

## Approaches to International Relations

## International Relations in Daily Life

### ➤ International events in everyday lives

- ❑ The civil war in Syria
- ❑ Terrorist attacks by IS
- ❑ The North Korean nuclear crisis
- ❑ The G-20 summits
- ❑ The economic crisis of 2008 and the Great Recession
- ❑ The growth of China's economy

2

## International Relations in Daily Life

### ➤ Immediate relevance of remote events

- ❑ The civil war in Syria
- ❑ Terrorist attacks by IS
- ❑ The North Korean nuclear crisis
- ❑ The G-20 summits
- ❑ The economic crisis of 2008 and the Great Recession
- ❑ The growth of China's economy

3

## International Relations in Daily Life

### ➤ Personal participation in IR

- ❑ Living
- ❑ Traveling
- ❑ Shopping
- ❑ Learning
- ❑ Working

4

## International Relations in Daily Life

### ➤ Implications for IR

- ❑ Actors in IR are various.
- ❑ Nation-states are major but not the only actors.
- ❑ "Non-state actors" – IOs, NGOs, MNCs, and individual are all actors.
- ❑ International relations is not just relations among nations.

5

## International Relations in Daily Life

### ➤ Implications for IR

- ❑ IR is the study of the interactions among the various actors that participate in international politics, including states, IOs, NGOs, sub-national entities like bureaucracies and local governments, and individuals.
- ❑ Other expressions of IR: international politics, world politics, global politics.

6

## International Relations in Daily Life

### ➤ Foundational Questions of IR

- ❑ How can human nature be characterized?
- ❑ What roles does the individual play in IR?
- ❑ What are the characteristics of the state?
- ❑ What drives state's international behavior?
- ❑ What are the characteristics of the international system?
- ❑ How might international system be structured to achieve order?

7

## Thinking Theoretically

### ➤ Competing explanations of IR

- ❑ Realism
- ❑ Liberalism
- ❑ Radicalism
- ❑ Constructivism

8

## Thinking Theoretically

### ➤ Realism: a billiard table



9

## Thinking Theoretically

### ➤ Liberalism: a cobweb



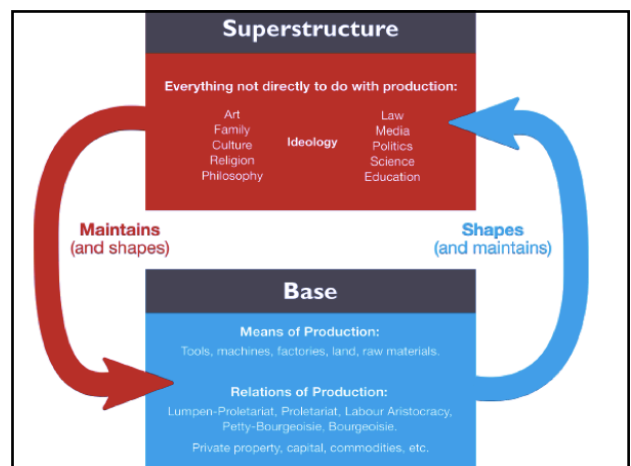
10

## Thinking Theoretically

### ➤ Radicalism: layers of cake? (material)



11

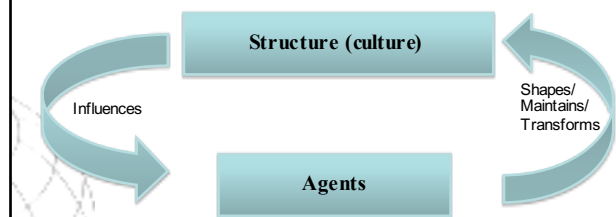


## Thinking Theoretically

- **Constructivism:**  
layers of cake?  
(discourse )



13



14

## Thinking Theoretically

- **Stephen Walt**
  - ❑ No single approach can capture all the complexity of contemporary world politics.
  - ❑ Therefore we are better off with a diverse array of competing ideas rather than a single theoretical orthodoxy.
  - ❑ Competition between theories helps reveal their strengths and weaknesses and spurs subsequent refinements, while revealing flaws in conventional wisdom.

15

## Developing the Answers

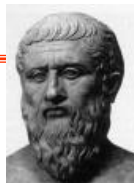
- **History**
  - ❑ Answers have been discovered in history.
  - ❑ History provides us a crucial background for the study of IR.
  - ❑ History not only provides detailed knowledge of specific events, but also serves as a yardstick to test generalizations.
  - ❑ Thucydides (460-400 BC) and his *History of the Peloponnesian War*

16

## Developing the Answers

- **Philosophy**
  - ❑ Plato (427-347 B.C.)
  - ❑ Greek political philosopher.

*The Republic*, is a Socratic dialogue, written by Plato around 380 BC, concerning justice, the order and character of the just, city-state, and the just man.

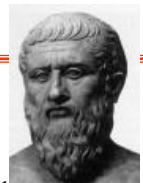


17

## Developing the Answers

- **Philosophy**
  - ❑ Plato (427-347 B.C.)
  - ❑ Greek political philosopher.

In the book's dialogue, Socrates discusses the meaning of justice and whether or not the just man is happier than the unjust man. They consider the natures of existing regimes and then propose a series of different, hypothetical cities in comparison. This culminates in the discussion of Kallipolis, a hypothetical city-state ruled by a philosopher king.



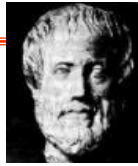
18

## Developing the Answers

### ➤ Philosophy

❑ Aristotle (384-322 B.C.)

❑ Greek political philosopher who addressed the problem of order on the individual Greek city-state. The first to use the comparative method of research, observing multiple points in time and suggesting explanations for the patterns found.



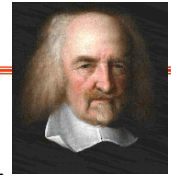
19

## Developing the Answers

### ➤ Philosophy

❑ Hobbes (1588-1679)

❑ English political philosopher who in *Leviathan* described life in a state of nature as solitary, selfish, and brutish. Individuals and society can escape from the state of nature through the establishment of a strong authority embodied in the state, a Leviathan.



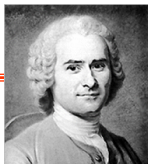
20

## Developing the Answers

### ➤ Philosophy

❑ Rousseau (1712-1778)

❑ French political philosopher whose *Social Contract* helped inspire political reforms or revolutions in Europe, especially in France. The *Social Contract* argued against the idea that monarchs were divinely empowered to legislate. Rousseau asserts that only the people, who are sovereign, have that all-powerful right.



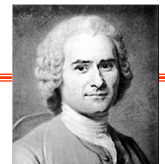
21

## Developing the Answers

### ➤ Philosophy

❑ Rousseau (1712-1778)

❑ Rousseau posits that the political aspects of a society should be divided into two parts. First, there must be a sovereign consisting of the whole population, women included, that represents the general will and is the legislative power within the state.



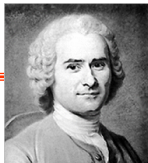
22

## Developing the Answers

### ➤ Philosophy

❑ Rousseau (1712-1778)

❑ The second division is that of the government, being distinct from the sovereign. This division is necessary because the sovereign cannot deal with particular matters like applications of the law. Doing so would undermine its generality, and therefore damage its legitimacy.



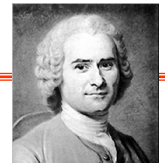
23

## Developing the Answers

### ➤ Philosophy

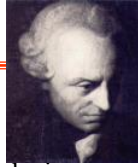
❑ Rousseau (1712-1778)

❑ Thus, government must remain a separate institution from the sovereign body. When the government exceeds the boundaries set in place by the people, it is the mission of the people to abolish such government, and begin anew.



24

## Developing the Answers



### ➤ Philosophy

- ❑ Kant (1724-1804)
- ❑ German political philosopher who is a central figure in modern philosophy. Kant argues that the human mind creates the structure of human experience and that reason is the source of morality. In *Perpetual Peace*, he advocated a world federation of constitutional republics bound by the rule of law..

25

## Developing the Answers

### ➤ Alternative Approaches

- ❑ Behavioralism (positivism)
  - Finding patterned ways of behavior (inductivism)  
EG: Singer and Small on the causes of war
- Explaining recurring patterns of behavior (deductivism)  
EG: Waltz's balance of power theory

26

## Developing the Answers

### ➤ Alternative Approaches

- ❑ Critical theory
  - Postmodernism: concept deconstruction  
EG: Cynthia Weber on sovereignty
- Constructivism: discourse analysis  
EG: Peter Katzenstein and *The Culture of National Security*

27

## Integrating the Answers

### ➤ The Correlates of War project

- ❑ Turning to statistical data to discover general patterns of wars
- Collect data.
- Generate specific testable hypotheses that might explain the outbreak of war.
- Connect all relationships that are found into a coherent theory of why wars occur.

28

## Integrating the Answers

### ➤ The Democratic Peace Debate

- ❑ Whether democracies are more peaceful than non-democracies?
- Yes: since 1789 no wars have been fought strictly between independent states with democratically elective governments.
- No: democratic governments were not noticeably more peace-prone or passive.

29

## In Sum: Making Sense of IR

- To ask and answer core foundational questions of IR, the realist, liberal, radical, constructivist theories provide frameworks.
- To present explanations of international events, IR scholars also use insights from many other disciplines, including history, philosophy, economics, behavioral psychology, and critical studies.

30

Approaches to Studying IR	
History	Offers a rich source for examining individual or multiple cases.
Philosophy	Offers reasoned expositions about the world around us as they can be found in the work of famous philosophers.
Behavioralism (Positivism)	Finds patterns in human behavior and state behavior using empirical methods. Explains these recurring patterns on the basis of general assumptions (deduction)
Critical Alternative	Deconstructs major concepts and uses discourse analysis to build thick description.

31

## In Sum: Making Sense of IR

- IR is a pluralistic and eclectic discipline.
- To understand IR, we need the help of IR theory.
- And to understand IR theory, we need to examine general “stuff” of diplomatic history.



32