

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY (INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORIES)

THE 'NEO-NEO' DEBATE

4th lesson

EFOP-3.6.2-16-2017-00007

SZÉCHENYI 



HUNGARIAN
GOVERNMENT

European Union
European Social
Fund



INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE

LEARNING GUIDE

- Lesson length: **11** slides
- Content:
 - Liberalism and Realism as leading theories
 - Versions of Neoliberalism and Neorealism
 - Contemporary Neorealism
 - Contemporary Neoliberalism
 - The Neo-Neo Debate
- Recommended minimum duration for review: 45 minutes
- Suggested minimum time for learning: 2 hours
- The learning of the curriculum is aided by a course book and self-assessment questions.
- Recommended minimum duration of this full lesson: 2 hours 45 minutes



LIBERALISM AND REALISM AS LEADING THEORIES



- The neo-neo debate has been the dominant focus in international relations theory scholarship in the US for the last 20 years.

LIBERALISM AND REALISM AS LEADING THEORIES

* CAPITAL HERE REFERS NOT MERELY TO FINANCIAL CAPITAL BUT TO SOCIAL, CULTURAL, MILITARY, TECHNOLOGICAL, BUREAUCRATIC AND OTHER FORMS OF CAPITAL AS WELL. IN SHORT, CAPITAL REFERS TO THE SUM TOTAL OF RESOURCES THAT MAY BE MARSHALLED BY STATE LEADERS IN ORDER TO ENSURE STATE INTEGRITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE FACE OF POTENTIAL EXTERNAL AGGRESSION OR INTERNAL DISCONTENT.

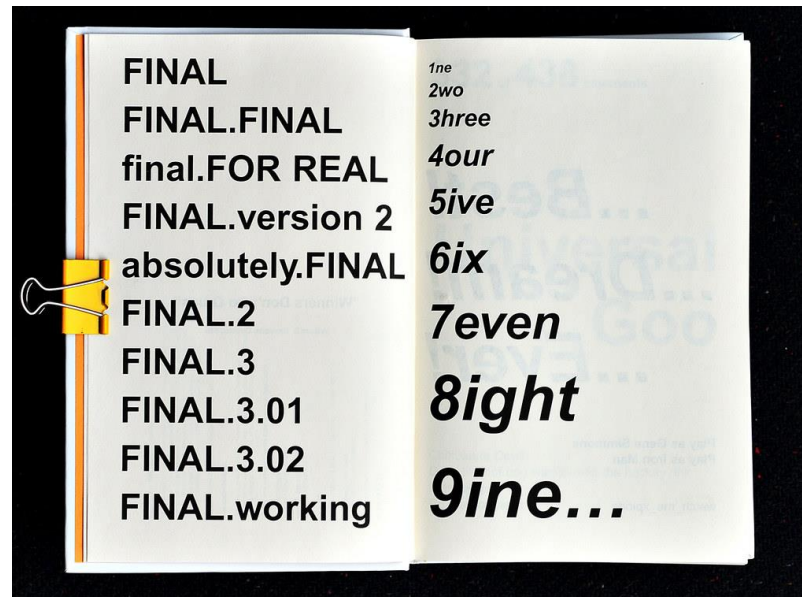
<i>End goal</i>	Strong state ↑	
<i>Objective of state policy</i>	Development of capital* stock within state boundaries ↗ ↖	
<i>Strategy to meet objective of state policy</i>	Promote movement of capital* across state borders ↑	Promote retention of capital* within state borders ↑
<i>Underlying assumption that guides strategy</i>	Cooperate to increase global stock of capital*, as this will increase absolute amount of capital for each state	Compete so that greatest share of global stock of capital* accrues within state borders, as this will make state relatively powerful in reference to others
<i>School of thought</i>	Neoliberalism	Neorealism

Source: Steinberg, Philip & Stephen McDowell (2003) Global communication and the post-statism of cyberspace: a spatial constructivist view. *Review of International Political Economy*, 10:2, p.200,

DOI: 10.1080/0969229032000063207

LIBERALISM AND REALISM AS LEADING THEORIES

- More than just theories, neo-realism and neo-liberalism represent paradigms or conceptual frameworks that shape individuals' images of the world and influence research priorities and policy debates and choices.
- There are several versions of neo-realism or neo-liberalism.



VERSIONS OF NEOLIBERALISM AND NEOREALISM

- Neoliberalism in the academic world refers most often to neoliberal institutionalism.
- In the policy world, neoliberalism is identified with the promotion of capitalism and western democratic values and institutions.
- Neorealist and neoliberal theories are status-quo oriented problem-solving theories.
- These theories share many assumptions about actors, values, issues and power arrangements in the international system.
- Neorealists and neo-liberals study different worlds. Neorealists study security issues and are concerned with issues of power and survival. Neoliberals study political economy and focus on cooperation and institutions.

CONTEMPORARY NEOREALISM

- Neorealism is often used inter-changeably with structural realism.
- Kenneth Waltz's structural realism has had a major impact on scholars in international relations.
- Waltz claims that the structure of the international system is the key factor in shaping the behaviour of states.
- Waltz's neorealism also expands our view of power and capabilities; however, **he agrees with traditional realists when he states that major powers still determine the nature of the international system.**



CONTEMPORARY NEOREALISM

- Structural realists minimise the importance of national attributes as determinants of a state's foreign policy behaviour. To these neorealists, all states are functionally similar units, experiencing the same constraints presented by anarchy
- Structural realists accept many assumptions of traditional realism. They believe that force remains an important and effective tool of statecraft and balance of power is still the central mechanism for order in the system.

CONTEMPORARY NEOREALISM

- Joseph Grieco represents a group of neo-realists or modern realists who are critical of neo-liberal institutionalists who claim states are mainly interested in absolute gains.
- Grieco claims that all states are interested in both absolute and relative gains. How gains are distributed is an important issue. Thus, there are two barriers to international cooperation, fear of those who might not follow the rules and the relative gains of others.

CONTEMPORARY NEOLIBERALISM

- Contemporary neoliberalism has been shaped by the assumptions of commercial, republican, sociological, and institutional liberalism.
- Commercial and republican liberalism provide the foundation for current neoliberal thinking in Western governments. These countries promote free trade and democracy in their foreign policy programmes.

CONTEMPORARY NEOLIBERALISM

- Neoliberal institutionalists see institutions as the mediator and the means to achieve cooperation in the international system. Regimes and institutions help govern a competitive and anarchic international system and they encourage and at times, require, multilateralism and cooperation as a means of securing national interests.
- Neoliberal institutionalists recognise that cooperation may be harder to achieve in areas where leaders perceive they have no mutual interests.

THE NEO-NEO DEBATE

- The neo-neo debate is not a debate between two polar opposite worldviews. They share an epistemology, focus on similar questions and they agree on a number of assumptions about international politics. **This is an intra-paradigm debate.**
- Neoliberal institutionalists and neorealists study different worlds of international politics.
 - Neorealists focus on security and military issues – the *high politics* issue area.
 - Neoliberal institutionalists focus on political economy, environmental issues, and lately, human rights issues. These issues have been called the *low politics* issue agenda.
- Neorealists explain that all states must be concerned with the absolute and relative gains that result from international agreements and cooperative efforts. Neoliberal institutionalists are less concerned about relative gains and consider that all will benefit from absolute gains.

THE NEO-NEO DEBATE

- **Neorealists think that states are still the principle actors in international politics. Globalization challenges some areas of state authority and control; but, politics is still inter-national.**
- Neorealists are concerned about new security challenges resulting from uneven globalization, namely, inequality and conflict.
- **Free market neoliberals believe globalization is a positive force. Eventually, all states will benefit from the economic growth promoted by the forces of globalization.**
- Some neoliberals believe that states should intervene to promote capitalism with a human face or a market that is more sensitive to the needs and interests of all the people. New institutions can be created and older ones reformed to prevent the uneven flow of capital, promote environmental sustainability, and protect the rights of citizens.

ABOUT THIS LESSON

The images used in the curriculum can be found online and are freely accessible.

The curriculum is for educational purposes only.

Compulsory and recommended literature sources for the given course were used as sources for the lesson.

This teaching material has been made at the University of Szeged, and supported by the European Union by the project nr. EFOP-3.6.2-16-2017-00007, titled Aspects on the development of intelligent, sustainable and inclusive society: social, technological, innovation networks in employment and digital economy. The project has been supported by the European Union, co-financed by the European Social Fund and the budget of Hungary.



HUNGARIAN
GOVERNMENT

European Union
European Social
Fund



INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE