Offensive realism

- A theory developed by John Mearsheimer, in contrast with 'defensive realism.' Great powers, according to this theory, are perpetually seeking ways to gain power over their rivals, toward the ultimate goal of hegemony.
'Empirical' statehood

- Part of the external basis of a state's sovereignty; the extent to which a state fulfils its role as a substantial political-economic organization. A successful state in terms of empirical statehood has developed efficient political institutions, a solid economic basis, and a substantial degree of national unity (internal popular support for the state).
Hegemony

- In IR a concept referring to a state’s power relative to that of other states. A state may be considered a hegemon if it is so powerful economically and militarily that it is a dominant influence on the domestic and foreign policies of other states. Depending on its level of power, a state may be a regional hegemon (e.g., Germany immediately prior to and during World War II) or a global hegemon (e.g., many agree, the United States in the late 20th and early 21st centuries).
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- An international defence organization established in 1949 to provide the assured concerted defence of each of its member states. NATO (whose primary member was and is the United States) and the signatories of the Warsaw Pact (whose primary member was the Soviet Union) were the two rivals (though fundamentally the United States and the Soviet Union) in the Cold War and the bipolar world order. NATO outlived the Warsaw Pact and recently accepted seven new members, including six former Warsaw Pact countries, in 2004.
Ecoradicals

- Those who believe that environmental problems are highly serious. Dramatic changes of lifestyles plus population control is necessary in order to promote sustainable development.
Modernists

- Those who believe that environmental challenges are not a serious challenge to advanced societies. Progress in knowledge and technology will enable us to protect the environment.
Unlike the 'bureaucratic' and other sociological approaches, this approach focuses on the individual decision-maker, with particular attention to the psychological aspects of decision-making. Robert Jervis has studied misperception, and the construction of erroneous 'images' of others, as it pertains to these state leaders. Margaret Herman studied the personalities of dozens of government leaders, arguing that such factors as experience, political style, and worldview affect the ways leaders conduct their foreign policies.
Structural violence

- The oppression and hardship that people suffer from political and economic structures that subject them to unequal positions. Johan Galtung invented the concept in order to identify types of violence different from direct violence.
Economic liberalism

- Adam Smith (1723-1790), the father of economic liberalism, believed that markets tend to expand spontaneously for the satisfaction of human needs—provided that governments do not interfere. He builds on the body of liberal ideas. These core ideas include the rational individual actor, a belief in progress, and an assumption of mutual gain from free exchange. But Smith also adds some elements of his own to liberal thinking, including the key notion that the economic marketplace is the main source of progress, cooperation, and prosperity. Political interference and state regulation, by contrast, is uneconomical, retrogressive, and can lead to conflict.
Ideational view

• In the ideational view held by social constructivists ideas always matter. The material world is indeterminate; it needs to be interpreted. Without ideas there can be no larger context of meaning. Ideas define the meaning of material power.
Bureaucratic approach

- A strongly empirical (evidence-based) sociological approach to foreign policy that focuses primarily on the organizational (or bureaucratic) context in which decision-making takes place. The 'bureaucratic' approach is seen by supporters to be superior to other approaches by virtue of its empirical analysis of the relationship between decision-making and organizational structure. This approach therefore emphasizes specific context over the inherent rationality of any foreign policy decision; it seeks to clarify the context-based reasons for individual foreign policies, but does not have a strong normative, prescriptive component.
Positivism

• A methodology in IR that employs most of the attitudes and assumptions of behaviouralism but does so in a more sophisticated way. Positivism is a fundamentally scientific approach. Its advocates and adherents believe that there can be objective knowledge of the social and political dimensions of the world, and that this knowledge is obtainable through the careful development and testing of empirical propositions. The social scientist is no different than any other scientist in this regard.
Functionalist theory of integration

- A theory coined by David Mitrany. He argued that greater interdependence in the form of transnational ties between countries could lead to peace. Mitrany believed, perhaps somewhat naively, that cooperation should be arranged by technical experts, not by politicians. The experts would devise solutions to common problems in various functional areas: transport, communication, finance, etc. Technical and economic collaboration would expand when the participants discovered the mutual benefits that could be obtained from it. When citizens saw the welfare improvements that resulted from efficient collaboration in international organizations, they would transfer their loyalty from the state to international organizations.
Karl Marx in many ways represents a fundamental critique of economic liberalism. Economic liberals view the economy as a positive-sum game with benefits for all. Marx rejected that view. Instead, he saw the economy as a site of human exploitation and class inequality. Marx thus takes the zero-sum argument of mercantilism and applies it to relations of classes instead of relations of states. But where mercantilists see economics as a tool of politics, Marxists put economics first and politics second. For Marxists, the capitalist economy is based on two antagonistic social classes: One class, the bourgeoisie, owns the means of production; the other class, the proletariat, owns only its labour power which it must sell to the bourgeoisie. But labour puts in more work than it gets back in pay; there is a surplus value appropriated by the bourgeoisie. That is capitalist profit and it is derived from labour exploitation.
Anarchical society

- A term used by Hedley Bull to describe the worldwide order of independent states who share common interests and values, and subject themselves to a common set of rules and institutions in dealing with each other. The concept of 'anarchical society' combines the realist claim that no world 'government' rules over sovereign states, with idealism's emphasis on the common concerns, values, rules, institutions, and organizations of the international system.
A version of revolutionism that seeks the abandonment of the existent state system by a peaceful revolution of ideas. Immanuel Kant and Mohandas Gandhi, as well as Christian pacifists and secular humanists more generally, are examples of soft revolutionists.
Foreign policy theories analyzed at three different levels initially conceptualized by Kenneth Waltz: the systemic level involving the distribution of power among states; the nation-state level involving the type of government, the relations between the state and groups in society, and the bureaucratic make-up of the state apparatus; and the level of the individual decision-maker, involving his or her way of thinking, basic beliefs, personal priorities and so forth.
Seeking to counter realism, emancipatory theorists, such as Ken Booth and Andrew Linklater, argue that IR should seek to understand how men and women are prisoners of the existing state system, and how they can be liberated from the state and from the other oppressive structures of contemporary world politics, which can be reconstructed along universal solidarist lines.
Hegemonic stability theory

• A hegemon, a dominant military and economic power, is necessary for the creation and full development of a liberal world market economy, because in the absence of such a power, liberal rules cannot be enforced around the world. That, in its simplest form, is the theory of hegemonic stability which is indebted to mercantilist thinking about politics being in charge of economics.
Postmodernism

• A post-positivist approach to IR that rejects the modern, enlightenment idea that ever-expanding human knowledge will lead to an improved understanding and mastery of the international system. A distinctive feature of postmodernist discourse in IR is an inclination toward scepticism, debunking and deconstruction of 'universal truths'-such as those advanced by Kant or Marx or Waltz-that are supposed to be valid for all times and places.
Terrorism

• The unlawful use or threatened use of violence against civilians, often to achieve political, religious, or similar objectives. International terrorism involves the territory or the citizens of more than one country. Terrorism is nothing new; it has probably existed ever since human societies began to regulate the use of violence. It is the unusual scale and intensity of the September 11, 2001, attacks in New York and Washington, and later attacks in Ankara, Madrid, London and elsewhere that has put the issue of international terrorism high on the agenda.
Soft power

- Also termed 'co-optive power', soft power is, according to Joseph Nye, the ability to structure a situation so that other nations develop preferences or define their interests in ways consistent with one's own nation.
Imperialism

- The projection of power by a political entity for the purpose of territorial expansion and political and economic influence beyond its formal borders. Much of history has been marked by the expansion and demise of empires: the Roman Empire, the Mongol Empire, the British Empire and the Ottoman Empire, to name but a few. After World War II, the last of the great empires (with the possible exception of the Chinese) were dissolved.
Liberalism

- The liberal tradition in IR emphasizes the great potential for human progress in modern civil society and the capitalist economy, both of which can flourish in states which guarantee individual liberty. The modern liberal state invokes a political and economic system that will bring peace and prosperity. Relations between liberal states will collaborative and cooperative.
Structuration

A concept suggested by Anthony Giddens as a way of analysing the relationship between structures and actors. Structures (i.e. the rules and conditions that guide social action) do not determine what actors do in any mechanical way, an impression one might get from the neorealist view of how the structure of anarchy constrains state actors. The relationship between structures and actors involves intersubjective understanding and meaning. Structures do constrain actors, but actors can also transform structures by thinking about them and acting on them in new ways. The notion of structuration therefore leads to a less rigid and more dynamic view of the relationship between structure and actors. IR constructivists use this as a starting point for suggesting a less rigid view of anarchy.
State system

• An organization of independent states wherein mutual sovereignty is recognized; relations are subject to international law and diplomatic practices; and a balance of power exists among states. Historically, the geopolitical outcome of the Peace of Westphalia was the first (albeit only European) state system in the modern sense. We now speak of a global state system, as the world's inhabitable land is covered entirely by states and their territories. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the breakup of both Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia and the end of the Cold War, there are now nearly 200 states in the state system.
Foreign policy theorists concerned with multilateral questions are likely to take a Liberal approach, emphasizing international institutions—such as the United Nations or the World Trade Organization—as means of reducing international conflict and promoting mutual understanding and common interests.
Critical theory

- A post-positivist approach to IR influenced by Marxist thought advanced by the 'Frankfurt School'. Critical theory rejects three basic postulates of positivism: an objective external reality, the subject/object distinction, and value-free social science. Critical theorists emphasize the fundamentally political nature of knowledge. They seek to liberate humanity from the conservative forces and 'oppressive' structures of hegemonic (U.S.-dominated) world politics and global economics. Critical theorists are similar to idealists in their support for progressive change and their employment of theory to help bring about that change.
Comparative approach to foreign policy

- A form of policy analysis inspired by the behaviouralist movement in political science. Unlike the traditional approach to foreign policy analysis, in which information is sought about a single country's policy, the comparative approach amasses substantial data about the content and context of many countries' foreign policies. Rather than merely prescribe action for a specific country in a specific context, the goal of the comparative approach is to develop systematic theories and explanations of the foreign policy process in general.
World system analysis

- An approach developed by Immanuel Wallerstein. A world system is characterized by a certain economic and a certain political structure with the one depending on the other. In human history, there have been two basic varieties of world systems: world-empires and world-economies. In world-empires, such as the Roman Empire, political and economic control is concentrated in a unified centre. World-economies, in contrast, are tied together economically in a single division of labour, but politically, authority is decentralized, residing in multiple polities, in a system of states. Wallerstein's key focus is the analysis of the modern world-economy, characterized by capitalism.
Revolutionism

One of three interacting philosophies (along with realism and rationalism) whose dialogue, according to Wight, is essential to an adequate understanding of IR. Revolutionists, such as Kant and Marx, are solidarists who believe in the 'moral unity' of humankind beyond the state. They hold in common a progressive aim of changing (even eliminating) the international state system in the expectation of creating a better world. Revolutionists are more optimistic than rationalists and realists about human nature: they believe in the achievability of human perfection.
Rational choice theory

• Rational choice begins with individuals. Whatever happens in the social world, including in international relations, can be explained by individual choices. What a state or any other organization does can also be explained by choices made by individuals. This view is called methodological individualism. Individual actors are rational and self-interested; they want to make themselves better off. This is true for everybody; not merely for sellers and buyers in economic markets, but also for bureaucrats and politicians. When individuals act in a rational and self-interested way, the overall outcome for states or systems will be the best possible. Just as 'the invisible hand' in liberal economics leads from individual greed to the best possible economic result for all, so the individual actions by bureaucrats and politicians lead to the best possible outcome. So if we want to understand what governments do, our first priority must be to understand the preferences of public officials.
'Hard' revolutionism

- A version of revolutionism that seeks the violent destruction of the system or society of sovereign states and its replacement by a new global order based on an exclusive universalist ideology. Lenin is an example of a hard revolutionist.
Social constructivist approach

- A theory of foreign policy-making as an intersubjective world, whose ideas and discourse can be scrutinized in order to arrive at a better understanding of the process. The discourse of actors is seen to shape policy-making, since policies are conveyed by speech and writing. Some constructivists claim that identity, rooted in ideas and discourse, is the basis for a definition of interests and thus lies behind any foreign policy.
Neorealist stability theory

- The claim, associated with Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer, that bipolar systems are superior to multipolar systems because they provide greater international stability and thus greater peace and security. While Waltz employs this logic to explain the relative peace of the bipolar Cold War era, Mearsheimer, citing pre-Cold War and post-Cold War instability, claims the theory can be applied to past and future international orders.
'RAM' (Rational Actor Model)

- An approach to foreign policy analysis at the systemic level that views the sovereign state as a unitary actor driven by a motivation to advance its national interests, and that assumes that decisions made by the state are based on rational choice.
Pluralism

- Along with solidarism, one of two International Society approaches to the potential conflict between state sovereignty and respect for human rights. A pluralist view of the state system emphasizes the primacy of state sovereignty: a policy of non-intervention must be maintained even when another state is experiencing (or complicit in) a humanitarian crisis within its borders. Civil rights (within states) take precedence over human rights (between states).
Rationalism

- One of three interacting philosophies (along with realism and revolutionism) whose dialogue, according to Martin Wight, is essential to an adequate understanding of IR. Rationalists, such as Hugo Grotius, are more optimistic in their view of human nature than are realists. Rationalism conceives of states as legal organizations that operate in accordance with international law and diplomatic practice; International relations are therefore norm-governed policies and activities based on the mutually recognized authority of sovereign states.
Materialist view

- According to the materialist view, power and national interest are the driving forces in international politics. Power is ultimately military capability, supported by economic and other resources. National interest is the self-regarding desire by states for power, security, or wealth. Power and interest are seen as 'material' factors; they are objective entities in the sense that because of anarchy states are compelled to be pre-occupied with power and interest. In this view, ideas matter little; they can be used to rationalize actions dictated by material interest.
Gender issues

- The starting point for introducing gender to IR is often the debate about basic inequalities between men and women and the consequences of such inequalities for world politics. Compared to men, women are a disadvantaged group in the world. Women own about one per cent of the world's property and make up less than five per cent of the heads of state and cabinet ministers. Women put in about 60 per cent of all working hours, but they only take home 10 per cent of all income. Women also account for 60 per cent of all illiterates and about (together with their children) 80 per cent of all refugees.
Sovereignty

- As applied to a state, sovereignty includes both ultimate internal authority and external recognition. Internally, a state is sovereign when it exercises supreme authority over the affairs and people within its territory;Externally, a state is sovereign when it is recognized as such by the international community, i.e., its territorial integrity and internal sovereignty are respected and upheld. Presently, the greatest threat to sovereignty is the rise in prominence of IGOs, NGOs and the global economy (and globalization in general), all of which increase state interdependence and accountability.
International order

- An order between states in a system or society of states. Along with international justice, international order is a fundamental normative value of the International Society tradition. Hedley Bull identifies four goals necessary for international order: preserving international society, upholding the independence of member states, maintaining peace, and adhering to norms governing war, diplomacy, and sovereignty. Responsibility for the pursuit and preservation of international order lies with the great powers, whose fundamental duty, according to Bull, is to maintain the 'balance of power'.
Public goods

- Such goods are characterized by nonexcludability; others cannot be denied access to them. The air that we breathe is an example of such a good. A lighthouse is another example of a public good; so is a road or a sidewalk. The elements of a liberal world economy, such as a currency system for international payments, or the possibility to trade in a free market, are other examples of public goods. Once created, they are there for the benefit of all.
Postmodern states

- States with high levels of cross-border integration. The economy is globalised rather than 'national'. The polity is characterized by multilevel governance at the supranational, national and subnational level. Collective loyalties are increasingly projected away from the state.
Dependency theory

• Draws on classical Marxist analysis. But is different from classical Marxism in a basic respect. Unlike Marx, dependency theorists do not expect capitalist development to take root and unfold in the Third World in the same way that capitalism first took place in Western Europe and North America. The main aim of dependency theory is to critique the dependency form that capitalist development is seen to take in the Third World. In short, dependency theory is an attack on late capitalism. It is an effort to provide the theoretical tools by which Third World countries can defend themselves against globalizing capitalism.
Mercantilism

- The world view of political elites that were at the forefront of building the modern state. They took the approach that economic activity is and should be subordinated to the primary goal of building a strong state. In other words, economics is a tool of politics, a basis for political power. That is a defining feature of mercantilist thinking. Mercantilists see the international economy as an arena of conflict between opposing national interests, rather than an area of cooperation and mutual gain. In brief, economic competition between states is a 'zero-sum game' where one state's gain is another state's loss.
Post-positivist approaches

- This is a cluster of different approaches to IR. They include critical theory, postmodernism, and normative theory. These approaches are sceptical of the behaviouralist view that the world can be scientifically explained; they are also sceptical of regard international relations as an 'objective reality out there'. International relations is sooner a subjective creation of people.
Interdependence liberalism

- A branch of liberal thinking which argues that a high division of labour in the international economy increases interdependence between states, and that discourages and reduces violent conflict between states. There still remains a risk that modern states will slide back to the military option and once again enter into arms races and violent confrontations. But that is not a likely prospect. It is in the less developed countries that war now occurs, because at lower levels of economic development land continues to be the dominant factor of production, and modernization and interdependence are far weaker.
Max Weber emphasized that the social world (i.e. the world of human interaction) is fundamentally different from the natural world of physical phenomena. Human beings rely on 'understanding' of each other's actions and assigning 'meaning' to them. In order to comprehend human interaction, we cannot merely describe it in the way we describe physical phenomena, such as a boulder falling off a cliff; we need a different kind of interpretive understanding, or 'verstehen'. Is the pat of another person's face a punishment or a caress? We cannot know until we assign meaning to the act. Weber concluded that 'subjective understanding is the specific characteristic of sociological knowledge'. Constructivists rely on such insights to emphasise the importance of 'meaning' and 'understanding'.
Think tanks

- Private research organizations that disseminate useful information and provide expert advice with the aim of influencing government policies. They were initially developed in the United States by philanthropists and public intellectuals who recognized the importance of addressing, debating, and (hopefully) solving troublesome issues of American foreign policy, particularly war. They have subsequently been developed in many other countries. American 'think tanks' are differentiated from their foreign counterparts by the degree to which politicians in the United States actively seek advice from these organizations.
Communitarianism

- A normative doctrine that focuses on political communities, especially nation-states, which are seen as fundamental agents and referents in world politics. According to this position, states' interests come before those of individuals or that of humanity in general.
Ontology

- The philosophical study of the nature (reality) of the world and its components. Methodological divisions and debates in IR often reflect differing and even contradictory ontologies: e.g. whether an 'objective' world exists outside human experience, or only a 'subjective' world constructed by human experience. The claim that international relations is an external 'thing' or 'object' or 'reality' is associated with behaviouralist and positivist approaches, such as neorealism. The alternative claim that international relations consists of shared human understandings expressed via language, ideas, and concepts is associated with international society, normative theory, constructivism and postmodernism.
Normative theory

- Can be viewed as the political theory or moral philosophy that underlies IR. Normative Theory is primarily concerned to understand fundamental values of international life, the moral dimensions of international relations, and the place of ethics in statecraft. Although it focuses on values, rules, practices, and the like, normative theory is not necessarily a prescriptive approach to IR.
Foreign policy

- The manner in which states interact with each other states, international organizations, and foreign non-governmental actors (such as NGOs, corporations, and terrorist organizations). Foreign policy thus includes all competitive and cooperative strategies, measures, goals, guidelines, directives, understandings, agreements, etc., through which a state conducts its international relations. By virtue of their separate international existence, all states are obliged to develop and execute foreign policy toward these other states and international organizations. Normally the key policymakers are leading government officials, namely presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers, defence ministers, etc. Dealing with everything from the conduct of war to the regulation of imported goods, policy-making tends to involve means-end and cost-benefit analyses of realistic goals and available means to achieve them.
'Security dilemma'

- An important paradox inherent in the state system. A fundamental reason for the existence of states is to provide their citizens with security from internal and external threats; however, the existence of these armed states threatens the very security they are expected to maintain.
Traditional approach to foreign policy

- Proponents include Niccolo Machiavelli, Hugo Grotius, and Henry Kissinger. The traditional approach, with its attention to the specific historical foreign policies of a particular country, analyzes the substance of foreign policy as practiced, as opposed to the systematic theories and explanations advanced by more analytical and scientific approaches to foreign policy.
'Defensive realism'

- According to Kenneth Waltz's theory, a 'defensive realist' recognizes that states seek power for security and survival, but striving for excessive power is counterproductive because it provokes hostile alliances by other states.
Failed states'

- Weak states incapable of creating domestic order. State failure is a case of extreme weakness involving a more or less complete breakdown of domestic order. Examples are Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia, and Sudan.
International justice

- Along with international order, a fundamental normative value of the International Society tradition. This approach discerns tendencies toward both communicative justice (as in diplomatic practices) and distributive justice (as in the provision of development aid) in international relations.
Laissez-faire

- The idea of the freedom of the market from all kinds of political restriction and regulation, supported by early economic liberals. Yet even these liberals were aware of the need for a politically constructed legal framework as a basis for the market. Laissez-faire does not mean the absence of any political regulation whatsoever; it means that the state shall only set up those minimal underpinnings that are necessary for the market to function properly. This is the classical version of economic liberalism. At the present time this view is also put forward under labels such as 'conservatism' or 'neoliberalism'; the content is basically the same, however. The 'conservative/neoliberal' economic policies of Margaret Thatcher in Britain and of Ronald Reagan in the United States were both based on classical laissez-faire doctrines.
Realism

- The realist tradition in IR is based on (1) a pessimistic view of human nature; humans are self-interested and egoistic; (2) a conviction that international relations are conflictual and can always lead to war; (3) a high regard for the values of national security and state survival; and (4) a basic scepticism that there can be progress in international politics.
'Weak liberals'

- Liberal theorists who accept a great deal of the realist critique of liberal theory, especially that anarchy persists and there is no escape from self-help and the security dilemma.
Behaviouralism

- An approach that seeks increasing precision, parsimony, and predictive and explanatory power of IR theory. Behaviouralists believe in the unity of science: that social science is not fundamentally different from natural science; that the same analytical methods—including quantitative methods—can be applied in both areas. The behaviouralists also believe in interdisciplinary studies among the social sciences.
Quasi-state

- A state that possesses juridical statehood but is severely deficient in empirical statehood. A large number of states in the Third World can be defined this way: they are recognized as states and participate in the state system, but they have weak or corrupt political institutions, underdeveloped economies, and little or no national unity.
Neorealism

- This theory developed by Kenneth Waltz analyzes how the decentralized and anarchical structure of the state system, in particular the relative distribution of power of states, is the central focus. Structures more or less determine actions. International change occurs when great powers rise and fall and the balance of power shifts accordingly. A typical means of such change is great-power war. Actors are less important because structures compel them to act in certain ways. An ethics of statecraft is thus unnecessary.
Modernization theory

• A liberal theory of development; the basic idea is that Third World countries should be expected to follow the same developmental path taken earlier by the developed countries in the West: a progressive journey from a traditional, pre-industrial, agrarian society towards a modern, industrial, mass-consumption society. Development means overcoming barriers of pre-industrial production, backward institutions, and parochial value systems which impede the process of growth and modernization.
IR is the shorthand name for the subject of international relations. The traditional core of IR concerns the development and change of sovereign statehood in the context of the larger system or society of states. Contemporary IR not only concerns political relations between states but a host of other subjects: economic interdependence, human rights, transnational corporations, international organizations, the environment, gender, inequalities, development, terrorism, and so forth.
'Juridical' statehood

- Part of the external basis of a state's sovereignty. A state must be viewed as a formal or legal institution by other states—hence the fact that, for example, Quebec will never be a sovereign state unless Canada, the United States and others recognize it as such. In addition to sovereignty itself, this dimension of statehood includes the right to membership in international organizations and the possession of various international rights and responsibilities.
International Political Economy (IPE)

- IPE is about international wealth and international poverty; about who gets what in the international system. If economics is about the pursuit of wealth and politics about the pursuit of power, the two interact in puzzling and complicated ways. It is this complex interplay in the international context between politics and economics, between states and markets, which is the core of IPE.
Ethics of statecraft

Ensuring national security and state survival is the fundamental responsibility of statecraft and the core normative doctrine of classical realism. The state is considered to be essential for the good life of its citizens. The state is thus seen as a protector of its territory, of the population, and of their distinctive and valued way of life. The national interest is the final arbiter in judging foreign policy.
Social constructivism

- Constructivists argue that the most important aspect of international relations is social, not material. Furthermore, they argue that this social reality is not objective, or external, to the observer of international affairs. The social and political world, including the world of international relations, is not a physical entity or material object that is outside human consciousness. Consequently, the study of international relations must focus on the ideas and beliefs that inform the actors on the international scene as well as the shared understandings between them.
Strategic realism

- This theory developed by Thomas Schelling analyzes how a state can employ power to get a rival to do what the state desires, i.e., through coercion instead of brute force, which is always dangerous and inefficient. Unlike classical and neoclassical realism, strategic realism does not make normative claims; values are taken as given and not weighed during analysis. Rather, the theory seeks to provide analytical tools for diplomacy and foreign policy, which are seen to be instrumental activities that can be best understood via game theoretical analysis.
'Strong liberals'

- Liberal theorists who maintain that qualitative change has taken place. Today's economic interdependence ties countries much closer together; economies are globalised; production and consumption take place in a worldwide market-place. It would be extremely costly in welfare terms for countries to opt out of that system. Today there is also a group of consolidated liberal democracies for whom reversion to authoritarianism is next to unthinkable, because all major groups in society support democracy. These countries conduct their mutual international relations in new and more cooperative ways.
Foreign policy analysis

- Involves scrutinizing foreign policies and placing them in a broader context of academic knowledge. There are many approaches to the analysis of foreign policy, with each having different descriptive and prescriptive goals and paying attention to various dimensions (sociological, psychological, historical context, etc) of the decision-making process. Foreign policy analysis often involves instrumental analysis, studying the best means to reach an advisable goal; it may also include a prescriptive component, that is, making recommendations for the best course to follow.
Classical realism

- A theory of IR associated with thinkers such as Thucydides, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Thomas Hobbes, and with the neoclassical realist Hans Morgenthau. They believe that the goal, the means, and the uses of power are a central preoccupation of international relations, which is an arena of continuous rivalry and potential or actual conflict between states that are obliged to pursue the goals of security and survival. In comparison with neorealism, which largely ignores moral and ethical considerations in IR, classical realism has a strong normative doctrine.
National security

- The policies employed and the actions undertaken by a state to counter real or potential internal and external threats and to ensure the safety of its citizens. This is one of the fundamental responsibilities of the state to its people, and the fundamental state responsibility according to the Realist view of IR. Before the advent of the state and the state system, security was provided by family, clan, warlord or another locally-based entity; this responsibility, among others, was gradually transferred to the state.
State

- The main actor in IR, sometimes referred to as a 'country' or a 'nation-state'. The term is used in reference to both the populated territory of the state and the political body that governs that territory. The state is a territory-based sociopolitical organization entrusted with the responsibility of defending basic social conditions and values, including security, freedom, order, justice and welfare. Because of their role as protectors of security, states have a monopoly on the authority and power to engage in war. Though states differ in their level of success in defending the aforementioned values, the state is understood to have legal jurisdiction (sovereignty) over its own affairs and population. In popular view, the Peace of Westphalia (1648), following the Thirty Years War, marked the formal beginning of the modern sovereign state and modern international relations.
International Society School

- This approach to IR emphasizes the simultaneous presence in international society of both realist and liberal elements. There is conflict and there is cooperation; there are states and there are individuals. These different elements cannot be simplified and abstracted into a single theory that emphasizes only one aspect—e.g. power. International Society theorists argue for an approach that recognizes the simultaneous presence of all these elements.
Post-positivism

- A methodology developed largely in reaction to positivist claims. Post-positivism presupposes methods that acknowledge the distinctiveness of human beings as such: i.e. creatures that must live with and among each other in order to live a human life. Post-positivist methodology rests on the proposition that people conceive, construct and constitute the worlds in which they live, including the international world, which is an entirely human arrangement and nothing else. Social science is a different methodology from that of natural science.
Institutional liberalism

- The earlier liberal vision was one of transforming international relations from a 'jungle' of chaotic power politics to a 'zoo' of regulated and peaceful intercourse. This transformation was to be achieved through the building of international organizations, most importantly the League of Nations. Present-day institutional liberals are less optimistic than their more idealist predecessors. They do agree that international institutions can make cooperation easier and far more likely, but they do not claim that such institutions can by themselves guarantee a qualitative transformation of international relations, from a 'jungle' to a 'zoo'. Powerful states will not easily be completely constrained. However, institutional liberals do not agree with the realist view that international institutions are mere 'scraps of paper', that they are at the complete mercy of powerful states. They are of independent importance, and they can promote cooperation between states.
International state of nature

• This is a permanent condition of actual or potential war between sovereign states. War is necessary, as a last resort, for resolving disputes between states that cannot agree and will not acquiesce. Human society and morality is confined to the state and does not extend into international relations, which is a political arena of considerable turmoil, discord, and conflict between states in which the great powers dominate everybody else.
Solidarism

- Along with pluralism, one of two International Society approaches to the potential conflict between recognition of state sovereignty and respect for human rights. A solidarist view stresses individuals, not states, as the ultimate members of international society; there exists both the right and the duty of states to intervene in foreign countries for humanitarian reasons.
Sociological liberalism

- A branch of liberal thinking which stresses that IR is not only about state-state relations; it is also about transnational relations, i.e. relations between people, groups, and organizations belonging to different countries. The emphasis on society as well as the state, on many different types of actor and not just national governments, has led some to identify liberal thought by the term 'pluralism'.
'State of nature'

- Thomas Hobbes' famous description of the original, pre-civil existence of humankind, a state in which life is 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.' In their natural condition, all people are endangered by everyone else, and nobody is able to ensure his or her security or survival. This mutual fear and insecurity is, according to Hobbes, the driving force behind the creation of the sovereign state.
Republican liberalism

This strand of liberalism is built on the claim that liberal democracies are more peaceful and law-abiding than are other political systems. The argument is not that democracies never go to war; democracies have gone to war as often as have non-democracies. But the argument is that democracies do not fight each other. This observation was first articulated by Immanuel Kant in the late eighteenth century in reference to republican states rather than democracies. It was resurrected by Dean Babst in 1964 and it has been advanced in numerous studies since then.
'Bureaucratic structures and processes' approach to foreign policy

- A strongly empirical (evidence-based) sociological approach to foreign policy that focuses primarily on the organizational (or bureaucratic) context in which decision-making takes place. The 'bureaucratic' approach is seen by supporters to be superior to other approaches by virtue of its empirical analysis of the relationship between decision-making and organizational structure. This approach therefore emphasizes specific context over the inherent rationality of any foreign policy decision; it seeks to clarify the context-based reasons for individual foreign policies, but does not have a strong normative, prescriptive component.
Neoliberalism

- A renewed liberal approach which seeks to avoid the utopianism of earlier liberalist theory. Neoliberals share classical liberal ideas about the possibility of progress and change, but they repudiate idealism. They also strive to formulate theories and apply new methods which are scientific.
Bretton Woods

- The system of international economic management, setting the rules for commercial exchange between the world's major industrial states. Allied states set up the system in the New Hampshire resort town of Bretton Woods in July 1944.
Epistemology

- The philosophical study of how one comes to 'know' something and what is ultimately 'knowable'. One position is that the world can be 'explained', from outside, by a social-scientific test of empirical propositions. That view is particularly widespread among American IR scholars. The opposite position holds that the world can only be 'discerned', 'comprehended' and 'interpreted', from inside, by historical, legal, and philosophical analysis. That view is gaining ground in the United States but is still more like to be found among British and continental European IR scholars.
Cosmopolitanism

- A normative doctrine that focuses on individual human beings and the whole of humanity, which are seen as fundamental agents and referents in world politics, which come before the interests of states.