Thinking about power

Start with a group of actors, one of which has a “project.” How does that one get others to participate?

That actor must persuade others to join in the project, that is, it must influence the others in some fashion.

This notion is called “power”: getting other to do what you want them to do.
The most basic and visible form of power is “power over”: to force others to act as you wish.

A second form of power involves “agenda-setting”: including what is permitted, excluding what is not (but who decides the agenda?).

A third form of power rests on the authority to promulgate the rules governing action and have them obeyed.

The fourth form of power is “power with”: Foucauldian power that forms both society and the social individual.
How, then, can we explain how and why some projects succeed while other fail?

Empiricist explanations rely on visible evidence of desires, actions, and responses

Remember, we want to explain intentions, causes and outcomes:
1. what is believed or desired?
2. what actions are taken?
3. what responses are observed?
These are the “Three Traditions” in Int’l Relations

**Realism**: Realists believe that actors seek power to realize their goals

**Power is the best means to protect, to acquire, to get others to act**

**Liberalism**: Liberals believe that actors seek to attain their self-interests

**Interests can best be attained or protected by negotiation & trade**

**Socialism**: Socialists believe that rich actors seek to exploit poor actors

**This is done via flows of capital, colonialism, and imperialist war**
Important concepts

Realism

Liberalism

Socialism

Anarchy
Sovereignty
Territory
Self-help
Balance-of-power

Self-interest
Free trade
Division of labor
Bargaining
Interdependence

Capital and labor
Class struggle
Accumulation
Imperialism
Communism
Each of these has a new or “neo” version:

**Structural realism** (aka “neo-realism”)
- Power relations among dominant states determines int’l politics, e.g., only US-USSR balance mattered

**Neo-liberalism** (aka, “regime theory”)
- Int’l institutions (regimes) can help states to modify interests and cooperate rather than conflict

**Neo-marxism** (aka, “regulation theory”)
- Capitalists states seek to maintain domestic and int’l order via rules stabilizing political economy and domestic politics


## “Three Traditions” in International Relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tradition</th>
<th>Central processes</th>
<th>Central objective</th>
<th>Variants</th>
<th>Sources/origins/proponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Realism</strong></td>
<td>Sovereignty</td>
<td>Balancing against opponents to avoid war; deterring an attack; winning a war if one breaks out</td>
<td>Balance-of power</td>
<td>Nico Machiavelli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anarchy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Int’l society</td>
<td>Hans Morgenthau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-help</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deterrence</td>
<td>Kenneth Waltz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-defense</td>
<td></td>
<td>Neo-realism</td>
<td>George Kennan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Henry Kissinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Mearsheimer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liberalism</strong></td>
<td>Sovereignty</td>
<td>Self-defense but also creation of norms, rules, laws that foster exchange, institutions, and markets</td>
<td>Classical liberalism</td>
<td>Immanuel Kant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anarchy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Idealism</td>
<td>Adam Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Society</td>
<td></td>
<td>Neo-liberalism</td>
<td>J.S. Mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regime theory</td>
<td>Norman Angell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Empire”</td>
<td>Robert Keohane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socialism</strong></td>
<td>Class struggle</td>
<td>Enrichment of capital by exploitation of labor, class struggle, and, perhaps, socialist revolution</td>
<td>Classical Marxism</td>
<td>Karl Marx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(aka Marxism)</td>
<td>Exploitation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Imperialism</td>
<td>VI Lenin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accumulation</td>
<td></td>
<td>World-systems</td>
<td>John Hobson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revolution?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Neo-marxism</td>
<td>Immanuel Wallerstein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dependency</td>
<td>Ellen Wood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Runs with Scissors”

Realism

Iran $\rightarrow$ nukes $\rightarrow$ threat $\leftarrow$ response $\leftarrow$ sanctions $\leftarrow$ United States

Liberalism

Iran $\rightarrow$ nuclear research $\rightarrow$ oil trade $\leftarrow$ money $\leftarrow$ negotiations $\leftarrow$ EU, Rus, PRC

Socialism (aka, “global class conflict”)

Iran (poor) $\rightarrow$ nuclear research $\rightarrow$ oil trade $\leftarrow$ tech. control $\leftarrow$ rich states