

IR Comprehensive Examination

March 23, 2009

Instructions: Ph.D. students must answer the mandatory and three (3) optional questions (8 hours). M.A. students must answer the mandatory and two (2) optional questions (4 hours). Note — you may answer only one question from any optional group. Be sure to provide the corresponding number to the questions you answer.

MANDATORY:

1. To what extent *does*, and secondly *should*, the field of “IR Theory” confine itself to “relations among states”? How important is the state and its attendant concerns—those of pursuing its national interests internationally via influence or coercion based on its power (using diplomacy, alliances, threats or war), protecting its physical security (territorial integrity and defense of borders), maintaining its sovereignty, promoting (positive) nationalism, etc.—in conceptualizing and actually addressing the daunting challenges of contemporary global affairs? Draw on different theoretical traditions in making your argument about IR as it is and as it should be.

OPTIONAL (Select no more than one from each sub-section)

IR Theory

2. The term ‘hegemony’ is used widely in the IR literature. Compare and contrast the different conceptions of hegemony. How do these differing definitions affect the various theorizations? In your response also critically evaluate these conceptualizations of hegemony in reference to the phrase ‘hegemonic stability’. Discuss key authors and critically evaluate which definition of hegemony is more relevant and why.

Foreign Policy Analysis and International Security

3. Realists have long dominated IR scholarly debates over national and international security. How does realist theory define or conceptualize “security”? What role does the “security dilemma” play in realism? What alternative conceptualizations of security and the “security dilemma” have arisen in the IR literature in the post-Cold War era? What does the term “securitization” mean and what, if anything, does it add to the study of security issues in the IR field? Finally, do you find the concept of “regional security complexes” to be a useful one for security studies? Why or why not? In your answer, provide at least two examples of security complexes from around the globe.
4. George W. Bush and a group of his major foreign policy advisers have been labeled “neoconservatives”. What does that term actually mean? Where, if at all, does it fit within the major categories of IR theory discussed in this field of study? In

responding to the question be sure to relate specific elements of the logic of the 'neoconservative' argument to aspects of more 'formal' IR theory. Additionally, explain how it relates to notions such as "defensive" and "offensive" realism. Be sure to refer to the relevant authors of the theoretical perspectives and foreign policy literatures that you discuss.

Global Governance, Transnational Actors and International Issues

5. To what extent are non-state actors—be they social movements, nongovernmental organizations, transnational corporations, criminal networks or terrorist organizations—confined to and engaged within their national contexts? More importantly, in what ways do transnational movements, businesses, or criminal networks transcend national borders, challenge state authority and sovereignty (of all states or only of some?), and/or empower transnational governance structures (e.g., UN agencies, international banks, treaty regimes, military alliances, etc.)? In answering these questions, be sure to invoke different theoretical perspectives and concepts, cite the main authors, and illustrate your answer with empirical cases or examples.
6. Collective health risks require increased global transparency with timely disclosure of newly emerging or re-emerging disease spread. Analyze this statement and be sure to consider the concept of state sovereignty and its relationship to health diplomacy, health security and viral sovereignty in the study international relations in the 21st Century. Use at least three examples to support your statements.

Ethnic Conflict and Nationalism

7. In the 1990s, at the time of the wars in former Yugoslavia characterized by ethnic cleansing and genocide, journalists such as Robert Kaplan, attributed the bestiality to 'ancient hatreds' or long-standing bitterness and ethnic resentments. In his words: "This was a time-capsule world: a dim stage, upon which people raged, spilled blood, experienced visions and ecstasies. . . . But the villages all around were full of savage hatreds, leavened by poverty and alcoholism. The fact that the most horrifying violence—during both World War II and the 1990s—occurred in Bosnia was no accident." Where does this interpretation of nationalism fit in the scholarly literature? What is the evidence marshaled to support, or critique, this view of the roots of nationalism and of national and ethnic conflict? In responding to the question be sure to mention the major 'schools' into which theorists of nationalism can be divided, as well as the names of at least some of the key contributors to the debates concerning ethnic and nationality identity, nationalism, and ethnic conflict/war.

International Political Economy

8. The IPE literature defines the social and political compromise of "embedded liberalism" associated with the Bretton Woods regime as a virtuous combination of an international economy resting on trade openness, fixed exchange rates, and capital

controls, on the one hand, with the domestic political economy and liberal democratic politics of the Keynesian welfare state, on the other. Compare the Bretton Woods regime with what has been referred to as the post-1971 “non-system” or “disorganized capitalism.” What are the most critical differences in the pre- and post-1971 regimes in terms of trade, production, finance, and inclusiveness of democratic politics? In your view, to what extent will the current international financial crisis influence the nature of the international economic order and, in particular, the relationship between states and markets? In what ways?

International Law & Integration

9. Discuss the changing dynamics between the norms of state sovereignty vs. humanitarian intervention, drawing on theory, international law and historical precedents and contemporary cases.
10. For more than half a century, experts have puzzled over the nature of the European Union (EU). Even if it is not viewed as a model, the EU has become an unavoidable point of reference for discussions of international relations. Despite its undeniable relevance, however, debates continue to rage among analysts concerning its structural identity, proper categorization, and ultimate purpose(s). Indeed, the still pending processes of ratification of the Lisbon Treaty and the current global economic meltdown have served once again to remind observers that the true identity and ultimate direction of the EU remains unresolved. Is it a federation in the making? Is it a state in construction? Is it an international organization? Is it an Unidentified Political Object (UPO)? Via an examination of the nature and roles of three of its most fundamental institutions, write an essay on the DNA of the EU using at least three different theories of integration. Which are the principal insights that can be gleaned from the EU experience for the study of contemporary international relations?

Respond critically (and comprehensively) to the following statement. (You may limit your answer to either issue - 1) the lawful use of force or 2) torture - or you may address both issues; make clear which option you choose at the start of your answer). “20th century rules on the lawful use of armed force by states are outmoded. So is the unthinking insistence that torture is legally prohibited under any circumstance. 21st century terrorist organizations, rogue states, and weapons of mass destruction have made it impossible to limit the use of force to self-defense and to those occasions when the United Nations gives the go-ahead. Those same 21st century factors make clear that it would threaten national and international security to forbid torture in all circumstances.”

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