

Perspectives on International Relations and World History PYQ 2020

Q1. What are the different levels of analysis in studying International Relations? Explain them with the help of suitable examples.

Ans. The study of International Relations (IR) involves examining interactions between states and non-state actors on the global stage. Different levels of analysis provide distinct perspectives to understand these interactions. The three main levels are individual, state (national), and systemic levels:

1. Individual Level of Analysis:

This level focuses on the role of individuals, such as leaders, diplomats, and decision-makers, in shaping international relations. It examines their personalities, beliefs, values, and actions to understand how they influence foreign policy and global outcomes. For example, the personal animosities between leaders like Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin during World War II impacted the dynamics of alliances and negotiations.

2. State (National) Level of Analysis:

At this level, the focus shifts to the attributes and characteristics of individual states. Factors include a state's domestic politics, economic systems, ideologies, and historical experiences. The actions of states are analyzed in terms of their national interests and motivations. For instance, the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union was driven by their ideological differences and quest for global influence.

3. Systemic Level of Analysis:

This level examines the broader international system and the interactions between states within it. It explores how the structure of the international system, such as power distribution and international institutions, shapes states' behavior and interactions. The balance of power and cooperation among states are central concerns. An example is the rise of multipolar dynamics with the emergence of multiple global powers challenging the dominance of a single superpower.

Each level provides a distinct lens through which to view international relations. An event, such as a conflict or alliance formation, can be understood differently based on which level of analysis is applied. An effective study of IR often involves considering interactions across these levels to develop a comprehensive understanding of global politics.

Q2. How did the Treaty of Westphalia contribute to the peace and order in the world? Explain.

Ans. The Treaty of Westphalia, signed in 1648 to end the Thirty Years' War in Europe, is often considered a foundational moment in the development of the modern international system. **It contributed to peace and order in several significant ways:**

1. State Sovereignty and Non-Interference:

The Treaty of Westphalia introduced the principle of state sovereignty, establishing the idea that each recognized state has the right to govern itself without interference from external powers. This concept helped reduce religious conflicts and paved the way for the modern nation-state system. By emphasizing non-interference in domestic affairs, the treaty aimed to prevent large-scale wars triggered by religious disputes.

2. Territorial Integrity and Borders:

The treaty confirmed and recognized the territorial boundaries of various states, putting an end to territorial disputes that had fueled conflict. This clarity on borders reduced the likelihood of armed conflicts caused by ambiguous or disputed territories.

3. Balance of Power:

The treaty indirectly contributed to the development of the balance of power as a diplomatic strategy. With the fragmentation of power among various states and the weakening of the Holy Roman Empire, no single state emerged as an overwhelmingly dominant power. This balance of power concept aimed to prevent any one state from becoming too powerful and dominating others.

4. Norms and International Law:

The Treaty of Westphalia established the basis for the modern international legal framework. It laid down principles that govern the behavior of states in the international arena, including the sanctity of treaties and respect for diplomatic immunity. These principles have become integral to international law and diplomatic relations.

5. Decline of Religious Wars:

The treaty contributed to a decline in religious wars that had plagued Europe for decades. By granting religious freedom and recognizing the rights of different religious communities, it reduced the incentives for armed conflicts rooted in religious differences.

While the Treaty of Westphalia did not bring universal peace, it laid the groundwork for a more orderly international system based on the principles of state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and diplomatic negotiations. It established norms and practices that still guide modern international relations, contributing to a more stable global environment.

Q3. Critically analyze Kenneth Waltz's structural realism. How does defensive realism of Waltz differ from the offensive realism of Mearsheimer?

Ans. Kenneth Waltz's structural realism, often referred to as neorealism, is a significant theoretical framework in the field of International Relations. It emphasizes the role of the international system's structure in shaping state behavior. While it has been influential, it also faces criticisms.

Structural Realism (Neorealism) by Kenneth Waltz:

Waltz's structural realism asserts that the behavior of states is primarily influenced by the anarchic structure of the international system rather than solely by individual states' characteristics or intentions. He introduced the concept of international anarchy, where there is no central authority

above states to ensure order and security. To survive in this environment, states seek to maximize their security by focusing on relative power. **Waltz distinguishes between two levels of analysis:** the distribution of power (unipolarity, bipolarity, multipolarity) and the differentiation of states' capabilities (major powers, middle powers, etc.). He argues that bipolar systems are more stable due to clear power concentrations.

Critiques of Structural Realism:

Neglect of Domestic Factors: Critics argue that Waltz's neorealism oversimplifies state behavior by downplaying the role of domestic factors like leaders' ideologies, public opinion, and bureaucratic politics.

Static Nature: Some critics claim that Waltz's theory assumes a static view of the international system, ignoring the possibility of shifts in power or systemic change.

Limited to States: Neorealism focuses primarily on state interactions and fails to account for the growing influence of non-state actors in global politics.

Overemphasis on Security: The theory's exclusive focus on security can overlook other important factors that drive states' actions, such as economic interests, identity, and cultural considerations.

Defensive Realism (Waltz) vs. Offensive Realism (Mearsheimer):

Waltz's defensive realism and John Mearsheimer's offensive realism are variations within neorealism. **They differ in their assumptions about state behavior and security strategies:**

Defensive Realism (Waltz):

States prioritize security and survival.

States seek only enough power to ensure their security and deter potential threats.

Waltz believes that states generally exhibit restraint due to the security dilemma, where efforts to increase security can inadvertently lead to increased insecurity.

Offensive Realism (Mearsheimer):

Mearsheimer argues that states are inherently driven to maximize their power and security, not just to survive.

He believes states will engage in aggressive behavior to gain a relative power advantage.

Offensive realists are more skeptical about the possibility of cooperation and stability within an anarchic system.

In summary, while both defensive and offensive realism are rooted in structural realism, they differ in their assumptions about state motivations and strategies. Defensive realism emphasizes a more cautious and security-focused approach, while offensive realism sees states as more aggressive and power-maximizing entities. Critics of both theories point out limitations in their explanations of state behavior.

Q4. How did nationalism, colonialism and arms race set the stage for the First World War? Explain.

Ans. The First World War, which occurred from 1914 to 1918, was a complex and multifaceted conflict. Nationalism, colonialism, and the arms race were significant factors that contributed to setting the stage for this global conflict:

1. Nationalism:

Nationalism refers to the strong sense of identity and loyalty to one's nation or ethnic group. It played a role in the lead-up to the war in several ways:

Rivalries and Competition: Nationalism fueled rivalries and competitions among nations, especially in Europe. Ethnic tensions in regions like the Balkans heightened due to nationalist aspirations for independence, leading to instability.

Desire for Power and Prestige: Nationalist fervor led states to seek power and prestige on the international stage. This quest for dominance often brought nations into conflict as they vied for supremacy.

Alliance Systems: Nationalism contributed to the formation of alliance systems, with countries aligning themselves based on shared ethnic, cultural, or national identities. This resulted in intricate webs of alliances that heightened the potential for conflict.

2. Colonialism:

Colonialism involved the expansion and domination of European powers over overseas territories. It played a role in creating tensions and rivalries that contributed to the war:

Competition for Colonies: European powers competed to acquire and maintain colonies, which were seen as sources of wealth, resources, and strategic advantage. This competition created friction and rivalries among colonial powers.

Imperial Rivalries: The competition for colonies and influence led to diplomatic tensions and conflicts between major powers, especially in Africa and Asia.

National Pride: Colonies were seen as symbols of national power and prestige. The desire to protect and expand colonies fueled nationalist sentiments and contributed to geopolitical rivalries.

3. Arms Race:

The arms race involved the rapid buildup of military capabilities, particularly in terms of weaponry and military technology. This arms race was particularly pronounced in Europe:

Militarization of Alliances: Nations formed alliances to enhance their security but also engaged in an arms race to match the military capabilities of rival alliances. This buildup of military strength heightened tensions.

Fear and Insecurity: As one country increased its military capacity, others felt threatened and responded by increasing their own military capabilities. This created a cycle of fear and mistrust.

Lack of Communication: The arms race and militarization often limited diplomatic communication and peaceful resolutions to conflicts. Nations felt that military force was the primary means to secure their interests.

In summary, nationalism fostered rivalries and alliances, colonialism led to territorial disputes and imperial ambitions, and the arms race created an atmosphere of tension and military buildups. These

factors collectively set the stage for a volatile international environment that eventually culminated in the outbreak of the First World War.

Q5. Explain the emergence of the Global South dynamics and its present relevance.

Ans. The term "Global South" emerged as a concept to describe countries and regions that are economically and politically less developed compared to the wealthier and more powerful "Global North." The concept originated from discussions about economic inequality, post-colonialism, and the challenges faced by countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Oceania. **The emergence of the Global South dynamics can be understood in historical and geopolitical contexts:**

Historical Context:

Colonial Legacy: Many countries in the Global South were subjected to colonial rule by European powers. Colonialism led to exploitation, resource extraction, and socio-economic disruption, leaving these countries with significant developmental challenges.

Post-Colonial Realities: After gaining independence, countries in the Global South faced the task of nation-building and economic development. Many struggled with political instability, weak institutions, and limited access to resources.

Geopolitical Context:

Cold War Influence: During the Cold War, the Global South became a battleground for ideological influence between the United States and the Soviet Union. Both superpowers supported various regimes and movements, often exacerbating existing conflicts and divisions.

Economic Inequalities: The Global South's economies were often characterized by dependence on exporting raw materials, low industrialization, and unequal terms of trade. This contributed to their relative underdevelopment compared to the Global North.

Debt Crisis: Many countries in the Global South faced debt crises due to borrowing for development projects and falling commodity prices. Debt servicing consumed a significant portion of their budgets, hindering social and economic progress.

Present Relevance:

The dynamics of the Global South remain relevant today due to several reasons:

Economic Disparities: The economic disparities between the Global North and Global South persist, with the latter facing challenges in achieving sustained economic growth, reducing poverty, and achieving equitable development.

Global Governance: The Global South seeks greater representation and voice in global institutions like the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. Calls for reform in international institutions aim to address the imbalances in decision-making.

Climate Change and Environmental Challenges: Many Global South countries are disproportionately affected by climate change and environmental degradation. They often lack resources to adapt and mitigate the impacts.

Conflict and Security Concerns: Political instability, conflicts, and security challenges persist in various regions of the Global South, affecting both local and global stability.

South-South Cooperation: The Global South has increased its collaboration through initiatives like the Non-Aligned Movement and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), aiming to strengthen their collective bargaining power and development efforts.

In conclusion, the emergence of the Global South dynamics is rooted in historical colonial legacies, geopolitical factors, and economic inequalities. Its present relevance lies in addressing developmental challenges, achieving equitable global governance, and addressing pressing global issues.

Q6. How did the Treaty of Versailles lead to the Second World War? Explain.

Ans. The Treaty of Versailles, signed in 1919 to formally end World War I, played a significant role in shaping the political and economic landscape of Europe and ultimately contributed to the outbreak of the Second World War. While the Treaty aimed to establish peace, it imposed harsh terms on Germany and created conditions that led to resentment, economic instability, and geopolitical tensions. **Here's how the Treaty of Versailles contributed to the Second World War:**

1. Harsh Reparations and Economic Strain:

The Treaty imposed heavy reparations on Germany, holding it responsible for the damages caused during the war. These reparations were not only financially burdensome but also contributed to economic instability and hyperinflation in Germany.

The economic hardship caused by reparations led to widespread discontent among the German population, which undermined the legitimacy of the Weimar Republic and created fertile ground for extremist political movements.

2. Territorial Losses and National Humiliation:

Germany was stripped of significant territories, including Alsace-Lorraine, and parts of West Prussia and Posen. These territorial losses were seen as a national humiliation, fueling nationalist sentiments and grievances.

The loss of territory and resources contributed to Germany's economic woes and added to the perception that the Treaty was unjust and punitive.

3. Demilitarization and Military Restrictions:

The Treaty imposed strict limits on the size and capabilities of the German military. The demilitarization of key areas like the Rhineland and the restriction of military technology further humiliated Germany and created a perception of insecurity.

These military limitations were not only seen as undermining Germany's national pride but also as weakening its ability to defend itself against potential threats.

4. Rise of Extremist Movements:

The economic hardships, territorial losses, and national humiliation created a fertile environment for extremist political movements. The Nazi Party, led by Adolf Hitler, capitalized on these sentiments, promising to restore Germany's glory and overturn the Treaty's terms.

Hitler's rise to power in 1933 marked a turning point, as he aimed to undo the Treaty's provisions and pursue a revisionist foreign policy.

5. Destabilization of International Relations:

The Treaty's punitive nature and the perception of unfair treatment sowed resentment among many Germans and created a sense of injustice.

The destabilization of Germany and the resulting political and economic instability weakened the collective security framework established after World War I, contributing to a breakdown in international relations.

In summary, the Treaty of Versailles created conditions of economic instability, political resentment, and national humiliation in Germany. These conditions facilitated the rise of extremist movements and a revisionist foreign policy, ultimately leading to the outbreak of the Second World War as Germany sought to overturn the Treaty's terms and regain its lost power and prestige.