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Politics, International Relations



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Introduction The state is a functional unit that takes on a number of important responsibilities, centralizing and unifying them. There are numerous competing conceptualizations of the state. The state level of analysis comes as criticism of structural theories and looks at the nature of the state and the impact it has on the way it behaves internationally. It analyzes cultural influences, the state's geographical location and its historical legacy to explain how it acts internationally. It argues that states would not act in the same way in different situations. There are different views of the state:

- The Realist view of the state The state is:
 - An autonomous actor
 - Constrained only by the anarchy of the international system
 - Sovereign
 - Guided by a national interest that is defined in terms of power
- The Liberal view of the state The state is:
 - A process, involving contending interests
 - A reflection of both governmental and societal interests
 - The repository of multiple and changing national interests
 - The possessor of fungible sources of power
- The Constructivist view of the state The state is:
 - * A socially constructed entity
 - * The repository of national interests that change over time
 - * Shaped by international norms that change preferences
 - * Influenced by changing national interests that shape and reshape identities
 - * Socialized by IGOs and NGOs

Challenges to the state The state, despite its centrality, is facing challenges from the processes of globalization, religiously and ideologically based transnational movements and ethno national movements.

Forces | Effects of the State | Globalization-political, economic, cultural | Undermines state sovereignty; interferes with state exercise of power | Transnational Crime | State is unable to curb due to

expansion of communication networks | Transnational Movements Religious/Ideological/Political | Seek loyalty and commitment of individuals beyond the state; want to transform the ideology of the state Change state behavior on a specific problem or issue | Ethno national Movements | Seek own state; attempt to replace current government with one representing the interests of the movement | Presentation of the main authors and main arguments In International Relations, one commonly refers to 'states' without questioning what this word refers to. Stephen D. Krasner investigated on 'weak' or 'badly governed' states, the history of state formation and different elements or forms of sovereignty. He explains why IR is still all about states, and how one should distinguish between different elements or kinds of sovereignty in order to understand current international politics. Stephen Krasner: He distinguishes between, firstly, international legal sovereignty, which has to do with whether a state is recognized. The second is what people generally call 'Westphalian' sovereignty, which encompasses the idea that each state is autonomous; reflected in the rule of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states. The third is domestic sovereignty, which has to do both with the domestic authority structures and how effective they are. Critics The question here is to know whether or not states are completely sovereign and autonomous from the outside world. No nation is an island and not even North Korea is autonomous. Nations have always depended on others for resources, support, or security. Even if not forced to do so, they have always compromised their autonomy in countless ways: through treaties, coalitions, alliances, and institutions. However, sovereignty follows the dominant model of international politics and balance

of power. Here, Krasner does not criticize sovereignty but how it is organized among states, and how super powers can benefit from this type of organization. Sovereignty and its effects create interdependence between states, and makes weak states suffer from this type of organization.

Samuel Huntington: Samuel Huntington's article is about the next rising conflict and its cause. For instance, Huntington argues that next international conflict won't be caused by military differences or the race to power; nor it will be because of the economic differences among the countries of the world. For instance, Huntington argues that next generation conflict will be caused by the differences among cultures within the world. In his article, Huntington separates two levels of analysis of the clash between civilizations: The micro-level of conflict represents the clash within civilizations over the control of territory; while the macro level is about a clash between civilizations worldwide. Finally, Huntington concludes by differentiating between "the West and The Rest" stating the causes and implications of that clash. Critics

For Huntington, we can pretty much relate his article to the ideology of constructivism. That ideology sustains that cooperation among nations is based on shared values and culture, and that the big changes come from the changes in ideas. In his article, Huntington talks about "clash of civilizations" which he narrows to "West vs. Rest". He supports his ideas by proving that the differences between cultures will result one way or another to a war.

Moises Naim: In this article Moises Naim discusses the five plagues happening in the world as the globalization is spreading. Naim discusses the fact that the resources are unlimited for the continuation of the spreading of these catastrophes. For instance the first major fact of these wars is that

they are completely decentralized, there is no central place to attain them in order to prevent or even annihilate one or all of them. Second of all, these plagues are stateless and very well organized networks that may or may not be connected with each other. Then he discusses these plagues one by one. The plagues are : drugs, arms trafficking, piracy, alien smuggling (human illegal immigration) and finally, the money laundering (fiscal paradises).

Critics Naim's five wars of globalization can be positively criticized by supporting the fact that since the countries started opening borders to each other and the fact that the economy is (more or less) " globalized" these 5 plagues cited by Naim started weakening the states themselves making it harder to fight against them. For instance, in this article, I do not think that using the state level of analysis is relevant; since the problem is more of an international problem, the systemic level of analysis should be used.

Mark Juergensmeyer In the text, Mark Juergensmeyer argues that the rejection of secular nationalism is the driving force of the religious nationalists and movements since the end of the cold war. Mark Juergensmeyer explains why religions have confronted the secular nationalism over the last decades. Giving the example of many extremist groups across the world, he argues that the loss of faith in secular state that we are currently witnessing has allowed religious activism to rise. Indeed, the rising religious movements and the globalization are important factors to explain the global rebellion according to Jurgensmeyer. Critics According to George Weigel, " the process of unsecularization of the world is separating people from their local identities. "They weekend the nation-state as a source of identity. That is, the secular nationalism has establish a form of uniformity of culture all

around the world. The religious nationalists and movements claim that this is a trick of the West to take religion out of the map. Furthermore, secular nationalism is not only a religiously neutral organization according to Rupert Emerson and Hans Kohn, but also a form of political organization that is the ideological ally of the nation state.