

Q: Describe the evolutionary process through which International Relations acquired the status of an academic discipline

Ans:

Introduction

International Relations (IR) is the study of relationship between countries, including the roles of state, Inter Government organization and International non Government organization and Multinational Corporations. Although international relations are as old as the state itself, its study as an autonomous discipline is of comparatively recent origin. This discipline is so new that it can be called the youngest of all social sciences, as a separate subject.

Stages of Evolution

- 1: Diplomatic history stage (1648-1919)
- 2: Current Events stage (1919-1945)
- 3: Idealistic outlook stage or Law and organization stage
- 4: Contemporary stage (till present)

1: Diplomatic History stage (1648-1919)

- Until the first world war (1914-1918), the study of IR was dominated by historians rather than political scientists
- At this stage, the study of IR mainly centered around the state system

- No organized and systemic study of IR in universities
- No real attempt to study and analyze IR in an organized and systematic manner
- Paul S. Reinsch delivered lectures on World Politics at the University of Wisconsin
- Not all states accepted every other state as sovereign states and it constituted the agenda of international relations
- International relations did not develop much till the First World War.

Basic trend of this era were as follows:

- 1) Focus on study of past history of political and diplomatic relations among nations
- 2) Descriptive study: Instead of analysing the events based on various factors and forces, most studies of the period were chronological descriptions of the events.
- 3) Historical study: Most studies were rooted to know the historical part and no effort was made to analyse the contemporary event
- 4) No attempt at theory building: Since most of the studies were not done systematically, they lacked scientific rigour towards theory building.

This disrupted the growth of the analytical theoretical and contemporary study of the IR.

Therefore, this era was devoid of the development of theories of the discipline. To begin with, the study was dominated by diplomatic historians and the attention was focused on the study of history of diplomatic relations among nations.

2: Current Event Stage (1919-1945)

Teaching of the subject of international relations was initiated after WWI in the various universities in the United Kingdom, United States of America, and Switzerland. In 1919 "Woodrow Wilson Chair" of international relations was established at Aberystwyth, the university of Wales. The first person to hold Chair was Alfred Eckhart Zimmer. Department of international relations was established at London School of Economics.

Significant Features of this Era:

- 1) This phase focused on current events and happenings in international relations.
- 2) No focus on integrative knowledge of international relations - complete neglect of history led to the limited knowledge of international relations.
- 3) Complete and total dependence on current affairs was not enough for a correct knowledge of IR.
- 4) Theory building was absent during this period too - Absence of Predictability.

3: IDEALISTIC OUTLOOK STAGE:

Focus on development of international law and institutions - Developed simultaneously with the second stage, involved an attempt to reform the nature and content of international relations in future through the development of international law and institution.

Important Features:

- * Codification the rules of international law and establishment of international organizations. It was believed that all international problems could be resolved by developing a system of international law and by successfully organizing and working international organisations.
- + Strong faith in goodness of human relations.
- * Elimination of war-war was looked upon as both a sin and an accident.

Partial and incomplete approach It concentrated upon future without realizing the importance of the Past and Present.

It ignored the harsh realities of international relations and instead adopted an idealistic approach. The outbreak of the Second World War 1939

4: Contemporary Stages

A) Cold War and emergence of new concept
 The study of conflicts, Proxy wars, arms race, nuclear threat, detente, the balance of power

Rise of new states: Emergence of new state of Asia and Africa.

Rise of Non state actors: Political like Amnesty international and economic like multinational Corporations (MNCs)

Study of all factors and forces and not only institutions: The emphasis got shifted from law and organisation to the study of all factors and forces which conditioned and shaped the behaviour of nations in the international environment.

- Theory building: Attempts were initiated for developing a theory of international relations
- Theory of Realism and Neo Realism: As formulated by Hans ~~Moxthengau~~ Morganthau
- National power, National interest and foreign Policy as the fundamental units of study
- Main Concern (i) The motivating factors of foreign Policy everywhere, (ii) Techniques of Conduct of foreign Policy, (iii) Modes of resolution of international conflicts
- Behaviouralism in international politics: formulate new approaches and methods for the study of international politics; focus on interdisciplinary study
- The Scientific study of the substantive issue

and Problems of international relations and actual course of relations among nations became popular. Development of more and more sophisticated methods and tools

B) Post Cold War: Critical theories and Globalisation (1991-Present)

With the end of the Cold war, not only the nature and working of international relations changed but new kind of discourse started in analysing and understanding of international politics.

* New Critical theories - Constructivism, Feminism, Post modernism etc; Termed as Paradigm shift in international relations.

* Study of new approaches Post-Modernist, Neo realists, Structural, Neo Libertarian and several others.

* Study of world order

* Globalisation - after 1991

Rise of several new issues:

* Emergence of ethnic factors

* Terrorism

* Human rights

* Environment and Sustainable developments

* Increasing interdependence among nations

* Growth of international organisation and Non-state actors

* Relevance of ~~international~~ balance of power in Post Cold War etc.

Conclusion:

In ^{old} Submissions There have together given a new importance to international relations. It has now come to be recognized as one of the major disciplines requiring continuous and systematic study.