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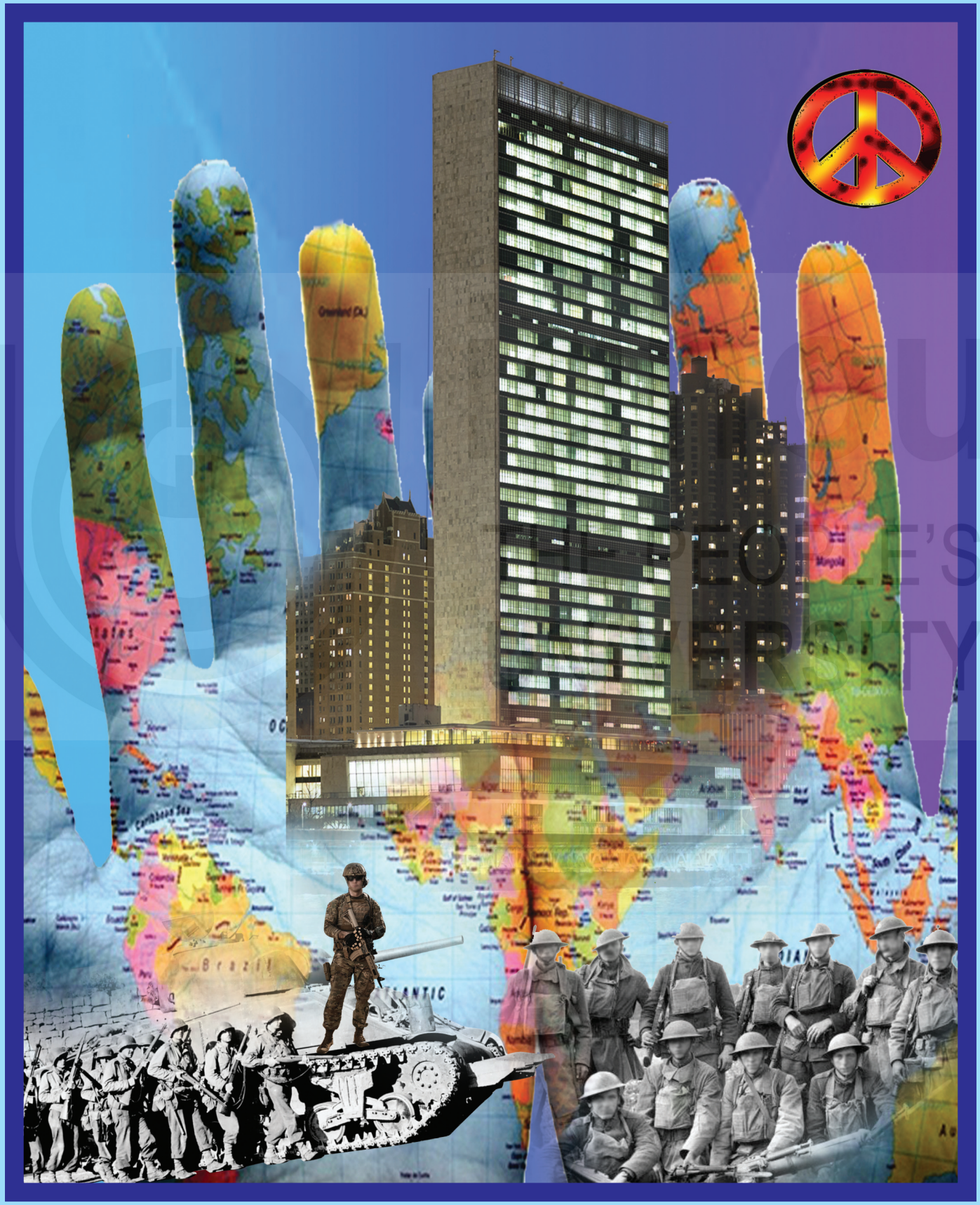
School of Social Sciences

BPSC - 107
Perspectives on International Relations and World History



BPSC-107

PERSPECTIVES ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND WORLD HISTORY

School of Social Sciences
Indira Gandhi National Open University

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INTRODUCTION TO PERSPECTIVES ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND WORLD HISTORY

This course is divided into four separate blocks. You would notice three things here: Block-I comprising two Units presents to you a kind of **menu** on International Relations and the World History. Secondly, Blocks-II & IV take you on a kind of a guided study tour of four **historical events** on and before the Second World War and four **contemporary developments** that have defined World History and International Relations since the second half of the 20th Century and the two decades of the 21st Century. In a concise way, these eight themes cover the history of international relations in the 20th century. The course also has a very exciting, and somewhat challenging Block-III. As many as five Units here introduce you to the **theoretical frameworks** for the study of International Relations (IR). The theories that are introduced to you are empirical. They are grounded in the experiences of sovereign states and/or specific events. Some conceptual frameworks are normative. They make a critique of present IR and suggest what 'ought' to be.

Remember one thing: these theories are neither wholly right nor wholly wrong. International Relations (IR) is a complex and multi dimensional subject; each theory highlights only few though significant truths about IR. A second joy of reading theories is that they allow us to raise some very specific and insightful questions and then search for their answers. And that is the right way of approaching this course.

All units of this course have a uniform structure. Each unit begins with **Objectives** to help you find what you are expected to learn from the unit. Please go through these objectives carefully. Keep reflecting and checking them after going through a few sections of the unit. Each unit is divided into sections and sub-sections for ease of comprehension. In between these sections, some **Check Your Progress Exercises** have been provided. We advise you to attempt these as and when you reach them. This will help you assess and test your comprehension of the subject studied. Compare your answers with the answer or guidelines given at the end of the unit.

While the units in this course are carefully designed and written by specialists, it must however be added that the units are by no means comprehensive. For deeper understanding of the themes dealt with in this volume, you are advised and encouraged to read as much of the books, chapters and articles listed in the Suggested Readings given at the end of this course book

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BLOCK I
STUDYING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Units 1 and 2 tell you few important things: (i) International Relations (IR) is fundamentally characterized by high complexity and dynamism. An event taking place in a far off place immediately impacts available opportunities and challenges. No wonder, therefore, foreign ministries in all countries are agile; and diplomats are required to be nimble-footed. (ii) Contemporary IR emerged from the traumatic experiences of the Second World War. Major norms and institutions of IR were set after the Second World War. (iii) The period from the end of Second World War in 1945 till the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991 is described as the period of Cold War. Cold War was the era of political, ideological and military rivalry between the US and the erstwhile USSR; and it greatly shaped the domain of IR. (iv) Two superpowers, few great powers and a large number of developing countries – that was the world power hierarchy like during the period of Cold War. This changed in the 1990s. The post- Cold War period has witnessed a reconfiguration of power hierarchy. For a while, especially in the 1990s, US was the sole superpower; and, for a while, international system looked unipolar. But the unipolar moment passed soon. No doubt, the US remains unquestionably the most powerful country in economic, technological and military terms. But Russia is resurging; China is rising; Brazil, India, South Africa and several more countries are emerging. Many other countries in the Global South are showing lots of economic and technological dynamism; and thereby they are raising their profiles in IR. Examples include Mexico, Malaysia and Nigeria etc. All said and done, world power hierarchy is undergoing transformation. Today's international system is markedly multipolar. (v) The onset of globalization in the 1990s caused major changes in the international economic relations. The clout of emerging economies, such as Brazil, China, India, South Africa and several more fast growing economies, increased in international economic and trade matters. In addition, their growing political and military capabilities make them significant stakeholders in global peace and security. Two points are important here: the reconfiguration of power is calling for reform of the global governance architecture; meaning thereby global institutions need to become inclusive and representative. Secondly, there is an increase in the intra-South trade, investment, and integration. South-South cooperation is a reality today; the idea of Global South is in vogue. (vi) Economic globalization and regionalization are running parallel to each other. These are two complementary or contradictory processes. A straightforward answer is not easy to give. In 1994, the European Union (EU) came into being; besides there were strong movements towards regionalization: South East Asian countries cemented their economic and political ties under ASEAN; Canada, US and Mexico came under the umbrella free trade agreement called NAFTA; and US led scores of Asian and Pacific nations into forming the APEC. These groupings started emerging as big centres of economic and technological powers. As Unit 2 tells, international economic relations were a dominant feature of the post-Cold War international relations. With the formation of WTO in 1994, the Bretton Woods system became further consolidated; IMF, the World Bank and regional development banks all came to reflect the economic and trade priorities of the rich and developed economies. (vii) It is observed that economic globalization has not benefitted all the people in all the countries; which was its promise. There is also a realization that globalization works to strengthen the capitalist economic model; and serves primarily the interests of the rich and powerful global corporate companies and banks. The reaction against

globalization and its injustices have given rise to anti-globalization movements and formulation of alternative models of development. These anti-globalization movements bring together non-governmental organizations and civil society activists from across nations. In 1999, the WTO ministerial meeting at Seattle saw protestors across the world protesting the predatory trade policies of the rich and developed countries. The so-called 'Battle of Seattle' marked the rise of anti-globalization movement. World Social Forum (WSF) began bringing activists from across the globe as an alternative discourse to globalization.

History might come to judge the 1990s as truly a transformative decade. Remember, these and other significant changes remain the hallmark of IR in this second decade of 21st Century. The world around us continues to change at a fast pace. Hence there is an utmost need to understand the complex international relations by identifying new contours, dimensions and orientations of the present world system. One more thing: concerns of IR have broadened. Today IR covers issues ranging from the social and environmental concerns to the security and well-being of all. Some scholarly writings have set higher goals for IR: empowerment of the entire humankind.

We shall come back to discuss some of these issues while examining the theoretical perspectives on IR. Let us first get to know more about the discipline of IR by going through the two units of this block.

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UNIT 1 UNDERSTANDING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS*

Structure

1.0 Objectives

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Contemporary Concerns of International Relations

- 1.2.1 Structural Changes
- 1.2.2 Economic Transformation
- 1.2.3 Transforming the United Nations
- 1.2.4 Problem of Nuclear Proliferation
- 1.2.5 Emergence of Non-Traditional Security Threats
- 1.2.6 Issue of Humanitarian Concerns

1.3 Agenda for Global Peace

1.4 Let Us Sum Up

1.5 References

1.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit, you will be reading about the complexities and scope of the discipline of International Relations. After going through this unit, you should be able to

- Describe the basic contours of international activities and the nature and scope of the discipline of International Relations
- Trace the evolution of International Relations since the end of the Second World War
- Identify the challenges of Post-Cold War global order
- Describe the contemporary concerns of International Relations: structural political change and economic transformation
- Discuss the changing dynamics of the UN system, threats of nuclear proliferation, and non-traditional security threats and
- Identify significant trends in International Relations.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Growing complexities and highly dynamic nature have always been the two important characteristics of International Relations. After having undergone big changes under the impact of World War II, the relations among nations have changed and are changing at a faster pace. The end of the Cold War brought big and formidable changes in the global power structure. International Relations, therefore, underwent several subtle but formidable changes since the disintegration of erstwhile Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR).

* Prof. R. S. Yadav, Dept. of Political Science, Kurukshetra University

Politically, the Cold War came to an end. The Warsaw Pact died a natural death. With the collapse of the erstwhile USSR in December 1991, Russia emerged as the successor state and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) i.e. an association of nine independent republics of erstwhile USSR. This event had a devastating impact on the economy of the new state of Russia. Domestic political uncertainty and economic dependence upon the USA and other Western countries kept it weak. The disintegration of the Soviet Union left the USA as the sole surviving superpower. Berlin Wall stood buried. Germany became a unified single state. Non-aligned Movement (NAM) debilitated and called for recalibration to meet the exigencies of the post-Cold War era.

Within a few years of hardship, Russia started rising like phoenix under the strong leadership of Vladimir Putin who took over the presidency from Boris Yeltsin on 31 December 1999. Russia experienced resurgence as a power under Putin and now, it does not seem weak power from any angle and has great clout at the international front.

Besides, with the USA, the UK, France, Russia, China, India, Brazil, Germany, Japan, EU, ASEAN, South Africa, NAFTA, APEC started emerging as bigger centres of power. Securing this multi-centric structure of international relations came to be recognized as the common goal. The world changed and is still changing at a very fast pace. Hence, there is an utmost need to understand this new and complex International Relation by identifying new contours, dimensions, and orientations of the present world system.

Economically, the WTO consolidated Bretton Woods system and global economic integration has been initiated to strengthen the working of the capitalist economic model. International economic relations became a dominant feature of the post-Cold War international relations. Regional cooperation for development and economic integration models such as the European Union, BRICS, ASEAN, APEC, NAFTA, SAFTA, CECAS, came to be the order of the day. Securing sustainable development, environmental protection, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, elimination of terrorism, human security emerged as major global concerns. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted that issues like health security cannot be ignored by governments & there is need for international cooperation to deal with such threats to human security.

Thus, politically, and economically a new kind of world order is taking shape. The emerging order has numerous challenges and huge opportunities as well. It is, therefore, pertinent to understand these dynamic changes of the present international system and their implications for global peace and security and development.

1.2 CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In the period since the end of the Second World War, International Relations has widened its horizon regarding the key constituents and has witnessed varied processes. Briefly described in the following are the structural changes; economic transformation; reform of the international organizations; the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and the emergence of non-traditional security threats.

1.2.1 Structural Changes

International political relations are undergoing structural change. The change is most effectively felt in two areas: changes in the nature and role of the nation-state; and structural change in global policies.

Changed Nature of Nation-State

Nation-State used to be central to the activities of International Relations. But in contemporary times though international system continues to be constituted by the system of interactions among the sovereign nation-states acting at the local (sub-regional/bilateral), regional and global levels, yet the rest of state has undergone a total transformation. The ideologies of nationalism and self-determination also continue to enjoy support and popularity, yet the role of the nation-state has changed.

In this era of increased global interdependence and interconnectedness, the nation-state, howsoever powerful, finds itself compelled to keep its powers and objectives under restraint. The emergence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction against which the nation-state can offer little protection to the life and property of its people has adversely affected its role in international relations.

Decolonization in the 1950s had led to the emergence of many sovereign nation-states as new actors in world politics. However, these developing countries, because of their new problems and unrealized developmental ambitions have mostly failed to be effective and powerful actors by themselves. They have found themselves individually incapable of facing the new security threats of the post-Cold War world and the economic and cultural challenges posed by the process of globalization.

Imperatives of economic development and the very forces of globalization have impelled many of these countries to form regional economic associations for securing their developmental objectives. The Western European states have been able to develop only by 'compromising their sovereignty' and formed the European Union. Besides, the rise of world public opinion, people-to-people contacts, global peace and development movements which have successfully transcended the national frontiers, have again changed the role of the nation-states. The decision-makers exercising power on behalf of their sovereign states today find it difficult to avoid and ignore these new powerful forces. They now find it essential to establish collective regional economic institutions and obey their directives for satisfying the developmental needs of their people. Even while defining the goals in terms of its national interest, a nation-state finds it necessary to express these interests in the form of internationalism or universalism.

Instances abound. For example, the freedom of the Indian Ocean is demanded by the littoral states in the name of international peace and security. The needs for technology imports are projected as the right of all nations to share gains of the technological revolution. In sum, the nationalistic universalism and not pure nationalism is now being followed by the nation-states.

Further, the contemporary nation-state now finds its 'sovereignty' limited by world public opinion, international morality, international law, increased global interdependence, the commitment to world peace, inability to resort to war which

can be a total war, the realization regarding the reduced worth of military weapons as means of security and national power, and presence of several non-state actors.

Structural Change in Global Politics

The aftermath of the Second World War was characterised by an intense Cold War conflict between the USA and erstwhile USSR. Both these states, to strengthen their respective positions in international politics started organising their camps.

The United States brought the liberal democratic capitalist countries in one bloc- the American bloc, through several regional alliances likes NATO, SEATO and others. The Soviet Union organised the socialist states under the Warsaw Pact. The Cold War between the two superpowers and their blocs divided the world vertically into two groups- a configuration that came to be known as bi-polarity.

However, towards the late 1950s, there appeared cracks in both the camps. The attempts of France to be an independent power and certain other factors weakened the American camp. Similarly, the decision of Yugoslavia to remain Non-aligned and the emergence of Sino-Soviet differences made the Soviet camp weak.

The tight bipolar system of the early 1950s was also weakened by the emergence of new centres of power, the European Community, Japan, Germany, China, India, and NAM. These developments have initiated the process of transformation of the bipolarity towards multi-polarity or polycentrism.

As the two superpowers and their respective blocs continued to be operational in international relations some described this situation in the 1970s as bi-polycentrism or bi-multipolarity.

This bi-multipolarity got transformed into a virtual unipolarity in early 1990 with the USA as the sole surviving superpower, along with its NATO. The disintegration of the USSR, liquidation of Warsaw Pact, the inability of Russia, the successor state of the (erstwhile) USSR, to challenge the US power, the inability of the European Union, Germany, Japan, France and China to materially check the US power, the continued British support for the US policies and role in the world, the weakness suffered by NAM, and the economic dependence of the Third World countries and former socialist states all came to be the new realities of international relations.

The USA, as the sole surviving superpower began dominating the international system in general and the UN Security Council in particular. The virtual absence of any power capable and willing to challenge US power, enabled it to play a dominant role in world politics. Unipolarity came to characterize the international system. The neoliberal ideas gaining influence in international economic relations, unipolarity got further strengthened.

However, towards the beginning of the 21st century, there appeared several definite indications of the re-emergence of polycentrism. Russia, China, Japan, European Union, India, Brazil, the G-20 and all began playing a more vigorous role. All these states declared their resolve to secure and maintain the multipolar character of the international system.

In June 2005, China, India, and Russia decided to forge and develop a common understanding and approach towards solving the problems like the scourge of terrorism and the need for the protection of their strategic interests. The US dominance, that was witnessed in the first few post-Cold War years, also came to be somewhat diluted. Later, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) came up as a group to challenge the western dominance over international financial architecture.

After the terrorist attacks in the USA on September 11, 2001, the USA also became conscious of the need to involve fully and more vigorously many states in the international war against terror. As such, there came to be present several definite trends towards the re-emergence of a new polycentrism or multi-polarity in international relations. The contemporary international system is moving in the direction of becoming a more multipolar system.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the Unit for tips for your answer.

1) What are the key structural changes in International Relations?

.....

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1.2.2 Economic Transformation

Beginning of Globalisation

The process of globalisation has commanded increasing attention and interest of the nations. It has emerged as a commonly shared objective and contemporary international system abundantly reflects that globalisation has gained a near universal acceptance as an objective of international relations.

It is seen both as an active process of corporate expansion across borders and a structure of cross-border facilities and economic linkages that have been steadily growing and changing as the process gathers steam. Like its conceptual partner 'free trade', globalisation is also an ideology, whose function is to reduce any resistance to the process of integration by making it seem both highly beneficent and unstoppable.

It is expected to act as the means both for a real economic, political, and cultural transformation of the world into a global village as well as for securing the objective of sustainable development and environmental protection. However, the critics of globalisation hold that it is really a corporate agenda for dominating international business and economy. It has the potential danger of enabling the rich and developed countries to maintain and strengthen their neo-colonial control over the policies and economies of the developing countries. Many point out that developing countries have seen more of the negative effects rather than the positive outcomes of globalization.

However, it is also an accepted fact that global problems need global solutions. Economic shocks such as the attacks on the stock markets by speculative capital, trans-border health and environmental issues such as COCID-19 pandemic require global responses. Hence, globalisation is a reality and a need for international relations and full participation of all the states is desirable.

Emerging Regional Economic Groupings

The successful operationalization of the concept of Western European Economic Integration has been a source of encouragement for other nations. Through the European Common Market and several other institutions, the Western European countries registered rapid and big economic, industrial, and technological development by establishing supranational institutions.

The success encouraged them to vote in favour of making Europe a single economic zone with a common currency and banking service. European Economic Community (now European Union) emerged as a powerful supranational actor as well as a regional organisation in contemporary international relations. The collapse of the Socialist bloc and changes in Eastern European countries in the 1990s set the state for ushering Europe into an era of meaningful and high-level economic cooperation among all the European states. Several Eastern European states have joined the EU and others are in the queue.

The success of the EU also encouraged others to follow the suit. Countries also saw the merit of cooperation in political and security areas and came together to form regional groupings and mechanisms. The South-East Asian states have been using ASEAN; there is the 8-member South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC); nine states of West Asia and Central Asia have formed Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO); and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) brings together China, Russia, the four Central Asian Republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan and the two countries from South Asia viz. India and Pakistan. Varieties of objectives and ideals have led to the formation of groupings such as the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), African Union (AU), Arab League and several other similar functional organisations which have appeared in different parts of the globe. Economic and trading blocs like NAFTA and APEC and groups like ARF, G-8, G-15, G-20 and others also point towards the growing importance of economic relations and forces of regional economic integration.

Several states have started acting as regional partners in the process of economic development. Along with these, a manifold increase in international and regional and bilateral institutions has been taking place. These have been established for guiding, directing, and coordinating mostly non-political, non-military socio-economic and cultural relations among nations.

This trend towards institutionalization of relations is a welcome trend since it is based upon the principle of mutual benefits through organised mutual efforts. Globalism reflects the new urge for international integration.

Living through Financial Crisis

Since 2007-08 the world has been experiencing a global-level financial and economic recession. The economies of all the developed countries, particularly the USA, Japan, UK, Canada, the European Union States and Australia have

been living with big economic and industrial slowdowns and several cases of failures of banks, insurance companies and other such institutions.

Negative inflation, negative industrial growth, job losses and rising unemployment have been the order of the day. The global financial crisis has had substantial domino effects. Under the impact of economic recession in developed countries, the economies of almost all the developing countries have been facing economic and industrial pressures. .

The economies of the two largest emerging economies China and India have been registering low economic and industrial growths. The developed countries have been undertaking several measures – stimulus packages for banks and insurance companies, lowering of interest rates, protection of domestic markets and several others. The G-7 and G-20 as well as the World Bank and IMF have been trying to overcome the global economic recessionary conditions. The COVID-19 pandemic has wrecked economic have and affected all types of states.

Globalization appears to have halted or maybe going into reverse direction. Countries like India have been trying hard to maintain their economies healthy and growing. These are also the countries opposing protectionism by the US, the UK and other developed countries in the name of fighting the economic recession. The international economic and trading system is under great stress as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and a need will be increasingly felt for reforms in international financial architecture.

1.2.3 Transforming the United Nations

The Dominance of the United Nations by Big Powers

In the post-Cold War era, as the sole surviving superpower, the US came to be an even bigger actor in international relations. It set out to shape rest of the world after its own image – selling ideas of market economy and coercively democratizing all sorts of countries ranging from Haiti to Afghanistan and Iraq. The Gulf war operations were virtually the US operations under UN flagship with a team of coalition of the multinational force.

In the immediate years of the post-Cold War period, as Russia and the former republics of the erstwhile USSR became weak, the US position in the UN Security Council became stronger. None of the other four permanent members with veto power were prepared to displease the US. Several UN decisions – the sanctions against Iraq, measures against Libya, the decision to exonerate Israel by pushing the resolution that Zionism and apartheid are not one, the UN decisions on Somalia, Bosnia, Cambodia, and Angola issues, etc., all reflect the increased US influence, nay US dominance of the UN.

Several scholars even go to the extent of stating that in the 1990s the UN behaved more like one of the departments of US administration, particularly its Security Council showed a pro-US orientation. Almost all the nations, particularly the Third World nations were quite aware of the need to check all attempts at the dominance of the US in the garb of UN, particularly in their domestic issues.

Demand for Democratization of the UNSC

Following the disintegration of the Soviet bloc, East European states became free of Soviet control; in the late 1990s, several new states, Latvia, Estonia, and

Lithuania, emerged as sovereign independent states. As the erstwhile German Democratic Republic (East Germany) integrated with the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), the socialist republic of Yugoslavia split into several independent republics after prolonged and bloody ethnic wars in the early 1990s.

These changes gave a new shape to the world map. The number of sovereign states in the world went above 190. The strength of the UN General Assembly correspondingly registered a big increase. However, the UN Security Council continued to have only five permanent and 10 non-permanent members. Asia had only one permanent veto-wielding seat, held by the Peoples Republic of China.

Without incorporating the changes taking place, the UN Security Council increasingly appears to be an outmoded multilateral body. Riding the crest of economic globalization, many countries had begun registering impressive economic growth from the second half of the 1990s. India, Brazil, South Africa and several more and of course China went on to register impressive economic growth rates year after year. It was soon evident that these emerging economies carry tremendous economic and political clout. However, they are not represented in the international institutions that were created some 75 years ago after the end of the Second World War. And that UN was yet to adopt decentralization and democratization. Germany, Japan, India, Brazil, South Africa and Egypt deserved permanent seats in this apex decision-making body at the international level. Brazil, Germany, India and Japan formed G-4 for securing the objective of reforming and broadening the composition of the UNSC. The plea of G-4 is that the UN Security Council represents the power hierarchy of 1945, and that is the principal reason why the Security Council is often found wanting in timely and effectively responding to threats to global peace and security. Inclusion of the G-4 countries as permanent veto-wielding members shall broaden the Council, make it more democratic and reflect current global power distribution.

The need to confer permanent membership on some of the states is felt by all, though some prefer to suggest that new permanent members should be non-veto members while others hold that either the existing permanent members should be made to part with their veto power in the era of sovereign equality of all states and peaceful co-existence, or the new permanent members should also be given the veto power.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the Unit for tips for your answer.

1) What is meant by the democratization of the United Nations?

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1.2.4 Problem of Nuclear Proliferation

The nuclear factor has been a source of a big change in international relations and the nuclear powers particularly the USA, Russia, Britain, France, and China are in predicament. They have the power, rather an overkill capacity, yet they cannot use it for securing their desired objectives. Even after signing INF, START-1, START-II and Chemical Weapons Abolition Agreement and even while accepting the need for arms control and disarmament, the nuclear powers have been maintaining their nuclear weapons. However, at the same time, they want the non-nuclear nations to refrain from nuclear proliferation.

In addition to the five nuclear powers, since 1998, India and Pakistan have also been developing their N-weapon capabilities. States like Iran, Israel and North Korea have either secretly developed nuclear weapons or are on the way to do so. Brazil and Argentina pursued their respective nuclear weapons programmes and refused to sign the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). In the 1990s, the two countries, however, joined the NPT and agreed to confine their nuclear programmes for peaceful purposes only under nuclear rules and regulations. Most of the states, however, continue to be non-nuclear states.

The nuclear powers (P-5) strongly oppose the spread of nuclear weapons and are, therefore, keen to prevent the horizontal expansion of the nuclear club. The non-nuclear states are opposed to nuclear weapons and they oppose both vertical and horizontal expansions of the nuclear club.

In fact, they see no reason and rationale behind the production of nuclear weapons and the continuance of nuclear proliferation by the nuclear 'haves'. The nuclear nations support piecemeal nuclear control systems like the creation of nuclear weapons-free zones in the world. Countries like India are opposed to this piecemeal and sub-regional view of Arms Control and Disarmament.

Several states support measures for comprehensive and global disarmament. They want to end the state of their defenselessness against nuclear weapons as well as the overkill capacity of the nuclear states. The nuclear 'haves' do not accept such a demand. Through the extension of NPT and signing of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) they have virtually perpetuated their status as nuclear haves and are now trying to practice a sort of nuclear hegemony on non-nuclear states.

These advocate nuclear non-proliferation by the non-nuclear states but justify their own nuclear proliferation in the name of nuclear deterrence and world peace. The issue of CTBT evades consensus. Nuclear weapons and the problem of Nuclear Disarmament and Arms Control continue to be key issues of contemporary international relations.

1.2.5 Emergence of Non-Traditional Security Threats

The Problem of International Terrorism

The last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century experienced the emergence of international terrorism in its several dimensions – Cross-border Terrorism, Religious Terrorism, Fundamentalist Terrorism, Narco-Terrorism, Jihadi Terrorism. Kashmir, Chechnya, Serbia, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Washington, London, Paris, Mumbai, Delhi, and many other places witnessed

the clumsy, dangerous, and atrocious face of terrorism. Several terrorist groups began acting as highly organised and motivated groups actively using and justifying the use of terror as a weapon for securing their respective narrowly conceived goals.

The international community started becoming more and more conscious of the need to control this menace which has the potential of challenging and disturbing international peace and security in a big way. The International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999) and follow-up UN Security Council resolutions calling upon states to prevent and suppress the funding of terrorist groups fully reflected such concerns.

However, it was only after September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the American World Trade Centre and the Pentagon that the world, led by the USA, accepted the urgent need to fight the scourge of international terrorism. War against terrorism was initiated in a big way in October 2001. However, this will have to be extended to war against every other centre of terrorism and every other such regime as is found engaged in helping or supporting or sponsoring terrorism in any dimension.

After December 13, 2001, terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament, and the 26/11 terrorist attacks on Mumbai, it became fully realized that the war against terrorism would have to be fought against Taliban, Al Qaeda, LeT, JeM, JuD, ISIS etc. The world community is now fully committed to winning the war against International terrorism, particularly terrorism flowing from the Afghanistan-Pakistan area into several different parts of the world.

Pakistan must end all terror networks operating from its soil and the PoK. The international community wants strong, transparent, comprehensive, and effective Pakistani action against all terrorists without any reservations. There are no good or bad terrorists. All terrorists are perpetrating crimes against humanity and they must be either forced to abandon terrorism or face complete destruction. There is a strong need to adopt strong political, economic, social, cultural, and military means for meeting this menace.

The fight against terrorism should be made under the aegis of the United Nations and no single nation should be permitted to implement and secure its national agenda in the garb of a collective (coalition) war against terrorism with concerted efforts. War against terrorism should not be selective and subjective. It must be global in scope and approach as well as involve truly global attempts for pursuing a single objective of securing the end of international terrorism. India has been advocating an international convention to combat terrorism in all its forms called Comprehensive Contention on International Terrorism (CCIT). Due to the concerted efforts of India in cooperation with several other countries, Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar was listed as a designated terrorist by the UN Security Council 1267 Committee in May 2019.

Problem of Narco-Trafficking

Narcotic trafficking is also emerging as serious non-traditional threat to global security. Production, supply, and marketing of huge amounts of narcotic drugs from one region to another region is not only affecting the population of that area but also the working of those states. It is a problem of not only of bilateral

nature, rather regional and global politics are affected in the process. In this context, two important regions – Golden Cresent (Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan) and Golden Triangle (of South-East Asia) – are considered most important areas affecting the politics of regions of West Asia, South Asia, East Asia and Southeast Asia in particular and global politics in general. Drug supply route of both the regions is affecting the population, politics, economy, and socio-culture milieu of all the states in these regions. In the contemporary era, this problem has acquired significant magnitude. Earlier smuggling of these drugs was affecting the socio-economic, political, culture etc. scenario and working processes of those states. Nowadays, earning through the supply of these drugs are further invested in the enhancement of terrorism by these mafias. This linkage between drug supplies and terrorism has posed a serious threat to the security of concerned states as well as cover all international political system. Therefore, to understand contemporary international policies, the working of threats emanating from such activities becomes even more crucial.

Drug trafficking is a global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution, and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws. World heroin market is very large: there are millions of consumers; hundreds of tons of heroin is seized every year. Myanmar and Laos are major sources of heroin in South East Asia; Afghanistan is a very major producer of opium in South Asia. Large quantities of heroin and morphine are trafficked worldwide via routes flowing into and through the countries neighbouring Afghanistan. The Balkan and northern routes are the main heroin trafficking corridors linking Afghanistan to the huge markets of the Russian Federation and Western Europe. The Balkan route traverses the Islamic Republic of Iran (often via Pakistan), Turkey, Greece, and Bulgaria across South-East Europe to the Western European market. The northern route runs mainly through Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan (or Uzbekistan or Turkmenistan) to Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. The size of the heroin market is estimated in several billions of dollars.

Cocaine is also consumed by millions of people worldwide. North America and Europe account for major consumption of global cocaine. For the North American market, cocaine is typically transported from Colombia to Mexico or Central America by sea, air, and land. Cocaine is trafficked to Europe mostly by sea, often in container shipments. Colombia remains the main source of cocaine; Bolivia and Peru are the countries where coca plants are cultivated and partially processed. New points of transhipment continue to emerge; cocaine cartels have spread all over South America. Some parts of Africa have emerged as new points of transhipment. Besides, drug money is laundered through so many major business cities all over North America, Europe, and Asia.

Growing Ethnic Conflicts

A sad and unfortunate reality of the contemporary era of international relations has been the emergence of ethnic conflicts and ethnic wars in several parts of the globe. Even after the defeat of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) at the hands of Sri Lankan forces, the Tamil ethnic problem of their island nation is yet to be fully resolved. Armenia and Azerbaijan have been involved in ethnic wars and Russia and Georgia are virtually getting involved in local ethnic wars.

A dirty and bloody ethnic war in former Yugoslavia inflicted a big loss of human life. The inter-tribal conflict resulted in the death of several hundred thousand in

Rwanda. Massacre of children, women, and men in the name of religion and ethnic cleansing has been a bitter reality in contemporary times.

Angola, Cyprus, Somalia, Ethiopia, Algeria, Middle-East, South Africa, Russia, Chechnya, China, Lebanon, Iraq and others continue to be potent centres of ethnic conflicts and wars. The rising force of Islamic fundamentalism in West Asia, Central Asia, Algeria, Egypt, and some other areas has been another development causing concern. The post-Cold War world has yet to really secure peaceful co-existence and freedom from local and ethnic wars.

1.2.6 Issue of Humanitarian Concerns

Environmental Protection, Sustainable Development and Human Rights

In the contemporary era of international relations, all the members of the international community, both as nation-states as well as in their role as regional and global actors, have accepted securing sustainable development, protection of environment and protection of human rights as the three cardinal objectives to be secured in the years to come.

Economic development registered in the age of science and technology has proved to be neither real nor enduring. This development has adversely affected our environment and made our Planet Earth insecure, poorer, and polluted by excessive and unprincipled exploitation of natural resources. The development achieved during the past century has adversely affected the ability of the future generations to live, grow and develop.

As such, the current objective is to secure sustainable, real, and enduring development, which in no way limits the ability of the future generation to develop. It also involves making our environment healthier by repairing the damage already done as well as by strengthening its ability to withstand pressure resulting from development. Use of eco-friendly technology for keeping the environment healthy is the current objective.

Finally, protection of human rights of all the people living in different parts of the globe for enabling them to enjoy equal benefits of natural resources of the earth and to gain from technological advancement is again an international objective. The contemporary international system accepts these as valuable objectives to be secured in the 21st century.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the Unit for tips for your answer.

1) Identify three important issues of humanitarian concerns in contemporary international Relations.

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1.3 AGENDA FOR PEACE

A very encouraging and positive trend in contemporary international relations has been the emergence of several and influential world movements in favour of peace, security, environment protection and sustainable development. The rise of international civil society is a fact of International Relations in the present century. Humanitarian concerns are coming to the fore: calls for environmental protection and to cap the global temperature; sustainable development to make the world safe for future generations and respect for human rights have gained traction in the study of International Relations.

The people all over the world have joined hands to raise voice in favour of peace against war, disarmament against the arms race, non-nuclear non-violent world against nuclear and highly tensed world, and cooperation and economic development against confrontation and fruitless militarization. Environment protection movements and Earth protection drives have given a new positive direction and health to international relations.

These initiatives secured vital support for the ideals of Peace, Security, Cooperation and Development. The British based Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), the European Nuclear Disarmament (END), the Green Peace against nuclear weapons, the Five Continent Six Nation Disarmament initiative taken by India, the movement for maintaining the ecological balance of our planet, the international fund-raising movements for meeting the challenges posed by floods, famines etc., are all signs that study of International Politics has been becoming increasingly popular.

The process of change, which has been in place since 1991, is neither complete nor can it be finished in the immediate future. The components of International Relations have always been dynamic and the same is also true in contemporary times.

A new international system is currently emerging. It has several distinct trends – globalisation with a focus on harnessing its positive energies; fight against terrorism as a priority; additional steps for the protection of human rights; environmental protection and steps towards sustainable development; human security, inclusive growth, the need to meet the challenges emanating from climate change, empowerment of women, marginalized and vulnerable people of global society and the imperatives to achieve the rise of all.

Richard A. Falk in his article entitled "The Global Promise of Social Explorations at the Edge of Time" has suggested a five-dimensional agenda for ushering International Relations into an era of real and durable peace and development. The five-dimensional agenda included *inter alia* Denuclearisation; Demilitarisation; Depolarisation; Development and Democratisation. To achieve this agenda, it is imperative to apply concerted efforts and collective actions of all the nation-states, international statesmen, national decision-makers, the non-state actors and international social movements. They must accept and emphasize it for the empowerment of the entire humankind. The need is to secure and preserve the multipolar character of the world community as well as a sustainable all-round development for all.

1.4 LET US SUM UP

International Relations are fundamentally characterized by high complexity and dynamism. The present IR emerged from the traumatic experiences of the Second World War. The period of the Cold War which lasted until the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 greatly shaped the IR. Post-Cold War era is beset with new challenges and opportunities. The Unit has described in detail: (i) the structural changes being witnessed by the international system in the form of changing role of the sovereign nation-states and the processes of regionalization and globalization. (ii) International economic relations are under transformation – first and foremost because of the vigour and speed of economic globalization and the process of formation of regional economic blocs such as the EU and ASEAN. The global economic transformation however is constrained by the prolonged financial crisis that had begun in 2008. The global economy seems to have set in an unusual pattern of low and uncertain growth. (iii) International organizations in particular the UN need to be strengthened so that these multilateral bodies continue to play an effective role in the changing international political and economic environment. An utmost need is there to reform the UN Security Council with the inclusion of new members such as India to make the Security Council representative and effective in the discharge of its duties. (iv) The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction – nuclear, chemical, and biological – remains one of the major concerns before humankind. (v) Besides, the emergence of, what is called, non-traditional security threats are a very major concern. The important point to understand here is that non-traditional security threats can get transformed into traditional security threats. Besides, these threats are more pervasive, deep, difficult to track. They require concerted global and regional efforts to tackle. In other words, non-traditional security threats cannot be met by a sovereign state acting alone.

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1.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Key structural changes: the changing role of the nation-state; the rise of non-state actors and the international civil society; and shifts in global power from the West to the 'Rest'.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) Your answer should include the following: changes in the structure of international relations should be incorporated in the UN, and the need to strengthen the role of the UN.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

1) Important issues of humanitarian concern are environmental protection; sustainable development; and human rights.

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UNIT 2 EVOLUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM*

Structure

2.0 Objectives

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Stages of Evolution

- 2.2.1 Diplomatic History Stage (1648-1919)
- 2.2.2 Current Events Stage (1919-1945)
- 2.2.3 Law and Organization Stage (1919-1945)
- 2.2.4 Scientific Studies Stage (1945-1991)
- 2.2.5 Critical Theories and Globalisation (1991-2019)

2.3 Let Us Sum Up

2.4 References

2.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

2.0 OBJECTIVES

This Unit is about the emergence of International Relations as an independent and separate academic discipline. After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- Trace the evolution of the discipline of International Relations
- Identify different stages in the development of International Relations as a discipline
- Explain the causes for the changes in different stages of the discipline

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The origin and evolution of International Relations (IR) as the subject of study and as an independent discipline have several theories and interpretations. Besides, the dynamic nature of events at the global level and the ever-changing scope of the discipline makes it even more difficult to talk about the exact nature of the evolution of IR. However, it is a fact that the history of IR can be traced back to thousands of years; to the prevalence of interaction among the Sumerian city-states dating back to 3500 B.C. The Greek city-states had their international system with norms of war and peace. But we cannot mark the origin of international relations to these periods as they do not fulfil the basic requirement to be called as International Relations. The history of modern International Relations is more precisely related to the origin of the nation-state system in the 17th century. In this context, the Peace Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 which recognised the idea of sovereign nation-states can be regarded as the real beginning of International Relations. Before this treaty, European medieval organisation of political authority was based on a vaguely hierarchical religious order. However, about the Westphalian treaty also, indeed, there existed still embodied layered systems of sovereignty, especially within the Holy Roman Empire. That is why,

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more than this treaty, it is the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713 which can be considered as a more appropriate document delineating the sovereign state. Because it reflected an emerging norm that the sovereign had no external superiors as the ultimate authority within the territory's sovereign borders. As with the origin, there is a difference in terms of scope and activities of the IR. Hence it is necessary to have a critical appraisal of the evolution of the discipline of International Relations.

2.2 STAGES OF EVOLUTION

From the First World War to the present times, International Relations has passed through different stages of evolution. Besides, the journey of its efforts to make it an independent discipline also started with the end of the First World War. This journey of International Relations for becoming a separate discipline can be understood by analysing its evolution and direction of the changing contours of interaction among states.

2.2.1 Diplomatic History Stage (1648-1919)

Until the First World War (1914-18), the study of IR was dominated by historians rather than political scientists. At this stage, the study of IR mainly centred around the state system. Individual scholars also identified and organised themselves in sovereign states and through them strove to fulfil their interests. That is why no organised and systematic study of international relations was made in universities anywhere in the world. Only in a few courses dealing with history, law and theology etc, initial efforts were made to study a wide variety of current international problems. But all this was done in a very unsystematic and superficial manner. No real attempt was made to study and analyse IR in an organised and systematic manner to give it the shape and stature of a distinctive subject. The only exception is the pioneering effort of Paul S. Reinsch, who in 1900 delivered lectures on world politics at the University of Wisconsin.

Despite the existence of the state system, however, not all states accepted every other state. The norms of universality and sovereign equality were still nebulous and often questioned by powerful states. Truth is, some of the states had only partial attributes; they were small principalities and fiefdoms owing their allegiance to some big empire or a strong man. Some states were significant because of their neighbourhood; while others were due to their economic or military might. Some others due to their cultured or ethnic peculiarities. Thus, inter-state relations existed due to sovereign states and it constituted the agenda of international relations. However, relations between two or more states acquired complexities and divergent implications due to a variety of factors like economy, geography, military, historical, social, cultural, religious, ideological, strategic, and leadership. As a result, there emerged a situation of conflict or cooperation among them and the same became the area of study of international relations. Since both these aspects continued to remain part of the behaviour of states, international relations also was constrained to study both dimensions of conflict and cooperation. Thus, in the real sense of the term, despite the emergence of nation-states, international relations did not develop much till the First World War.

Since the study of International Relations was dominated by diplomatic historians the basic trends of this era were as follows:

1) Most of the study was descriptive and no effort was made to develop the causal relationship.

2) Instead of analysing the events based on various factors and forces, most studies of the period were chronological descriptions of the events, recorded partially.

3) Most studies were rooted to know the historical past and no effort was made to analyse the contemporary events. Therefore, the study of contemporary events and developments did not receive the importance it deserved.

4) Since most of the studies were not done systematically, they lacked scientific rigour towards theory building.

5) Since most studies were descriptive and chronicled the events without any effort to find a causal relationship, the discipline of International Relations lacked empirical and scientific grounding.

Thus, in the years before World War I, studies in International Relations were predominantly in the form of historical and diplomatic writings. This disrupted the growth of the analytical, theoretical, and contemporary study of the IR. Therefore, this era was devoid of the development of theories of the discipline. Besides, systematic and comprehensive growth of the subject was also missing during this period.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the Unit for tips for your answer.

1) Identify the features of the study of International Relations before World War I.

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2.2.2 Current Events Stage (1919-1945)

The First World War had a tremendous impact on the study of International Relations. It was only after the War that teaching of the subject of International Relations was initiated in the various universities in the United Kingdom, United States of America, and Switzerland. The teaching of the subject as a formal academic discipline started with the founding of international professorship in the UK. In 1919, Woodrow Wilson Chair of International Relations was established at Aberystwyth, the University of Wales (now Aberystwyth University). The first person to hold this chair was Alfred Eckhart Zimmer. Simultaneously, in the same year, Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service was founded in the USA. In early 1920, the department of international relations was established at London School of Economics at the

behest of Nobel Peace Prize winner Philip Noel-Baker. This was the first institute to offer a wide range of degrees in IR. Numerous other universities in the USA and Switzerland also followed this trend. Later, the London School of Economics and at Oxford, Montague Boston Professor of International Relations was created which gave further impetus to the study of international relations

In 1927, the first university entirely devoted to the study of international relations, the Graduate Institute of International Studies, was established in Geneva. It was meant to train diplomats for the League of Nations. In 1928, Chicago University started offering a graduate course in International Relations. Then in 1933, Harvard and Tufts University jointly started Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy which was the only school in the USA offering graduate degree in IR. Later, such courses were offered in some other universities as well.

During this era, some significant changes in the study of international relations were noticed. Salient ones of them inter alia were:

1) This phase focused on current events and happenings in international relations. A past study of diplomatic history was replaced by an interest in current affairs.

2) Despite the neglect of historical descriptions, an integrative knowledge of international relations was still not attained. Because at least to understand the contemporary developments, contextualization of the same in its timing and space was required. Hence complete neglect of history led to the limited knowledge of international relations.

3) Complete and total dependence on current affairs was not enough for a correct knowledge of IR. This kind of detachment and compartmentalization led to the lopsided reading of international relations.

4) Lack of complete study of past and present with appropriate linkages in the study of international relations were missing. As a result, theory-building was absent during this period too. In the absence of a long-term historical perspective to drive common consensual finding, the element of predictability in the working of international relations again went missing.

2.2.3 Law and Organisation Stage (1919-1945)

The period between the two world wars witnessed a strong trend regarding the growth of international legal organisations. It emphasized the institutionalization of international relations through the development of a legal organizational setup. It was assumed that with the growth of such an institutional arrangement, problems of the international system will automatically get resolved. Therefore, the emphasis was to identify goals and values which would facilitate the growth of peaceful world order. This kind of thinking was based on idealism, optimism and hope that with the growth of some legal and institutional setup, issues of conflict, violence and war could be overcome. This type of approach was thus based on an emotional and visionary outlook of its supporter. As a result, the idea of League of Nations was conceived as part of the treaty of peaceful resolution of conflict after the First World War. It was thought that issue of war and conflict in past were linked to the thinking of power enhancement, the balance of power and demonstration of power which was not appropriate; rather only through law

and organisation states can attain the goal of peace. This belief was based on the strength of individual and collective morality found in men and state.

The increased emphasis on law and organisation had the following implications for international relations:

1) Though the emphasis on institutional setup based on law and organization was based more on idealism, morality and vision for peace; yet, it was beyond the prevailing relations of the time and non-comprehension of interests of the state. Therefore, it was far from the existing realities of international relations.

2) The establishment of global peace is dependent on multiple and complex variables than the wishful thinking and narrow outlook of legal and organizational structure. Hence, the thrust on institutionalization did not factor in the dynamism of international relations. This became apparent when the League of Nations failed to establish international peace.

3) Despite their best effort to evolve some framework and establishment of League of Nations, no general theorization of international politics was developed during the period.

4) There is a clear difference between suggestions for reforms at the international level by the states and the pursuit of their national interests. Most powers agreed on the Charter of the League of Nations for the observation of peace, but when issues were confronted by them against their perceived national interest, they left the League, rather than observe the mandate of the Charter.

Thus, this era also failed to understand and analyse the complex phenomenon, called International Relations. Nor the creation of an international legal and institutional setup facilitated the establishment of peace. There were no efforts to evolve a general theory to understand this phenomenon. Therefore, the need for a sound framework of peace was still required. Thus, due to parochial vision which remained restricted to law and organization, the study of IR during this era prevented the real understanding of dynamic and complex forces of International Relations.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the Unit for tips for your answer.

1) What were the features of International Relations studies during the interwar years?

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2.2.4 Scientific Studies Stage (1945-1991)

After the end of World War II, international politics underwent a significant transformation in terms of its nature and scope. On one hand, the emergence of new states of Asia and Africa enhanced the membership of the global community; and thereby, made international politics truly international. Simultaneous to this phenomenon, the onset of Cold War between the then two superpowers led to the requirement of the study of conflict, proxy wars, arms race, nuclear threat, détente, the balance of power etc. as new issues in international relations. Besides, a new dimension came to be added in the form of non-state actors, who began to strongly influence and shape the working of international relations. These non-state actors were both political like Amnesty International and economic like the multinational corporations (MNCs). As a result of power rivalry and Cold War tensions, theoretical approaches to the study of peace and the world order studies also acquired important space in International Relations. Thus, global politics acquired new dimensions that demanded the discarding of earlier idealistic, moralistic, legal and institutional studies; and their replacement by rational and scientific studies.

Realism and Neo-Realism*:* As a result of the above developments, studies of 'Realism' and behaviouralism acquired importance in international relations. Hans J. Morgenthau has been regarded as the first realist thinker who propounded Realism as a theory for the study of International Relations.

Realism dominated the study of IR since the end of World War II. In 1948, Hans J. Morgenthau wrote his *Politics among Nations* and scholars have continued to refer to the book ever since. Morgenthau and other Realists drew ideas from philosophers such as Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes and others. Their writings on variety of subjects and themes about IR were clubbed together and labelled by critics as 'Classical Realism'. Core arguments in 'Classical Realism' are as follows: (i) In IR, there is no scope for idealism; the failure of the League of Nations to ensure peace in the inter-war years is a good example of the misplaced belief in the goodness of human nature, scientific temperament, and the inevitability of material progress for the betterment of all. 'Classical Realists' point out the selfishness and brutishness in human nature, the corruptibility and self-serving tendency of institutions, and the anarchic and fluid character of the international system as realistic points to start any discussion on IR. (ii) 'Classical Realists' argued that there is no centralized authority to enforce the law at a global level; hence international relations operate in an anarchic, somewhat lawless, context. (iii) Here, every state is concerned with its preservation. Therefore, every state is guided by the pursuit of power and promotion of its self-interest. 'Classical Realism' was grounded in a mix of history, philosophy, and theology. As a theoretical framework of IR, it declined with the rise of social-scientific behaviouraism in the 1960s.

The decade of 1970s marked the ascendance of 'Neo-Realism'. In his *Theory of International Politics* (1979), Kenneth Waltz argued that all-important features of international relations, especially the actions of great powers, could be explained in terms of the anarchical structure of the international system. Waltz tried to give 'Classical Realism' empirical bases but failed to do so, and have since been criticized for that. His 'Neo-Realism' differed from the 'Classical Realism' in two ways: (i) Waltz tried to give his ideas a scientific basis and drew

some ideas from economics. While doing this, he tried to shed 'Classical Realism' of its penchant to draw from history, sociology, theology and human nature. (ii) In building their theory of international relations, 'Classical Realists' considered variables such as domestic institutions, quality of diplomacy, the nature of statecraft, national morale and human nature. Waltz considered all of them as irrelevant in understanding IR.

Core arguments of Waltz's theory of 'Neo-Realism' are: (i) States are unitary rational actors existing in a self-help system. They are all concerned above all else with their survival; and, equally important, they all operate with imperfect information. (ii) Waltz makes an important statement: states are conditioned by the logic of the international system into similar patterns of behaviour. (iii) The trajectory of international relations is explained by the distribution of power across units (states) in the system. (iv) He argues that the international system, conceived in this way, has maintained remarkable continuity across space and time. (v) The most important argument of Waltz is that the most stable arrangement in an international system is bipolarity or a balance between two great powers.

Waltz's conception of IR remained influential in the 1980s and the 1990s. (i) Many have criticized his argument that states inherently find cooperation difficult. (ii) Critics further ask: what it is that the states want in the end: security or power? The so-called defensive 'Neo-Realists' answer: security. Since states seek foremost security, a stable international equilibrium is possible via balancing. The so-called offensive 'Neo-Realists say power. Maximization of power makes attainment of equilibrium hard to achieve. No wonder, the international system always remains on tenterhooks. (iii) There are other grounds of criticism. 'Neo-Realism' has been faulted, for example, for neglecting the insights of history, sociology, and philosophy. Besides, most important, its claim of scientific validity is found false. (iv) 'Neo-Realism' also does not consider, nor in fact, it does explain, systemic transformations in IR. It cannot explain, for example, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War or, for that matter, the advent of globalization.

Systems theory*:* In the post Second World War period, one major development in the field of political science has been to make the study of the discipline more scientific through quantitative methodology with the study of behaviour.

What do we mean by systems theories? Systems theories of international relations (IR) give priority to the structure of the international system to explain the behaviour of states and interactions among them. States are the units of the system, and they collectively constitute a system of states. Most systems theories treat the relationship between the international system and states as reciprocal. However, it is the structure of the international system that strongly influences and shapes the behaviour of the states and interaction among states. Thus, what a state does or does not do at the international level can be explained by referring to the structures of the international system; and the way these structures impinged on the state. For the first time, systems theory came to treat the international system as the formal and independent variable. Systemic thinking became central to the study of IR in the second half of the 20th century, after the publication of Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* in 1979. IR scholars have continued to study and develop the strengths and weaknesses of Waltz's and others' systems approaches. No doubt, systems theorizing remains an important approach to the study of IR. However, not all theoretical assertions of systems

approaches have been empirically supported; there thus remains a strong debate about how much systems theories explain the IR and the behaviour of the states. Moreover, the notion of an international "system" and how to define it remain contested among IR scholars.

Systems theory assumes that basic parameters of the system can be integrated. Hence a general system theory can be developed. Though, as stated above, in terms of the meaning of 'system', there is a difference of opinion among scholars, but one thing is certain: systems theory has helped in the enrichment of theoretical studies of International Relations. Systems theory has widened the scope of the study by highlighting those dimensions of international relations which were not given adequate attention earlier.

***Other theoretical frameworks**:* Other partial theories developed due to the influence of behaviouralism have been decision-making theory, game theory, communication theory and bargaining theory. They cannot be treated as full general theories of international relations because they are dealing with one aspect of it only, i.e. foreign policy analysis. This has been done through the evaluation of the behaviour of foreign policy or decision-makers. They are also based on the scientific method and value-free approach as suggested by behaviouralism.

Thus, in this era an effort was made by Realists and behaviouralist to study international relations in a scientific and realist manner, rather than the utopian, idealism, emotive, historical, diplomatic, ethical, legal and institutional frameworks. But both the studies suffered from serious weaknesses of not interpreting international relations holistically. In the case of the Realist approach, predominant issues have been the issue of struggle and conflict. An important aspect of cooperation has been missing, which is not only equal rather it is the aim of nation-states. Similarly, behaviouralism also ignored the value of peace in their craze for scientism issue and quantification. Besides, they all put more and more emphasis on analysis over description, on transnationalism over nationalism and interaction over action. That is why all these approaches failed to predict the end of the Cold War and its likely consequences for international relations. No theory, howsoever scientific it has been, can predict major upheavals and transformations in the global political system.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the Unit for tips for your answer.

1) Pick the correct response about the core concern of Defensive realists.
   a) Security
   b) Power
   c) Cooperation.

2) Pick the correct response. Neorealism has been faulted for its neglect of ?
   a) Insights from history, sociology and philosophy
   b) Systems approach
   c) Models and theories of economics

2.2.5 Critical Theories and Globalisation (1991-2019)

With the end of the Cold War, not only the nature and working of international relations changed but new kind of discourse started in analysing and understanding of international politics. New Critical theories in the form of constructivism, feminism, post-modernism etc. started raising some normative questions, which were missing in the discourses that prevailed during the Cold War era. This theoretical orientation is termed as "Paradigm shift" in International Relations. This period is different from 'post-Westphalia' representing 'post sovereignty' phase. These theories were not concerned with scientism or analytical framework; rather they are of problem-solving nature. Hence, they can be termed as emancipatory theories. Therefore, they are aimed at providing an answer to questions faced by contemporary International Relations. As a result, these are purposive in nature and provide a critique of dogmatism. Simultaneously, they are in favour of de-legitimization of the existing order. Hence, their dominant concern is not merely providing a framework, but concerns for social and political examination. These normative and explanatory theories are developed by scholars' like Andrew Linklater, Michael Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Jean Elshtain, Cynthia Enloe, Christine Sylvester, J. Ann Tinker, Richard Ashley, Richard Cox, Herbert Marcuse, Jurgen Habermas etc.

Some scholars believe that the behaviour of human beings is determined by their identity, which itself is shaped by society's values, history and practice. Therefore, most of the institutions, including the state are socially constructed. For instance, feminists believe that gender-based role differentiation is socially rather than biologically determined. Similarly, critical theorists believe that the task of theory is not to just explain but provide for the emancipation of human beings from social institutions and practices that oppose them. In the same way, post-modernists consider themselves as incredulity towards meta-narratives. Postmodernism then is essentially concerned with de-constructing and de-trusting any account of human life that claims to have direct access to truth. It is a narrative of narratives that have a totalizing view of historical events, social experiences and culture as lived and politics as experienced. Meta narratives are false; they often claim to be all-knowing truths. Thus, in this era, like the earlier period, a lot of theories are available but they have their limitations like earlier ones. In sum, International Relations is a very complex discipline involving a variety of factors and forces shaping its working; and all attempts at building theories about IR have at best met only limited and partial success.

Parallel to political development in the form of the end of the Cold War, the world witnessed a new phenomenon of 'Globalisation' after 1991. But how to interpret and understand this phenomenon is also a cumbersome task. It is because both positive and negative discussion of this phenomenon is given in terms of its being a myth and reality. It is only after knowing both the arguments we can be better equipped to explain the working and process of contemporary international relations.

Those who support or justify the process of Globalisation give the following arguments in support of their contention. First, the world economy has become more interdependent than before; hence it has opened the doors of trade and other such activities for the nations. Second, as a result of this changing world has become more inter-connected and communicative, this has strengthened social

cohesiveness. Third, with the growth of large-scale interactions now the world is witnessing common culture across nations. Fourth, with this development differences among nations are being replaced by homogeneousness. Fifth, time and space have seemed to collapse and we are witnessing concept of the global village. Sixth, even polity seems to be moving in the direction of a transnational order and the beginning of a transfer of allegiance is witnessed from state to sub-state, transnational and international bodies. Seventh, a cosmopolitan culture is developing and people seem to begin to think globally and act locally. Finally, risk culture is emerging to take care of common humanitarian concerns.

But opposition to Globalisation is equally strong and the following arguments are given to prove their contention. First, the present process of Globalisation is merely strengthening capitalism. Therefore, it is more about Trade, FDI, Finances etc. than development of human growth and interactions. Second, it is very uneven in its effects, because it is a game between unequal players. Hence, it is not going to provide equal opportunities for all. Third, it is not Globalisation with a human face, rather it is the concentration of capital and going to prove the latest stage of Western imperialism. Fourth, it is going to benefit the rich and to remain disadvantageous for the poor. In this open competition, the huge gap between rich and poor countries will only widen and deepen further. Fifth, all forces of Globalisation are not good. For instance, it also makes it easier for the drug cartels and terrorists to operate worldwide. Sixth, it is not to facilitate good global governance, because most of the MNCs and TNCs are not under the control of any one country or some global agency. Finally, it is paradox: whether Globalization is a triumph of Western capitalism or it marks the rise of Asian economic and technological dynamism.

Thus, developments of Critical theories and Globalisation present a paradox for the readers to provide an adequate explanation for the contemporary International Relations. If critical theories are discussing the emancipations, then Globalisation is posing the problem of inegalitarian world order. In both the senses it is difficult to develop a general theory for the understanding of IR. Both the propositions must deal with multiple factors and processes; hence are not able to explain the complexities of contemporary international relations. No common consensus has been arrived at among different scholars. Thus, this era is also full of partial approaches that can at most explain one or the other phenomenon, but a complete understanding of international relations is missing.

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the Unit for tips for your answer.

1) What is the function of a theory according to Critical theorists?

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2.3 LET US SUM UP

Above discussion about various stages of the evolution of International Relations reveals that this discipline is not only difficult but also very dynamic and complex to understand. In the first phase, it emerges as a separate discipline woven around the concept of nation-states as first developed under the Westphalian treaty. Treaty of Utrecht further polished it to provide complete external sovereignty to the nation-states. However, this phenomenon remained limited to diplomatic history and of the descriptive nature of the subject. Later, the period between the two world wars proved critical for the development of the subject. During this period, on the one hand, emphasis on current affairs was manifest; whereas, on the other hand, the importance of law and organisation was strongly underlined. It was believed that legal and institutional architecture shall help resolve the problems of war and peace among nations. In the post-Second World War era, major stress was put on scientism and studies based on Realistic paradigm. Finally, the end of the Cold War presented a bizarre scenario both at political and economic levels. As a result, alternative Critical theories of global politics were presented. But new departure has also not been able to develop a complete general theory of international relations. Simultaneously, post-1991 economic development in the form of Globalisation too cannot provide an answer to all kinds of problems and economic challenges being witnessed by most of the states. Thus, for a sound understanding of International Relations, some more efforts are needed. However, due to the dynamic and complex interdependence among nation-states, it seems difficult, if not impossible, to provide a complete explanation and understanding of International Relations in times to come.

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2.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) The study of IR was dominated by diplomatic histories which were mostly descriptive and chronological. These studies did not focus on contemporary developments and lacked scientific rigor. They lacked scientific rigor and did not establish causal relations

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) During the interwar years, the focus of IR shifted on institutions and on contemporary developments. In the absence of historical analysis, theory-building could not take place.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

1) (a)

2) (a)

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

1) A theory should function to emancipate human beings from social institutions and practices that oppress them.

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