CHAPTER 1
International Political Economy: Competing Analyses

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International political economy (IPE) is a very diverse discipline. It covers a wide range of issues not only to do with the analytical discourses currently used to describe and explain (and prescribe policy for) its many and varied concerns, but also to do with the history of the discipline *per se*. The most significant aspect of contemporary IPE is the way it exemplifies the industrial/scientific revolution and its technological consequences. This revolution has made — and continues to make — radical changes to global production and consumption, finance and trade, management and work, overdevelopment and underdevelopment, global gender balances and imbalances, and environmental sustainability and distress.

The table of contents of this *Handbook* clearly reflects this diversity. As such it highlights the disciplinary concerns that contemporary scholars and practitioners find most compelling.

It provides a comprehensive coverage of what IPE involves. It flags out in the process, the issues that most analysts think of as being central to the discipline.

A HANDBOOK

The contributors to this book/volume were invited to write as they saw fit about the general or specific topics they agreed to discuss. In some cases those working on a particular part met to share their ideas about the approaches they thought they would take. By so doing they tried to maximise the degree of coherence between the general account of what was involved and the applied discussions of it. In other cases they did not meet, usually because this was not feasible. They made the contribution they considered most appropriate, whether general or applied, and they submitted that, relying on the editor’s account of the structure of the work as a whole to place their piece within the context the *Handbook* sought to provide.
They were chosen because of their expertise. They were also known to the editor to be analysts able to provide contributions that would be stimulating and up-to-date.

To be of maximum benefit to the reader, however, this *Handbook* had first and foremost to include all the key topics that dominate the discipline today. This is what is meant by comprehensive coverage, and this is what this work strives to provide.

**AN ANALYTICAL OVERVIEW**

Before going any further it is important to confront the fact that it is impossible to talk about any part of this discipline without using an analytical language of some kind. Moreover, talking in analytical languages also means talking in analytical dialects. The latter provide much of the nuance with which each analytical language presents itself.

To talk about IPE without using an analytical language or dialect at all would require the talker to be so intellectually detached and socially alienated that he or she would have to be divine or insane or both. Most people are not divine or insane. Though imbued with the modernist/rationalist culture that is hegemonic today, they never achieve total detachment or alienation.

In practice, while analysts and practitioners may reach in the direction of detachment, they continuously fall short, smuggling back in to their understanding of IPE one or more underlying assumptions. It is these assumptions which underpin the various articulations of modernist/rationalism that are used to describe and explain (and prescribe for) mainstream accounts of the subject. It is these assumptions that result in the various analytical languages and dialects that characterise the diverse discourses that dominate the discipline today.

Noteworthy too is the way the most radical assumptions about objectivity result in the meta-discourse of modernist/rationalism itself. These assumptions have already been flagged. They are two-fold, namely, epistemological detachment and ontological individuation.

These radical assumptions result in the marginalisation of those deemed insufficiently rationalistic. Modernist/rationalists, that is, consign to the periphery of IPE those they deem incapable of prioritising reason as an end in itself. They tend to include in this regard women, environmentalists, post-colonials, indigenous peoples and the poor. Members of these groups respond in turn by pointing out why they are central rather than peripheral to IPE and what the implications of their centrality happen to be.

These radical assumptions are also manifested now in a range of auto-critiques. Many of those who prioritise reason as an end in itself have come to see
how this limits and distorts their understanding of the world. As a result they now try, by various means, to compensate for these limits and distortions; hence such approaches as postmodernism, poststructuralism, psychopathology, emotivism, phenomenology, and sacralism.

There is a great deal of information in the preceding paragraphs. They are so compressed that what they say could hardly be called engaging. As a consequence the rest of this Introduction will discuss what is said above in a more expansive and hopefully more engaging way.

To reiterate however: the question of competing of analytical approaches is so basic that in this Handbook it is placed upfront. It attempts to show what these approaches are, how they relate to each other, and how they inform any attempt to discuss IPE.

To begin with it is worth considering IPE in context of world affairs as a whole (for a more extended discussion see Pettman, 2010). It is worth considering, that is, what the main ways in which world affairs is described and explained might be.

**IPE AS ONE OF THREE DIMENSIONS TO WORLD AFFAIRS**

Most obviously there is the strategic dimension to world affairs. This is often called the political dimension but that is to confine the political to the strategic. Politics is about politicking, that is, the process of getting one’s own way, whether individually or collectively. As such it pertains to every aspect of human experience. It is about much more than strategic affairs.

The strategic dimension to world politics is mostly to do with the politics of state affairs, that is, politics of affairs of the diplomatic and military kind. This dimension is the anarchic one of security dilemmas and the competitive, so-called ‘realist’ attempt to survive and prevail in a self-help environment where human nature is seen in the worst possible light and peace is deemed to be only ever a lull between wars.

It is also characterised by calculative behaviour, however. As such it is one where a more optimistic sense of human nature is manifested in the form of state-makers creating international regimes, organisations and laws and where, in the process, they bring about tit-for-tat outcomes that state competitiveness alone would never allow.

It is characterised as well by an even more optimistic sense of human nature that highlights the capacity for cooperative, hail-fellow-well-met behaviour. It is this sense that sees in world affairs the rudimentary possibilities of global governance.

The politico-strategic dimension to world affairs is well represented by the sort of map most commonly on display, usually in its Mercator projection, on
schoolroom walls across the world. A map like this highlights the world’s sovereign states. It shows their borders and their capital cities.

Less obvious but no less significant is the dimension to world affairs that lies behind this sort of map, namely, the map of the politics of global market affairs, that is, global production and consumption, finance and investment, work and trade. This is the international political economy. Like the strategic dimension to world affairs there is one account of IPE that highlights human competitiveness. This account highlights how economic nationalism (or economic protectionism) continues to prevail. Like the strategic dimension to world affairs there is also an approach that highlights the human penchant for calculation. In the case of the politics of the market dimension to world affairs this is seen to be what makes it possible to promote economic liberalism. And like the strategic dimension to world affairs there is a third account that highlights human nature in the most positive of terms. This throws into clear analytic relief people’s cooperative capacity to administer equal outcomes, that is, to promote economic socialism.

The least obvious dimension to world affairs lies behind both the politico-strategic and the politico-economic ones. It is the dimension to do with the politics of the world’s social or civic affairs. As with the strategic and market dimensions there is one account of it that highlights human competitiveness. This account highlights the significance of nationalism and how, in a world of several thousand nations and only two hundred sovereign states, the legitimacy accorded by the doctrine of national self-determination is the basis for considerable global strife. Like the strategic and market dimensions there is also an approach that highlights human nature as essentially calculating. This account highlights how individuals have arrived at doctrines of human rights and democratic rule. The third account of the civic dimension to world affairs highlights the human capacity for cooperation. It highlights global social movements that promote common causes.

All three dimensions cited above are part of world affairs. Moreover, all of the analytical languages that articulate these dimensions do so in the light of the assumptions about human nature that those who speak these languages see as being significant.

**IPE WITH REGARD TO HUMAN NATURE**

The international political economy is the marketeering dimension to world affairs. As such it can be compared with the strategic and socio-civil ones and as such it is articulated in terms of the same assumptions that are articulated by strategic and socio-civil analysts, that is, in terms of assumptions to do with people as being by nature bad, calculating or good.
IPE is articulated in both proximal and distal forms. The proximal form is typically the classical one and the distal form is typically a more contemporary one.

For example, the account of economic nationalism provided by Thomas Mun, an early English trader and one-time director of the East India Company, in his book on *England’s Treasure by Forraign Trade, or the Balance of Our Forraign Trade is the Rule of Our Treasure* (Mun, 1664 [1630]), is a proximal/classical one. Mun was a practitioner and his account of foreign trade was that of someone involved in trade himself. Not surprisingly, he identified foreign trade as the way a state might increase its wealth. By astute foreign dealings, he said, a state could sell more each year than it buys. It could maximise its worth by combining an increase in exports with import substitution, that is, by enacting laws that prohibited imports and compelled the use of local goods it could undercut other suppliers, use national transport, and add value to its primary products.

Mun’s concept of economic nationalism was the dominant doctrine of IPE in the early stages of European capitalism, that is, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. It remained so until economic liberalism took its place. That said, economic nationalism did not disappear. It remained a key approach and it does so to this day, informing not only individual state policies but regional policies like those of the European Union.

Relatively more contemporary and distal dialects of the same analytical language talk similarly about protecting sovereign autonomy by promoting exports, inhibiting imports, controlling capital flows, and keeping currency and foreign reserves in state hands. They talk about self-sufficiency in terms of tariffs, quotas and other restrictions, protected secondary and agricultural industries, and state growth in an otherwise adversarial economic world. Taken to voluntary extremes an approach like this can result in autarky (like Myanmar). It can also be involuntary, that is, it can be imposed by other states in the form of economic sanctions (like Cuba).

A representative example of such an account is Frederick List’s *National System of Political Economy* (1856 [1841]). List argued that states that were united would be more prosperous. Like a strategic realist or a socio-civic nationalist, however, he saw states as “victims of each other” and their self-referential policies and as failing to promote their collective potential for economic development (List, 1856 [1841], pp. 70–71). What was to be done? According to List, a state was likely to become more rich and powerful the more it exported manufactured products and imported raw ones (List, 1856 [1841], p. 77). It had to seize the day in this regard, he said, since states that did not were likely to be left behind.

States like Japan responded almost immediately to List’s advice. They used it as the basis for one of the most dramatic development projects ever seen. More
recently China has found in List’s neoprotectionism an important key to its own politico-economic growth.

In positing self-reliance as the basic source of state wealth List was specifically critiquing Adam Smith. As a classical economic liberal, Smith advocated opening every state market to the world market. He assumed that the world would be peaceful enough to make such openness possible. List was a pessimist, however, and as such he did not see people as capable of sustaining a system of interstate law that would be sufficiently compelling to allow for interstate confederacy. With the spread of industry he did admit that war might be made “improbable, if not impossible” (List, 1856 [1841], p. 191). In his reading of the historical record, however, he saw “political” or strategic union as invariably preceding the commercial variety. In practice, he believed that free trade results not in a “community of nations” but in the “universal subjection of nations to the supremacy of the greater powers in manufactures, commerce, and navigation” (List, 1856 [1841], p. 200). In practice, he saw economic protection as the “only system” by which “less advanced” states could achieve the same level as those that dominate global manufacturing. In practice, he advocated excluding foreign products so that states could defend their own interests and not fall victim to foreign ones. It was, after all, a “vulgar rule of prudence”, he said, for those who had reached the “pinnacle of power” to “cast down the ladder” by which they had climbed so that others might not follow. A state which by “protective duties …” had built up a “manufacturing industry … to such a point of … power as not to fear the competition of any other”, he said, could pursue “no safer policy than to thrust aside the means of elevation, [and] to preach to others … the advantages of free trade …” (List, 1856 [1841], pp. 440, 488).

Adam Smith saw human beings as essentially calculating. It was this assumption that informed his account of economic liberalism, an account that became the classical/proximal liberalist one and the foundation for the discipline of modern economics.

Adam Smith was a prominent member of the Scottish Enlightenment and as such he promoted the prioritisation of the use of reason as an end in itself. It was a short step from promoting this perspective to one that saw human beings as being by nature essentially self-referential and rationalistic and Smith used that assumption to describe and explain IPE.

His key work was entitled *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Smith, 1993 [1776]). In this work Smith began by highlighting the significance of the division of labour. A workman’s woollen coat, however “course and rough”, could not exist, he said, without the “joint labour of a great multitude” of others (Smith, 1993 [1776], p. 19). Any economy relies on reciprocity, he said, with each individual in it supplying others and the resulting “general plenty” trickling through “all the different ranks of the society” (Smith, 1993 [1776], p. 18). This
reciprocity was not the result of a wise assessment, however, of what was achievable in this way, but rather of the human tendency to “truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another”. It was the result of people saying “[g]ive me that which I want, and you shall have this which you want … [Thus i]t is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker”, Smith concluded “that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest …” (Smith, 1993 [1776], p. 22).

Smith was highly critical of economic nationalism, basically because of the way it exalted the significance of a favourable balance of trade. He did not believe that restricting imports by using duties and tariffs, and fostering exports using subsidies for infant industries and the like, could make a state wealthy.

He did not, in short, see one state’s gain as another state’s loss. Granted, everybody strives to use their capital to their advantage, he said. However, “the study of … [that] advantage naturally, or rather necessarily” led to “… that employment” which was the “most advantageous to the society” (Smith, 1993 [1776], p. 289). Thus while individuals did pursue their own interests, they were also prompted “by an invisible hand” to promote interests they did not intend. Moreover they were prompted to do so “more effectually” with regard to the social good than any plan could possibly provide (Smith, 1993 [1776], p. 292). A liberal and free trade system between states was in his view, therefore, the most effective way to pursue wealth.

Smith’s idea of absolute advantage was carried a step forward in the nineteenth century by David Ricardo and his concept of comparative advantage. It was Ricardo’s abstract conclusion — that those states that were more productive in every way still had an incentive to trade — that became the cornerstone of the contemporary liberalist account of the global system of trade (Ricardo, 1951 [1817]).

In the twentieth century Smith’s ideas were made the basis of a more contemporary/distant account of market behaviour. This analytic dialect not only promoted Smith’s concept that human beings were by nature calculating. It was even more convinced that government control over markets distorts them.

The so-called neoliberalists involved articulated what by the 1990’s had come to be called the ‘Washington Consensus’. They advocated balanced budgets and small or no budget deficits, reduced state expenditure of all kinds as a way of achieving such a balance (even where this required less spending on education, health and public infrastructure), tax reforms that broadened the tax base and reduced the tax burden on the well-off, interest rates and exchange rates determined by the market and not by bureaucrats, the liberalisation of imports and in particular no import licensing, the liberalisation of foreign financial flows, more privatised commerce and industry in general (that is, more deregulation of the economy) and more secure property rights. Neoliberalism was the fruit of what
came to be called the Chicago school. Milton Friedman was one of this school’s most eminent exponents. Trained originally as a mathematician, Friedman preferred analyses that were highly abstract. He endorsed what he saw as social science and the distinction between positive and normative knowledge. Despite his detachment he was also part of a movement that began in Switzerland in 1947 to promote the principles of the free market in the face of those of Soviet state-planned socialism, a movement whose leader was an equally eminent neoliberalist: Friedrich A. von Hayek. However, it was Friedman who advised American Presidents like Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan. It was Friedman who received the Nobel Prize for economics in 1976. And it was Friedman who in his book *Capitalism and Freedom* (1962) wrote about the need to maximise personal freedom and minimise state interference. Governments were necessary in a market-centred society, he said, to act as umpires and to maintain the integrity of the system. He agreed with Smith on that. But control of foreign exchange, of imports, and of domestic production was the best way, he believed, to convert a market-centred society into an authoritarian one. “Concentrated power”, he said, “is not rendered harmless by the good intentions of those who create it” (Friedman, 1962, p. 201).

In marked contrast to all liberalists were those who saw human beings as basically good enough to envisage distributing the largesse of the industrial revolution in an equitable fashion so that everyone’s fundamental needs for food, shelter, clothing, education and healthcare would be met. With the industrial revolution the species now has this capacity. Economic socialists are those who see no reason why planning to realise this capacity should not succeed.

This sort of socialism is *reformist* and as such is not the *revolutionary* socialism associated with Karl Marx, for whom socialism was the next stage in humanity’s history. Marx saw socialism in terms of the proletariat rising up to overthrow the bourgeoisie and dismantle the apparatus of the state in order to establish advanced communism.

To reformist socialists Marx gave socialism a bad name. Marx, in turn, saw reformist socialists as utopian and ineffectual.

There is a fundamental difference between these two approaches in that economic socialists articulate an optimistic assumption about human nature (‘people are basically good’) while Marx saw human nature as only manifesting once the process of historical materialism was at an end, that is, once humanity’s “species being” had ceased to be distorted by ruling class exploitation. Marx highlighted the material nature of human nurturing practices.

Examples of proximal/classical socialism include nineteenth-century British and French optimists like Robert Owen and Henri de Saint-Simon. Owen, for example, instituted reforms in workers’ pay, participation and education. He sought
to make self-reliant collectives of the manufacturing enterprises that he owned. In his work *A New View of Society, or, Essays on the Principle of the Formation of the Human Character, and the Application of the Principle to Practice* (1817 [1813–1816]), for example, he flagged his belief in the human capacity for personal improvement where rulers put the interests of the ruled before their own. The result of this for his fellow manufacturers (Owen was a cotton miller) was increased production, since a well-managed enterprise, he said, like a well-maintained machine, responded favourably to proper maintenance. This meant providing workers with training, food, comfortable conditions and humane control. Owen expressed not only a high degree of optimism about human nature in this regard but also a high degree of optimism about what the appropriate forms of human nurture could achieve. Because people are basically good, he said, if they were treated well that goodness would reveal itself and there would be greater prosperity and less aggression. People actually preferred, he said, useful and rewarding work, while children responded positively to the sort of instruction that taught consideration and the well-being of others. Economic nationalists saw such conclusions as unrealistic. Economic liberals saw them as falling foul of the human capacity for calculation. Owen thought that regardless of what we were born to be, we could learn to be generous and kind and that ideas of inherent human superiority were wrong. This suggests that Owen did not in the end subscribe to any fundamental assumption about human nature. Why, however, do good qualities manifest themselves if given the chance to do so — as Owen argued they would — unless these were not the most basic forms of human being? Socialism like Owen’s is underpinned by optimism in this regard. Pessimists tend to be protectionists, as indicated above, while those who see human beings as calculating tend to be economic liberalists.

Like the other analytical languages, there are diverse analytical dialects of economic socialism too, one of the more contemporary and distal being Hugh Stretton’s *Economics: A New Introduction* (1999). Like a classical socialist Stretton highlights how rich states do less than they might to help the poor and how as their wealth increases so does poverty. He argues, in the face of this fact, that the benefits of economic growth ought to be distributed collectively. States should use their capacity to make their product available to all so that everyone might have a sustainable quality of life regardless of the wage they earn. He wants greater equality, in other words, and less inequality. He wants economic collectivism to take precedence over economic growth and public power to be used to help the poor, both within states and between them.

In practice, Stretton sees the hegemony of neoliberalism as resulting in the underestimation of “social commitments” and the overestimation of what is possible on the basis of “universal selfishness …” (Stretton, 1999, pp. 61–63). He sees neoliberal policies resulting in “absolute poverty and death in some poor
countries, and relative poverty and insecurity in rich countries, on a scale to rival any effects of poor doctoring or engineering” (Stretton, 1999, p. 61). He sees neoliberals, and indeed, all economic liberals, as promoting arguments like public enterprise is inefficient and ineffective and as much market activity as possible should be moved into the private domain where it is subject to the discipline of competitive calculation. He himself, by contrast, wants “good performance by a well-designed public sector”. For this he sees no alternative but “good government” (Stretton, 1999, pp. 468–470, 484).

Stretton’s economically socialistic proclivities are also evident with regard to international money and banking. The “price of credit”, he says, “cannot equilibrate the supply and demand for it …”. Nor can it ration bank lending “either to its most productive or … most socially desirable uses”. Indeed, Stretton sees opening state borders as guaranteed to take from their inhabitants their “best means” of controlling their rates of “investment, employment, and inflation” (Stretton, 1999, p. 722).

**IPE WITH REGARD TO HUMAN NURTURE**

In discussing Robert Owen’s work, mention was made of approaches that articulate assumptions about the essential nature of human nurturing practices as opposed to approaches that articulate assumptions about the essential nature of human beings. These approaches do not focus on human nature. They focus on how human beings learn to be.

There are three key approaches in this regard, one that highlights the material nature of human nurturing practices, one that highlights the mental nature of human nurturing practices, and one that highlights a mixture of the two. The general point to note here is that not all analysts and practitioners think human beings are by nature essentially anything. They think that what matters most is what dominates people’s educative environment. There is a particular point to note too, which is that the nature/nurture dichotomy is a conceptual one. In practice people are both one and the other, though this does not stop analysts and policy-makers from dichotomising the two and using this dichotomy to inform their descriptions and explanations of (and policy prescriptions with regard to) IPE. There is another particular point which is that the results of articulating the material, mental and mixed assumptions about human nurturing practices cuts across the three dimensions to world affairs highlighted above. They do not highlight the strategic, marketeering and socio-civic aspects of the larger discipline. As such they tend to be critical of those who do. They do not talk of IPE, hence their reputation as ‘critical’ approaches (with a small ‘c’).

While the first such approach can be articulated in politico-geographic terms, the best known materialist approach is marxism. In its classical/distal form this
analytical language describes and explains how changes in the material means of production cause changes in the overall mode of production, that is, the social superstructure or class system.

The best known articulation of marxism is Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels’ *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1975 [1848]). The *Manifesto* provides a brief account of the class struggles that have historically informed the relationships between “freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman …”. It describes the way all these struggles have ended either in the “revolutionary reconstitution of society at large” or in the “common ruin of the contending classes” (Marx and Engels, 1975 [1848], pp. 32–33).

The *Manifesto* sees the contemporary world as split between the owners and managers of the means of industrial production and those who sell their labour for a wage. As a mode of production Marx and Engels call this capitalism and like its predecessors they see it as exploitative and destined for revolutionary overthrow, that is, they see the workers as eventually rising up against those who exploit them and their state system.

The bourgeois world, as Marx and Engels describe it, is one of “naked self-interest … [and] callous ‘cash payment’”. Moreover, in the place of “numberless … chartered freedoms”, they say, it has put “one unconscionable freedom — Free Trade”.

It is also highly expansionist, in short, it has established connections all over the world, creating in the process a global market that has provided a “cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country … In place of … old wants [that is], satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have … universal interdependence …” (Marx and Engels, 1975 [1848], pp. 35–38).

More contemporary and distal analysts have taken this approach further to highlight how local elites in poor countries have become comprador allies of corporate interests in rich ones and have ceased in the process to serve the interests of their own populations. They highlight how bourgeois states produce too much, seeking new markets and new ways of more radically exploiting old ones. Some of these analysts articulate a neo-marxist approach called *dependencia*. Others highlight the structural features of the capitalist world economy and the way it has a centre, a periphery, and a semi-periphery. It is the uneven nature of the development of this system that accounts, they say, for the “multiple forms” of class conflict (Wallerstein, 1979, p. 36).

Marx and Engels did not think the revolution they envisaged would take place until the class struggle was a worldwide one. This is why they would not have countenanced attempts to reconcile marxism with local circumstances the way
communist revolutionaries did in Russia and China. Revolutionaries wanted to jump over capitalism in order to go straight to revolutionary socialism. Marx and Engels did not think this was possible and, indeed, it was not. It was entirely predictable that China and Russia would have to go back and have capitalism, which is what is happening today.

The opposite to marxism as a materialist approach to IPE is a ‘mentalist’ one. This, too, highlights the essential nature of human nurturing practices but rather than the material nature of those practices it emphasises their mental aspect.

The best known mentalist approach is that of constructivism. To a constructivist, how people think about IPE is what they get. IPE is a result of norms, ideals and values. It has a self-fulfilling quality to it in that what people see as being significant about IPE is what becomes significant there.

Constructivism completely contradicts the marxist approach. Where Marx inverted Hegel to see the means of production determining everything else, including norms, ideals and values, constructivism inverts Marx to adopt a neo-Hegelian perspective that make ideals analytically central.

Like every other analytical language constructivism is replete with diverse dialects. Some are determined to defend a scientific understanding of IPE. Some are prepared to be less rigorous in this respect. Others are highly abstract, emphasising how rules result in rule. Others again are much more applied, emphasising how a mental awareness of the world is built from the ground up.

Some analysts and practitioners approach IPE on the basis of a combination of both materialism and mentalism. This sounds like a contradiction in terms. For those aware of how intimately they are entwined, however, and how difficult it is to disentangle the doctrines they articulate, this is the only approach that makes much sense.

Marx and Engels themselves saw materialist assumptions impinging upon mentalist ones and the ruling class that is defined in material terms as being the ruling class that defined what obtains in mental terms too. Other analysts highlight how advertising and popular culture are part of a ‘culture industry’ which hides from wage workers the full significance of their exploitation using values, norms, ideas and ideals.

THOSE MARGINALISED BY MAINSTREAM IPE

The analytical languages and dialects discussed so far are all mainstream ones in that they all articulate the modernist/rationalist project. This is the Enlightenment project that prioritises the use of reason as an end in itself.

Modernist rationalism was devised in the main by white, middle-aged, Western, environmentally-indifferent, males. In turn, they characterised large
swathes of humankind as insufficiently rationalistic or as not capable of prioritising reason. These swathes included women, environmentalists, post-colonials, indigenous peoples, and the poor.

By asking where the women are in IPE it is possible to draw attention to the radically gendered nature of the whole discipline and the way its seemingly conventional practices are radically loaded in terms of their gender outcomes (Enloe, 1989). What is made to seem normal and natural in this regard is anything but, in part because of the worldwide use of a public/private distinction that successfully hides the extent of gender discrimination. Those determined to draw attention to this discrimination have a wide choice of analytical dialects with which to do so. They can opt, for example, for a liberalist approach that argues for human rights regardless of secondary qualities like gender ones. They can opt for a marxist approach that sees women as the world’s last colony and women’s liberation as requiring the overthrow of global capitalism. Or they can make alliances with others similarly marginalised by the modernist/rationalist project (like environmentalists) or those from that project who currently critique it for being limited and distorting (like postmodernists or poststructuralists).

By asking why environmentalists are seen as too subjective to deserve consideration in modernist/rationalist terms it is possible to draw attention to the way IPE marginalises this issue too, that is, the treatment of the global eco-sphere and what the contemporary generation will leave behind for following ones. Are current forms of development sustainable, for example? If so, how can this be so in the light of scientific evidence of widespread and increasing human damage to the atmosphere and the biosphere? What might sustainability mean in the light of a population that continues to grow and continues to put increasing pressure on the planet’s resources and its capacity to cope with human pollution?

Post-colonials and indigenous peoples are well placed, despite being marginalised by the modernist/rationalist project, to highlight the racist nature of IPE. Both are aware of the way patterns of imperialism persist as a continuing fact of life. And they fight back. Post-colonials, for example, highlight how ‘orientalism’ makes all Middle-Eastern and Asian peoples appear to be exotic ‘others’, thus rendering central to the discipline all US and European ‘selves’. Indigenous peoples, meanwhile, highlight their own forms of IPE and how these provide constructive alternatives to those imposed upon them.

The poor also bear witness to the highly skewed nature of contemporary IPE. The agricultural/industrial largesse provided by the scientific and technological revolutions that began in the seventeenth century means that no one need go without life’s fundamental necessities anymore. That so many still do reflects a lack of political will. It does not reflect a shortage of the requisite global product. The poor are marginalised since they are depicted by modernists/rationalists as not knowing
how to prioritise reason. If they did, modernists think, they would demand the kind of education that would allow them to do so. This is to trap the poor in a self-defeating spiral. They tend not to be heard because of their illiteracy and lack of advocacy and because a radical lack of resources prohibits them from getting these skills. Nonetheless, there are those who speak on their behalf and who highlight how poverty is no longer a human necessity.

**THE MODERNIST MAINSTREAM AND ITS AUTO-CRITIQUES**

The modernist/rationalist project is now under siege from within as well as without. This has consequences for IPE too.

By turning reason back upon itself, for example, it is possible to ask what the reasons are for prioritising reason. This is to unsettle the certainty of modernist/rationalism as a meta-discourse, to unsettle the certainty of all the attempts to articulate IPE provided by mainstream analysts and practitioners, and at the same time to open up thinking and speaking spaces for marginalised accounts of IPE like those of women and environmentalists. This is postmodernism as generally understood.

By highlighting the way language determines the conclusions rationalists come to, it is possible to do the same. This unsettles the modernist/rationalist sense of identity and all that flows therefrom. This is poststructuralism as generally understood.

Modernist/rationalist truths are similarly challenged by other auto-critiques. Psycho-pathologists see reason as resulting from unconscious needs and drives. Romantics prefer to describe and explain IPE in emotivist terms, that is, in terms of their gut feelings. Phenomenologists prefer to bracket off rationalism in order to see things-in-themselves in intuitive terms, that is, in terms of their gut thinking. Sacralists prefer to opt for the spiritual context that modernist/rationalism was originally set up in opposition to, choosing instead to meditate or pray. This allows them to arrive at very different approaches to IPE, for example, economics as construed in Buddhist terms.

**CONCLUSION**

So there it is: an introduction to all the ways in which IPE is analysed. Recognising the assumptions a particular analyst or practitioner is making immediately reveals the approach that he or she is taking. It reveals what he or she wants to say and more importantly, what he or she does not want to say. However: to know what is not being said requires a comprehensive and coherent account of all the ways in which IPE can be accounted for. Hence the systematic summary of these ways
provided above. Hence the hope that the reader never gets lost again in the swamps of what is a highly complex subject, where so many competing part-truths masquerade as the whole-truth, and where the use of modernist/rationalism leaves so much to be desired itself in terms of those it marginalises and what its own limits and distortions entail.

REFERENCES


