

INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO STUDYING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: RELEVANCE OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL ACCOUNTS*

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Abstract

As an academic discipline, International Relations deals with a wide range of issues in the context of relations between states, international organizations and other non-state actors. These issues, their causes, processes and consequences are addressed from a political, socioeconomic and legal perspective, and their social psychological dimensions are either ignored or ignored. Until now, it seems that the attempt to cross the border between social psychology and International Relations mostly comes from social psychology. Undoubtedly, this points to the lack or weakness of International Relations researchers' attempts or awareness of using psychological theories and perspectives. Thus, this article focuses on the question that "How can the International Relations discipline benefit from social psychological approaches?" In this context, the fields of study, subjects and scope related to International Relations and social psychology will be defined first. Then, the current contributions of social psychology to International Relations will be briefly discussed. Finally, the possible issues that the International Relations discipline can benefit from social psychology and the possibility of such cooperation will be discussed in depth.

Keywords: Social Science, Discipline, International Relations, Social Psychology.

ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLERE DİSİPLİNLERARASI YAKLAŞIMLAR: SOSYAL PSİKOLOJİK AÇIKLAMALARIN GEÇERLİLİĞİ

Öz

Akademik bir disiplin olarak Uluslararası İlişkiler, devletler, uluslararası kuruluşlar ve diğer devlet dışı aktörler arasındaki ilişkiler bağlamında çok çeşitli konularla ilgilenmektedir. Bu konular, sebepleri, süreçleri ve sonuçları politik, sosyoekonomik ve hukuki bakış açılarından ele alındığı, sosyal psikolojik boyutlarının ise ya göz ardı edilmekte ya da hiç dikkate alınmamaktadır. Bu zamana kadar, sosyal psikoloji ile Uluslararası İlişkiler arasındaki sınırı geçme girişiminin, çoğunlukla sosyal psikoloji tarafından geldiği görülmektedir. Şüphesiz ki bu durum, Uluslararası İlişkiler araştırmacılarının, psikolojik kuramlara ve bakış açılarına

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başvurma girişimlerinin ya da farkındalıklarının eksikliğine veya zayıflığına işaret etmektedir. Buradan hareketle bu makale, "Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplini sosyal psikolojik yaklaşımlardan nasıl yararlanabilir?" sorusuna odaklanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda ilk olarak Uluslararası İlişkiler ve sosyal psikoloji ile ilgili olarak çalışma alanları, konuları ve kapsamı açısından tanımlanacaktır. Ardından, sosyal psikolojinin Uluslararası İlişkilere mevcut katkıları kısaca ele alınacaktır. Son olarak ise Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininin sosyal psikolojiden faydalanabileceği muhtemel konular ve bu tür bir işbirliğinin oluşma olasılığı derinlemesine tartışılmaya çalışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Bilim, Disiplin, Uluslararası İlişkiler, Sosyal Psikoloji.

Introduction

Social sciences are products of the attempt to produce systematic information about the nature of people, their relations with each other and spiritual powers, and social structures they create. From its development as of the 16th century well into the 19th century, social science implied a single, unified science of the social contrary to the multiple disciplines¹ that were being formed by 1900 (Porter, 2003:13). Based on the assumption that systematic research required specialization in different fields of "reality", institutional structures started to be formed to produce information in the 19th century (Gulbenkian Komisyonu, 1996:16). In this context, borders between disciplines such as history, anthropology, economics, political science and sociology emerged. However, International Relations as a 20th century-born discipline reaches beyond these borders by its nature. As Kaplan correctly puts forward, International Relations with its subject matter "involving transactions across national boundaries, it is immediately evident that these transactions come within the purview of many different recognized disciplines" (Kaplan, 1961:464) one of which is social psychology.

International Relations as an academic discipline is concerned with a wide range of issues in the context of the relations between states, international and supranational organizations that have particular political identities. These identities constitute a sort of border they draw between themselves and other actors and they do not behave free from these identities in their relations with each other. In this regard, it is possible to think international relations as a form of intergroup relations which defines individual or group interaction between members of different groups in the context of their group identity (Sherif, 1962:5; Sherif et al., 1988:26). Hence, studying International Relations as a kind of intergroup relations seems to require making use of social psychological accounts. However, by this time, the attempt to cross the border between social psychology and International

¹ The literature on the questions of 'what a discipline is' and 'under which conditions existence of a discipline can be claimed' hosts various views and opinions. In this study, a discipline is considered to be whole activities and products of a particular academic community, people who identify themselves as studying a particular subject or field.

Relations has mostly come from the social psychology side. Indeed, this implies the lack or weakness of the attempt or awareness of International Relations scholars to resort to the psychological theories and perspectives.

Building on such awareness, this paper is mainly concerned with the question that "In which ways can International Relations discipline benefit from social psychological accounts?" In this sense, first, International Relations and social psychology as fields of study will be defined with regard to their subject matters and scope. Then, the present *contributions* of social psychology to International Relations will be covered briefly. Finally, the possible subject matters and issue areas that International Relations discipline can *benefit from* social psychology and the ways such collaboration likely to occur will be discussed in depth. This kind of a discussion is thought to be the major importance of this study as it puts forward new research topics for the International Relations research agenda.

1. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: SCOPE AND SUBJECT MATTER

Considering it as intercommunal relations, it is possible to state that international relations are as old as beginning of people's living as communities. The beginning of international relations as a modern phenomenon, on the other hand, dates back to the emergence of nation-state in Europe in the 17th century. In line, it is accepted that present day international system emerged as norms, values and rules created by new nation-states to regulate their relations embraced the world as known today (Yurdusev, 2010:19). Whereas international relations as a kind of relationship is that far old, International Relations as a discipline studying a wide range of issues in the context of the relations between states and non-state actors emerged centuries later.

Questions about the reasons of war, the ways to terminate wars, the means to conduct war and the conditions under which war becomes just constituted the origins of thoughts on International Relations in the aftermath of the World War I (Hollis and Smith, 1990:18; Lott, 2011:303; Smith; 2013:1; Dağı, 2010:188). Early International Relations was further concerned with international law and diplomatic history as well as war and peace. (Hellmann, 2011:22). Since the early days of the emergence of the discipline, substantive expansion in its subject matter as measured in research problems being taken up by scholars identifying themselves as doing International Relations has been witnessed (Hellmann, 2011:20). In the historical process, the subject matter of International Relations has reached beyond the issues of war and peace, international law and diplomatic history. The Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War took attention to the strategic studies and the issues of deterrence and arms control (Ayson, 2008). The 1970s onwards, intensification of effort to bridge the gap between International Relations and economics was witnessed, and this increasingly inspired research on international political

economy (Cohen, 2008:3). The end of the Cold War paved the way to balance the prominence of security issues in the research agenda of International Relations. It broadened to include human rights, globalization, international humanitarian issues, international environmental problems, ethnic and religious terror, gender, and so on.

Parallel to broadening research agenda, the scope of International Relations has expanded as well. New issues brought new actors on the stage. As of the beginning, the discipline was primarily concerned with war, peace, international law and diplomacy in the context of relations between nation-states. Three types of non-state actors, namely, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations and transnational corporations play roles alongside nation-states (Reinalda, 2011:3) by taking part in the global diffusion of values, norms and ideas in various issue-areas as human rights, international security, or the global environment (Risse-Kappen, 1995:4). Additionally, beyond offering a paradigmatic alternative to the traditional focus on great power competition (Hellmann, 2011:22), the process of European integration updated and heated up the discussion on supranational actors. Hence, new research matters have brought new actors and the scope of International Relations has expanded to cover non-state and supranational actors, international norms and values and their relations with each other.

2. SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY: SCOPE AND SUBJECT MATTER

The emergence of psychology as a discipline mainly concerned with mental processes within brain and other parts of the nervous system as well as reflection of these processes on human feelings, thoughts and behaviors corresponds to the 19th century. It continued to develop throughout the 20th century and came out with its significant movements and majors one of which is social psychology (Fuchs and Milar, 2003:6; Brock, 2014:874). Social psychology came up in the first half of the 20th century when psychologists started to be interested in interactions of individuals within their groups and society as a whole. During the first three or four decades of its existence, main focus of social psychology had been on the problem of establishing itself as a legitimate field of empirical research. In this period, social psychologists had been primarily concerned with developing basic concepts and proposing appropriate methods of research. By the mid-1930s, social psychology was prepared to conduct research on important substantive problems and studies on social norms and conformity, reference groups, human motivation, frustration and aggression, social learning and imitation, styles of leadership, and public opinion started to appear in the literature (Cartwright, 1979:84). In the historical process, social psychology has met with a range of research questions. Social psychologists have been interested in "the experience of people as individuals, notably how real or imagined others influence them in terms of effect (emotions, feelings), cognition (thoughts, beliefs), and behavior (actions, intentions)" (Studying Social

Psychology: 6). Additionally, they have focused on the issue of impact of social organizations on individuals and the ways these organizations are affected by psychology of individuals who establish them as well as relations between members of these groups (in-group relations) and between different groups (intergroup relations) (Hogg and Abrams, 1998:8-9; McDougall, 2001:24-25).

A look over the subject matter of social psychology makes it clear that some take individual as the unit of analysis while some research subjects require more "social" analysis beyond individual. Studying the experience of people as individuals, notably how real or imagined others influence them in terms of effect, cognition, and behavior means taking individual as the unit of analysis whereas focusing on the impact of social organizations on individuals, in-group and intergroup relations require group level of analysis. This is directly related to the fact that right from the start social psychology is considered to reside at the intersection of two disciplines, psychology and sociology. Although it is a subdiscipline of psychology, social psychology indeed was founded and has matured in both disciplines (Eagly and Fine, 2010:313). Hence, two parallel traditions have obtained within social psychology: psychological social psychology and sociological social psychology.

Psychological movement defines social psychology as the "subdiscipline of psychology that especially involves the scientific study of the behavior of individuals as a function of social stimuli" (Jones and Gerard, 1967:1). In this sense, essential concern of psychological social psychology is to understand and explain individual psychological processes - perception, cognition, motivation, learning, attitude formation and change, etc- in the context of social stimuli and social environment (House, 1977:163). To put it in another way, psychological social psychological research is concerned with individual processes that people have in common with others, and how these processes regulate a person's interactions with other people, including groups (Studying Social Psychology: 7). Sociological social psychology as a more "social" alternative to the quite psychological and experimental social psychology (House, 1977:165), on the other hand, is primarily concerned with social influence, and deals with individual and individual behavior with regard to this influence. That is to say, sociological social psychology is interested in interpersonal relations rather than inner world of individuals (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2012:21-22). Influenced by psychology's cognitive revolution, the psychological tradition in social psychology appeared to be intensely individual with an emphasis on cognitive processes whereas the sociological tradition took an interest in the issues of social interaction and collective phenomena (Eagly and Fine, 2010:313).

The corresponding existence of psychological and sociological traditions within social psychology makes the field broad in terms of both its subject matter and scope. On the one hand, individual-centric psychological

traditions bring the issues related to the experience of people as individuals, notably how real or imagined others influence them in terms of effect, cognition, and behavior to the research agenda of social psychology. On the other hand, group-centric sociological social psychology takes attention to the impact of social organizations on individuals and the ways these organizations are affected by psychology of individuals who establish them as well as relations between members of these groups (in-group relations) and between different groups (intergroup relations). This broad research agenda brings individuals, groups and other social organizations formed by these individuals and groups into the scope of social psychological research.

3. PRESENT CONTRIBUTIONS OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The idea that social psychology can contribute to International Relations research is not something new. Psychologists who are aware of the psychological dimension of international relations and permeability of the border between their discipline and International Relations have attempted to approach to some international issues through the lenses of social psychology. For most of the time, these attempts have focused on the issues of international conflict and ethnic and religious terror. Additionally, social psychologists have been interested in psychological assumptions underlying various approaches to foreign policy (Kelman, 1965:3). The present contributions of social psychology to International Relations include but not limited to the issues of international conflict, ethnic and religious terror and foreign policy. However, this part of the paper is primarily concerned with these three issue areas as they seem to constitute predominant part of social psychological contributions to International Relations.

3.1. International Conflicts

International conflicts indicate legal or political divergences between actors of International Relations on a certain issue. These conflicts and the issue of their resolution have been one of the subjects of International Relations to which social psychology has contributed predominantly. Kelman identifies a greater tendency that theoretical formulations in social psychology research start with questions derived from an analysis of international conflicts, and introduce psychological concepts whenever they can contribute to their analysis (Kelman, 1965:8). This tendency seems not surprising considering the fact that resolution of international conflicts is closely linked to the issue of equality and inequality in the conflicting parties' relations with each other; how the parties perceive themselves and each other; behavior of favoring their own group and discriminating out group; and protecting or not protecting their group identity in the presence of the other group. At this point, social psychological theories of group psychology and intergroup relations have been instructive in understanding and explaining international conflicts and their settlement.

Herbert C. Kelman's (2008) article "Bridging Individual and Social Change in International Conflict: Contextual Social Psychology in Action"; his another study (2010) "Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation: A Social Psychological Perspective on Ending Violent Conflict Between Identity Groups"; his chapter (2007) "Social Psychological Dimensions of International Conflicts"; "The Social Psychology of Intergroup and International Conflict Resolution" in Springer Series in Social Psychology (1990); the book "Social Psychology of Intergroup Reconciliation" edited by Arie Nadler, Thomas E. Malloy and Jeffrey D. Fisher (2008); Berkowitz's book (1962) "Aggression: A Social Psychological Analysis"; Sherif's (1966) study titled "In Common Predicament: Social Psychology of Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation"; Ziferstein's article (1967) "Psychological Habituation to War: A Sociopsychological Case Study"; Stagner's book (1967) "Psychological Aspects of International Conflict" are some remarkable examples approaching issue of international conflicts through the lenses of social psychological accounts.

3.2. Ethnic and Religious Terror

One of the issue areas that social psychology has contributed to the study of International Relations is ethnic and religious terror with regard to its reasons, processes and results. This appears to be closely related to the situation that ethnic and religious terror is group work from beginning to end. Regarding process of terrorist activity, it is conducted within the group dynamics. Once individuals join a terrorist network, group dynamics set in. From that movement on, the group begins to transform the values of its members (Banks, 2005:678). The members of terror groups share a common fate; their future and the attainment of the goals of the group are bound together (Crenshaw, 2004:422). They give priority to their group identity over their individual identities, and perceive individual or individuals that these movements target at in the context of opposite group identity. This is possible within a group and as an impact of group dynamics. Considering the results of ethnic and religious terror, it is also related to the issue of group dynamics in the sense that violence acts influence its perpetrators as group as well as those who are targets of violence. Taking these together clearly shows that from beginning to end ethnic and religious violence is both an intergroup and an in-group issue. Building on this consciousness, many studies on ethnic and religious violence have been conducted by taking advantage of social psychological theories of group psychology and intergroup relations.

Albert Bandura's study (1998) on moral justification of violent acts through group processes and dynamics "Mechanisms of Moral Disengagement"; Clark McCauley's chapter (2002) "Psychological Issues in Understanding Terrorism and the Response to Terrorism"; his joint article with Mary M. Segal (1987) "Social Psychology of Terrorist Groups"; a political scientist Martha Crenshaw's pioneer studies "The Psychology of

Political Terrorism" (2004), "Explaining Suicide Terrorism: A Review Essay" (2007), "How Terrorists Think: Psychological Contributions to Understanding Terrorism" (1992); and her instructive article concerning research on ethnic and religious terrorism (1990) "Questions to be Answered, Research to be Done, Knowledge to be Applied" are a few instances of numerous studies that social psychological theories have contributed to International Relations research on ethnic and religious violence.

3.3. Foreign Policy

Foreign policy is another subject matter that is popular among those who apply social psychological approaches to the study of International Relations. Foreign policy has appeared to be dealt with in social psychological sense mostly with respect to foreign policy decision-making. Foreign policy decisions, especially national security decisions, are collective products. They are made at the end of "intensive interactions among small groups, each of which represents a major bureaucratic, economic, or political constituency" (Tetlock, 1998:886). That is to say, leaders and their small cycle of advisors, or groups of policy makers meet face-to-face and make decisions on the basis of the information and analysis provided by the various agencies and departments (Breuning, 2007:99). Social psychological contributions to foreign policy decision-making research are predominantly interested in either the dynamics of these small decision-making groups or the role of public opinion in the formation of foreign policy in the context of in-group and intergroup relations.

Several remarkable examples of social psychological contributions to foreign policy studies include but not limited to Irving Janis' important work (1972) "Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes"; Carrie R. Leana's experimental study based on Janis' work (1975) "A Partial Test of Janis' Groupthink Model: Effects of Group Cohesiveness and Leader Behavior on Defective Decision-making"; Andrew K. Semmel's chapter (1982) "Small Group Dynamics in Foreign Policy Decision-making"; his joint article with Dean Minix (1979) "Small Group Dynamics and Foreign Policy Decision-making: An Experimental Approach"; Philip E. Tetlock's study (1979) "Identifying Victims of Groupthink from Public Statements of Decision Makers"; and Michael J. Shapiro and G. Matthew Bonham' article (1973) "Cognitive Process and Foreign Policy Decision-making".

4. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH: POSSIBLE ISSUE AREAS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS CAN BENEFIT FROM SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

The attempt to transcend the border between International Relations and social psychology has predominantly come from social psychology side. That is to say, mostly social psychology has *contributed* to International

Relations. Indeed, this implies the lack or weakness of the attempt or awareness of International Relations scholars to resort to the psychological theories and perspectives. Building on such awareness, it is appropriate to argue that International Relations studies need to *benefit from* social psychological theories and perspectives consciously beyond the *contribution* of social psychology to International Relations research. With regard to this need, this section of the paper is concerned with possible issue areas that International Relations research can *benefit from* social psychology in theoretical terms.

As it is already stated before, International Relations is interested in the issues of war, peace, security, human rights, foreign policy and decision-making, international political economy, globalization, diplomacy, international humanitarian problems, international environmental matters, ethnic and religious violence, gender, and so on in the context of relations between actors of International Relations. Thereby, International Relations deals with relations between various social units formed out of repetition and institutionalization of relations that result from individuals' coming together (Yurdusev, 2010:17-18). From this point of view, it is proper to state that international relations is a kind of intergroup relations and consequently International Relations discipline is concerned with a sort of intergroup relations. In this respect, it is not difficult to identify possible issue areas that International Relations can *benefit from* social psychology.

4.1. Foreign Policy: Possibility of a Broader Research Agenda

Foreign policy has already been discussed as a subject matter of International Relations that social psychology is interested in. Foreign policy is studied through social psychological approaches mostly in terms of foreign policy decision-making. However, a broader agenda for interdisciplinary foreign policy research is possible. In this sense, International Relations can move beyond current social psychological contributions and apply social psychological theories to analyze new topics related to foreign policy one of which is foreign policy attitudes and behavior of states.

Actors of the international relations are social units formed by means of repetition and institutionalization of relations that result from individuals' coming together, and states are primary actors of the international relations in this sense. Like individuals' attitudes and behaviors in their relations with other individuals, states, which are composed of individuals but in time gain specific and distinct presence from these individuals, have foreign policy attitudes and behaviors. In social psychological sense, attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive and dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related (Allport, 1935:810). It refers to tendency that cannot be observed but that is attributed to an individual out of individual's observable behaviors. To put it another way, attitude is a

tendency that prepares to behavior (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2012:110; Haddock and Maio, 2008:114). In a similar manner, foreign policy behaviors of states are prepared by their foreign policy attitudes. To illustrate, Turkish foreign policy is independent, peaceful, regards loyalty to national boundaries and law in the sense of its main criteria. Independence, peacefulness, loyalty national boundaries and law are foreign policy attitudes of Turkey, and this attitude is preparatory of Turkish foreign policy behavior. Considering this foreign policy attitude, for instance, Turkey is not expected to wage war as a foreign policy behavior as long as its vital interests are not threatened.

Foreign policy attitudes and behaviors of states emerge in parallel with developments and changes in course of time, and they can change over time as well. At the point of giving meaning to the issue of how foreign policy attitudes of states change and take a fixed form in time, it is possible for International Relations research on foreign policy to *benefit from* social psychological theories of attitude and behavior in general; components of attitude, attitude-behavior relation and consistency between them; and cognitive dissonance that occurs in the absence of such consistency in particular. In this way, to continue the previous example, it will be possible to comprehend the basis of Turkey's adaptation of the certain foreign policy attitudes. Furthermore, in case of an aggressive foreign policy behavior contrary to its peaceful foreign policy attitude, it will be possible to understand and explain the reasons behind this unexpected behavior, how this inconsistency affects Turkey, and what is done in order to get through this inconsistency.

4.2. Diplomacy

Diplomacy appears to be another issue area in International Relations that needs to the explanatory power of social psychological accounts. In the classical sense, diplomacy is defined to be the art and practice of conducting negotiations by means of state representatives. States sustain their foreign policies by the agency of diplomacy (Berridge, 2005:3). An appropriate definition of diplomacy is the communicative management of international relations, including negotiations that result in a bargain or understanding (Viotti and Kauppi, 2014:219). Conventionally, diplomacy is attributed two types of functions, to be broad and narrow functions. In the broad sense, diplomacy involves various political influencing techniques and methods applied in foreign policy of a state. In the narrow sense, on the other hand, it is thought to be process of mutual communication and conversation conducted through formal representatives of governments (Sönmezoğlu, 2000:323).

Considering these definitions, diplomatic practice is a communication process in its essence. This communication process involves continuous flow of sending messages, understanding messages, accepting and rejecting messages. As it regards the aim of gaining strategic advantage or reaching a mutually acceptable outcome and ensuring its continuity, this

communication is required to be an effective one. Especially public diplomacy that has been in the diplomacy literature since 1965² as a new form of diplomacy beyond the classical diplomacy is an effective communication process in its own right. The success and efficiency of public diplomacy as an effective communication process with its concern to change or at least influence the foreign policy attitude and behavior of the target in its favor relies on parties' knowledge and perception of each other. In this context, International Relations studies on diplomacy in general, and public diplomacy in particular, can, in deed need to, *benefit from* social psychological theories of attitude change, thesis such as message learning and cognitive reaction thesis, and approaches concerning in-group and out-group perception in regard to intergroup relations.

4.3. International Norms

In social sense, norm refers to benefit oriented rules adopted as a result of traditions and customs in a community. In a similar manner, international community has a number of legal norms that are defined with regard to the principles of international law, thought to be universal and infrangible, and accepted to be peremptory. In the language of international law, these legal norms are called as *jus cogens* (Linderfalk, 2008:856). They have their basis in the Article 53 of the Vienna Convention that "[a *jus cogens* norm] is a norm accepted and recognized by the international community of States as a whole as a norm from which no derogation is permitted and which can be modified only by a subsequent norm of general international law having the same character". Despite the fact that international norms as a subject matter of International Relations are studied in the context of international law research, it is argued in this paper that they are highly associated with social psychological issues of social influence and compliance as a form of social influence.

In social psychological terms, compliance emerges as result of social influence and creates similarity between individuals and thereby regularity in social behavior (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2012:72-73). As compliance behavior is requisite for social life, the members of the international community are required to comply with certain norms developed to ensure the continuity of this community and behavioral regularities in the community. Considered in this context, it is probable that social psychological theories and analysis concerning social influence; the emergence of social norms; compliance with social norms; environmental, personal and cultural factors affecting compliance behavior; and types of compliance behavior will bring a new point of view to International Relations research on international norms. In this regard, the issues of why states comply with international norms despite the absence of a higher authority above them; the role of social influence generating from other members of the international society in compliance

² Although its practice as old as the diplomacy itself, the conceptualization of public diplomacy and its inclusion in the literature in the sense it is understood today occurred in 1965.

behavior; the extent of compliance behavior will be able to be analyzed in depth beyond mere legal and political explanations.

Conclusion

International Relations is interested in the issues of war, peace, security, human rights, foreign policy and decision-making, international political economy, globalization, diplomacy, international humanitarian problems, international environmental matters, ethnic and religious violence, gender, and so on in the context of relations between actors of International Relations. These issues are generally covered and their reasons, processes and consequences are analyzed with regard to their political, socio-economic and legal dimensions at the expense of ignoring their social psychological sides, which overshadows the depth and expressiveness of International Relations research.

Up till now, social psychological theories, especially in-group and intergroup approaches, applied to the study of international conflicts, ethnic and religious terror and foreign policy decision-making have contributed to International Relations discipline accidentally for most of the time. International Relations as a discipline concerned with sort of intergroup relations must move beyond this accidental contribution, and resort to social psychological accounts consciously. Considering in this context, it is significant to realize current contributions of social psychology to International Relations and benefit from social psychological theories and thesis in International Relations research in general, and research on foreign policy attitudes and behavior, diplomacy and international norms in particular.

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