

Explain the main assumptions of Liberalism and Realism. Which theory in your opinion, is best suited to explain the complex domain of international politics? Support your arguments by providing instances from contemporary world politics.

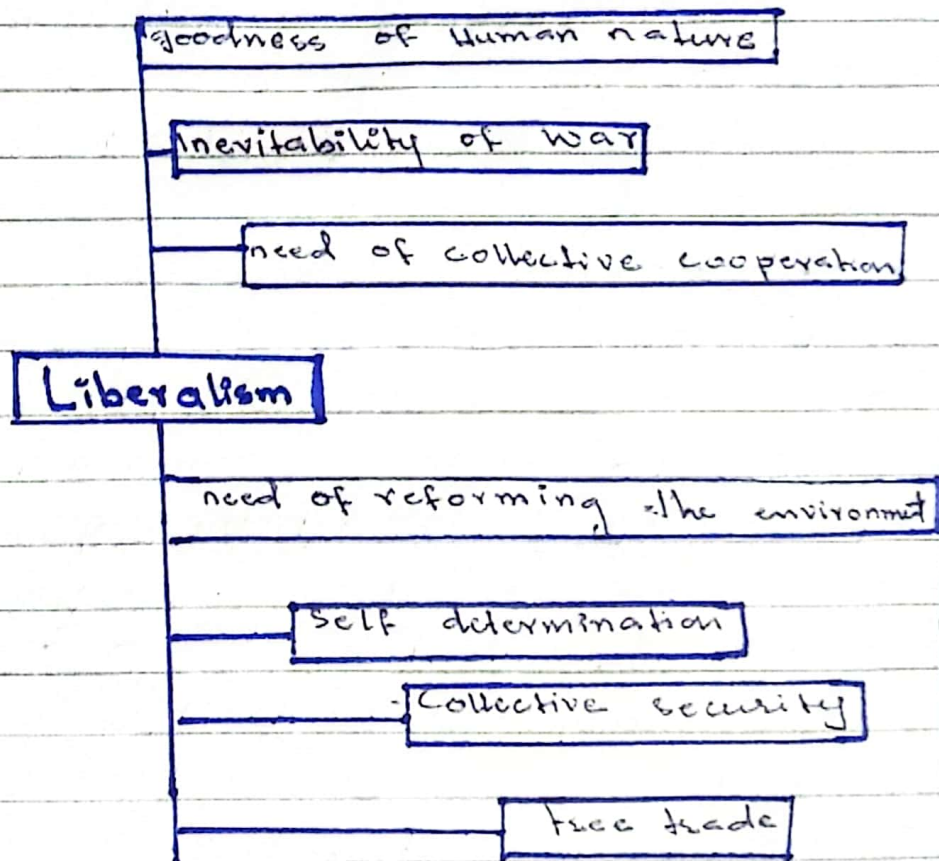
a) Introduction:

"A theory is a set of propositions and concepts that combine to explain phenomena by specifying the relationship among the propositions. Theory's ~~the~~ ultimate goal is to predict phenomena." (Karen A. Mingst and Wan M. Arreguin-Toft: Essentials of International Relations)

IR also developed a set of theories to comprehend the complexities of international relations in the international society. These theories came in various forms but all of them perform three main functions: description, explanation and prediction. IR theories help us understand the way the international system works, as well as how nations

engage with each other and view the world.

(b) Main assumptions of Liberalism:



Idealist or Liberalist perspective:

Liberalism stands for improving the course of international relations by eliminating wars, hunger, inequality, tyranny, force, suppression and violence. It accepts the possibility of freeing the world from these evils. It represents the set of ideas which together oppose the war and

advocate the reform of international community through dependence upon moral values and development of international institutions and international law.

liberalism is further divided into classical liberalism and neo-liberalism

classical liberalism:

This theory is an individual level interpretation of cooperation politics at state and global level. It states that humans are altruistic, cooperative and moral in nature. So egoism is not the defining trait of human personality. The environment in which human exists is bad and that's why humans are forced to behave immorally towards pursuit of power. This results in power oriented approach of leaders and societies. In order to achieve peace, prosperity and developed men have to cooperate each other with ethical means. liberalism ensures the right of

an individual person to life, liberty and property is the highest goal of government.

"The pillars of classical liberalism call for flat taxes, with revenues put to limited uses; strong property rights and free markets."

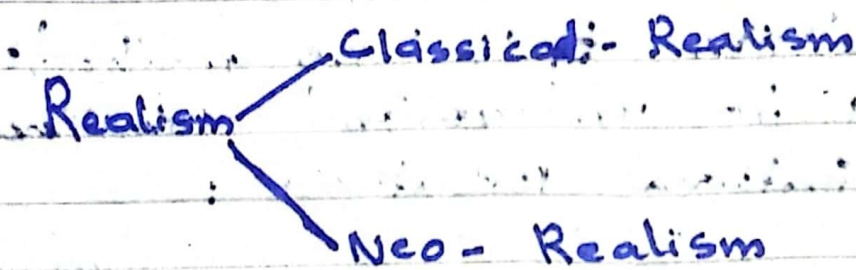
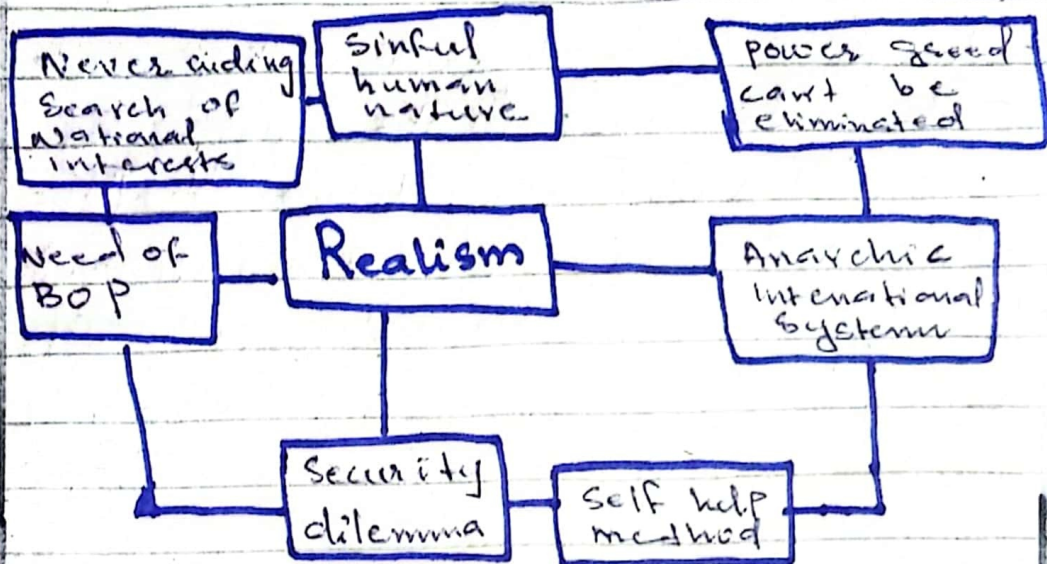
- Richard Allan Epstein -

Neo-liberalism:

This theory does not negate the assumption of good nature of humans. However, it narrates that addressing anarchy through the approach of maximization of power is not the solution. It results into the vicious cycle of power, and causes 'security dilemma'. So, only solution is the cooperation of international society. Henceforth, establishment of international cooperative institutions should be the end goal of politics based on liberal policies. This institutionalization is called "Liberal institutionalization".

c) Theory of Realism:

Key features of the approach:



Classical-Realism: This theory states that human nature is greedy and societies operate on the principle of 'survival of the fittest'. Also societies embrace the idea of 'might is right' so there is no room for moral behavior. They are in race of maximization of power in order to achieve national interest.

Neo-Realism: Neo-Realists believe that states are possessed of with fear of security and this is due to lack of trust. According to this the power maximization of one state is threat to others, so they should be conscious of the activities of others. They believe that the nature of international structure is anarchic. There is no formal central authority to regulate the actions of state.

d) **Realism:** A fine methodology to understand complex international relations:

Realism is a prominent theory in IR that offers valuable insights into understanding complex international relations.

(i) **Focus on state interest and Russia-Ukraine conflict:**

Realism prioritize the pursuit of national interests, security and survival. It helps understand

how states navigate complex relationships. Russia's invasion of Ukraine exemplifies that the Realist notion of states pursuing their interests and security through military means.

(ii) Notion of self help - Hamas' struggle against Israel:

Realism spread the notion of self help that there is no central power over states and they can't rely on each other so states fight for their sovereignty under the doctrine of self help. In contemporary world, Palestine is facing genocide by Zionist regime. However, global body (UN) passed several resolutions in favour of ceasefire but Israel is reluctant in its mission.

Therefore, Hamas, the militant and resistance organization of Palestine is striving for the security of its land and people by tunnel network and resistance against Israeli forces.

(iii) Security dilemma and emerging conflict in South China sea:

The concept of security dilemma explains that raising security of one state is threat to others. Similarly, China's claim of islands in South China sea by its "9-dash-line" position is security threat to countries like Taiwan, Vietnam, Philippines, and Brunei. These states are now trying to counter China in the region with the help of America.

(e) **Conclusion:** The theories of IR set the pillars of understanding the complex approaches of IR. The two main theories of them are Liberalism and Realism. The former advocates the piourness of human nature and viciousness of the environment. While the later, discusses the greediness of human nature and chaos as a result of it. Realism as more suitable theory demonstrates the issues of contemporary world and is prominent in understand the doctrine of tangible International Relations.