How the World Works

A BRIEF SURVEY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

THIRD EDITION

RUSSELL BOVA

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A Brief Survey of International Relations

THIRD EDITION

Russell Bova
Dickinson College

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Preface

As I wrote in the prefaces to the first two editions of this text, teachers of international relations are fortunate to have the media do such a good job of marketing their courses. The constant swirl of news about global events provides a steady stream of students eager to make sense of world politics and the implications for their own lives. Since the publication of the second edition, that swirl of events has continued unabated. The Arab Spring, the Russian invasion of Crimea, the rise of ISIS, and the West African Ebola epidemic are just a few of the noteworthy developments to take place subsequent to the completion of the second edition. Part of the goal in writing this third edition was to incorporate those events into the analysis of the book.

Even more important, this third edition provides an opportunity to make more general improvements to the book. In revising the text, however, the central goal of the first two editions has remained unchanged. That goal is to tap into and maintain the interest in global events that leads students to enroll in international relations classes and to translate that interest into a conceptual and theoretical sophistication that will remain useful long after today's current events become the stuff of history and long after the course in which this book is assigned is completed.

To that end, *How the World Works* provides the detailed micro-level knowledge and information that is necessary to understand world politics. Students will read about such things as the structure of the United Nations, trends in international conflict, the sources of international law, and the role of the World Trade Organization. They will simultaneously pick up a new vocabulary, which will include such terms as "deterrence," "hegemony," "collective security," and "comparative advantage." But facts and concepts are not enough. In acquiring a new vocabulary and in learning about the details of institutions and events, it is important that students not become lost in the thicket of world politics to the extent that they lose sight of the forest for the trees. Thus, they also need a larger framework that provides context and meaning for the data, trends, and terminology to which they are exposed.

In teaching over the years, I have found that most beginning students of international relations and world politics come to the first class already in possession of predispositions regarding how the world works. Some are inclined to accept conflict and violence in international life as inescapable, and this leads such students to endorse approaches to foreign policy that entail a

reliance on military power and a suspicion of global institutions. These students are "instinctive realists," even though they may never have encountered the "realist" perspective on international relations as a formal theory. Others come to the first class more optimistic about the prospects for global cooperation and are thereby more inclined to eschew power-oriented approaches to foreign policy and to favor working through institutions such as international law and the United Nations. These students are "instinctive critics of realism" even though they too have never formally encountered "realism" as a concept in international relations theory and could not tell a "liberal" from a "constructivist" from a "feminist" approach to world politics.

How the World Works helps students examine their natural inclinations, question their assumptions, and subject their conclusions to the fire of classroom debate and discussion. The most general goal of the book is to get students to think about how the world works. To this end, the book is organized around the story of realism and its critics, conveying the message that scholars disagree among themselves about the world's political and economic interactions and trends. While some scholars, in recent years, have questioned the utility of examining international relations through the lenses of the various paradigms, the TRIP surveys of international relations scholars continue to show that the majority of scholars continue to work within one or more of those paradigms and that many of the most influential scholars in the field (e.g., Alexander Wendt, Robert Keohane, Kenneth Waltz, John Mearsheimer) are strongly associated with paradigmatic analysis.

That said, it is important to note that this is not a "realist" book, and it does not attempt to profess the merits of any single paradigm. On the contrary, the goal is to expose students to contending perspectives and to provide the empirical and conceptual foundation upon which they can begin to develop their own assessment of how the world works. This book does not take sides.

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educational technology boosts student engagement, which leads to better understanding of concepts and improved performance throughout the course.

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The third edition of *How the World Works* features a number of substantive revisions, including the following:

CHAPTER 1

- New section on non-paradigmatic research
- New Theory in Practice box on Obama and constructivism in his labeling of terrorists

CHAPTER 2

- Takes account of recent scholarship on "the myth of 1648"
- Updated with discussion of Ukraine crisis and Arab Spring

CHAPTER 3

- Chapter reorganized around two themes: the levels of analysis and the assumption of rationality in foreign policy decision-making
- More extended discussion of the cognitive model of decision-making
- New Theory in Practice box which applies rational actor, cognitive, and poliheuristic decision-making approaches to student selection of colleges

CHAPTER 4

- New breakout section on the causes of war
- New Theory in Practice box on "The Drone Revolution"

CHAPTER 5

- General updating of all sections

CHAPTER 6

- Clarified the role of the Human Rights Council
- Added discussion of Libya to section on humanitarian intervention
- Expanded discussion and assessment of the record of R2P
- New Theory in Practice box on Palestine and the International Criminal Court

CHAPTER 7

- Updated EU discussion to take account of post-2008 trends and Greek crisis
- Updated discussion of the global financial crisis and its aftermath

CHAPTER 8

- Clearer discussion of concepts of (global) public goods and common pool resources
- Discussion of the fracking revolution and its impact on both the environment and global energy politics
- Updated discussion of global climate governance post-Kyoto
- Discussion of the 2014 Ebola scare
- New Theory in Practice box on Ebola vs. the Flu: The Risks of a Pandemic
- Discussion of role of social media in the Arab Spring

CHAPTER 9

- Retained the seven competing visions of the global future approach, but changed the hypothetical future histories style to a more straightforward presentation and critique of the seven global futures

In addition to the key revisions noted above, many smaller substantive revisions are found in every chapter. They include updating of data including that found in many of the tables and figures, expanded or improved discussion of some key concepts to reflect the latest literature, and use of new examples from recent events to illustrate larger points.

Features

How the World Works begins by laying out the central assumptions of the realist paradigm in Chapter 1 and then discussing the challenges posed to the realist worldview by the paradigms that have emerged as alternatives to realism. Each subsequent chapter then examines a specific issue in the real world of international politics—such as war, human rights, and economic globalization—to shed light on the differences between the realist approach and the alternative paradigms. In different chapters of the book, the essential subject matter may seem to privilege one theoretical perspective or another, but there will be enough competing evidence and perspectives provided so that students will be encouraged to think about and question the various worldviews.

Chapter 2 of the text examines the history of international relations and the related rise and fall of the theoretical paradigms over time. Chapter 3 looks at foreign policy-making and the several levels of analysis that are involved in shaping state behavior, including the domestic sources of state behavior that realists traditionally have tended to downplay. Given the centrality of war to the realist perspective, the discussion of war and violence in Chapter 4 takes place on realism's turf, though there is plenty in the chapter to provide ammunition for critics of realism. Chapter 5 then moves to the turf of liberal institutionalism as the focus shifts to international law and organization. Constructivism gets the

home-field advantage in Chapter 6, with its focus on international human rights. Chapters 7 and 8 examine economic globalization and transnational issues, spotlighting the liberal commercialist and neo-Marxist perspectives and discussing in some detail the tension between globalization and many of the core realist assumptions.

Chapter 9 concludes the book with a discussion of seven alternative global futures. Each of these seven different visions of the future extends the logic of a different theoretical perspective on world politics. And each vision is then subjected to a short critique. The goal of this chapter is to bring the reader full circle to the theoretical perspectives presented in Chapter 1. On the basis of this discussion of possible global futures, and in light of the data and analysis absorbed from Chapters 2 through 8, the reader should be in a good position to articulate and defend, in a reasonably sophisticated manner, his or her own theoretical preferences for understanding world politics.

Each chapter in *How the World Works* is structured not only to address the central question of that chapter but also to contribute to an understanding of the book's larger themes and goals. The result is a book that hangs together and that is more than just a collection of useful concepts and pieces of information examined in isolation. The approach to each chapter reflects an assumption that, for beginning students, theoretical sophistication must be based on an understanding of the real world of international relations and world politics. For example, if students are going to be in a position to decide whether liberal institutionalists best explain how the world works, they have to examine the record of liberal institutions such as international law and organizations in practice. Similarly, if students are to be in a position to judge the constructivist notion that norms and ideas can shape world politics, then it is useful and necessary to examine in detail the emergence and impact of the idea of human rights in the conduct of world politics since World War II. To help students keep larger goals in mind, each chapter begins and ends with a reminder of the larger theoretical debate, but the bulk of each chapter focuses on the empirical record of the topic at hand.

You will find pedagogical features that support the goals in each chapter and throughout the book:

- **Theory in Practice.** Each chapter includes two or three "Theory in Practice" boxes, in which students will find a key chapter concept applied to a recent world event. The goal is to reinforce the idea, stressed throughout the book, that international relations concepts and theories have direct relevance to the world in which students are living. Critical thinking questions at the end of each box encourage students to start doing their own analysis using international relations concepts.
- **Photos and Figures.** Each chapter includes an opening photo and two interior photos related to the substance of the chapter. Where appropriate, figures are included to help visualize key ideas or put them into quantitative context.

- **Key Terms and Glossary.** In each chapter, key terms are highlighted and then listed again at the end of the chapter. A marginal glossary provides brief definitions of those terms for quick reference in the context of the chapter. Through the key terms and glossary, students have a comprehensive list of the key ideas and concepts necessary to understand world politics.
- **Review Questions.** At the end of each chapter, students are given three review questions that focus on the big issues raised in the chapter. While the list of key terms helps students ascertain whether they understand the details and specifics of a chapter (whether they see the "trees"), the review questions help students test their knowledge of the larger significance of those details (to determine if they see the "forest").
- **Map Insert.** A four-color insert with maps of the world, North America, South America, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, East and South Asia, and Australia and Oceania is included following page xix of this book. Basic geographical knowledge is essential in the study of international relations, and the insert is intended to put this knowledge within students' immediate reach.

How the World Works strives for a conversational style that keeps its student readers in mind. This approach does not require dumbing down the content. On the contrary, the clearer the writing, the better the organization, and the more accessible the style, the more one can succeed in conveying sophisticated content to the reader. Especially in a field as intrinsically interesting and compelling as world politics, and at a time in world history when so much is in flux, there is no reason that a text on the topic cannot be intellectually sophisticated and, at the same time, readable, engaging, and even fun. This text introduces students to the concepts and developments at the core of the discipline of world politics but in a way that makes sense to them.

While *How the World Works* is perhaps half the length of many introductory textbooks, it has the advantage of focusing attention on the most salient issues and concepts that often get buried in longer texts. Brevity also provides greater opportunity for instructors to assign supplementary readings that reinforce and develop concepts and issues discussed in this text. There is such an array of good writing, accessible at the undergraduate level, on issues of world politics and international relations that it would be an omission not to be able to incorporate as much of it as possible into the introductory course. Students will be armed with the basic concepts and issues from reading this text. Thus, instructors can assign additional readings by proponents or critics of a particular theory to extend the discussion beyond the text.

Supplements

Pearson is pleased to offer several resources to qualified adopters of *How the World Works* and their students that will make teaching and learning from this book even more effective and enjoyable. Several of the

supplements for this book are available at the Instructor Resource Center (IRC), an online hub that allows instructors to quickly download book-specific supplements. Please visit the IRC welcome page at http://www.pearsonhighered.com/irc to register for access.

Instructor's Manual/Test Bank This resource includes learning objectives, lecture outlines, multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, and essay questions for each chapter. Available for download from the IRC.

Pearson MyTest This powerful assessment generation program includes all of the items in the instructor's manual/test bank. Questions and tests can be easily created, customized, saved online, and then printed, allowing flexibility to manage assessments anytime and anywhere. To learn more, please visit http://www.mypearsontest.com or contact your Pearson representative.

PowerPoint Presentation Organized around a lecture outline, these multimedia presentations also include photos, figures, and tables from each chapter. Available for download from the IRC.

Longman Atlas of World Issues (0-205-78020-2) From population and political systems to energy use and women's rights, the *Longman Atlas of World Issues* features full-color thematic maps that examine the forces shaping the world. Featuring maps from the latest edition of *The Penguin State of the World Atlas*, this excerpt includes critical thinking exercises to promote a deeper understanding of how geography affects many global issues. Available at no additional charge when packaged with this book.

Goode's World Atlas (0-321-65200-2) First published by Rand McNally in 1923, *Goode's World Atlas* has set the standard for college reference atlases. It features hundreds of physical, political, and thematic maps as well as graphs, tables, and a pronouncing index. Available at a discount when packaged with this book.

Research and Writing in International Relations (0-205-06065-X) With current and detailed coverage on how to start research in the discipline's major subfields, this brief and affordable guide offers the step-by-step guidance and essential resources needed to compose political science papers that go beyond description and into systematic and sophisticated inquiry. This text focuses on areas where students often need help—finding a topic, developing a question, reviewing the literature, designing research, and finally, writing the paper. Available at a discount when packaged with this book.

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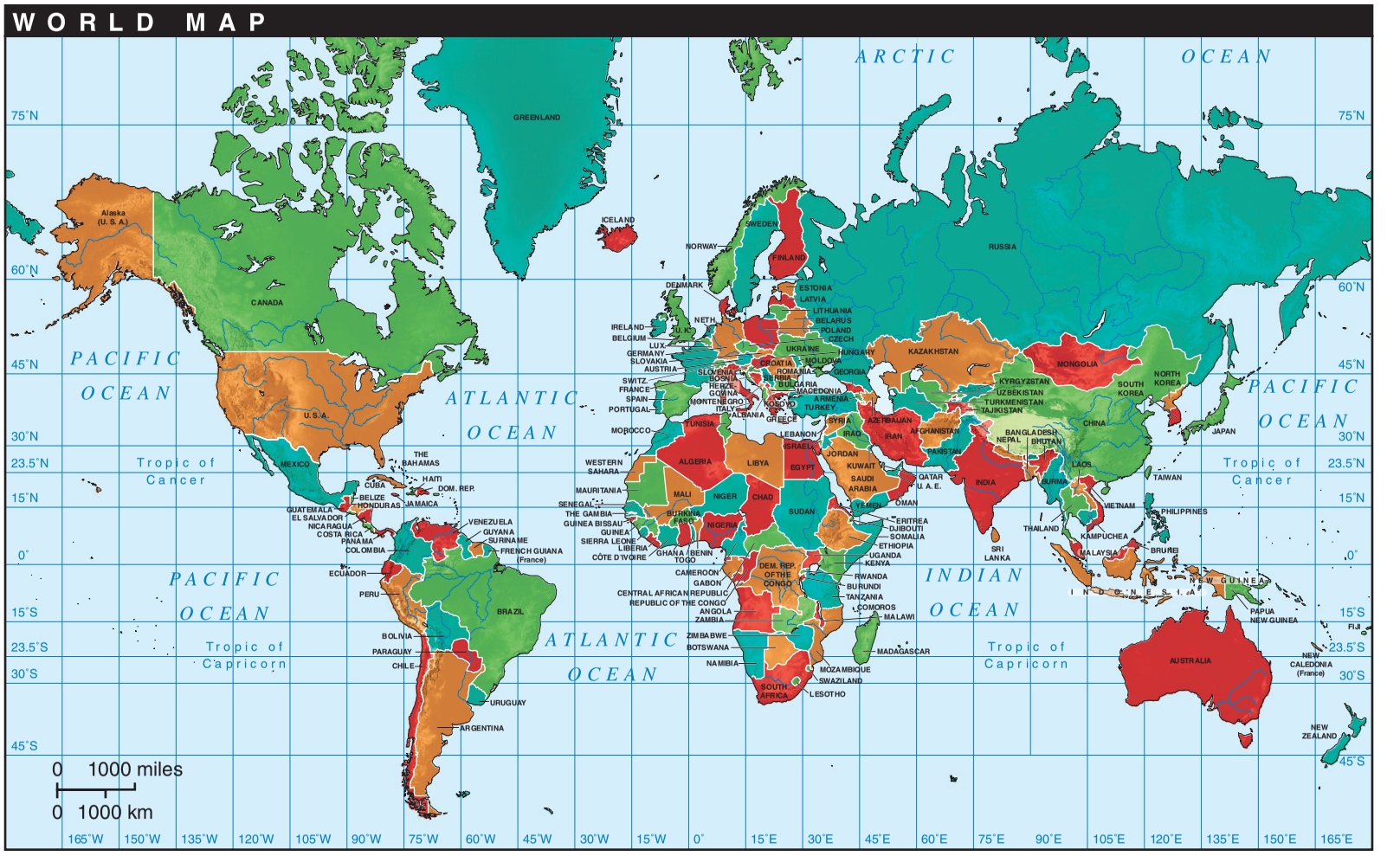
In many ways, this book reflects a career spent teaching and writing at Dickinson College, where I have been surrounded by first-class colleagues, excellent students, and an administration committed to fostering an environment where both good scholarship and good teaching can thrive. In particular, I would like to thank my colleagues Douglas Stuart, for his thoughtful comments on Chapters 1 and 3, and David Strand, for his useful suggestions on Chapter 6. Students in numerous sections of my Political Science 170 International Relations class who have used the earlier editions of this book also helped improve this new edition in various ways.

I have been sustained in the long process of writing and revising this book by the memory and thoughts of those people (Rosemary, Serf, Sam, Tina, Shelly, Angie, Elmer) whom I have cared most about in this world. Most important of all, this edition, like the first two, is dedicated to my three daughters—Laura, Samantha, and Alex—who give meaning and purpose to everything I do, and to Candace L. Bova—my wife, my best friend, and my partner-in-life.

—Russell Bova

Maps

WORLD MAP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Gulf of Alaska
Gulf of St. Lawrence
Gulf of California
Gulf of Tehuantepec
Brooks Range
Mt Mckinley
Mt Logan
Mackenzie Mountains
Rocky Mountains
Great Plains
Appalachian Mts.
Sierra Madre Occidental
Sierra Madre Oriental
Sierra Madre Del Sur
Baja California
Great Bear Lake
Great Slave Lake
Lake Athabasca
Lake Winnipeg
Lake Superior
Lake Huron
Lake Michigan
Lake Ontario
Lake Erie
Lake Oahe
Lake Sakakawea
Great Salt Lake
Death Valley
Mojave Desert
Olympic Mts.
Nuuk (Godthab)
Vancouver
Calgary
Seattle
Spokane
Portland
San Francisco
Oakland
Los Angeles
San Diego
Boulder
Minneapolis
Milwaukee
Chicago
Detroit
Cleveland
Buffalo
Rochester
Montreal
Ottawa
New York
Philadelphia
Baltimore
Washington D.C.
Norfolk
Charlotte
Omaha
Kansas City
St. Louis
Louisville
Memphis
Birmingham
Dallas
Houston
San Antonio
New Orleans
Jacksonville
Orlando
Tampa
West Palm Beach
Miami
Nassau
THE BAHAMAS
Havana
CUBA
HAITI
Port-au-Prince
Santo Domingo
DOM. REP.
San Juan
Kingston
JAMAICA
Willemstad
Mexico City
Yucatan Peninsula
Belize City
BELIZE
Belmopan
Guatemala
GUATEMALA
HONDURAS
Tegucigalpa
San Salvador
EL SALVADOR
NICARAGUA
Managua
L. Nicaragua
San Jose
COSTA RICA
Panama
PANAMA
0 500 miles
0 500 km
180°W
165°W
150°W
135°W
120°W
105°W
90°W
75°W
60°W
45°W
30°W
15°W
0°
75°N
60°N
45°N
30°N
23.5°N
15°N
Tropic of Cancer


SOUTH AMERICA
Caribbean Sea
ATLANTIC OCEAN
PACIFIC OCEAN
80°W
70°W
60°W
50°W
40°W
30°W
10°N
0°
10°S
20°S
23.5°S
30°S
40°S
50°S
Tropic of Capricorn
Barranquilla
Maracaibo
Barquisimeto
Valencia
VENEZUELA
GUYANA
SURINAME
Paramaribo
Georgetown
Cayenne
FRENCH GUIANA (France)
Medellin
Bogotá
Cali
COLOMBIA
Quito
ECUADOR
Guayaquil
Gulf of Guayaquil
Amazon Basin
Manaus
Marajo Island
Belém
Fortaleza
Teresina
Recife
Salvador
BRAZIL
Andes Mountains
PERU
Lima
Lake Titicaca
BOLIVIA
La Paz
Sucre
Mato Grosso Plateau
Brasilia
Goiania
Belo Horizonte
Rio de Janeiro
Campinas
São Paulo
Cabo Frio
Curitiba
CHILE
Atacama Desert
PARAGUAY
Asunción
Porto Alegre
ARGENTINA
Cerro Aconcagua
Santiago
Rosario
URUGUAY
Buenos Aires
Montevideo
Pampas
Isla Grande de Chiloe
Gulf of San Matias
Valdes Penninsula
Gulf of San Jorge
Taitao Penninsula
Andes Mountains
Patagonia
FALKLAND ISLANDS
Port Stanley
Strait of Magellan
Tierra Del Fuego
SOUTH GEORGIA ISLAND
0
500 miles
0
500 km

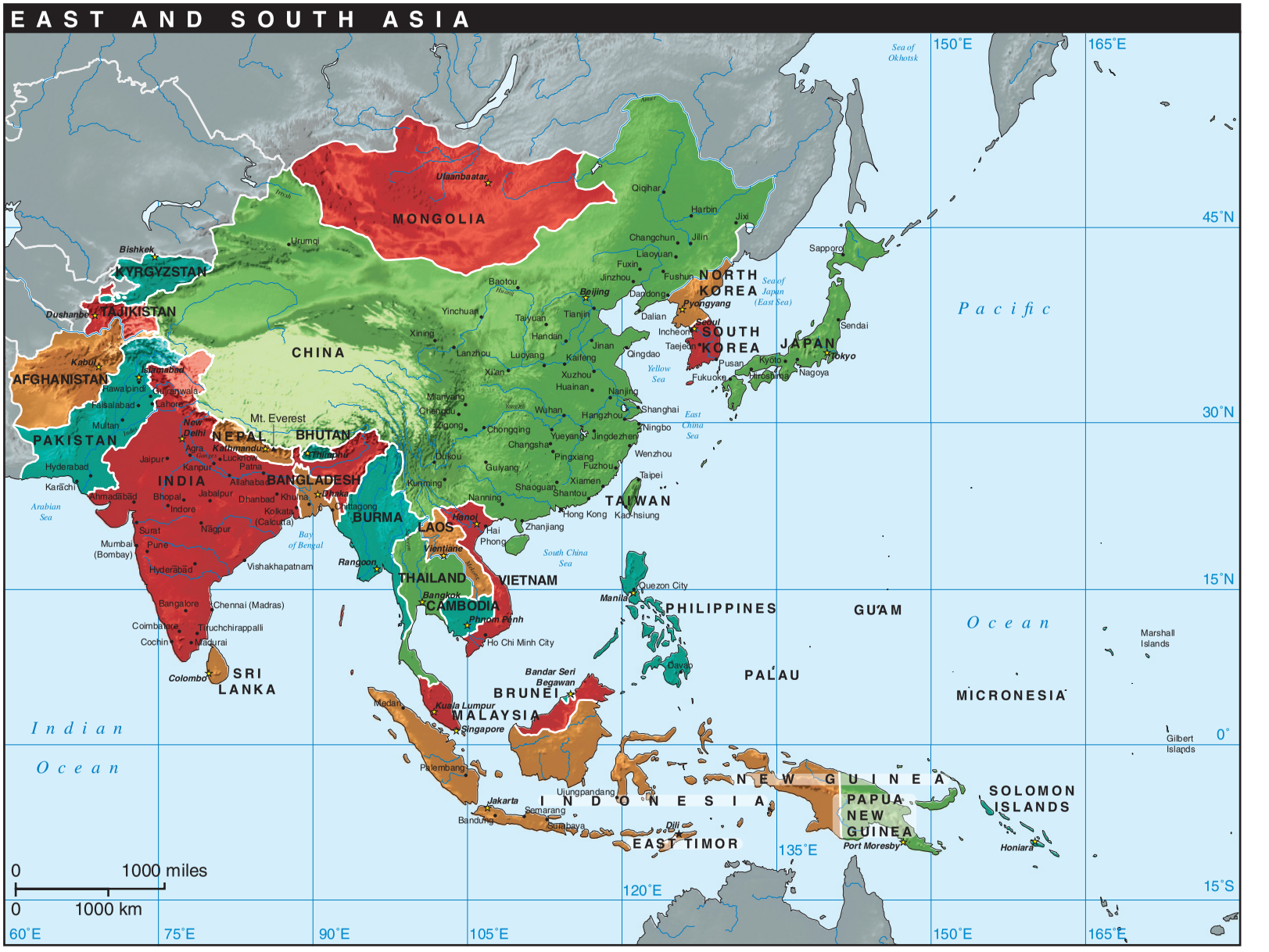
A F R I C A

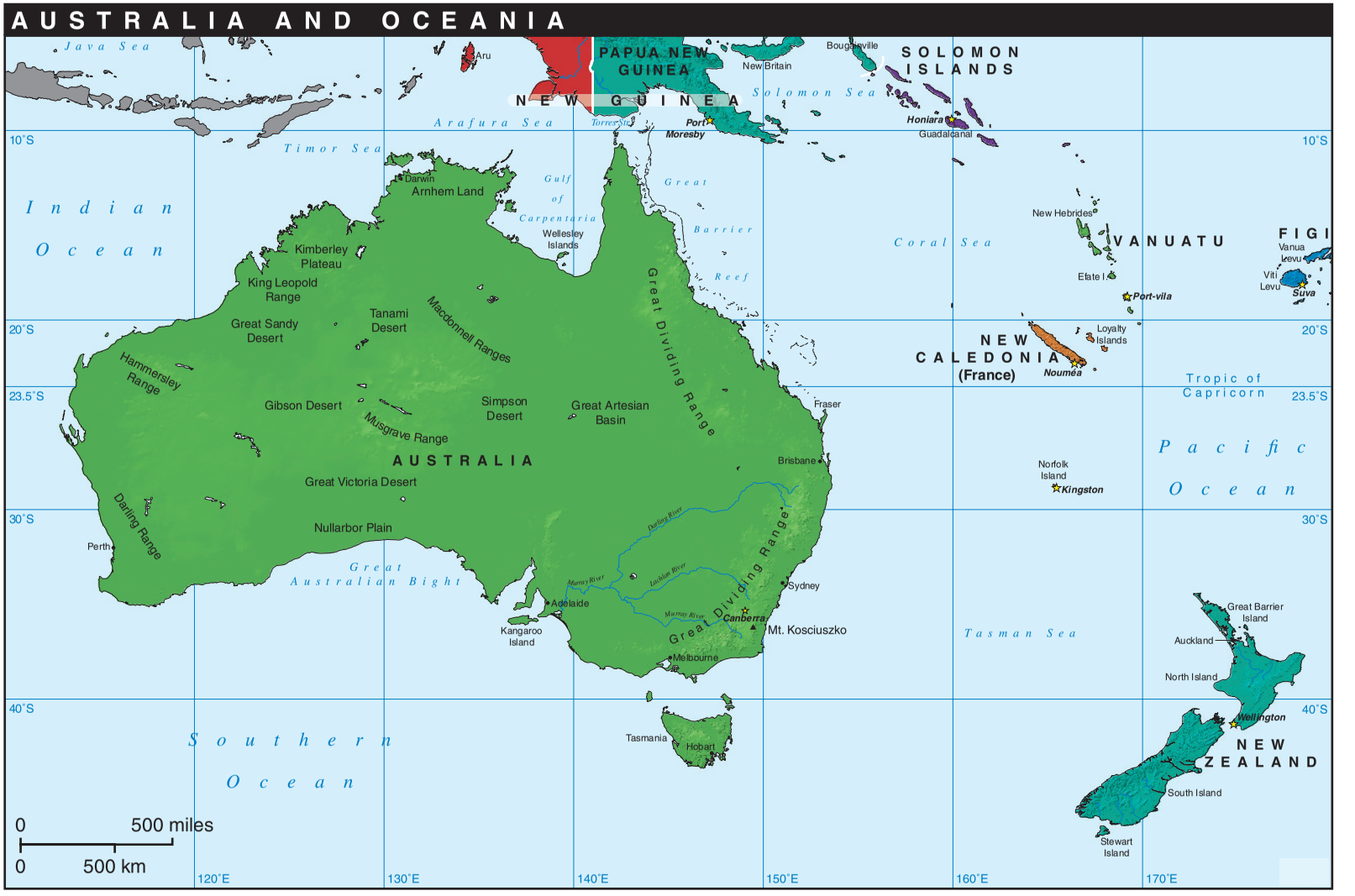
10˚W
0˚
10˚E
20˚E
50˚E
Caspian Sea
Madeira Island (Portugal)
Strait of Gibraltar
Algiers
Tunis
Valletta
MALTA
Tripoli
Mediterranean Sea
Casablanca
Rabat
MOROCCO
Atlas Mountains
TUNISIA
Alexandria
30˚N
Canary Islands (Spain)
ALGERIA
Cairo
LIBYA
EGYPT
Libyan Desert
Nile R.
Tropic of Cancer
Persian Gulf
WESTERN SAHARA
Ahaggar Mtns.
23.5˚N
Sahara Desert
Lake Nasser
20˚N
Tibesti Mtns.
Nubian Desert
Red Sea
MAURITANIA
MALI
NIGER
CHAD
Nouakchott
Senegal R.
SUDAN
ERITREA
Asmara
Sudan Desert
Khartoum
Dakar
SENEGAL
THE GAMBIA
Banjul
Niger R.
Niamey
L. Chad
Bamako
Ouagadougou
Gulf of Aden
DJIBOUTI
Djibouti
Bissau
BURKINA FASO
N'Djamena
GUINEA
BENIN
NIGERIA
White Nile
Blue Nile
10˚N
GUINEA BISSAU
Conakry
COTE D'IVOIRE
TOGO
Abuja
Chari R.
Ethiopian Highlands
Addis Ababa
SOMALIA
Freetown
SIERRA LEONE
Lake Volta
Benue R.
Ibadan
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
ETHIOPIA
GHANA
Porto Novo
Monrovia
LIBERIA
Lomé
Accra
CAMEROON
Douala
Yamoussoukro
Bangui
Ubangi R.
Gulf of Guinea
Yaoundé
DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO
Lake Turkana
Lake Albert
UGANDA
Bata
Mogadishu
EQUATORIAL GUINEA
Libreville
REP. OF THE CONGO
Sangha R.
Congo R.
Mbandaka
KENYA
Kampala
0˚
Sao Tome
Lake Victoria
GABON
Congo Basin
RWANDA
Nairobi
L. Kivu
Kigali
Mt. Kilimanjaro
Brazzaville
Bujumbura
BURUNDI
Kinshasa
Kasai R.
TANZANIA
Zanzibar
Matadi
L. Tanganyika
Dar es Salaam
Luanda
Lake Mweru
10˚S
L. Malawi
ANGOLA
Likasi
Katanga Plateau
Lubumbashi
Comoros
Huambo
MALAWI
MOZAMBIQUE
ATLANTIC OCEAN
ZAMBIA
Lilongwe
Lusaka
Lake Kariba
Zambezi R.
Mozambique Channel
Harare
MADAGASCAR
Antananarivo
NAMIBIA
ZIMBABWE
20˚S
BOTSWANA
Bulawayo
Namib Desert
Windhoek
Kalahari Desert
Limpopo R.
Tropic of Capricorn
Walvis Bay
23.5˚S
Gaborone
Pretoria
Maputo
Mbabane
Johannesburg
Vaal R.
SWAZILAND
Orange R.
Bloemfontein
30˚S
Maseru
Durban
SOUTH AFRICA
Umtata
LESOTHO
INDIAN OCEAN
Cape Town
0 500 miles
0 500 km
30˚E
40˚E

EUROPE

20°W
10°W
0°
10°E
20°E
30°E
40°E
50°E
40°W
60°N
30°W
70°N
20°W
40°N
Greenland Sea
Jan Mayen
Denmark Strait
Barents Sea
Kolgujev
Reykjavik
ICELAND
Norwegian Sea
White Sea
Ural Mountains
Faroe Islands (Denmark)
Torshavn
Shetland Islands
Orkney Islands
Hebrides
Gulf of Bothnia
SWEDEN
FINLAND
NORWAY
Helsinki
Gulf of Finland
St. Petersburg
L. Ladoga
Tallinn
Oslo
Stockholm
ESTONIA
Perm
Izevsk
Kazan
Jaroslavl
Rostov
Gorkiy
Volga
Tol Yatti
Moscow
RUSSIA
Saratov
U. K.
Glasgow
Edinburgh
North Sea
DENMARK
Goteborg
Riga
LATVIA
IRELAND
Belfast
Sunderland
Dublin
Limerick
Cork
Leeds
Liverpool
Manchester
Birmingham
London
Baltic Sea
Copenhagen
LITHUANIA
Vilnius
Kaliningrad
Minsk
BELARUS
NETH.
Amsterdam
The Hague
Rotterdam
Hamburg
Gdańsk
POLAND
Warsaw
Poznań
Łódź
Berlin
GERMANY
Leipzig
Voronez
Kharkov
Volgograd
Kiev
UKRAINE
ATLANTIC OCEAN
English Channel
Brussels
BELGIUM
Bonn
Luxembourg
LUX.
Frankfurt
Prague
CZECH
Brno
Kraków
L'viv
Donetsk
Krivoy Rog
Paris
FRANCE
Nurnberg
Strasbourg
SLOVAKIA
Carpathian Mountains
Bratislava
Vienna
MOLDOVA
Chisinau
Frunze
Sea of Azov
Krasnodar
Odessa
Caucasus Mts.
Nantes
Bay of Biscay
LIECHTENSTEIN
Vaduz
Zurich
Bern
SWITZERLAND
Geneva
Lyon
AUSTRIA
Budapest
HUNGARY
Cluj-Napoca
ROMANIA
Timisoara
SLOVENIA
Ljubljana
Zagreb
CROATIA
Bordeaux
Mont Blanc
Milano
ITALY
Bucharest
Belgrade
Black Sea
Bayonne
Genova
Monaco
BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA
Sarajevo
SERBIA
KOSOVO
BULGARIA
Varna
Burgas
Sofia
Porto
Valladolid
ANDORRA
Marseille
Firenze
Adriatic Sea
Apennines
Podgorica
Pristina
Skopje
MACEDONIA
PORTUGAL
Madrid
Barcelona
Corsica
MONTENEGRO
Rome
Tirana
ALBANIA
Lisbon
SPAIN
Valencia
Sardinia
Naples
Vesuvius
Thessaloniki
GREECE
Lesbos
Cordoba
Majorca
Tyrrhenian Sea
Ionian Sea
Agrinion
Aegean Sea
Athens
Gibraltar
Mediterranean Sea
Palermo
Monte Etna
Sicily
Peloponnesus
Rhodes
Crete
0
500 miles
0
500 km
Red Sea


THE MIDDLE EAST
30°E
35°E
40°E
50°E
60°E
Black Sea
Caucasus Mountains
Caspian Sea
Aral Sea
KAZAKHSTAN
UZBEKISTAN
GEORGIA
Tbilisi
ARMENIA
Yerevan
AZERBAIJAN
Baku
Istanbul
Bursa
Ankara
TURKEY
Pontic Mountains
L. Van
Tigris R.
Izmir
L. Tuz
Tabriz
TURKMENISTAN
Ashgabat
Adana
Mosul
Aleppo
Euphrates R.
Elburz Mountains
Tehran
Mashhad
Nicosia
CYPRUS
SYRIA
Zagros Mountains
IRAN
35°N
Mediterranean Sea
Beirut
Damascus
LEBANON
Baghdad
ISRAEL
West Bank
Tel Aviv
Jerusalem
Amman
Dead Sea
IRAQ
Esfahan
AFGHANISTAN
Alexandria
JORDAN
Basra
Qattara Depression
Cairo
Sinai Pen.
Kuwait
KUWAIT
Shiraz
Persian Gulf
BAHRAIN
Manama
Str. of Hormuz
QATAR
Doha
SAUDI ARABIA
Riyadh
Abu Dhabi
U. A. E.
Gulf of Oman
Muscat
25°N
EGYPT
Lake Nasser
Red Sea
Arabian Peninsula
Tropic of Cancer 23.5°N
OMAN
Nubian Desert
Rub' Al Khali
20°N
Arabian Sea
SUDAN
Khartoum
YEMEN
Sanaa
15°N
Gulf of Aden
Socotra (Yemen)
0
500 miles
0
500 km
DJIBOUTI
Djibouti
45°E
55°E
60°E
SOMALIA


EAST AND SOUTH ASIA
MONGOLIA
CHINA
KYRGYZSTAN
TAJIKISTAN
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN
INDIA
NEPAL
BHUTAN
BANGLADESH
BURMA
LAOS
THAILAND
VIETNAM
CAMBODIA
SRI LANKA
BRUNEI
MALAYSIA
INDONESIA
PHILIPPINES
TAIWAN
NORTH KOREA
SOUTH KOREA
JAPAN
GUAM
PALAU
MICRONESIA
NEW GUINEA
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
SOLOMON ISLANDS
EAST TIMOR
Pacific Ocean
Indian Ocean
Ulaanbaatar
Bishkek
Dushanbe
Kabul
Islamabad
New Delhi
Kathmandu
Thimphu
Dhaka
Rangoon
Vientiane
Bangkok
Phnom Penh
Hanoi
Manila
Bandar Seri Begawan
Kuala Lumpur
Singapore
Jakarta
Dili
Port Moresby
Honiara
Beijing
Pyongyang
Seoul
Tokyo
Taipei
Urumqi
Lhasa
Mt. Everest
Sea of Okhotsk
Sea of Japan (East Sea)
Yellow Sea
East China Sea
South China Sea
Arabian Sea
Bay of Bengal
0 1000 miles
0 1000 km
150°E
165°E
45°N
30°N
15°N
0°
15°S
135°E
120°E
105°E
90°E
75°E
60°E


AUSTRALIA AND OCEANIA
Java Sea
Aru
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
NEW GUINEA
Bougainville
New Britain
SOLOMON ISLANDS
Solomon Sea
Arafura Sea
Torres Str.
Port Moresby
Honiara
Guadalcanal
10°S
Timor Sea
Darwin
Arnhem Land
Gulf of Carpentaria
Great Barrier Reef
Indian Ocean
Wellesley Islands
Coral Sea
New Hebrides
VANUATU
FIGI
Vanua Levu
Viti Levu
Suva
Efate I.
Port-vila
Kimberley Plateau
King Leopold Range
Great Sandy Desert
Tanami Desert
Macdonnell Ranges
Great Dividing Range
20°S
NEW CALEDONIA (France)
Loyalty Islands
Noumea
Hammersley Range
Gibson Desert
Simpson Desert
Great Artesian Basin
Musgrave Range
Fraser
23.5°S
Tropic of Capricorn
AUSTRALIA
Brisbane
Norfolk Island
Kingston
Pacific Ocean
Great Victoria Desert
Darling Range
Nullarbor Plain
Perth
30°S
Great Australian Bight
Darling River
Murray River
Lachlan River
Sydney
Adelaide
Canberra
Mt. Kosciuszko
Kangaroo Island
Melbourne
Great Dividing Range
Tasman Sea
Great Barrier Island
Auckland
North Island
Wellington
NEW ZEALAND
South Island
Stewart Island
40°S
Southern Ocean
Tasmania
Hobart
0 500 miles
0 500 km
120°E
130°E
140°E
150°E
160°E
170°E

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Chapter 1

How to Think About World Politics

Realism and Its Critics

World Trade Center, September 11, 2001. After 9/11 a common response was that "everything has changed." Is that the case? How would realists respond to that observation?

Learning Objectives

1-1 Explain the three grand debates over how scholars should study international relations.

1-2 Identify and explain the key assumptions and arguments of the realist paradigm.

1-3 Compare and contrast the liberal, constructivist, feminist, and neo-Marxist paradigms.

All politics is global. Whether you live in New York or Shanghai, in a small town in Kansas or a village in rural India, in the heart of a prosperous European city or on an impoverished subsistence farm in sub-Saharan Africa, your life is affected in countless ways by developments in world politics. Of course, during times of war, global politics becomes a matter of life and death for individuals and, sometimes, for entire societies. However, even during more "normal" times, global events continually reverberate through our lives. For example, how much it costs you to travel to school could be affected by political instability in an oil-producing country located far from where you live and study. Whether you will be able to afford to study abroad during your college career can be affected by the value of your country's currency in global currency markets. Getting the job of your choice when you graduate might depend on the evolving patterns of global trade.

The impact of global trends on your life is not merely economic. The quality of the air you breathe can be a direct consequence of pollutants poured into the atmosphere by factories located halfway across the world and on the success or failure of global efforts to regulate the environment. The level of respect given to your human rights increasingly depends on emerging global human rights norms and institutions that go beyond your own government's policies. Your physical security as you go about your daily life can be affected by trends in global terrorism or the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, as many discovered after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, you don't have to be a direct victim of global terrorism to feel its impact. Increased security at airports, tightened immigration rules, and a recalibrated balance between security and civil liberties affected Americans as well as those who wanted to visit or study in the United States.

Global events have always affected individuals' lives, particularly through war, conflict, and trade across national borders. However, in recent decades, developments in the technologies of transportation and, especially, telecommunications have shrunk the world and allowed individuals to become increasingly interconnected. Thus, more than ever before, in the twenty-first century being an informed individual requires understanding the larger world in which we live. But having such an understanding requires more than accumulating information, facts, and details about the world. It also requires a more generalized understanding of how the world works—an understanding that will allow us to make sense of the day-to-day events reported in the news. That is what formal study of international relations (IR) and world politics seeks to attain.

Studying International Relations and World Politics

1-1 Explain the three grand debates over how scholars should study international relations.

The phrases "international relations" and "world politics" are often used interchangeably, including in this book, to refer to the full range of political, military, and economic relations and interactions occurring among nation-states, such as the United States, Russia, and China, and nonstate actors, such as the United Nations (UN), al-Qaeda, and Amnesty International. At the same time, the two phrases do not have precisely the same meaning. "International relations" suggests a focus on relations among nation-states as the key actors. "World politics," in contrast, implies the casting of a broader net to include nonstate actors. Thus, the trend in recent years has been toward using "world politics" to label the field of study covered in this book.

Whatever label one prefers, the important point is that the scholarly study of international relations and world politics is not the same as journalism or political punditry. Journalists and many other commentators on contemporary history are usually content to describe and analyze specific, discrete events, but political scientists look for patterns and generalizations that can illuminate how the world works. For example, while a journalist might describe and explain al-Qaeda's terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, a political scientist will try to understand more generally the causes and consequences of terrorism. While a journalist might report and describe Iranian efforts to acquire a nuclear weapons capability, the goal of international relations scholarship is to better understand both the causes and consequences of nuclear proliferation in general.

Though international relations scholars generally agree that their work is different from that of journalists, those scholars disagree among themselves on a number of fundamental questions over how best to study and understand how the world works. Indeed, the scholarly study of international relations has been marked by a series of grand debates. The three most important of those debates are: (1) the debate over whether international relations is a positivist science, (2) the debate over the appropriate methods to be employed in scholarship, and (3) the debate over the choice of paradigms from which to view the world. Each of these debates will be explained below.

The Debate over Positivist Science

For much of the twentieth century, the study of international relations was dominated by discussion and analysis of diplomatic history, international law, and international institutions. The emphasis was on description of historical events and trends combined with interpretation of those events by scholars,

with an eye toward providing advice about how states and their leaders should act to achieve their goals in international relations. In this era, the most influential scholars were those whose historical narratives and institutional analyses seemed most persuasive.

By the 1960s, however, a new generation of scholars had become dissatisfied with this approach. In their view, the traditional scholarship was too descriptive and not much more than a sophisticated type of journalistic analysis. What they wanted was to transform the study of international relations into a more rigorous enterprise modeled on the natural sciences. In particular, they embraced an approach to science known as **positivism**.

positivism
An approach to knowledge based on the scientific method and the observation and analysis of empirical data.

The positivist approach seeks to apply the scientific method, common in the natural sciences, to the study of international relations. One starts with a hypothesis that specifies a relationship between two variables. Consider for example the following hypothesis: a democratic regime reduces the propensity of a country to go to war. In that example, democracy is the independent variable and war is the dependent variable. The independent variable is the one that the scholar manipulates to see what impact it has on the dependent variable. In a chemistry lab, one can manipulate the independent variable by adding or subtracting the presence of a chemical agent to see what result is produced. In international relations, one cannot do that, but what one can do is to compare the war propensity of democratic and authoritarian regimes. Thus to test the hypothesis, one looks at empirical data on the war propensity of democratic versus nondemocratic regimes, and that data will serve to either support or to falsify the hypothesis.

The goal of a positivist science of international relations is the development of scientific laws of international behavior. Those laws are not absolute but, instead, probabilistic. It is unlikely that one will ever be able to say with certainty, for example, that democracies are always peaceful or that democratic regime X necessarily will be more peaceful in its approach to international relations than authoritarian regime Y. Instead the goal would be to be able to say that the probability of a democratic regime going to war is lower.

rational choice theory
An approach to social science, borrowed from economics, that assumes individuals are rational actors who make decisions intended to maximize their interests on the basis of cost–benefit calculations.

A manifestation of this new, more scientific approach was the ascendance of **rational choice theory**. The theory of rational choice stood in sharp contrast to the historically grounded descriptions characteristic of the study of international relations in the first half of the twentieth century. Borrowing heavily from the discipline of economics, rational choice assumed that individuals were rational actors whose primary commitment was to the advancement of their own interests. On that basis, economists had long developed laws of economic behavior that were deemed to hold true regardless of historical and cultural context. Likewise, in international relations rational choice theorists sought to develop laws of international behavior with universal applicability across time and place.

Traditional scholars resisted, suggesting that the study of human behavior is fundamentally different from the study of the natural world. They argued that

is difficult, if not impossible, to study the human world with the cool, intellectual detachment with which natural scientists study the laws of physics. But the positivists gained the upper hand, and for the next couple of decades they came to dominate international relations scholarship.

In the 1990s a backlash emerged against the dominance of the positivist approach in international relations theory. A new generation of "post-positivist" scholars argued that because the study of international relations is about the actions of human beings, it is a mistake to try to mimic positivist natural science. Their argument rests on a distinction between "explaining" and "understanding." Positivists seek to explain international behavior by reference to objective cause-and-effect relationships present in the external world. For example, a positivist might argue that when one country acquires nuclear weapons, its neighbors will seek to acquire them in self-defense.

For a post-positivist, that conclusion cannot be formulated into a general law. Instead, one's reaction to the arms acquisition of a neighboring state will be determined by one's own subjective understanding of one's neighbor as a friend or a foe, the history of relations between the two states, and the preconceived perceptions and ideas held by leaders about the nature of the threat posed by one's neighbor. Thus, one can come to "understand" the nature of a state's behavior but one cannot "explain" it by general laws applicable across time and place.

The Debate over Methods

A second area of debate among international relations scholars is related to method. Some, though not all, scholars committed to a positivist science of international relations argued that the search for objective laws of international relations requires one to analyze large numbers of cases using sophisticated statistical techniques. Purely qualitative methodologies—for example, case studies of a particular war or even a side-by-side comparison of two wars—might provide interesting insights into those cases but cannot allow one to formulate general laws about when wars will occur. To be able to generalize in that fashion, many scholars argue that one needs to analyze large numbers of cases via quantitative methods.

Take, once again, the question of the impact of democracy on the propensity of countries to go to war. Looking at a handful of cases may point in the direction of an answer but is unlikely to be conclusive. A more convincing answer to the question would require analysis that looks at dozens, perhaps hundreds of cases. One might start by defining terms such as democracy and authoritarianism, placing countries into one category or the other, and then looking at the relationship between regime type and frequency of involvement in wars.

Of course, any such study would quickly become more complex than that as one would have to consider how much fighting is necessary to consider an event to be a war as well as differing degrees of democracy and authoritarianism

in individual countries. Then, one would have to account for other causal factors that might influence the propensity to fight wars, including such things as level of economic development, preexisting arms races, etc. Teasing out the impact of all of these factors is not easy, and the most effective way to do that might well be via sophisticated statistical analysis.

The turn to greater use of quantitative methods was accompanied by much dissent from scholars who argued that quantitative analysis sacrificed the richness of case studies and other forms of qualitative research. Those critics complained that there were many aspects of political life that could not be reduced to quantitative data analysis and that the emphasis on statistical techniques was producing scholars who knew more about the methods of data analysis than about the real substance of political history. In fact, both approaches currently coexist in the study of international relations. A recent survey of international relations scholars suggests that while the field remains dominated by those who use qualitative methods in their research, a significant percentage (about a quarter in the case of US-based scholars) specialize in quantitative methods.[1]

The Interparadigm Debate

paradigm
A conceptual or theoretical perspective or framework commonly accepted within a scholarly discipline that helps to inform and guide thinking and research.

A third debate that has raged among international relations scholars is the "interparadigm debate." A **paradigm** is a way of thinking about and approaching an area of scientific or scholarly inquiry that is widely accepted within a particular discipline and that guides the direction of scientific research. In the natural sciences, scientists typically operate within a single paradigm. If at some point the paradigm no longer explains new information or discoveries, a scientific revolution occurs in which scholars develop a new paradigm to replace the old.[2] For example, Einstein's theory of relativity overturned the existing Newtonian paradigm of physics, providing a new framework within which subsequent research would be conducted. However, in the social sciences in general, and in the study of international relations in particular, several competing paradigms typically coexist and compete with one another. To relate this to the larger theme of this book, the main competing paradigms adopted by scholars of international relations and world politics provide different ways of understanding how the world works.

The so-called paradigm wars that have characterized the field of international relations were particularly heated in the 1980s and 1990s. Since that time, many scholars have sought to move beyond those wars and to focus on what is often called "non-paradigmatic research." Still, a 2014 survey of international relations scholars found that roughly three-quarters of international relations scholars continue to see their research as rooted in one of the major paradigms.[3]

Thus, the remainder of this chapter will focus on comparison of the main competing international relations paradigms. One virtue of examining competing paradigms is that a paradigm provides a simplified map of reality; it takes the complexity of the real world and reduces it to a core set of assumptions that

make the twists and turns of daily events and the relationships among them comprehensible.[4] As you think about the merits of the competing paradigms discussed in the pages that follow, keep in mind a few cautionary points:

1. To be valuable, a paradigm of world politics need not explain every event. In simplifying reality, a paradigm will miss certain things. The test of a paradigm, and your assessment of its utility, is how much of the reality of world politics it does manage to capture and how efficiently it does so. The best test is one of relative utility. The paradigm that one adopts should be the one that, in comparison to others, most comprehensively and efficiently explains how the world works.
2. The various paradigms offer different descriptions of how the world works, not how you might wish it to work. However, those competing descriptions can also give rise to prescriptive guidelines for formulating policy. Thus, the paradigm you embrace will affect the policy choices you might recommend. That is why understanding and evaluating the competing paradigms is more than an academic exercise. It has implications for your view of what constitutes wise policy-making in practice.
3. The paradigms presented below are what social scientists would call **ideal types**. That is, for purposes of analytical clarity and conceptual comparison, they are defined and stated in a pure and almost exaggerated form. The real world rarely conforms precisely to any single ideal type. Scholars working within different paradigms will often learn from one another, borrow from one another, and modify their theories on that basis. However, substantial differences among the paradigms remain. While the ultimate goal might be the emergence of a single paradigm that all scholars in the field can embrace, we are not yet at that point.

ideal type
A concept that provides an exaggerated and oversimplified version of reality as a way to promote analytical clarity and conceptual comparison.

In this chapter, we will look first at realism—the paradigm that dominated the field of international relations in the era following World War II. Following that, we will turn to a variety of competing paradigms that have arisen to challenge the realist view. In completing this chapter, you will not yet be in a position to decide whether you are more persuaded by realists or their various critics. That will require reading the rest of the book. What you will have by the end of this chapter is a sense of where and how realists and their critics think differently about how the world works.

The Realist Paradigm

1-2 Identify and explain the key assumptions and arguments of the realist paradigm.

From the end of World War II at least through the end of the Cold War, the dominant paradigm in the field of international relations was **realism**. Realist scholars see international relations as driven by the unrelenting and competitive

realism
Dominant post–World War II era paradigm; based on the assumption that international relations is a struggle for power among sovereign states.

pursuit of power by states in the effort to secure state interests. For realists, the most important source of power is military capability, and the acquisition and use of that military capability make the realists' world one prone to violence and warfare.

human nature realists
Scholars (also called "classical realists") who see the struggle for power that characterizes international relations as rooted in the essential character of human nature.

Human nature realists (or classical realists) see world politics driven by certain essential characteristics of human nature. For them, states seek power and use violence because human beings are essentially violent, power-seeking beings. Theirs is a particularly pessimistic worldview, as war and violence in world politics are viewed as an inherent part of the human condition. Most contemporary realists, however, are **structural realists** (also called neorealists). For them, the behavior of states has less to do with essential characteristics of the human species than with the structure of the international system within which states operate.

structural realists
Scholars (also called "neorealists") who see the struggle for power that characterizes international relations as rooted in the structure of the international system, especially the condition of anarchy.

The ten points below summarize the structural realist perspective; the first three represent its core assumptions:

anarchy
The absence of an effective world government capable of enforcing rules and norms of behavior.

1. **Anarchy exists in world politics.** For most contemporary realists, the first and most important thing one needs to know and remember is that world politics takes place within a context of **anarchy**. In international relations, anarchy refers to the absence of any world government. This situation differs significantly from what we are accustomed to in our domestic political life, where functioning governments provide rules and laws to govern individual behavior and where institutions, such as police, courts, and prisons, exist to ensure enforcement of such rules.

   What would domestic political life be like without such governments and the order they provide? The sixteenth-century British political philosopher Thomas Hobbes imagined such a world, referring to it as a **state of nature**.[5] Such a world would, arguably, have its positive side. After all, you could do as you pleased, unhampered by the countless rules and constraints imposed by governmental law and regulation. You could drive down the street at 90 miles per hour without fear that a police officer would issue a ticket. You would not need to pay taxes out of your hard-earned income, and if you wanted something but could not afford it, well, you could just take it without fear that the police would arrest you. It would also mean you could read what you wanted, drink what you wanted, smoke what you wanted, and in general, do what you wanted without restrictions imposed by a government.

state of nature
Situation of anarchy in which there is no government. Thomas Hobbes posited that humans once existed in a state of nature but elected to create governments; they thereby surrendered some personal liberty in exchange for order and security.

   On the other hand, would you really choose to live in the world just described? After all, though you would be free of governmental constraints, you would be subject to greater and more unpredictable threats from others. A speeding car can hit and kill *you*. A thief might steal from *you*. And your ability to do what you want might be constrained not by a government but by a powerful neighbor who decides to benefit in some way at your expense. Hobbes described the state of nature as a perpetual "war of all against all,"

in which life was "nasty, brutish, and short." For this reason, Hobbes suggests, people choose to live under the constraints imposed by government. The sacrifice of some liberty to that government is the price we pay for order and security.

But whereas individuals have made and accepted this trade-off in the domestic political realm, states have not yet been willing to do so in the international realm. The creation of a truly powerful and effective world government is still seen by most observers as not worth the limiting effect on the ability of states to do what they want, when they want. Of course, as in the domestic example, this leaves us all vulnerable to the bad intentions of neighboring states. Thus, unlike domestic politics, world politics still essentially operates in a "state of nature." The violence, the chaos, the death and destruction that often accompany world politics reflect the "war of all against all" that international anarchy directly implies.

2. **States are sovereign.** The term **sovereignty** is defined by Webster's dictionary as "supreme and independent political authority."[6] That is why, in the days of monarchy, the king or queen was often referred to as "the sovereign." The term reflected the fact that "supreme and independent political authority" rested in the hands of the one person who occupied the throne. In a democratic political system, in contrast, sovereignty can be said to rest collectively in the people who exercise political power through a democratically elected and constituted government. That government wields sovereign power in the name of the citizens.

sovereignty Condition of supreme, independent political authority answerable to no higher authority. In international relations theory, and especially among realists, states are often regarded as sovereign.

At the global level, no supreme sovereign authority exercises all-encompassing political authority. As noted above, the international system is, instead, characterized by anarchy. The highest sovereign actors in the global system are the close to 200 independent states, each of which claims exclusive right to control events taking place in its territory. Those sovereign states range from large superpowers like the United States to small city-states like Singapore. Irrespective of size, wealth, or military power, international legal norms recognize that each of these duly recognized states has equal right to govern the affairs taking place within its borders. This state system dates back to 1648 and the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War (see Chapter 2).

Of course, the behavior of one state inevitably affects the well-being and interests of others, whether through trade and economic interaction; through the travel of the state's citizens; through the need of each state to have access to and consume the earth's finite resources; or through the influence that a state's culture, ideology, and values have on others. Especially given the shrinking of the world via modern advances in transportation and communications technology, the idea of 200 completely self-absorbed sovereign actors is almost absurd. We have a world of almost 200 interdependent actors, whose behaviors, values, and interests inevitably interact with and