

What are the concepts of state and sovereignty politics essay



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State refers to the rule tool of economically dominant class. Class nature is the fundamental properties. State includes three elements, namely political power, territory and the unity of people. State power is the embodiment of the country. It is a society institution with power governance and has external and internal sovereignty in a certain territory (Christopher Tomlins, 2008). In international relations theory, as long as the independence of a country recognized by other countries, the country can go into the international field, which is also key factor to prove its own sovereignty.

Sovereignty refers the internal supreme power and external independence that one state has. It also refers to the highest authority of one country to handle their own affairs independently inside and outside and manage their own country. Sovereignty is one country's inherent right that different from other social groups and special properties. Sovereignty mainly includes three aspects just like the followings. One is the maximum internal power. State has the power to manage its entire people and things within or outside the territory (Eric A. Heinze, 2010). And it also has the right to determine its own political system and socio-economic system according to its situation.

Second is foreign independence, namely the state completely and independent exercise power and rule out any external interference. Another is the power of self-defense. It refers to the power that the country defenses the threat and aggression of foreign countries to maintain political independence and territorial integrity. Mutual respect for national sovereignty is a basic principle in modern international relationship.

Sovereignty is one power above the law, nation, indivisible, sovereign, unified and lasting. "Peace of Westphalia" recognized the sovereign rights of
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country in treaty form first time in 1648. It provided the sovereign equality of states regardless of the size of the countries. State sovereignty is considered as one most important features. In some traditional theory of international law, sovereignty becomes a supreme power. Sovereign country is not necessarily bound by international law. People of state may even resort to war to achieve their will. “ Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States” of 1974 provides that each country has the inalienable sovereign rights to choose economic systems, political, social and cultural systems accordance with its will (Jonathan K. Ocko, David Gilmartin, 2009). Each state enjoys the full permanent sovereignty on its all wealth, natural resources and economic activities and so on. The above expresses a common core concept: state sovereignty is absolute and inviolable. Sovereignty has many unique features. It is the inherent property of state, and is non-transferable, indivisible, inviolable sanctity and exclusive. Sovereignty is the highest authority to handle internal and external affairs independently. State has the highest sovereignty in the domestic and independent external sovereignty in the international. Moreover, sovereignty state is the only actor in international relations. State sovereignty is the fundamental interests that relates to the rise and fall of country. Sovereignty and territorial has close link. With the development of society, modern international law makes a more specific identification and maintenance to national sovereignty.

Week 5: The central ideas and claims of liberalism and realism

Liberalism is a bourgeois political thought in nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It advocates the complete freedom of personal activities and

development and against the political, social and religious constraints.

Liberalism is an ideology or philosophy. The basic view of liberalism international relations theory is the state is embedded in society. The interaction between state and society creates the state preferences and also affects the acts in the international community. The core assumptions of liberalism that support this basic view include the following aspects (John Burton, 1996). One is the assumption on the primacy of social actors. Liberal theory suggests that the most basic actors are the various groups and individuals in international political. They are rational and avoiding disadvantages. They are subjected to certain concepts of influence and domination under the constraints of certain material conditions. They may organize collective action to defend and fight for their different interests. Second is hypothesis on the state representation and national preference. State or other political organizations represent the number of domestic social groups. The interest of these social groups is defined as national preferences, and they will take purposeful action to achieve these benefits in international politics. The other is the assumption on interdependence and the international system (John Burton, 1996). Liberalism views that the pattern of interdependent state preferences determines the behavior of country. In fact, liberalism has three major variants, namely the concept liberalism, commercial liberalism, and republicanism liberalism. Liberalism stresses the social identity and values are the fundamental determinants of national preferences, and are main reasons for the cooperation and conflict between countries. Commercial liberalism considers that individual and collective acts of state are based on the market incentives of national and transnational economic actors. Republican liberalism focuses on the social

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recognition and economic benefits of these requirements into national policy, domestic political system.

Realism considers that the state preference is power. Their pursuit for security, sovereignty and wealth is same. The central ideas and claims of realism include the followings. Realism assumes the human nature is self-centered and competitive. International system is anarchy. There is not sufficient authoritarian to bind the interaction of states on the country. In the international system, there are still a large number of non-state actors. They play a role in international politics, but in the view of realism, the status of non-state actors is always secondary, state is dominant actors. Realism also believes the essence of international politics is conflict from the view of pessimistic human nature, that is, the struggle for power is under anarchy (Robert Jackson, Georg Sorensen, 1999). Therefore, the international politics is first described as a realist “ power politics”. It is the confrontation between countries, conflict and war stage. The core normative theory of realism is national survival and security. Therefore, in the order of international issues, national security is usually in the highest position. Realists recognize the difficulty of view a country as rational actor. In any case, the result of rational choice is a satisfactory or second best choice at least.

Week 6: Different visions of realist and liberal about peace and security

Realists believe that the primary means of protecting national security and peace in the international community are balance of power and deterrence.

The peace and security concept of realism is built on the basis of the

following assumptions. First of all, sovereign states are the main actors of
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the international community and centered on national interests. Second, the basic structure of the international system is anarchy, that is, there is no legal power of centralized control (John Horton, 2010). International political anarchy determines that there is no law, code of ethics and public authority between the nations. This will inevitably lead to mutual suspicion and the worst intentions among countries. Third, the relations between countries can only be a competitive relationship in the anarchy international system. Countries participates in international struggle for power or existence, mainly rely on their own resources and ability. Self-help is the only way to achieve national security.

Realists also believe that the central feature of international relations is the competition for power and the show of strength. Security has always been the primary objective of national policy. Under the situation of anarchy in international community, states improve national security through military expansion, alliances or acquire buffer which leads to security dilemma and causes insecurity in other countries. The means to protect national security are balance of power and deterrence. The balance of power maintains state independence and the stability of international system (R. O. Keohane, 1986). Nuclear deterrence contributes to the over forty years of cold peace between the two superpowers in Cold War to some extent. Although balance of power strategic can not overcome the internal contradictions and the implement of nuclear deterrence needs rational and mechanisms conditions, these two ways are still reasonable means in safeguarding national security and curbing hegemonic.

The liberal also recognizes international community is in anarchy, but against the realists fragments the political relations between “ international” and “ domestic”. They are more tend to emphasize the common interests, values and norms in international relations to ensure international community is harmony. To sum up, the views of liberals on peace and safety are as following. First is the theory of world government. The national strategy, interests, power and policy choices are all the response to lack of national security in the international anarchy. In essence, war plays the functions of governmental in anarchy. World government and international law can be used as a substitute for war. Treaty powers namely a global government or loose management system formed through negotiations and consultations between the major powers. It is one of the ways to establish world government (Wotipka, Christine Min; Tsutsui, Kiyoteru2008). Second is theory of collective security. In view of real life does not have prerequisites for establishing a world government, liberal hopes to establish a collective security system to overcome the “ security dilemma”. The other is economic interdependence and peace. Liberal views that economic interdependence may help to reduce and mitigate the conflicts between countries and promote international peace. In short, the liberal considers that economic and trade relations will make more interdependent among countries, thus reducing the war to increase safety.