

A PLURALIST (SOCIAL) SCIENCE



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SCIENCE

- *systematic, methodical* links between premises and conclusions
- subject to *public criticism and improvement*
- focused on producing *worldly facts*



PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

- seeks to clarify the logic of scientific practice
- abstraction permits the reconstruction of that logic in artificial purity
- allows a clearer explication of the implications for empirical research
- defuse indefensible claims about knowledge

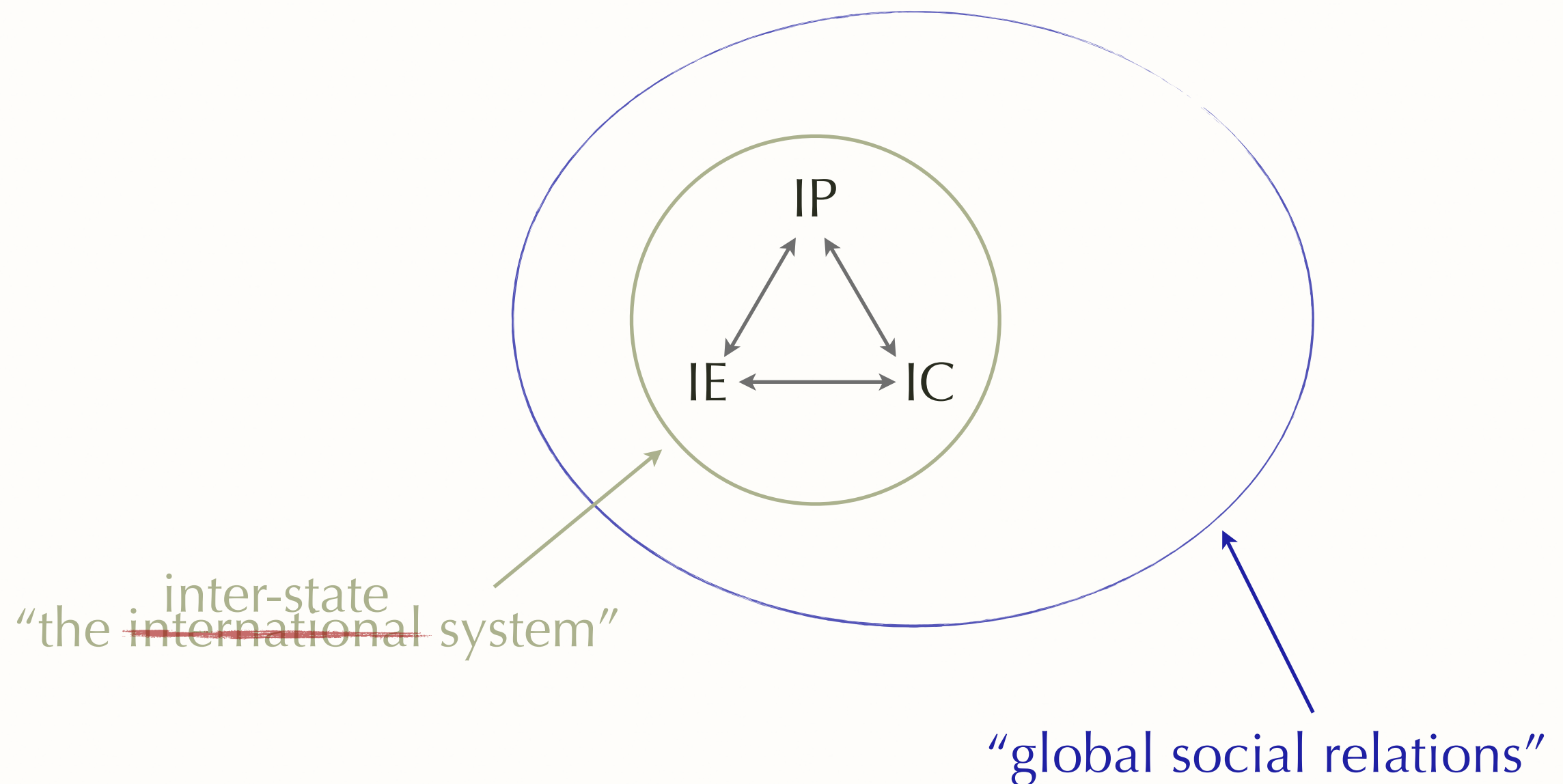


VARIETIES OF ONTOLOGY

- PoS speaks to *philosophical* ontology, not to *scientific* ontology
- scientific ontology: pertains to what objects exist and how they exist
- philosophical ontology: pertains to the mind-world hook-up, subject/object issues
- scientific ontology is the realm of *theory*
- philosophical ontology is the realm of *methodology*

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

“transactions and encounters among multiple worlds”



SCIENCE IS PLURALIST

- no single unified logic of scientific inquiry
- broad agreement that science *isn't* art, ethics, engineering, or politics
- *lots* of room for variation within this space



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METHODOLOGICAL WAGERS

- provisional position on likely unresolvable issues
- philosophical ontology: pertains to mind-world hook-up
 - more fundamental than “epistemology”
- artificially—ideal-typically—dichotomized
- a more adequate lexicon allows us to ask the right questions and have the right debates—about methodology

METHODOLOGICAL WAGERS

- mind-world dualism / mind-world monism
 - *dualism*: mind separate from world, knowledge mirrors the world
 - *monism*: mind continuous with world, knowledge a disclosing of the world
- dualists like testing; monists like analytical depiction

METHODOLOGICAL WAGERS

- phenomenal / transfactual
 - *phenomenal*: knowledge arises from and is bounded by the limits of our experiences
 - *transfactual*: knowledge can go beyond our experiences and grasp deeper truths
- both agree that the limits of experience are not immutably fixed or biologically given

A 2X2 TABLE

wagers	phenomenal	transfactual
mind-world dualism	neopositivism	critical realism
mind-world monism	analyticism	reflexivity

WHAT'S AT STAKE, I

methodology	status of knowledge	evaluation procedure
neopositivism	unfalsified conjecture	hypothesis-testing
critical realism	best approximation to the world	laboratory or transcendental argument
analyticism	useful account	analytical narrative
reflexivity	device for increasing self-awareness	theorize researcher's own social conditions

1. status of our knowledge

WHAT'S AT STAKE, II

methodology	type of causation	causal explanation
neopositivism	empirical generalization	subsume under general law
critical realism	dispositional	INUS-complexes
analyticism	ideal-typical and configurational	counterfactuals
reflexivity	dialectical	disclose unresolved tensions

2. signs of causation

WHAT'S AT STAKE, III

methodology	type of comparison	purpose of comparison
neopositivism	nomothetic	test hypothetical covariations
critical realism	contrasting	elucidate causal powers
analyticism	individualizing	specify particular configurations
reflexivity	de-naturalizing/ incorporating	provoke social change

3. use of case comparison

DIFFERENCE AND DIALOGUE

- no philosophy of science justification for a single uniform view of scientific methodology
- we must begin with difference and distinction in order to have a discussion



DIFFERENCE AND DIALOGUE

- we should be careful of so-called “mixed” research designs
 - can’t simply combine methodologies without privileging one or assimilating others
 - can’t introduce a strict common standard for evaluation without tacitly taking a methodological stance



IN DEFENSE OF PLURALISM

- there is no philosophically defensible alternative to pluralism—but a *rigorous* and *engaged* pluralism
- different methodologies answer different questions
- different approaches to the “same” topic yield diverse knowledge-claims that can be *valid in their own terms*
- this imposes a task of *translation* rather than synthesis
- efforts to be internally consistent afford such contentious conversations

As we approach the third millennium, our needs are different, and the ways of meeting them must be correspondingly rethought. Now, our concern can no longer be to guarantee the stability and uniformity of Science or the State alone: instead, it must be to provide the elbowroom we need in order to protect diversity and adaptability.

—Stephen Toulmin