International and global security in the post-cold war era

Plan:

1) Introduction.

2) The traditional approach to national security.

3) The continuing tensions between national, international and global security.

4) Conclusion.

Main terms:
- perpetual – вечный, бесконечный
- rare - редкий
- determinant – детерминант, определяющий фактор
- benign – в легкой форме
- restraint –ограничение; лишение свободы
- referent – референт, мораль; то, с чем соотносится мысль
- emancipation – освобождение; эмансипация
- communitarian – член коммуны
- epistemic – эпистатический
- accelerate – ускорять
- usher – объявлять, проводить

Neo-realists reject the significance of international institutions in helping many to achieve peace and security. Contemporary politicians and academics, who write under the label of **liberal institutionalism**, however, see institutions as an important mechanism for achieving international security.

Liberal institutionalists accept many of the assumptions of **realism** about the continuing importance of military power in international relations but argue that **institutions can provide a framework for co-operation which can help to overcome the dangers of security competition between states**.

Another 'liberal' approach to international security has gathered momentum in the post-cold war world. This centers on the argument that democratic states tend not to fight other democratic states. **Democracy** is seen as a major source of peace. 'Democratic peace' theory has been largely associated with the writings of **Michael Doyle** and **Bruce Russett**. In the same way that contemporary realists have been influenced by the work of **Hobbes, Rousseau and Machiavelli, Doyle** points to the importance of the insights contained in **Immanuel Kant's** 'Perpetual Peace'.

Supporters of democratic peace ideas, as a way of promoting international security **in the post-cold war era**, do not only argue that wars between democracies are rare or non-existent. Much more than other states, democracies settle their disagreement **by mediation, negotiation** or other forms of peaceful diplomacy.
Democratic peace theory emerged in the 1980s. The main argument was that **the spread of democracy would lead to greater international security**.

Democratic peace theory is based on a Kantian logic – emphasizing three elements:
- republican democratic representation;
- an ideological commitment to human rights;
- transnational interdependence.

Wars between democracies are seen as being rare and they are believed to settle mutual conflicts of interest without the threat or use of force more often than non-democratic states.

Supporters of **democratic peace ideas** do not reject the insights of realism, but they reject 'vulgar realism' preoccupation with the idea of **war of all against all**. They argue that internal norms and institutions matter. There are other approaches to contemporary international security which take realpolitik and power calculations seriously but which also argue that **domestic politics, beliefs** and **norms** must also be included as important determinants of state behavior.

One such approach is that associated with collective security ideas. **Collective security theorists** take power seriously but argue that it is possible to move beyond the self-help world of realism.

Collective security is based on three main conditions:
▪ (that) states must renounce the use of military force to alter the status quo;
▪ (that) they must broaden their view of national interests to take in the interests of the international community;
▪ (that) states must overcome their fear and learn to trust each other.

Collective security aims to create a more effective system of 'regulated institutionalized balancing' rather than relying on the unregulated balancing which takes place under anarchy.

Collective security is believed to contribute to the creation of a more benign international system.

Despite past failures, supporters argue that there is an opportunity to try collective security again with more success **in the post-cold war world**.

A **security community** is a rather different social structure, composed of shared knowledge in which states trust one another to resolve disputes without war.
Social structures include material things, like tanks and economic resources.
The idea of **power politics** or **realpolitik** has meaning to the extent that states accept the idea as a basic rule of international politics.

According to social constructivist writers, **power politics** is an idea which does affect the way states behave, but it does not describe all interstate behavior. States are also influenced by other ideas, such as **the rule of law** and the **importance of institutional co-operation** and restraint.

Social constructivist thinkers base their ideas on two main assumptions:

1) that the fundamental structures of international politics are socially constructed and 2) that changing the way we think about international relations can help to bring about greater international security.

▪ **Social constructivist thinkers** accept many of the assumptions of neo-realism, but they reject the view that 'structure' consists only of material capabilities. They stress the importance of social structure defined in terms of shared knowledge and practices as well as material capabilities.

▪ **Social constructivist** can be pessimistic or optimistic about changing international relations and achieving **international security**.

▪ **Critical security theorists** argue that too much emphasis is given by most approaches to the state.

▪ Some **critical security theorists** wish to shift the main referent to the individual and suggest that 'emancipation' is the key to greater domestic and **international security**.

▪ **Feminist writers** argue that gender tends to be left out of the literature on **international security**, despite the impact of war on women.

▪ **Feminist writers** also argue that bringing gender issues back in, will result in a reconceptualization of the study of **international security**.

Post-modernists emphasize the importance of ideas and discourse in thinking about international security. **Post-modernists** try to re-conceptualize the debate about **global security** by looking at new questions which have been ignored by traditional approaches. There is a belief amongst **post-modernist** writers that the nature of international politics can be changed if 'epistemic communities' help to spread communitarian ideals.

Writers from the **global society school of thought** argue that at the beginning of the 21st century the process of globalization has accelerated to the point 'where the clear outlines of a global society' are now evident. Supporters of the 'global society school' argue that the end of the 20th century witnessed an accelerating process of globalization.

Globalization can be seen in the fields of economic development, communications and culture. Global social movements are also a response to new risks associated with the environment, poverty and weapons of mass destruction.

Globalization is occurring at a time when the fragmentation of the nation-state is taking place, encouraged in particular by the end of the cold war.

There are disputes about whether globalization will contribute to the weakening of the state or simply to its transformation, and over whether a global society can be created which will usher in a new period of peace and security.

QUESTIONS

1 Why Is security a 'contested concept'?

2 Why do traditional realist writers focus on national security?

3 What do neo-realist writers mean by 'structure'?

4 What is meant by the 'security dilemma'?

5 Why do states find it difficult to co-operate?

6 What do you understand by the terms 'contingent realism' and 'mature anarchy'?

7 Do you find 'liberal institutionalism' convincing?

8 Why might democratic states be more peaceful?

9 Why do you think collective security arrangements failed in the past?

10 How do 'constructivist', 'critical security' theory, and 'feminist' views about international security differ from those of 'neo-realists'?

11 Do you think ideas and discourse influence the way states behave?

12 Is the tension between national and global security resolvable?

Buzan's *People, States and Fear* (London: Harvester, 1983) provides an excellent starting point for the study of national and international security. The book is written largely from a neo-realist perspective.

Michael Joseph Smith's study of *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986) covers the development of what has been described as classical realism and discusses some of the major thinkers in the field. Kenneth Waltz provides an overview of neo-realism in his article 'Realist Thinking and Neorealist Theory', in the *Journal of International Affairs*, 44:1 (1990).

For a very interesting alternative view see Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics', in *International Organization*, 46:2 (1992). This article gives a very useful analysis of the 'Constructivist' perspective. See also Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). A very useful broader evaluation of different theoretical positions is contained in N. J. Rengger, *International Relations, Political Theory and the Problem of Order: Beyond International Relations Theory?* (London: Routledge, 2000)