



# **UNIVERSAL THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: V.1 FOUNDATIONS**

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**УНИВЕРСАЛЬНАЯ ТЕОРИЯ МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫХ  
ОТНОШЕНИЙ: Т.1 ОСНОВЫ**

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# UNIVERSAL THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: V.1 FOUNDATIONS

Alex Skopin

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## Introduction

Recognition of the problem is the first step towards its solution (the deplorable state of TIR discipline in Russia and the world).

The theory of international relations as a field of research and academic discipline, created in the UK in the first half of the 20th century, has exhausted its development resources and is heading downhill. This is recognized by authors around the world (for example, A.Acharya), including Russian authors (E.A. Pozdnyakov, P.A. Tsygankov, M.M. Lebedeva, etc.).

I will name six main reasons for this situation.

The first reason is semantic. The theory of international relations says nothing about relations between people, as we might expect from the literal meaning of the term "international" and tries to say something about relations between states, although it does not contain the term "interstate" or the term "foreign policy".

The second reason is Eurocentrism. The theory of international relations, by name, claims to be global in scope, but in fact studies military conflicts between European states. The rest of the world, with the exception of the US and Russia, is not considered at all.

The third reason is a narrow political science approach. Despite the fact that international relations is a versatile process of demographic, resource, socio-cultural, economic and, of course, political relations, political relations are given overwhelming attention in English-speaking universities, journals, research centers. The theory of international relations is understood as an analysis of the influence of different political ideologies (liberalism, Marxism, realism, feminism, etc.) on the political agenda in Europe. Therefore, the main related disciplines are the history of international political relations, political philosophy and general political science.

The fourth reason is the focus on the past (historicism). Students study the main ideas of past centuries - Thucydides, Kautilya, Confucius, Machiavelli, Toynbee, Marx, Weber, Morgenthau, the activities of great politicians, and by the time they get to our time, the school year is already over.

The fifth reason is the notion of history as the activity of elites. One of the Russian authors even wrote that the main participants in the wars were princes, kings, etc. As if wars were two-person battles in front of watching armies!

The sixth reason is the misunderstanding of the term "theory". In works on the Theory of International Relations, the terms paradigm, concept, scheme, hypothesis, map, model, etc. are used as synonyms. For American authors, theory is a metaphor for interpreting the whole world ("great chessboard", "clash of civilizations", "doctrine shock", "soft power", etc.). For European authors, theory is a postmodern mosaic of thoughts of "authorities" on the topic of theory, where the author rather proves that

he is a good student who has read a mountain of literature, but at the same time cannot formulate any of his original ideas and a clear definition. For most Russian authors, theory is a presentation of misunderstood ideas of others or their own ideas that have not been thought through in a complex quasi-scientific language (the more complex and incomprehensible, the more theoretical).

As a result of these reasons, what is called the Theory of International Relations should in fact be called "Historical-Political Reflections on Wars between Sovereigns (States)". We must admit that there is no theory of international relations, because it is a non-theory and non-international relations. Having received such an extremely honest conclusion, we can now create a theory of international relations "from scratch".

What will make it a real **theory** and a real theory of **international relations**?

1. Theory should be understood as a clear picture of the world and its individual parts. Since "clarity" and Western postmodernism with its disintegrating consciousness are incompatible concepts, the theory must be formed on the basis of the semantic norms of the Russian language, which accurately correlates the term and its semantic content. If the term "international relations" is used, then we should be talking about relations between peoples, and not between states, international organizations and other possible actors! Based on this understanding, it is necessary to build a clear understanding of the participants, spheres, means and rules of international relations, types and nature of international relations and other necessary concepts. In addition to clear terminology, the theory of international relations should include proven facts, trends, well-founded hypotheses and concepts, on the basis of which forecasts and projects for the development of international relations can be made.
2. Nations should be understood as stable in time (several centuries and millennia) and space (countries) complex communities of people with common demographic, resource-environmental, socio-cultural, economic-technological, organizational and political interests. Peoples are the basic units that make up humanity and in whose interests it is necessary to develop international relations! Each people is formed through adaptation to a certain ecological niche (their own country), which creates a "mosaic" of peoples, corresponding to the "mosaic" of natural landscapes. LN Gumilyov perfectly expressed this idea in his work "Ethnogenesis and the Biosphere of the Earth".
3. International relations should be understood as relations between peoples as wholes (rather than individuals), arising from the competition of peoples for "ecological niches" and the possibility of existence on the surface of the Earth using five types of force - demographic force (number and physical qualities of the population) , resource strength (territory area and resource endowment), cultural strength (strength of spirit, knowledge and beauty), technological strength (weapon strength and all technical strength) and organizational strength (force of order and directed chaos). The state is one of the forms of organizational power of the people. In this sense, international relations partially intersect with interstate relations.

Cooperation and collectivism are forms of self-organizing power of the people, used as mechanisms for winning in the competitive struggle.

4. The highest form of cooperation and collectivism among the people is "kratos" (my term), as a **state of nationwide self-organized and organized action**. Kratos exists in two forms - in the form of a people's order (self-organization-synergy) and in the form of a state order (organization-policy). Each of the 4,000 nations that exist today has a synergy, but only 200 nations have a policy. Synergy complements politics in such a way that it forms a public opinion about ineffective politics and politicians (ridicule, rallies, protests) and, if necessary, changes politics (revolutions, change of government, etc.). The expulsion of the Poles from Moscow in 1612 is a vivid manifestation of the synergy of the Russian people in international relations. And the expulsion of the Napoleonic army in 1812 was a joint action of the synergy of the Russian people and the policy of the Russian Empire. Since states are one of the five forms of the integral existence of the people, the interaction of national and other ethnically based states is considered within the framework of the organizational and political sphere of international relations. But the interaction between family, clan, religious, ideological and other types of non-ethnic states should be partly taken out of the theory of international relations into the theory of interstate relations and world politics created by political scientists.

5. Today, peoples exist in the form of ethnic groups (a people that has all five types of integrity), quasi-ethnoi (incomplete people, with the absence of any integrity, strength or national interest), super-ethnoi (several highly integrated ethnic groups around one main ethnic group) and groups of ethnic groups (a group of similar, but poorly integrated ethnic groups). A special variety of peoples are nation-states, in which the community of a multi-ethnic people is created not by demographic, cultural and other types of community, but only by the citizenship of a certain state (for example, the United States or Australia). In modern international relations, the key role is played by 5 superethnoi, 11 groups of peoples and 2 ethnic groups, which account for almost 100% of the population of the Earth and almost 100% of the inhabited surface of the Earth (with the exception of Oceania). I call them Big Peoples. Big people can be "big" according to one of five characteristics, or according to a combination of characteristics: - 1) area of controlled territory (more than 1 million sq. km); 2) population (from 100 million people); 3) achievements of spiritual culture (world languages, religions, achievements in science, education and art); 4) economic power (GDP per capita from \$10,000); 5) political strength (top 40 in terms of military potential). Therefore, a quantitative analysis of international relations as relations between big nations is much simpler than an analysis of international relations as relations between states, and, at the same time, much more convincing from the point of view of the study of cause-and-effect relationships.

6. Inclusion in the analysis of 18 big nations as the main "actors" allows you to get rid of the "narrowness" of Eurocentrism and make the theory of international relations truly global. Since peoples are much more real than civilizations, an analysis of the conflicts and cooperation between big nations will give the most realistic picture of international relations in the world.

7. Mandatory consideration of the five main areas of international relations - demographic, resource-environmental, socio-cultural, economic-technological and organizational-political will allow getting rid of the political "narrowness" of analysis and talking about the theory of international relations as an interdisciplinary science. At the same time, such synthetic disciplines as social geography, comparative cultural studies, comparative macroeconomics, geopolitics, social psychology, global studies and others will play an important role. The synthesis of various knowledge of the listed disciplines can be realized on the basis of the author's theory of the existence of the Earth and mankind (General geography: global synthesis. Pearson Education, 2005, co-authored with P. Huggett).

8. Orientation to the future. The new Theory of International Relations should create a comprehensive scientific basis for forecasting, designing international relations, and fully assessing the multilateral effects of foreign policy decisions. On its basis, it is possible to develop "international relations" as a completely independent field of research and practical application, not striving to merge with political science (as M.M. Lebedeva suggests), but preparing complex specialists in the analysis and solution of problems of international development.

Thus, we can talk about a fundamentally new understanding of the Theory of International Relations, which **studies relations between big nations**, including relations between ethnically based states, studies five spheres of relations, and not just political relations, studies relations based on an interdisciplinary approach, including demography, ethnography, geography, ecology, sociology, cultural studies, economics, technology, political science, futurology, global studies and regional studies, and, finally, aimed at the future, not the past.

Since all starting positions have been changed, we can talk about a **new paradigm for understanding and teaching the Theory of International Relations, which I will call the Universal Theory of International Relations.**

The fundamental novelty of the proposed Universal Theory forces us to choose the format of not just a textbook, but a textbook-monograph in which students and teachers can be offered new knowledge, without their "approval" by the existing professional community, which is largely political science. In Russia, such an "assertion" takes too long, which is the reason for our protracted regression both in theory and in practice of international relations.

This monograph is divided into two volumes. The first volume, intended for undergraduate studies and an introduction to a new understanding of the discipline, gives 37 new definitions of key terms and concepts (Part 1), and also considers three groups of basic theories - **elemental** (Part 2, a comparative analysis of 18 Big Nations as the main participants international relations); **special** (Part 3, analysis of the five main areas of international relations) and **integral** (Part 4, critical analysis of the four most significant works in the field of the theory of international relations - Z. Brzezinski, S. Huntington, Yu. Yakovets and N. Klein). The Annexes include: 1) Glossary of new terms and concepts of the Universal Theory of International Relations (Appendix 1); 2) List and map of the Big Nations (Appendix 2); 3) Critical analysis of the most popular English-language textbook and dictionary on the

discipline of International Relations Theory (Appendix 3); 4) Critical analysis of the four most popular Russian-language textbooks and materials on the Theory of International Relations (textbooks by P.A. Tsygankov with co-authors (2019), textbook by A.G. Dugin (2014), section in the textbook Modern International Relations, edited by T.A. Alekseeva (2016), textbook by T.V. Bordachev with co-authors (2015) - Appendix 4; 5) Critical analysis of one of the works of Z. Brzezinski, which was made by my student Ya. Kurbanova absolutely independently (Appendix 5) and analysis the work of P. Banos, made by my students E. Mitroshkina and A. Gunko (Appendix 6), showing the possibilities of the author's method of critical analysis of theoretical texts.

The first volume is intended for international and regional experts and does not pretend to be used for political scientists, sociologists and other areas.

In the second volume, intended for various master's programs, I will consider three more groups of theories - dynamic (theories of the international process), structural-functional (theories of the international order) and complex (theories of the future of peoples and mankind), on the basis of which three development scenarios will be given humanity and the Russian-Belarusian superethnos in 2022-2030.

I want to express my deep gratitude to G.S. Amrakhova, Yu.A. Razzhivin, A.V. Kostina and other employees of the Moscow University for the Humanities for their support during the period of work on the textbook (2018-2022), as well as to the students of our university for their interested attitude to discipline and cooperation. Special thanks to D.V. Mosyakov and V.O. Pechatnov for the opportunity to communicate on basic issues of theory and practice of international relations.

The work on the textbook led to the expenditure of time and my own financial resources (about 150 thousand rubles), which I would like to at least partially reimburse. Therefore, I ask readers to treat with understanding the request for payment for downloading the main text and not distributing copies of the work without my permission. I would be grateful for financial support in the preparation of the second volume (150 thousand rubles). With suggestions, please contact [alexskopin.org](http://alexskopin.org) or email [alex\\_skopin@mail.ru](mailto:alex_skopin@mail.ru).

The title page, introduction and table of contents of this tutorial are for free download and free distribution.

I would be grateful for constructive comments and any interested suggestions on the textbook-monograph.