

Grotian System

Customary law refers to practices that have been widely accepted as binding by states over time. The jurist and legal scholar Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) is attributed with the first articulation of the principles of customary law in his treatise *On the Law of War and Peace*. He noted the existence of common practices whose routine observance by governments led to their acceptance as required behavior in relations among states. For instance, the practice of diplomatic immunity was typically granted to the representatives of host governments. This was to avoid the practice of "killing the messenger."

The states are the principal actors in the system of international law. The system assumes:

1. States are juridically equal;
2. states enjoy full sovereignty;
3. enjoy territorial integrity and political independence;
4. exercise the rights and responsibilities of other states in the international community.

Idealism and realism

	realism	idealism
units	nation state	community
system	anarchic	cooperation
goals	national self-help	common welfare
means	alliance	arms control
	balance of power	diplomacy
	pragmatic	morality, ideology

Periods in the Modern International Community

European Balance of Power	1648-1789
19th Century Balance of Power (Pax Britannica)	1812 - 1914
Inter-war System	1919-1939
Bipolar system	1945-1989
Contemporary system	1990-present

Zhou Dynasty

One candidate for the first example of an "international system" is the Zhou (Tso) Dynasty. Chinese history speaks of three stages in the Zhou Dynasty, the spring period, the autumn period, and the warring states period. The dynasty comes to an end with the establishment of the Qin (Ching) Dynasty in 221 BC.

1,100	770	476	403	221	0
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empire	spring	autumn	warring states	Qin	

Power Transition

A *power transition*, that is a change from one distribution of power to another, played a key role in the downfall of the Hellenic city-state system.

The Greek chronicler of the Peloponnesian war, **Thucydides**, said that the "growth of Athenian power was the cause of the war."

Balance of Power

The idea of the "balance of power system" is subtle. It is a configuration of states which is designed to:

- 1) prevent the establishment of a universal hegemony, or dominance, by any one state;
- 2) preserve the constituent elements of the system and the system itself;
- 3) ensure stability and mutual security in the international system; and
- 4) strengthen and prolong the peace by deterring war, that is by confronting an aggressor with the likelihood that a policy of expansion would meet with the formation of a coalition.

Maintaining a Balance of Power

The balance of power was maintained through a number of mechanisms, all of which relied upon the natural facilities of the individual state, not upon any international organization.

These included:

- 1) a policy of divide and rule (working to diminish the weight of the heavier side);
- 2) territorial compensations after a war;
- 3) the creation of buffer states;
- 4) the formation of alliances; 5) establishment of spheres of influence;
- 6) direct intervention when necessary;
- 7) diplomatic bargaining;
- 8) legal and peaceful settlements of disputes;
- 9) cooperative reduction and control of armaments;
- 10) armament races; and, sometimes, 11) war.

The Security Dilemma

The security dilemma, as defined by John Herz, notes that individuals living in

an anarchic society must be concerned about their security from being attacked, subjected, dominated or annihilated by other groups and individuals. Striving to maintain security from such attack, they are driven to acquire more and more power in order to escape the power of others. This, in turn, renders the others more insecure and compels them to prepare for the worst. Since none can ever feel entirely secure in such a world of competing units, power competition ensues, and the vicious circle of security and power accumulation is on.

Realism and Idealism

Realism

- 1 fundamental unit was nation state
- 2 system is best characterized as self help, brutish
- 3 alliances useful
- 4 states pursue self interest
- 5 sic vis pacem para bellum
- 6 balance of power affords protection
- 7 pragmatic

The paradigm statement: Metternich's dictum "There are no allies, only interests"

Idealism

- 1 community of nations, community is stressed
- 2 system is one of cooperation, international law
- 3 collective security
- 4 states act to promote common welfare, even sometime subordinate a state's self interest to whole
- 5 arms control, disarmament, avoidance of provocation
- 6 balance of power is not key
- 7 morality and ideology

Woodrow Wilson: "force will not accomplish anything permanent."

System Stability and Low-level Equilibrium Traps

Physical model of stability: (Assume smooth surface, gravity)

