

Today's Agenda

- Segue into liberalism in IR
- Economic interdependence and peace (or is it conflict?)

For Tuesday

- In class, we will go over chapter 4
- Please read chapter 5.
 - Provide a quote summarizing the individual-level decision-making theory that you found most persuasive.
 - Add a sentence or two explaining why you found that theory most persuasive.
 - Then provide a question regarding the theory you found most persuasive.

What is liberalism in international relations?

- States are not the only actors that matter (pluralism)
 - IGOs
 - All individuals matter (to greater or lesser degrees)
 - MNCs
- Focuses more on economics and less security.
 - State goals include "welfare" or economic growth.
 - Firms trade; states regulate trade.
- International institutions matter
 - They may even be "independent". (or at least somewhat autonomous)
- A country's type of government (regime type) matters.
- Anarchy doesn't necessarily lead to war.

Economic Interdependence and Peace (or is it conflict?)

- Arguments in favor of economic interdependence and peace?
 - If your own economic stability is at stake, then war is too costly.
 - Economic stability is good for regime survival.
 - More to gain through trade than through conquest.
 - You can have economic conflicts without going to war. Because trade is valuable, it's better to negotiate.
 - If voters (or those close to the leadership) care more about economic growth, then war may be less likely.
 - If you rely on another country for resources, then it may not be rational to attack them.
 - Interdependence fosters transparency, which can support peace.
- Arguments in favor of economic interdependence and conflict?
 - The more wealth you have, the more incentive you have to use force to protect it.
 - Interdependence can lead to dependence, in which one country benefits more (from trade), making the other dissatisfied.
 - Conundrum: Doesn't dependence make the asymmetric relationship more asymmetric? Even that depends on who is stronger to start with.
 - Those close to the leadership may value security over economic growth.
 - If you're exploiting the resources of another country, that can create conflict.
 - If you rely on another country for resources, then it may be rational to attack them in order to take over control of their resources.
- It depends...
 - On what?

Economic Interdependence and Power Transition/Hegemony

- U.S.-Chinese relations
 - Chinese government needs to concentrate on internal stability. War might make that harder.
 - But war (with some country with the USA) could allow for more internal security.
 - Rally around the flag!
 - Diversionary politics
 - Nukes make all-out (direct) war unlikely. (Partly because it would be a stalemate.) Proxy wars might become more likely.
 - Trade is very valuable for the Chinese. They don't want to risk that.
 - But China is also extending their influence around the world, which might come into conflict with U.S. influence. Oil issues in Africa and the Middle East.
 - What about U.S. debt held by the Chinese and its government?
- Economic Peace through hegemonic leadership?
 - New Steven Pinker book: "Our Better Angels"