

# Global Politics

## Chapter 1

### Introduction: Into A New Century

*" Global politics is a complex congruence of physical and intellectual power, political structures and institutions, and personalities "*

- the Canadian economy is heavily dependent on trade with the United States especially, approximately 83% of all Canadian exports
- high politics concern state security, grand strategies, and the use of military force
- low politics concern trade, investment, culture, environmental problems
- omnicide is the introduction of nuclear weapons, which have the ability to destroy all life on earth
- unilateral are actions performed by a single state
- multilateral are actions performed by many states
- post international politics an age characterized by the "decline of long standing patterns" leaving us uncertain about " where the changes may be leading
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### The Interdisciplinary, Yet Divided, Discipline

*" Indeed knowledge may be power, but it must make sense to be of any use "*

### Subfields of International Relations

- International relations theory is a body of literature that seeks to explain the nature of the international system and the behavior of the actors within it.
- International security has traditionally involved the study of conflict and war and the attempts to prevent or control it.
- international political economy is the study issues such as trade, finance, foreign dept, underdevelopment became increasingly prominent in international affairs
- International organization is the study of institutions such as the United Nations is generally focused on means of cooperation such as the establishment of regimes or agreements among states, groups, or individuals

### Three main levels of Analysis

- Individual level of analysis focuses on the decisions of individuals, and the perceptions, values and experiences that motivate those decisions, generally emphasizes the role of political leaders, for those individuals, it is assumed, have the most influence on history

- The state or group level of analysis focuses on the behaviors of individual states, which is often attributed to the form of government one finds at a particular time
- Free Trade agreements are supported by the industrial sectors within states that will benefit most from lowering restrictions on trade in their products
- Systemic level of analysis, the actions of states are seen as the result of external influences and pressures on them in relation to their attributes or position in world politics
- Hard power capability refers to the more obvious: military hardware, technological capabilities and economic size
- Soft power refers to the power of ideas, persuasion, culture, and innovation, which possess less tangible qualities

### **Idealism**

- Assumes the best of human nature: we are essentially cooperative political animals who are occasionally led astray by evil influences into war and conflict, and we have a natural affinity toward the communal, as opposed to the individual, good

### **Realism ( Classical realism)**

- Assumes that people are generally nasty self-serving creatures, political power merely corrupts them further

### **Structural Realism**

- This vision of realism focuses on the systemic level of analysis, structure determine behavior; the structure of the international system is anarchic, lacking a central political authority that can constrain individual states

### **Liberalism**

- Liberalism suggests people can rationally cooperate in the name of self-interest ( since what is good for one may be good for another as well), liberals emphasize the importance of private property, law, free markets, democracy, and justice
- Great importance is placed on economic growth, both domestically and internationally
- Two popular variants of liberalism are in circulation today: complex interdependence and neoliberal institutionalism

### **Complex Interdependence**

- Argues that economic factors are fast becoming as important as military matters, and that nonstate actors such as multinational corporations and nongovernmental organizations play important role alongside states

### **Neoliberal Institutionalism**

- Often call regimes, sets of principles, norms, rules, and decision –making procedures around which actor’s expectations converge
- Reduces uncertainty and allow people to get on with important transnational business such as trade, investments, or pursuing human rights improvements
- Overall essential argument: is that the anarchism is so instrumental in a structural realist understanding of global politics need not prevent states and individuals from achieving a more harmonious world

### **Neomarxism and Dependency Theory**

- Assumes that economic classes are the primary unit of analysis in world affairs and that the economic growth experienced by the rich Northern world has come at the cost of others, namely those in the poor Southern world.

### **Feminism**

- Primary focus of feminism of inequality and the critique of the patriarchal system that perpetuate it
- Liberal feminist argue that women’s participation in world affairs had been too silent or marginalized and that this situation must be corrected
- Feminists who are more radical argue this correction would be insufficient and that deeper changes are necessary

### **Postmodernism**

- Primarily concerned with how people interpret the world around them and they act on this understanding
- Reject the idea that realists, liberals, or Marxists can ever really know anything concrete about global politics or built objective knowledge about the world
- Strand of postmodernist: deconstructionists emphasize the importance of breaking down popular texts or discourses to understand the power relations they perpetuate
- Feminists postmodernists look for gender bias in traditional discourse

### **Environmentalism**

- Advocates reconceptualizing capitalism or redefining human relations
- Constructivism stresses the impact of intersubjective understandings among political actors on constituting their own identities