

International Regimes, International Society, and Theoretical Relations

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Abstract

The concept of international society is developed on the basis of the Grotian tradition that a society of states contains common bonds that brings order that would not be seen in a mere collectivity of sovereign states. The regime theory has been developed with regard to American hegemonic power and its decline. International society school regards the states system itself as a society, while literatures on international regimes hold that states create a set of principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures in various issue-areas within the states system. Though the two literatures have completely the different backgrounds and adopt different methodology, they treat the same phenomena in the states system that states form a cooperative relationship under the anarchical system in order to preserve international order. An international society is a framework in which states can maintain their sovereignty most effectively. States' commitment to their sovereign existence provides a bedrock for the development of regimes in certain economic or social areas. States in a large framework called an international society seek to create and maintain international regimes in certain issue-areas, with an objective of self-preservation. International society is the bedrock in which international regimes constitute a hierarchy.

1. Introduction

The concept of international society is developed by the so-called 'English school' theorists.¹ They set up this notion on the basis of the Grotian tradition that a society of states contains common bonds that brings order that would not be seen in a mere collectivity of sovereign states.² They contend that the European states system has expanded on the rest of the world and became the current global international society. They also seek to explain the behaviour of states with reference to values, rules and institutions that constitute the international society.

In current international studies, much academic attention is paid to international regimes. The interests in regimes have been developed in terms of American hegemonic power; that is, a formation of strong international economic regimes depends on hegemonic power. The decline of the United States as a hegemonic power and its apparent incapability to respond successfully to the rising economic problems during 1970s and 1980s promoted the burst of work on regimes. In the trade regime, protectionist actions pressured the liberal ideals of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) system. The impact of series of debt crises weakened the monetary regime. On the other hand, the policy dilemmas created by the density of international relations generated new forms of cooperation and organisation. The sudden blossoming of literature on international regimes is explicable in terms of growing discontent with existing approaches in international relations, such as realism

¹ The English school theorists include C. A. W. Manning, Martin Wight, Hedley Bull, Adam Watson, James Mayall, and others.

² A. Claire, Cutler, 'The "Grotian Tradition" in International Relations', *Review of International Studies* 17 (1991) p.42.

and institutionalism. That is, these situations cannot be accounted for by in terms of distribution of power among states or in terms of integration and related institutional arrangements.³

The two schools have completely the different backgrounds, but they share an important characteristic: they explain why sovereign states cooperate to maintain their relations in an international anarchy lacking a centralised authority.

This paper attempts to make clear the relations of the two literatures. In the first section, the nature of international politics is outlined. Then, the constitution of international society is sketched. The meaning, role, and principles of international society are examined. The third section moves a focus to international regimes. After defining the regime, the crucial issues such as the origin and necessity of regimes are investigated. In the last section, the pivotal issue, the relation of the two schools, including the different and similar characteristics, is discussed.

2. The nature of international politics

The most fundamental assumption describing international politics is anarchy. The states system is a politically fragmented system that lacks an authority to manage and to manipulate conflicting parties. Among states, the state of nature is a state of war. In the domestic system that admits the existence of an authorised government, the people must abide by the command of the authority. On the other hand, in the states system, which is composed of sovereign states, none is entitled to command: none is required to obey.⁴ As the realists assert, international politics is, basically, a struggle for power among independent actors in a state of anarchy. Among states that pursue their own goals without paying attention to moral or legal restrictions and distrust each other, there is always a risk that conflicts and wars may be brought about. States, self-serving actors, view the maintenance of security and the drive for power as primary goals.

Nonetheless, in the real international scene, collaborative relations among states are seen in various spheres. International organisations such as the United Nations have played crucial roles concerned with a promotion of human rights, a preservation of global environments, and settlement of international disputes. International law to regulate state behaviour has also developed from the collaboration among states. Economic cooperation has continued to stabilise economic situations and to promote world welfare. A crucial question of the study of international relations is why cooperation among states is seen in the anarchic states system. Both concepts of international society and international regimes provide an answer to this question.

3. International society

What is international society

What is the concrete shape of an international society? Bull defines it as follows: 'a society of states (or international society) exists when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one

³ Hans, Keman and Dietmar, Braun, 'Economic Interdependence, International Regimes, and Domestic Strategies of Industrial Adjustment', *European Journal of Political Research* 15 (1987) p.548.

⁴ Kenneth N., Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p.88.

another, and share in the working of common institutions'.⁵ It is important to distinguish the concept of international society from the similar concepts, international system and world society. The international system is formed when states interact enough to have sufficient impact on one another's decisions.⁶ The international system lacks the recognition of common interests and consent of common rules and institutions seen in the international society. On the other hand, while the international society consists of states, the world society is composed of individuals. In the world society, common values and rules are shared at the individual level.

Historically, the development of an international society is described as an expansion of the European states system on the rest of the world over the last five centuries.⁷ This system was formed at first as Christian international society in which rules of co-existence were enacted according to natural law, and a diplomatic institution was created. In the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the concept of sovereignty was developed as an attribute of state, and states respected one another's sovereignty. International law arose from the cooperation among states in this period. The European international society gradually expanded, at first to non-Western states such as the Ottoman Empire, Japan and China, which accepted European values, and then to all the new states that emerged from decolonisation after the Second World War. The European international society eventually has become a global international society.

Martin Wight and Hedley Bull are the two major English School theorists who developed the notion of international society. Wight introduces different aspects of the modern states system and of other historical states systems.⁸ His historical analysis is based on the assumption that 'a states system will not come into being without a degree of cultural unity among its members'.⁹ At the heart of his theory, there is a debate between three patterns of thought: Machiavellism, Kantianism, and Grotianism.¹⁰ Wight takes neither Machiavellism, which denies the existence of an effective international society, nor Kantianism, which posits that international society is a chrysalis for the community of mankind. He argues that the Grotian tradition is embedded in the Western values in the form of the political philosophy of constitutional governments and the quality of a *via media*.¹¹

Hedley Bull develops the notion of international society from the viewpoint of international order. The goals of the international society are the maintenance of the independence of individual states and the preservation of the states system itself. Bull explains them in the terms of international order, which means 'a pattern or disposition of international activity that sustains those goals of the society of states'.¹² In order to attain the goals, the states in the international society share common

⁵ Hedley, Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, p.13.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.10.

⁷ Hedley, Bull and Adam, Watson eds., *The Expansion of International Society*, explains various aspects of the expansion of the European international society.

⁸ Hedley, Bull, 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', *British Journal of International Studies* 2 (1976) p.102.

⁹ Martin, Wight, *Systems of States*, p.33.

¹⁰ Martin, Wight, 'Western Values in International Relations', in Herbert, Butterfield and Martin, Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations*, pp.92-97.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp.89-91.

¹² Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, *op.cit.*, p.16.

interests, make up rules to provide behavioural guidelines for the common interests, and set up institutions to make the rules effective.

The development of a sense of common interests is a starting point for the maintenance of international order. This sense stems from the rational calculation that the willingness to accept limitations on their freedom of action will lead to reciprocal benefits to secure their independence or sovereignty.¹³ Mutual respect for sovereignty, the rule that agreements should be kept, and rules limiting resort to violence are regarded as common interests.¹⁴

The sense of common interests does not in itself provide precise guidelines concerning what behaviour is consistent with the goals in the states system. Rules provide the guidelines. Rules are defined as 'general imperative principles which require prescribed classes of persons or groups to behave in prescribed ways'.¹⁵ That the member states accept the rules as legitimate is an important factor to make an international society function. Rules consist of various shapes such as international law, moral rules, custom or established practice, or merely operational rules such as 'rules of the game'.

In international society that lacks the supranational world authority, states themselves act as primary institutions to perform functions to carry out rules. The functions are to make rules socially effective by formulating, communicating, interpreting, and enforcing. In carrying out the functions, states collaborate in the following institutions: the balance of power, international law, the diplomatic mechanism, and the managerial system of the great powers, and so on. In international society, even war operates as the final institution of preserving order. These institutions play roles in symbolising the existence of an international society, giving substance and permanence to their collaboration in carrying out the political functions of international society, and mitigating their propensity to lose sight of common interests.¹⁶

Basic principles of international society

What are the basic principles of an international society? Relationships in an international society are governed by three basic principles. The first is sovereignty that is the basic bedrock of the states and states system. On the one hand, internal sovereignty, which means that the state is the only actor to use force legitimately within its territory, makes it possible to distinguish states from every other kind of social organisation. On the other hand, external sovereignty, which means that the state is not subject to any outside authority, leads to the independence of states and the requirement of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states. Sovereignty gives the *raison-d'être* of states and the basic answer why states maintain international society: to preserve sovereignty.

The second is reciprocity. Reciprocity is regarded as providing the genesis of international society.¹⁷ This is because the prerequisite condition for the establishment of an international society is the willingness of its members to recognise mutual sovereign equality. Reciprocity also gives the foundation for international law,

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.67.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.42.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.54.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.71-74.

¹⁷ R. D., McKinlay and R., Little, *Global Problems and World Order*, p.76.

diplomacy, international organisations, and cooperation in economic and social areas. For instance, the reason why international law is maintained, even in the absence of an enforcement authority, is that rules of international law derive their authority from the 'automatic working of the principle of reciprocity'.¹⁸

The third principle is the balance of power. The notion of sovereignty creates states, and reciprocity supports sovereign equality and forms the states system. However, states and the states system are in an anarchical relationship and there exists the need to accommodate disparities in power among states. The most important mechanism for meeting this need is the balance of power. Many observers criticise the idea that the balance of power serves to sustain international order. The power inequalities, however, are inevitable in the anarchical system, insofar as states pursue power in order to preserve their independence. If one state is preponderant enough to disregard the rights of other states without fear of retaliation, it may lead to the violation of all forms of rules and institutions.¹⁹ Consequently, all states seek to strengthen their power and carry on the struggle for survival. If this is allowed to continue unchecked, state sovereignty may be infringed and the states system may fall into chaos. The states in international society keep the balance of power with a purpose of avoiding this situation. The great powers are important actors to maintain the balance of power. War may be used to preserve the balance of power. The balance of power in international society is different from that in a state of nature. While the latter stems from states struggling to preserve their own existence, the former only emerge from the recognition that states have common interests in preventing the emergence of a hegemonic power.²⁰ This is a highly calculated mechanism.

4. International regimes

What are international regimes

International regimes has been defined in various ways according to the analysts since John Ruggie first introduced this concept to international relations in 1975.²¹ But the most prominent definition is given by Krasner: 'sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations. Principles are beliefs of fact, causation, and rectitude. Norms are standards of behaviour defined in terms of rights and obligations. Rules are specific prescriptions or proscriptions for action. Decision-making procedures are prevailing practices for making and implementing collective choice'.²²

It is important to distinguish between principles and norms on the one hand, and rules and procedures on the other. Since principles and norms are considered as the basic defining characteristics of a regime, changes in them means those of the regime itself. By contrast, rules and procedures may be altered within regimes underpinned by principles and norms.²³ Regimes can be viewed as neither as broad as international

¹⁸ Schwarzenberger, Georg, *Power Politics: A Study of World Society*, p.203.

¹⁹ Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, *op.cit.*, p.108.

²⁰ McKinlay and Little, *op.cit.*, pp.79-80.

²¹ Ruggie, John Gerard 'International Responses to Technology: Concepts and Trends' *International Organization* 29 (1975) pp.557-83.

²² Stephen D., Krasner, 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequence: Regimes As Intervening Variables', in Stephen D., Krasner, ed., *International Regimes*, p.2.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp.3-4.

structure, nor as narrow as formal international organisations.²⁴ They are intervening variables standing between basic characteristics of world politics such as power capabilities, and state behaviours.

The regime theory is based on the systemic analysis developed by neorealist approach, and seeks to define the regime neither as broad as international structure, nor as narrow as formal international organisations. The regime analysts seek to answer the question of why the interests of states tend toward cooperation rather than toward the creation of discord in an anarchical states system by demonstrating that there exist relatively permanent frameworks within which discord is subjected to a certain degree of cooperation.²⁵

Regime formation

One of the most critical spheres in regime theory is the search for determinants of its formation: how and under what conditions do regimes develop. Although there are several approaches toward the issue, the most prominent explanation is the hegemonic stability model. The model argues that the presence of a dominant great power is of great importance not only to the initial formation of regimes, but also to the maintenance of order over time. The rise or fall of a hegemonic actor leads to the emergence or decline of the international regimes.²⁶ Yet empirical facts do not support the model. For example, Krasner holds that there are three periods in which the relationship between hegemony and trade openness does not coincide: for the years 1900 to 1913, 1919 to 1939, and 1960 to the present.²⁷ In reality, although American hegemonic power waned after 1970s, the trade regime did not weaken. While there were the emergence of sectoral barriers, the decline in dispute settlement procedures, GATT functioned as a multilateral forum, and the tariffs reduced critically during 1960s and 1970s. The model accounts well for the rise of liberal system such as the British-led liberalism of the nineteenth-century, and the U.S.-dominated post-war period of the 1950s and 1960s. It cannot, however, apply to a period of hegemony decline. The dominance of a single great power may contribute to order in world politics in particular circumstances, but it is not a sufficient condition.²⁸

The hegemonic stability model should be supplemented by other explanations.²⁹ The most plausible theory for this objective is the egoistic self-interests approach. According to the approach, states, which are rational egoistic actors, attempt to take rational choices to maximise their own utility function. For this purpose, they abstain from short-term interests which may result in future losses that exceed present gains, and accept constraints on their actions. Stein accounts for the perspective by

²⁴ Stephan, Haggard and Beth A., Simmons, 'Theories of International Regimes', *International Organization* 41 (1987) p.492.

²⁵ Keman, and Braun, *op.cit.*, p.549.

²⁶ Robert, Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987) pp.72-80.; Robert O, Keohane, 'The Theory of Hegemonic Stability and Changes in International Economic Regimes, 1967-1977', in Ole R, Holsti, et al, eds., *Change in the International System*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980) pp.131-62.

²⁷ Stephen D., Krasner, 'State Power and the Structure of International Trade', *World Politics* 28 (1976) pp.338-43.

²⁸ Robert O., Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, p.46.

²⁹ Although the power-based and interest-based approaches are the major theories of international regimes, there is the third knowledge-based approach.

suggesting that the self-interest calculation that lies at the root of the anarchic international system lays the foundation for international regimes as a form of international order, and it leads actors to abandon independent decision making in favour of joint decision making.³⁰ The assumption asserts that states view interests in forming regimes in the anarchical setting.

This incentive is explained by the game theory approach or collective action approach. The game of Prisoners' Dilemma indicates that if information available to each player about others is limited, a rational actor chooses the strategy of defection. However, if the game is played repeatedly by the same players, it is generally agreed that players may rationally cooperate. Small groups also have an incentive to take collective action such as regime formation, because each member in the group will find that his personal gain from having the collective good exceeds the total cost of providing part of that collective good.³¹ The actors in small group can keep close contact with one another, monitor each other's behaviour, and react strategically to one another.³² These approaches can explain the conditions under which regimes are maintained, but they are not sufficient to explain why regimes actually arise.³³ This point is well accounted for by the functional approach.

Keohane, the leading theorist of the functional approach, analyses regime formation using microeconomic theories of 'political market failure'. He contends that egoistic states rationally calculate whether the opportunity costs of belonging to a regime outweigh those of some alternative course of behaviour.³⁴ The benefits that regimes provide are likely to balance the costs of formation and maintenance when there are asymmetric information, moral hazard, and potential dishonesty. Regimes perform the valuable function of filling the need derived from the deficiency of the self-help system. Regimes provide legal liability that establishes stable and mutual expectation about others' patterns of behaviour and develops working relationship. Regimes also provide relatively symmetrical information to the members, reducing level of uncertainty and risks of making agreements. Furthermore, regimes reduce transaction costs of legitimate bargains and increases them for illegitimate ones. International regimes can facilitate informal contact and communication among officials, and permit governments to attain objectives that would otherwise be difficult or impossible. The cost of forming regimes will become low when there exists a high level of formal and informal communication among states under conditions of complex interdependence.³⁵

In summary, self-interests determine the regime formation, under the conditions that the Prisoners' Dilemma or the collective action exists and regimes provide significant benefits. The hegemonic distribution of power should be viewed as one determinant of interests.

³⁰ Arthur A. Stein, 'Coordination and Collaboration: Regimes in an Anarchic World', in Stephen D. Krasner, ed., *op.cit.*, p.132.

³¹ Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, pp.33-34.

³² Keohane, *After Hegemony*, *op.cit.*, p.76.

³³ Haggard and Simmons, *op.cit.*, p.506.

³⁴ Keohane, *After Hegemony*, *op.cit.*, p.104.

³⁵ Krasner, 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequence: Regimes As Intervening Variables', *op.cit.*, p.12.

5. Relation between international society and international regimes

Similarities

Although the schools of international society and international regimes have been developed with the different backgrounds, they share several similar perspectives. First of all, both theories have similar characteristics. They are Anglo-Saxon theories. International society itself has its origin in a European states system. The rules and institutions as well as values are mainly developed from the Western thought and political practice. The theory of international regimes is part of the American study of international relations, which accounts for the change of international system caused by the erosion of American hegemonic power. In addition, both theories share a functional character. Bull's explanation of the development of international society is based on the perspective that international society is the best framework for keeping international order. International regimes, as noted previously, perform important functions of reducing information and transaction costs and facilitating the smooth operation of states in the fragmented political system.

In the second place, realist perspectives are shared in both theories. Both theories are state-centred, regarding states as primary actors in world politics. Bull considers states as the essential actors in international relations and the primary units of analysis. Most of the regime theorists, who focus on the behaviour of states such as drive for power or rational choice action, also view states as the principal actors in international life. For instance, Zacher argues that 'in the present world, states are still the dominant international actors, and their preferences and power relations shape evolutionary patterns of collaboration'.³⁶ Furthermore, their discussion proceeds on the premise that anarchy is the fundamental condition underlying international politics. They assume that in the self-help system, egoistic states pursue their self-interests. The characteristic of realist strain is also seen their lean to power politics paradigm. While Bull regards the balance of power as the most significant institution to maintain international order, the regime approach, especially the hegemonic stability model, explains the regime formation by the distribution of power.

In the third place, both theories seek to explain why sovereign states cooperate in the international setting without an effective centrally governed mechanism. Bull accounts for the reason by the assumption that there exists a certain society in which states share the goals to maintain their independent sovereignty and the states system itself. International society theorists argue that states share common interests and values, and there exist formal and informal, explicit and implicit rules and institutions to uphold them. They also hold that anarchy is not synonymous with disorder or chaos, and cooperative and norm-governed behaviour of states can exist even in the anarchical setting.³⁷ The regime analysts, on the other hand, challenge the view of anarchy by demonstrating that there exist regimes in which cooperative patterns of state behaviour are created and maintained. The egoistic states view mutual interests in cooperating to create regimes that would facilitate state control over certain important sectors of their economies or societies.³⁸

In the fourth place, the same kind of criticisms is given to both theories. The first criticism is that both are unduly Western-centred theories. International society

³⁶ Mark W., Zacher, 'Toward a Theory of International Regimes', *Journal of International Affairs* 44 (1990) p.153.

³⁷ Cutler, *op.cit.*, p.63.

³⁸ Zacher, *op.cit.*, p.142.

theorists see that the decay of the Western cultural-based values with the rise of the Third World power results in the decline of international society. Yet as Buzan suggests, 'this perspective is not only ethnocentrically narrow and misleadingly gloomy, but also mistaken'.³⁹ The expansion of its members naturally leads to a change of the values embodied in international society. Given that the international society covers most parts of the globe, new values and standards should be formulated and added to old ones. The conceptions of human right for individuals elaborated by Western states and egalitarian economic justice between states that is asked for non-Western states are considered as such new values.⁴⁰ On the other hand, the regime approach is too American-centred. The prominent explanation of regime change is the hegemonic stability model. Regime theorists, by and large, regard the erosion of American hegemonic power as the regime weakening. Yet many non-Americans see 'the restoration of Europe and Japan to the status of major powers as a healthy development rather than as a cause for concern'.⁴¹

Secondly, both theories are too static. Not only does Bull regard order as a constituent of the international states system at all times since the writings of Grotius, but has also no answer to the question of how specific evolutions are pertinent to particular growth or regression.⁴² The notion of regimes tends to exaggerate the static quality of arrangements for managing the international system.⁴³ Regime analysts unduly focus their efforts on searching for general rules governing the nature, origin, or change of regimes.

Thirdly, both theories are state-centred. Bull contends that 'the doctrine of human rights and duties under international law is subversive of the whole principle that mankind should be organised as a society of sovereign states'.⁴⁴ He also regards the claims of transnational actors to international personality as carrying the seeds of subversion of the society of sovereign states.⁴⁵ Although some regime analysts admit the limited roles of non-state actors, most of them cling to the state-centric paradigm.⁴⁶ As the international system becomes dense, highly interdependent relationships between non-state actors give crucial influence on domestic and inter-state relations. Because of universal structural change caused by accelerating technological change, liberalisation of finance, and low-cost transnational communication, the operations of multinational corporations have expanded to all corners of the globe, and their role in the international scene has become extremely important.⁴⁷ The fact that regimes often

³⁹ Barry, Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, p.167.

⁴⁰ Adam, Watson, 'Hedley Bull: States Systems and International Societies', *Review of International Studies* 13 (1987) p.152.

⁴¹ Oran R., Young, 'International Regimes: Toward a New Theory of Institutions', *World Politics* 39 (1986) p.113.

⁴² Richard, Rosecrance, 'International Theory Revisited', *International Organization* 35 (1981) pp.698-99.

⁴³ Susan, Strange, 'Cave! Hic Dragones!: A Critique of Regime Analysis', in Krasner, ed., *op.cit.*, p.346.

⁴⁴ Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, *op.cit.*, p.152.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.152-53.

⁴⁶ For instance, Donald J., Puchala and Raymond F., Hopkins, 'International Regimes: Lessons from Inductive Analysis' in Krasner, ed., *op.cit.*, p.63 regards a sets of elites as the practical actors within regimes.

⁴⁷ Susan, Strange, 'States, Firms and Diplomacy', *International Affairs* 68 (1992) pp.2-4.

regulate the behaviour of non-state actors illustrates that states are no longer the only important actors in world politics.⁴⁸

Differences

What are the most important differences between the two schools? There is a significant difference with respect to an approach to the economic dimension. Neither Wight nor Bull explains international politics with sufficient reference to economic factors.⁴⁹ The international society school, instead, emphasises cultural factors. Wight regards a common culture as a premise of international society. Though Bull pays more attention to the common interests of its members than cultural homogeneity, he also asserts that the future of international society depends on the preservation and extension of a cosmopolitan culture.⁵⁰ By contrast, international regime theory has developed in the field of international political economy. The notion started by focusing on economic domains such as trade regime, monetary regime, oil regime, and spread to other domains such as security, oceans, and environment.

The difference in the approach to the economic dimension is reflected on a reference to interdependence.⁵¹ Regime theory takes into account interdependence whereas international society theory gives little consideration to it. International society perspective is based on the assumption that states are completely independent and states attempt to preserve their independence. The existence of regimes, which calls on governments to act in prescribed manners when dealing with some specific issues, shows that states are not totally independent.⁵² The propensity for higher interdependence in the current international scene contributes to greater demand for international regimes and to more extensive regimes.⁵³ Regime theory, in a sense, brings the interdependence and realist perspective together in a common framework.

Second, whereas literature on international society considers the states system as 'society' rather than 'system', regime theory starts with 'system'.⁵⁴ The former posits that the states system develops from an international system to an international society. States from different cultures or civilisations work out the rules and institutions in a system. The regulatory rules and institutions of the system usually develop to the point where the members become conscious of common values and the system become an international society.⁵⁵ The literature on international regimes is a theory of international system. They have no idea to regard the states system as more than 'system'. Most of the regime analysts see the crucial cause of the change in the in-

⁴⁸ Richard L., O'Meara, 'Regimes and Their Implications for International Theory', *Millennium* 13 (1984) p.252 reinforces the point by raising examples such as deep sea mining regime which affects mining corporations, and monetary regimes which affect the dealings of banks, corporations and other financial institutions.

⁴⁹ Bull, 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', *op.cit.*, p.112. Rosecrance, *op.cit.*, p.699-700.

⁵⁰ Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, *op.cit.*, pp.316-17.

⁵¹ Tony, Evans and Peter, Wilson, 'Regime Theory and the English School of International Relations: A Comparison', *Millennium* 21 (1992) pp.342-44.

⁵² O'Meara, *op.cit.*, p.251.

⁵³ Robert O., Keohane, 'The Demand for International Regimes' in Krasner, ed., *op.cit.*, p.157.

⁵⁴ Stanley, Hoffmann, 'Hedley Bull and his Contribution to International Relations', *International Affairs* 62 (1986) p.185.

⁵⁵ Watson, *op.cit.*, p.151.

ternational system as a result of distribution of power.

Third, there is a difference with respect to theoretical features. The international society perspective is a holistic analysis that highlights the whole system and regards the states system itself as international society.⁵⁶ The English school sought to explain the prevalence of order in international society as a whole. In addition, both Wight and Bull leave space to posit that states are subject to the moral and legal constraints embodied in international society.⁵⁷ International regime school focuses on narrow areas in the international scene, asserting that there exist regimes in various issue-areas within the states system. Regime theory also adopts a scientific method. The theory is based on systemic level of analysis of neo-realist approach, in which the actors' characteristics are given by assumption rather than treated as variables. Changes in outcomes are explained not on the basis of variations in actors' characteristics, but on the basis of changes in the attributes of the system itself.⁵⁸

Relations between the two theories

How do the two theories relate to one another? The relation can be well understood from the viewpoint of the nature of the states system. The states system is basically characterised by anarchy. A security dilemma always exists among states. The power growth of one state leads to a direct threat to the well-being of other states. On the other hand, there are spheres characterised by peaceful and collaborative relation among states. In these domains, states create a set of rules, standards, norms and even binding regulations to allocate values, to regularise procedures, and to manage resources.⁵⁹ This means that even in an anarchical system, states can cooperate to create a network of laws, which enable them to maintain international order. International society is subtler than the domain of regimes or the very explicit rules and norms that successfully regulate transactions between states. The international scene is more than just a collectivity of states: it is a certain type of society. Despite the seeming anarchy, this society regulates the major forms of behaviour of international constituents through the rules and institutions that dampen anarchy, such as international law, diplomatic mechanism, the balance of power, and even war. There are, under the basis of these devices, the consensus among states with regard to what is acceptable and what is unacceptable. In the international society, anarchy is compatible with order that is a crucial factor for society. This is demonstrated in the title of Bull's book, 'Anarchical Society'.

International society school regards the states system itself as a society, while the literature on international regimes holds that there exist collaborative and peaceful relations among states within the states system. The regime theory analyses international politics by highlighting the parts in the states system. Although the two theories adopt different methodology, they treat the same phenomena in the states system that states form a cooperative relationship under the anarchical system in order to preserve international order.

An international society is a framework in which states can maintain their sovereignty most effectively. States' commitment to their sovereign existence provides bedrock for the development of a host of rules or norms in certain economic or social

⁵⁶ Evans and Wilson, *op.cit.*, p.339.

⁵⁷ Cutler, *op.cit.*, p.53; Rosecrance, *op.cit.*, p.693.

⁵⁸ Keohane, 'The Demand for International Regimes', *op.cit.*, p.143.

⁵⁹ K. J., Holsti, 'The Necrologists of International Relations', *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 18 (1985) pp.691-92.

areas.⁶⁰ Because all states that keep their independence in international society are committed to maintain their control over certain important sectors of their economies and societies, and keep out of external control. If international regimes strengthen state control over these areas and prevent foreign incursions on their control, states rationally find common interests in supporting them. International regime is a transformed notion of international society. States in a large framework called an international society seek to create and maintain international regimes in certain issue-areas, with an objective of self-preservation. The existence of regimes in important issue-areas presupposes the existence of an international society. Therefore, international society can be seen as the bedrock in which international regimes constitute a hierarchy. The most important regime is sovereignty which is the constitutive principle of the present international system.⁶¹ From the point of order-preservation in the international scene, the two theories are talking about the same thing.⁶²

6. Conclusion

Both regime theory and the English school of international society contribute to the development of international relations theory. The international society school combines the notion of society with the realist assumptions of classical tradition. The regime theory plays 'a constructive role in promoting a reintegration of the sub-fields of international politics, economics, law, and organisation'.⁶³ However, there are some major criticisms. Most of them are concerned with the traditional paradigms of international politics on which the two bodies of thought are by and large based. The assertion that states are the essential actors in international relations is weakened by the evidence that individuals are recognised as subjects of international scene under international human rights law, and a number of non-state actors such as multinational corporations play a crucial role. As seen in the demand of the New International Economic Order (NIEO), the new comers of the global international society seek to modify the old Western values, and introduce new values that meet their demands.

One way to overcome the limitations of the theories is to compensate for each weaknesses and synthesise their basic perspectives. While regime theory is lacking in historical perspective, the English school is weak in incorporating economic and technological factors, taking account of security and order.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the two bodies of thought would become more solid theories by paying more consideration to interdependence. While earlier work on regimes focused on interdependence, recent work reverts to an approach which sees states as unified and rational actors. The growing interdependence has made states sensitive and vulnerable to forces beyond their control. When states form foreign policy, they cannot but take into account the effect of non-state actors and domestic political processes and decisions. If the two schools paid due consideration to these spheres, they would yield more fruitful outcome.

⁶⁰ Zacher, *op.cit.*, p.143.

⁶¹ Krasner, 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequence', *op.cit.*, p.18.

⁶² Buzan, *op.cit.*, p.174.

⁶³ Young, *op.cit.*, p.121.

⁶⁴ Evans and Wilson, *op.cit.*, pp.350-51.

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