

Field Seminar – International Relations Theory

1st Term, Academic Year 2021-2022

Mondays, 09:00-11:00

Seminar Room 2, Badia Fiesolana (on

First Seminar Session: 11.10.21

Last Seminar Session: 13.12.21

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Office Hours: Mondays, 12:00-14:00 (Please book a time through Adele Battistini.)

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Description

This seminar surveys the contemporary literature on and about international relations (IR) theory. Social theoretically, theoretically and substantively, we range broadly. The seminar thus explores the (multiple) meta-theoretical bases of IR; assesses recent developments in prominent theoretical schools; examines non-Western IR theory; and addresses a range of substantive topics, including the rise of China, equality/legitimacy and international order, and intra-state conflicts. We also engage and assess recent special issues of journals that have come to represent two different ways of ‘doing’ IR – the *European Journal of International Relations* and *International Organization*.

Format

This is a reading intensive seminar, with reading averaging 180 pages/week. (NB – The reading load for session #1 is especially heavy.) The bulk of your effort will be reacting to and debating each week’s assigned readings.

Learning Outcomes

Researchers will gain an in-depth understanding of contemporary international-relations theory, and how to evaluate it along various dimensions: meta-theory; ethics; western/global; causal validity; interpretive understanding; and empirical insight. The seminar will also encourage researchers to develop their own perspective on the pluralism that has come to define IR over the past 15 years. Is this development bad, or good – and why?

Seminar Reading

Books / Journal Special Issues

- Adler, Emanuel. 2019. *World Ordering: A Social Theory of Cognitive Evolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cohen, Dara Kay. 2016. *Rape during Civil War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

- *European Journal of International Relations*. 2020. “Special Issue: Interdisciplinarity and the IR Innovation Horizon.” 26/1 (Supplement – September): 3-252.
- Glaser, Charles. 2010. *Rational Theory of International Politics: The Logic of Competition and Cooperation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- *International Organization*. 2021. “Special Issue - Challenges to the Liberal International Order: *International Organization at 75*.” 75/2 (Spring): 225-664.
- Jackson, Patrick. 2016. *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics, Second Edition*. London: Routledge.
- Johnston, Alastair Iain. 1995. *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Katzenstein, Peter J. Editor. 2021. *Uncertainty and its Discontents: Worldviews in World Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lechner, Silviya and Mervyn Frost. 2018. *Practice Theory and International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pouliot, Vincent. 2016. *International Pecking Orders: The Politics and Practice of Multilateral Diplomacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Price, Richard and Kathryn Sikkink. 2021. *International Norms, Moral Psychology, and Neuroscience*. Elements in International Relations. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Straus, Scott. 2015. *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership and Genocide in Modern Africa*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Viola, Lora Anne. 2020. *The Closure of the International System: How Institutions Create Political Equalities and Hierarchies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wendt, Alexander. 2015. *Quantum Mind and Social Science: Unifying Physical and Social Ontology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zarakol, Ayşe. 2021. *Before the West: Rise and Fall of Eastern World Orders*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zhang, Yongjin and Teng-Chi Chang. Editors. 2016. *Constructing a Chinese School of International Relations: Ongoing Debates and Sociological Realities*. London: Routledge.
- Zuern, Michael. 2018. *A Theory of Global Governance: Authority, Legitimacy and Contestation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Accessibility

- **Books & Chapters in Books:** With a few exceptions, all books are available electronically from the EUI Library. Below, these are indicated by **(E-Book)**, with the direct hyperlink to the holding embedded in the link.
- **Difficult-to-Access Materials:** Any difficult-to-access material – conference papers, forthcoming books or journal articles - will be uploaded to Brightspace.
- **Journal Articles:** These are easily obtained electronically from the EUI Library.

If you encounter any problems accessing seminar readings, please contact Adele Battistini.

Requirements

There are three requirements. To receive credit for the seminar, you must get a pass on each of them.

- 1) Seminar Debates/Discussions: Active participation in them.
- 2) Leading the Seminar Discussion / Setting an Agenda: For all sessions, individual researchers (or groups of researchers) will be responsible for setting an agenda.

➔ Sign Ups: By **October 4** – i.e., one week before our first session – please self-organize and decide which researchers are responsible for which session (#1 – #10).

➔ Assignment: If you are responsible for a particular session, please - by *12.00/noon the Friday before our Monday seminar* - upload to Brightspace a 5-page (double-spaced) reflection and analysis of that week's readings. Your comments can raise questions, probe for weaknesses, explore meta-theoretical matters (epistemology, ontology), address issues of theoretical, methodological or ethical operationalization, and the like.

During that week's seminar, we will start by having you raise key issues or points of contention – drawn from your 5-page memo. This gets us started, and we'll go from there. You are not responsible for running the entire 2-hour session!

3) Writing Exercise: Take any area of IR theory and prepare a critical analysis of the contemporary literature. ('Contemporary' means in the last 10 years.)

➔ Topic: *Anything* is possible, as long as it is a part of IR. Examples of topics include: Feminist IR theory; ethics and IR; the English School and IR; experimental IR; climate change and IR theory; meta-theory and IR; domestic politics and IR; IR theory and the new behavioralism; western IR versus / and / or global IR theory; IR and inter-disciplinarity.

Be strategic: Pick something about which you want to learn more or that will be helpful in your thesis.

➔ Format: The essay should be critical and analytic, providing a net assessment (the good as well as the bad) of your topic.

➔ Length: 10 pages (double-spaced).

➔ Due: During Session #10, 13.12.21.

Schedule

- Week #1 (11 October): Philosophies of Social Science & IR Theory
- Week #2 (18 October): Realism in the New Millennium
- Week #3 (25 October): Constructivism I – A Processual and Evolutionary Meta-Theory; Micro-Foundations
- Week #4 (3 November): Constructivism II – Practice Theory
- Week #5 (8 November): Non-Western IR Theory
- Week #6 (15 November): The Rise of China & IR Theory
- Week #7 (22 November): Equality/Hierarchy & Legitimacy
- Week #8 (29 November): Political Violence beyond Inter-State War - Militant Groups, Civil War & Genocide
- Week #9 (6 December): *European Journal of International Relations* - 25th Anniversary Issue
- Week #10 (13 December): *International Organization* - 75th Anniversary Issue

Seminar Topics & Readings

Session 1: Philosophies of Social Science & IR Theory

Katzenstein, Peter J. Editor. 2021. *Uncertainty and its Discontents: Worldviews in World Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press – Chapters 1, 3, 8, 10.

Jackson, Patrick. 2016. *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics, Second Edition*. London: Routledge – Chapters 2, 4, 7 ([E-Book](#))

Wendt, Alexander. 2015. *Quantum Mind and Social Science: Unifying Physical and Social Ontology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press – Chapters 1, 3, 13, 14 ([E-Book](#))

Session 2: Realism in the New Millennium

Glaser, Charles. 2010. *Rational Theory of International Politics: The Logic of Competition and Cooperation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press – Chapters 1-6 ([E-Book](#))

Session 3: Constructivism I – A Processual and Evolutionary Meta-Theory; Micro-Foundations

Adler, Emanuel. 2019. *World Ordering: A Social Theory of Cognitive Evolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press – Prologue, Chapters 1-4, 7 ([E-Book](#))

Price, Richard and Kathryn Sikkink. 2021. *International Norms, Moral Psychology, and Neuroscience*. Elements in International Relations. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press ([E-Book](#))

Session 4: Constructivism II – Practice Theory

Lechner, Silviya and Mervyn Frost. 2018. *Practice Theory and International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press – Introduction, Chapters 1-3, 6 ([E-Book](#))

Pouliot, Vincent. 2016. *International Pecking Orders: The Politics and Practice of Multilateral Diplomacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press – Introduction, Chapters 1-2, Appendix ([E-Book](#))

Pouliot, Vincent. 2020. “Historical Institutionalism Meets Practice Theory: Renewing the Selection Process of the United Nations Secretary-General.” *International Organization* 74/4 (Fall): 742-72.

Session 5: Non-Western IR Theory

Zarakol, Ayşe. 2021. *Before the West: Rise and Fall of Eastern World Orders*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press – Chapters TBA.

Zhang, Yongjin and Teng-Chi Chang. Editors. 2016. *Constructing a Chinese School of International Relations: Ongoing Debates and Sociological Realities*. London: Routledge – Introduction, Chapters 4, 6, 10 ([E-Book](#))

Session 6: The Rise of China & IR Theory

- Johnston, Alastair Iain. 1995. *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press – Chapters 1, 2, 8 ([E-Book](#))
- Fravel, M. Taylor. 2010. “International Relations Theory and China's Rise: Assessing China's Potential for Territorial Expansion.” *International Studies Review* 12/4 (December): 505-532.
- Johnston, Alastair Iain. 2012. What (If Anything) Does East Asia Tell Us About International Relations Theory? *Annual Review of Political Science* 15: 53–78.
- Johnston, Alastair Iain. 2019. “China in a World of Orders: Rethinking Compliance and Challenge in Beijing’s International Relations.” *International Security* 44/2: 9-60.

Session 7: Equality/Hierarchy & Legitimacy

- Viola, Lora Anne. 2020. *The Closure of the International System: How Institutions Create Political Equalities and Hierarchies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press – Chapters 1-2 ([E-Book](#))
- Zuern, Michael. 2018. *A Theory of Global Governance: Authority, Legitimacy and Contestation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press – Introduction, Chapters 3, 10 ([E-Book](#))
- Barnett, Michael. 2021. “Change in or of Global Governance?” *International Theory* 13/1 (March): 131-43.*

Session 8: Political Violence beyond Inter-State War - Militant Groups, Civil War & Genocide

- Parkinson, Sarah E. 2021. “Practical Ideology in Militant Organizations.” *World Politics* 73/1: 52-81.
- Cohen, Dara Kay. 2016. *Rape during Civil War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press – Introduction, Chapters 1, 3, Appendix ([E-Book](#))
- Straus, Scott. 2015. *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership and Genocide in Modern Africa*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press – Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 3 ([E-Book](#))

Session 9: European IR - *European Journal of International Relations*, 25th Anniversary Issue

- Daxecker, Ursula, Annette Freyberg-Inan, Marlies Glasius, Geoffrey Underhill and Darshan Vigneswaran. 2020. “Introduction: Interdisciplinarity and the International Relations Event Horizon.” *European Journal of International Relations* 26/S1: 3–13.
- Pan, Chengxin. 2020. “Enfolding Wholes in Parts: Quantum Holography and International Relations.” *European Journal of International Relations* 26/S1: 14-38.
- Standfield, Catriona. 2020. “Gendering the Practice Turn in Diplomacy.” *European Journal of International Relations* 26/S1: 140-65.

* The Barnett article is part of an *IT* Symposium assessing and critiquing Zuern’s 2018 book.

Kahraman, Filiz, Nikhil Kalyanpur and Abraham L. Newman. 2020. "Domestic Courts, Transnational Law, and International Order." *European Journal of International Relations* 26/S1: 184-208.

Session 10: North American IR - *International Organization*, 75th Anniversary Issue

Lake, David, Lisa Martin and Thomas Risse. 2021. "Challenges to the Liberal International Order: Reflections on *International Organization*." *International Organization* 75/2 (Spring): 225-57.

Adler, Emanuel and Alena Drieschova. 2021. "The Epistemological Challenge of Truth Subversion to the Liberal International Order." *International Organization* 75/2 (Spring): 359-86.

Simmons, Beth and Hein E. Goemans. 2021. "Built on Borders: Tensions with the Institution Liberalism (Thought It) Left Behind." *International Organization* 75/2 (Spring): 387-410.

Adler-Nissen, Rebecca and Ayşe Zarakol. 2021. "Struggles for Recognition: The Liberal International Order and the Merger of Its Discontents." *International Organization* 75/2 (Spring): 611-34.