. Here the idea that human civilization originated in the European experience of modernity becomes important. It makes Europe the centre of the narrative and also the analysis of growth. It was due to Europe's superiority and its control of the world that provided the conditions for Europe's ascendance and also created a scientific language that legitimized this perspective and made it into a universal truth. This truth creation becomes important as it emerged as the standard for understanding all forms of realities in different parts of the world. The two important foundations of Eurocentrism are:

i) **Evolutionism:** The belief that Western societies evolved higher than the non-Western societies. It follows the logic established by Charles Darwin in *On the Origin of Species* that looked into how species have progressed over the years. The logic embedded in his writing is of the survival of the fittest.

ii) **Dualism:** It stresses on the idea of Europe and the West being the fountainhead of knowledge, making them more powerful, which in turn is highlighted against the non-West, which was traditional. Thus, we see the creation of binary oppositions which is hierarchised leading to the formation of a dualism of the "self" and the "other".

Sujata Patel writes how the division of knowledge brought about by Eurocentrism is seen in the context of how academic knowledge regarding India was framed by the colonial anthropologists and administrators in India. For instance, Eurocentric scholars divided knowledge regarding Indian religion, making a distinction between the 'great traditions' that is Hinduism and the 'little traditions' that is the folk cultures. Much of these have been uncritically accepted by scholars researching on South Asian religion. On the other hand, South Asia had thousands of distinct cultural practices and ideas that have lived and experienced existence in various forms and unequal, subordinated relationships with each other. In the 19th century, anthropological and sociological knowledge dissolved these distinctions and recategorized them into four of five major religious traditions. A Eurocentric understanding of Indian religion led to the imposition of homogenization. One can say that Western categories and norms were used in the study of non-Western societies.

11.4 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY AND EUROCENTRISM

IRT is dominated by the West as much of the mainstream IRT has originated from Western philosophy, political theory and history. History as a discipline is also deeply Eurocentric that had led to Western dominance. Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan investigate neorealism and classical realism, the two dominant theories that project onto the rest of world history their basic Europe derived

story of international anarchy and balance of power politics as a universal, permanent structural condition. IRT is deeply Eurocentric as it originated from a history that is traced to the West. It ignores vast swathes of history, both Western and non-Western, where Empires such as the Han, the Persian, the Incan and Aztec held sway over their known world. Its main historical story is the modern one in which Western powers both fight amongst themselves and take over the rest of the world. It is seen to be developing categories that are imposed on the non-West. These categories are Western in nature and thus Eurocentric. One such category is the nation-state, which is considered as the norm for all of world history. Acharya and Buzan further write how much of the IR theories such as Liberalism and its ideas of individualism, market and more hesitantly democratic practices are all presented as universal truths that apply to, and whose application would be beneficial to all human beings.

IRT is seen to be homogenizing its ideas and norms throughout the world. One sees this in Marxist theory that terms itself as being universal and as a model that can be implemented in all parts of the world. IRT as a Eurocentric principle is seen to be remaking the world in its own image of sovereign territorial states, diplomacy and international law. Acharya and Buzan mention how these are carried forward by the **English School** in International Relations and their focus on International society. Under this, they emphasize on a culturally coherent European international society to a global scale that lacks a common culture to underpin it. Also, the English School is seen to be failing to acknowledge the presence of other international societies formed outside Europe. Their main objective is about how Europe remade the world. Even the critical theories in International Relations are all of European origin. They have been influenced by Western political and social practice. These theories have universal assumptions, but in many cases, seek to understand each situation in its own terms. Even the perspectives from the Global South are seen to be much influenced by the critical theories from the West.

IRT are particular, parochial and Eurocentric, pretending to be universal in order to enhance their own claims. The IRT that is studied and understood in the global context is a study of the interaction of Westphalian nation-states, a construct that emerged specifically in the Europe. This understanding is imposed on the non-West or the Global South, naturalizing it and making it the global norm. Also, all non-Western countries have adopted the model of the Westphalian state system that automatically makes them actors in the whole global interaction of states. However, this does not mean they are equal actors. IRT are seen to be speaking for the West and in the interest of sustaining its power, prosperity and influence. They do not speak for the other, whether it is the non-West or the Global South. It is seen to be constitutive of the reality that it addresses.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips to your answer.

1) What are the two important foundations of Eurocentrism?

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11.5 NON-WESTERN IRT OR VOICES FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

The idea of the Global South can be dubbed as a creation of the West. This happens on two levels, the first on a conceptual and psychological plane with the West creating the non-West or the Global South as the 'other' that defines the self. Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978) writes how the West managed and produced the non-West or the Global South. Thus, the non-West or the Orient is termed as a complete European invention, through which there is a strong degree of domination imposed by the West through restructuring and having authority over the Orient/non-West. The second way through which the non-West or the Global South has been created is through colonialism. The European countries, which constitute the core West had colonised much of Asia, Latin America, Africa and Australia, turning them into colonies for extracting resources to fuel the industrial revolution back in Europe. In these colonies, the European imperial powers transplanted their mode of governance, which was eventually adopted by these countries after independence. A majority of the non-West or the Global South are also seen to be poor and underdeveloped as they remained victims of neo-colonialism as practised by the United States. After the Second World War, the US emerged as a superpower, replacing the European powers. It, however, continued the earlier policies of imperialism and domination that had been carried out by imperial Europe. Through the Bretton Woods international economic system that established financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and subsequently the World Trade Organisation, the US dominated the world. It is these policies that led to the formation of the Global North and the Global South.

The Global South are generally the economically less developed countries, which consists of a variety of states with diverse levels of economic, cultural and political influence in the international order. As mentioned earlier, these countries have remained poor due to the enforcement of centuries of colonialism and imperialism. Hence, Europe and the West are directly responsible for their 'subaltern' position, a process that still continues. Their subordinate position is also reflected in them being not studied in the theories of IR. The absence of the perspectives from the Global South in IRT is a grave injustice as it means turning a blind eye to the voices of the majority of the global population. There is a strong need to broaden the field of IRT and incorporate the voices of the Global South so as to bring about a more just and representative understanding of IR. According to Benabdallah, Zamora and Adetula, IRT simply emphasises on concepts that do not reflect the reality in many Global South states. Their perspectives are absent or under-theorised in mainstream scholarship. Still, in the present age, colonial dominations profoundly shape the state of the current global order, which is not attributed in IRT. Under this, issues of race and empire are missing from mainstream theories despite the presence of postcolonial and post-structural studies. It needs to be understood that the non-West or the Global South are able to build their own understandings of IRT based on their histories and social theories.

Benabdallah and others write how mainstream IRT also interprets history in the wrong way. Majority of the global events are told from a Western perspective and thus the voices of the colonised and oppressed go missing, which leads to a different basis for theorising. They give an example of how realist scholarship writing on the Cold War, refer to it as a period of relative stability as no major war was fought between the two superpowers, the US and the USSR. However, if one looks at the same period through a Global South lens, one sees a world full of proxy wars and human suffering where both superpowers intervened in conflicts to support their interests or damage those of the other. It is therefore important to incorporate non-Western actors and non-Western thinking to explore how different actors challenge, support, and shape global and regional orders. There is a need to constantly question the mainstream theories in the context of postcolonial states and theorise the role of emerging economies and the other Global South states in shaping international institutions and global governance. IRT at present should adapt to absorb the Global South perspectives.

The universal/global assumption of IRT is also seen to be reflected in policies that shape international politics. An important way through which this is seen to be happening is through assumptions that originate in Western modes of thinking. An example of this is seen in the context of 'development'- a word that has the power to dictate national and international policies and attract vast sums of money.

One of the ways through which Western notions of development and economic progress gets imposed in the non-West is through the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and their successors, the Sustainable Development Goals. These global initiatives are based on an understanding of development that sees many countries in the Global South as not having achieved the economic progress of the north. They involve targets that every country in the world agree to strive towards and to fund. Under this, there is an imposition of Western values and understandings regarding development and progress in the non-West. There have been strong challenges towards this Western understanding of development as an organizing principle in international politics. This is seen to be emerging from the dependency theory, which is a major contribution from Latin American scholars in IRT. It emphasizes that underdevelopment and poverty are the results of political, economic and cultural influences exerted on the Global South from outside. The relationship between the Global South and Global North is termed as exploitative and unfair. This is due to the ways the Global South has been incorporated into the world economic system through capitalist development, which has exploited human and material resources and disrupted indigenous modes of production. Benabdallah and others write how Dependency theory analyses how the underdevelopment of many states in the Global South is a direct result of the policies, interventions and unfair trading practices of states from the North. The current economic relations between the Global South and Global North will not help the South to develop at all. Instead, the Global South will be poorer than the North. The Dependency theorists' stress on the need for a complete restructuring of the entire international economic system to deliver economic justice for the world's poor. One sees a continuation of colonisation in the Global South, which is termed as neocolonialism. Scholars have stated that in the final years of formal colonialism, the departing colonial powers brought a set of new policies and programmes that led to the establishment of domination over Global South economies.

Some of the policies that were imposed on the Global South were the production of cash crops for export, dependence on foreign financial assistance and the entrenchment of private capital (both domestic and foreign) as the engine of growth and development. North-South trade agreements and the policies of international organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are seen to be protecting the interests of the Global North despite repeated calls from the Global South for a fairer deal in global trade relations. International institutions, according to Benabdallah and others, have served to privilege 'developed' states in trade relationships and to disadvantage the former 'developing' colonies. The Global North views these policies as an instrument of helping the underdeveloped countries. However, the perspective from the Global South is that these policies are a new type of colonial domination as there is a continuation of unequal and exploitative North-South relationships.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips to your answer.

1) How do International Organisations such as the WTO and the IMF favour the Global North?

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11.6 IRT FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan write about how non-Western contributions in IRT are seen to be not meeting the criteria of hard theory. They have been placed in the softer conceptions, focusing on the ideas and beliefs from classical and contemporary periods. According to them, these can be divided into four major types of work.

The first is similar to the Western international theory's focus on key figures such as Thucydides, Thomas Hobbes, Machiavelli, Kant etc, whereby there are Asian classical traditions and the thinking of classical religious, political and military figures such as Sun Tzu, Confucius and Kautilya, on all of which some secondary 'political theory' type literature exists. They state, how some attempts to derive an understanding from these thinkers are present but have been rare. An example of this can be the Confucian thought and ideas of communitarianism that were frequently cited as an example of an 'Asian Perspective', which was termed as an alternative to Western individualised liberal values. It was also presented as the alternative conceptualization of an East Asian international order, which could challenge the hegemonic ambition of the Global North. Also, Acharya and Buzan write about how in India, the Vedic ideas about strategy and politics have been raised as the justification of India's acquisition of nuclear weapons. Even Kautilya's work, *Arthashastra,* can be a good example of understanding the presence of strong IRT from the Global South. He has elaborated on the ways

through which a kingdom can preserve its sovereignty. Termed as the Rajamandala, it describes the different ways through which a state can interact with neighbouring states with an aim of increasing its power and authority. The *Arthashastra* is a text that can be termed as India's contribution to strategic thinking. Hence, Kautilya's *Arthashatra* is an important example of the presence of non-Western IR thinking that falls under the category of classical realism.

The second category of work as according to Acharya and Buzan relates to the thinking and foreign policy approaches of Asian and non-Western leaders such as Nehru, Mao, Aung San of Myanmar, Jose Rizal of the Philippines and Sukarno of Indonesia. However, it needs to be stressed that their thinking may be sourced to training in the West or training in Western texts at home. Still, they came up with ideas and approaches independent of Western intellectual traditions. An example of this is the idea of non-alignment, developed by Nehru and fellow Asian and African leaders in the 1950s, which was partially adopted from concepts of neutralism in the West but was in many respects an independent concept. Nehru also promoted the idea of non-exclusionary regionalism, as opposed to military blocs based on the classic European balance of power model. Aung Sang's ideas offered something that can be regarded as a liberal internationalist vision of international relations, stressing independence and multilateralism rather than isolationism that came to characterise Myanmar's foreign policy under military rule. He rejected regional blocs that practised discrimination, such as economic blocs and preferences. In the 1960s, Sukarno, developed and propagated some ideas about the international order, such as 'old established forces' and 'new emerging forces', which drew upon his nationalist background as well as his quest for international leadership. There is also Mao Zedong's three worlds theory and his ideas about war and strategy. There is a need to give importance to the theoretical significance of these ideas, especially from Asia's nationalist leaders. In this, Acharya and Buzan give special importance to the case of Jawaharlal Nehru, as he was recognised both within India and in the world, as a thinker in his own right, rather than simply as a political strategist. His views shaped the initial foreign policy beliefs and approaches of several Asian nations. In his writings, Nehru is seen to be critical of the Western realist approaches that stressed on power politics. Independent India's first Prime Minister saw Western realist understandings as being a 'continuation of the old traditions' of European power politics. He believed that the current state of affairs, which had the presence of the Global South was not given any importance. For Nehru, some of the 'realist' solutions to the world's problem ignored new forces sweeping the world that included the economic and military decline of the West after the Second World War, as well as the upsurge of nationalism and demands for freedom in the former colonies. He writes how Realism was divorced from the reality of the larger world.

IRT is seen to be ignoring Nehru's thinking and contributions to global politics which smacks of an ethnocentric understanding in International Relations. His writings on post-war Asian unity, which he saw in the form of restoration of cultural and commercial links across Asia was inevitable. He organised the Asian Relations Conferences of 1947 and 1949, the latter being organised to create international pressure on the Dutch to grant independence to Indonesia. As elaborated by Acharya and Buzan, Nehru was seen to be taking a realistic view of the contradictions and dangers present among the newly independent nations in the 1950s as there were still strong threats from Western domination.

The third form of work in non-Western IRT are non-Westerners who have used Western theories in analysing local contexts. Acharya and Buzan, however, write that considering their work as part of the development of non-Western IRT may be problematic. The problem relates to the fact that most scholars have received their training in the West and have spent a considerable part of their working life in Western institutions. Hence, can they be regarded as truly 'local' scholars and their work truly 'indigenous' contributions to non-Western IRT? The answer to this query led to many debates and has not provided a clear answer.

The fourth form of work on IRT related to the non-West and specifically to Asia studies, Asian events and experiences and develops concepts that can be used as tools of analysis of more general patterns in International Relations, which locates the Global South within the larger international system and compares it with the rest of the world. Under this, Acharya and Buzan cite the works of Benedict Anderson's 'imagined communities' and James Scott's 'everyday forms of resistance', which have inspired scholars of comparative politics as well as international relations. Another example given by them is Edmund Leach's *Political Systems of Highland Burma* (1954) that is used to analyse fluid notions of ethnic identity in Southeast Asia and beyond. These academic writings are seen to be looking at events and processes from a non-Western perspective. It captures the distinctive patterns and experiences from the Global South, giving them much autonomy and the needed agency to these voices. It is however mentioned by Acharya and Buzan that non-Western IRT is rather limited as in most cases the non-Western scholars are seen to be testing Western IRT on an Asian or regional setting. Thus, they emphasise on the need to 'explore' how 'local knowledge' can be turned into definitive frameworks for analysing global processes. Yet, such forms of academic efforts are seen to be a mode through which the West is seen to be co-opting the non-West.

A form of indigenous theory from the Global South that has played a prominent role in contributing to IRT are 'subaltern studies'. The works of Homi Bhaba on subaltern studies and Arjun Appadurai on globalization are seen to be rebelling against Orientalism and Western dominance. Postcolonialism is seen as attempting to dismantle relativism and binary distinctions as seen in the form of centre and periphery, First World – Third World and North-South. However, as Aijaz Ahmad writes, postcolonialism is seen to be not producing fresh knowledge about the Third World, instead, it restructures existing bodies of knowledge into the poststructuralist paradigm. It then occupies sites of cultural production outside of Euro-American zones by globalizing concerns and orientations originating at the central sites of Euro-American cultural production. Hence, non-Western attempts are seen to be heavily influenced by the West. This is due to the non-Western attempts basically framed within the cultural discourses originating from the West.

11.7 LIMITATIONS AND PROBLEMS WITH IRT FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

A number of limitations and problems are seen in the creation and analysis of IRT from the Global South. Siba Grovogui writes that one of the main problems with IRT from the Global South is that it does not have a central structure, no central command and no appointed spokesperson. It has multiple custodians, all of them self-selected, which is also a result of a lack of a coherent historical

identity and conjoined agendas. As mentioned earlier, the IRT from the Global South in many cases is seen to be taking ideas and discourses from the West in their understanding of reality. Also, much of the countries in the Global South are nation-states, having adopted the Western models of governance and state-building. Hence, they are seen to be functioning on the same lines as states in the West. Mainstream IRT emerging from Western societies largely seek rational explanations for states' interactions. On similar lines, interactions between states in the Global South are studied from a relational perspective. Benabdallah and others have provided the example of China and its interactions with various African states. Presently, China is the largest trading partner of Africa and both countries' economies are mutually interdependent. However, this relationship is one of imbalance where African states are seen to be importing more from China than they export to China. China's development model (the Beijing Consensus) differs from the neoliberal model of development advocated by the IMF and other Western organisations (the Washington Consensus). The Washington Consensus' emphasis on liberalisation and minimising the role of the state in the market has been denounced by many African leaders as neocolonial and exploitative. By contrast, the Beijing consensus, with its principle of non-interference has presented an attractive alternative to some African countries.

Furthermore, they write that China is seen to be benefiting from its developmental role in African states, enhancing cultural dialogue and cultivating networks through people to people exchanges. Through the Confucian Institutes across Africa showcasing Chinese language and culture, the Chinese government is seen to be sponsoring thousands for training in various fields. It is part of constructing a shared identity based on future aspirations and trajectories that will lift citizens out of poverty. However, this model adopted by China in Africa and in some Latin American countries is a topic of much debate. The debates have become stronger with the imposition of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is seen as China's response to Western globalization. The main argument is how much of these initiatives from the Global South are different from the Global North. Whether these new spaces of thinking in the Global South are completely new, pathbreaking and can be understood as non-Western IRT is an issue up for debate and discussion. Still, in recent years a lot has been done to highlight the important contributions that actors from the Global South make, and have always made, to IRT. International Relations has come a long way in incorporating aspects, actors and concepts that represent the world more widely. This has emerged with the dynamics of the international system also changing with the rise of new economic powers such as India, China, Brazil, Turkey, South Africa and others. Hence, IRT has to take into consideration the perspectives of these new powers in the Global South.

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

Note i)   Use the space given below for your answer.

ii)   See the end of the unit for tips to your answer.

1)   What are the obstacles to the production of knowledge from the Global South?

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11.8 LET US SUM UP

IRT as a discipline is highly Eurocentric, due to its emergence from experiences of Western countries. However, it assumes a universal position and imposes itself in the non-Western world. Thus, it is a deeply hegemonic act leading to a process where the values and norms of the West are implemented in the non-West. This happens through colonialism and cultural imperialism where the ideas of the West are rational, scientific and normal. The non-Western ideas are dubbed as traditional, religious and unscientific. The various interactions among states are defined in lines of the interaction that had happened in Europe, among the European states. Eurocentrism turns the West into the centre of modernity and power. The unit gives an example of how this is seen in the context of development and progress. Through international organisations such as the IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organisation, which are seen to be imposing the Western sanctions and policies on the non-West. The model of state-building in the West is in the form of the Westphalian nation-state, which has its origins in Europe. There has been an export of the same model throughout the world, with ideas of state interaction such as realism, liberalism or Marxism emerging from knowledge traditions in the West. Even the criticisms against the Western IRT are coming from Western social, political theories. In response to these, the unit looked into the so-called Perspectives from the Global South, which has remained scattered and somewhat incoherent. Still, in conclusion, there is a steady rise in voices from the Global South which is highly important as it is needed to bring about notions of equity and justice in IRT.

11.9 REFERENCES

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11.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

- Your answer should highlight the following points i) IRT as the study of nation-states emerged from the West and ii) It takes the form of a universal narrative

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

- Your answer should highlight the following points, i) It should look into ideas of Evolutionism and Progress, and ii) The criticisms emerging from western political, social theories

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

- Your answer should highlight the following points, i) The work of the Dependency theorists is an important step in understanding how International Organisations are seen to be exploitative of the non-West

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

- Your answer should highlight the following points: Criticisms to Western IRT is seen to be influenced by social and political realities of the West, which gets translated in the formation of knowledge from the Global South