

# Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables

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## **ABSTRACT:**

In a specific issue-area, player expectations converge around certain principles, norms, regulations, and decision-making processes, which are referred to as international regimes. Regimes have first been viewed as intervening variables that stand between fundamental causative causes and associated consequences and behaviour. There are three perspectives on the significance of regimes: conventional structural orientations dismiss them as at best ineffective; grotian orientations see them as an integral part of the international system; and modified structural perspectives see them as important only under specific constrained circumstances. The development of a regime is viewed as a function of five fundamental causal factors in Grotian and modified structuralist arguments, which support the idea that regimes can affect outcomes and behaviour: egoistic self-interest, political power, diffuse norms and principles, custom and usage, and knowledge.

## **KEYWORDS:**

International, Power, Principles, Regimes.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Regimes are collections of implicit or explicit rules, conventions, and decision-making processes that shape the expectations of participants in a particular field of international relations. Principles are convictions about reality, causality, and morality. In terms of rights and responsibilities, norms are standards of conduct. Rules are detailed instructions or directives for behavior. Common practices for choosing and putting into action a group decision are called decision-making processes. This use is in line with more current formulations [1], [2]. For instance, Keohane and Nye describe regimes as "systems of governing arrangements" that contain "networks of rules, norms, and procedures that regularize behavior and manage its consequences. According to Haas, a regime consists of a collection of practices, laws, and standards that are mutually consistent. In reference to the significance of rules and institutions in global society, Hedley Bull uses somewhat different language. He defines rules as "general imperative principles which require or authorize prescribed classes of persons or groups to behave in prescribed ways." Bull uses institutions to create, communicate, administer, enforce, interpret, legitimize, and change norms in order to ensure that they are followed. Regimes need to be seen as more than just ad hoc structures that alter as power or interest dynamics change. Keohane points out that there has to be a fundamental analytical difference between regimes and agreements. Agreements are sporadic and often "one-shot" agreements. Regimes are designed to make agreements easier. The shift in interest and power affects conduct. Kaplan's conception of the balance of power, in which equilibrium requires adherence to rules that restrain immediate, short-term power maximization (especially not destroying an essential actor), is a regime; Waltz's conception, in which states are driven by systemic pressures to repetitive balancing behavior, is not a regime [3], [4].

Similar to this, regime-governed conduct cannot be entirely determined by short-term interest calculations. The utility function that is being maximized must reflect some sense of universal duty since regimes incorporate principles and norms. Jervis's examination of security regimes places a strong emphasis on one such notion, reciprocity. When governments embrace reciprocity, they will set aside their immediate needs in the knowledge that other actors will do the same in the future, even if they are not legally obligated to. This definition is comparable to Fred Hirsch's clever analysis of friendship; in which he claims that friendship is equivalent to a private economic good since it involves direct mutual trade. However, it often goes well beyond that. The 'transaction' of friendship might be assumed to be beneficial to both parties in the long run because of its longevity. However, it is very doubtful that the transaction will ever be equally balanced on both sides. Regime-

governed action in the international system is distinguished from more traditional activity, which is only driven by narrow calculations of interest, by the infusion of principles and standards into conduct [5], [6].

Principles and norms must be distinguished from rules and processes on the basis of certain basic principles. A regime's fundamental defining traits are provided by its principles and norms. The same concepts and standards may be followed through a variety of rules and decision-making processes. Rules and decision-making processes may vary within regimes as long as guiding concepts and standards remain the same. Principles and standards that change reflect changes to the system. When standards and principles are abandoned, either a new regime emerges or existing regimes vanish from a particular issue-area. Rules and processes are not as important in the fundamental political debates as norms and ideals. Different interpretations may be made of the latter's changes. For instance, recent changes to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATI) Articles of Agreement provide for less developed nations (LDCs) to get special and unequal treatment. Generalized systems of preferences for LDCs have been implemented in all developed nations [7], [8].

The most-favored-nation treatment of all parties, one of the fundamental principles of the liberal postwar system, is broken by such restrictions. The industrialized countries, however, have seen these rule changes as transitory deviations brought on by the unique conditions in less developed places. After the Tokyo Round, the American-driven notion of graduation was legally included into the GATT Articles. Graduation asserts that as nation's progress, they will embrace laws based on liberal ideas. Therefore, politicians from the North have decided to consider the preferential treatment of emerging nations as a shift in the system. On the other side, speakers from the Third World have argued that redistribution and fairness, rather than nondiscrimination and efficiency, should be the fundamental principles of the international economic system. They see rule changes as regime changes because they associate them with fundamental shifts in underlying assumptions. There is a key distinction between seeing rule changes as signs of internal regime transition and seeing them as signs of external regime change. Determining if principles and norms have changed as well is what makes the difference. These evaluations are never simple since they cannot be based on unbiased behavioral observations. "We recognize departures from regimes," Ruggie asserts, "not only by actions that are committed, but by the intentionality and acceptability given to those acts in the context of an intersubjective framework of meaning [9], [10].

## II. DISCUSSION

Finally, it is important to differentiate between changes within or across regimes and a regime weakening. A regime has weakened if its guiding concepts, conventions, regulations, and methods of decision-making become less consistent, or if actual behavior diverges more and more from these elements. Even if another government has not taken its place, the liberal regime has weakened when emerging nations are treated differently or with special consideration. spying on diplomats under diplomatic cover, bugging embassies, assassinating The murder of diplomats by terrorists, as well as the lack of effective local police protection, are all signs that the traditional system of safeguarding foreign diplomats has deteriorated. However, the covert nature of these operations suggests that fundamental values and conventions are not being explicitly questioned. On the other hand, the kidnapping of American diplomats by organizations that the Iranian government has sanctioned poses a fundamental threat to the regime itself. Iran went beyond just breaking laws and regulations. In conclusion, altering rules and decision-making processes but not norms or principles is what happens when a regime changes, while norms and principles are altered when a regime weakens due to incoherence between its constituent parts or inconsistency with related behavior.

### Do regimes matter?

The first analysis of regimes therefore presupposed the collection of causal linkages show in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Analysis of Regimes [researchgate].**

Regimes do not develop on their own. They are not seen as being goals in and of themselves. Once implemented, they do have an impact on connected actions and results. They go beyond being epiphenomenal. An important analytical problem is the independent influence of regimes. According to the second causal arrow, regimes do matter. There isn't a consensus on this matter, however, and there are three main orientations that may be identified. The traditional structural approach considers the notion of a regime irrelevant, if not deceptive. According to modified structural, regimes could be important, but only under very specific circumstances.

According to Grotian, regimes are far more prevalent and are fundamental characteristics of any intricate, enduring pattern of human activity. According to the common view, regimes, if they can even be claimed to exist, have little to no influence. Simply put, they are epiphenomenal. The underlying causal model assumes a direct relationship between changes in fundamental causative causes (economic or political) and adjustments in behavior and results. Regimes are either fully omitted or their influence on results and associated behavior is discounted. The universe of logical, self-seeking agents is conceptualized by structural orientations. The actors might be people, businesses, organisations, classes, or governments. Their own interests, power, and interactions establish the system or environment in which they operate. The idea that beliefs, conventions, guidelines, and methods of decision-making have a substantial influence on actions and behavior is rejected by these orientations.

There is no better example of this than the market, which serves as the dominant analytic framework for economics, the most prosperous of the social sciences. A market is defined as an exchange based on prices determined in terms of a common medium of exchange, specialization in purchasing and selling, and impersonality between buyers and sellers. According to Max Weber, "social actions are not determined in the market by orientation to any sort of norm which is held to be valid, nor do they rest on custom, but entirely on the fact that the corresponding type of social action is in the nature of the case best adapted to the normal interests of the actors as they themselves are aware of them." The market is a universe of atomized, egotistic, self-seeking people.

The market serves as a potent metaphor for a variety of claims in political science literature, not the least of which is that of international relations. Kenneth Waltz's most recent work serves as an example of this attitude. According to Waltz, the functional similarity and chaotic interaction of the international system's constituent elements (states) is what makes it unique. Only different distributions of relative capacities among players allow international systems to be differentiated from one another. It is thought that states would behave in their own best interests. They "want their own preservation at a minimum and, at a maximum, aim for global dominion," at least. They are solely limited by how they interact with other system states. As a result, behavior depends on how each state is positioned and how much control it has over the other states. Behavior will alter as power distributions change. According to Waltz, the power capacities that underlie regimes can only be separated by a very little distance.

The second regime orientation is structurally changed. The authors begin with a traditional structural realist viewpoint, one in which a world of independent nations aims to maximize its power and interest. The fundamental role of regimes in a world of sovereign states is to coordinate state activity to accomplish desired results in specific problem areas. Such synchronization is appealing in a variety of situations. The number of contexts where regimes may matter is expanding if, as many have suggested, there is a general shift toward a world of complex interconnectedness. Regimes, on the other hand, are not applicable in zero-sum scenarios, because states try to maximize the gap between their utilities and those of others. Regimes are prohibited by pure power motives. So, according to the second perspective, modified structuralism, regimes only emerge and have a considerable influence under certain circumstances. In the majority of instances, there is a direct correlation between fundamental causative factors and associated behavior (route a); nevertheless, in situations that are not exclusively conflictual, where individual decision-making results in less than ideal results, regimes may be important (way b).

In contrast to the previous two structural reasons, the third approach to regimes represents a fundamentally different understanding of international relations. The third perspective sees the market as a regime, but the modified structural approach does not since activity in a perfect market is only based on individual calculation without consideration of other people's conduct. Extended durations of consistent behavior patterns give them normative value. Self-interest calculations alone cannot support a market. In Ruggie's words, it must be a part of a larger social setting that fosters and maintains the circumstances required for its operation. Even the power dynamic, which traditional structural realist analysts see as exclusively conflictual, may be viewed as a regime. Regimes are often created as a result of patterned behavior reflecting calculations of interest, and regimes serve to reinforce patterned behavior. State abstractions are (rarified) concepts. Elites have both international and domestic links. In contrast to an analytical premise, sovereignty is a behavioral characteristic. States have limited power to retain command over all facets of the international system and regulate movements beyond their boundaries. There are other goals than ensuring state existence and security. In terms of international politics, force does not have a particularly significant position. Elites operate within a global network of communication that transcends national borders and embodies laws, conventions, and ideals.

Numerous theoretical postulates created in the years after World War II have been influenced by this minimalist Grotian viewpoint. Functionalism believed that the proliferation of particularistic interests across international

borders may weaken sovereignty. Karl Deutsch distinguished between secure communities and anarchy in his 1957 study on integration, which placed a strong focus on social communication. Some scholars who support the idea of transnationalism have proposed a web of interdependence that renders any focus on sovereignty normatively dubious and analytically unhelpful. The premise of the predominance of force and the problem hierarchy implied by a realist approach are rejected in Keohane and Nye's examination of complex interdependence. According to Ernst Haas, organic ideas such as eco-environmentalism, eco-reformism, and egalitarianism refute prevailing beliefs about power. What matters is one's fundamental assumption about the typical state of international relations, not so much whether one accepts the idea that principles, norms, rules, and decision-making processes impact outcomes and behavior. Regimes are acknowledged by proponents of the Grotian approach as a prevalent and important feature in the international system. Regimes are seen by supporters of a structural realist viewpoint as a phenomena whose existence needs serious justification and whose absence cannot be taken for granted. The two "standard cases" are essentially distinct from one another, and the standard case's definition indicates the underlying theoretical approach. Regimes are phenomena that must be explained from a realist standpoint; from a Grotian viewpoint, they are facts that must be described.

In conclusion, traditional structural explanations do not really consider regimes: if fundamental causative factors change, regimes will likewise shift. Regimes don't affect behavior on their own. Regimes only matter, according to modified structural arguments, when autonomous decision-making results in undesirable results, which are represented in this context by a number of supporters of a realism approach to international relations. Last but not least, Grotian viewpoints acknowledge regimes as an essential component of all structured human interaction, including actions within the international system.

## **Explanations for regime development**

### **1. Self-Centered Egoism**

Egoistic self-interest is the most common justification for the existence of international governments. The desire to maximize one's own utility function when that function excludes the benefit of another party is what I mean when I use the term "egoistic self-interest." Only to the extent that another person's actions could have an impact on their utility are other people's actions of concern to the egoist. From Hobbes to Rawls, all contractarian political systems are founded on egoistic self-interest. Pure power seekers, on the other hand, are more concerned with increasing the power gap between themselves and their opponent. Regimes' involvement in coordinating is not entirely obvious. The creation of rules could be all that is needed for coordination. These regulations will not fit the preceding definition of regimes if they are not based on any nearby principles or standards.

When there is asymmetric knowledge, moral hazard, the possibility of dishonesty, or a high problem density, the advantages of regimes are likely to exceed the costs of regime development and maintenance. Additionally, open political systems with intricate interconnections are more likely to have high levels of official and informal communication across nations, which will minimize the costs of establishing regimes.

### **2. Political Influence**

Political power is the second important fundamental causal factor used to explain the emergence of regimes. Power may be seen from two distinct perspectives. The first is universal and instrumental: power is exercised to ensure that the system as a whole receives the best results. In terms of game theory, power is utilized to encourage joint maximization. It is power used for the greater benefit. The second strategy is specialized and could lead to a conclusion. Power is employed by certain players in the system to advance their ideals. Enhancing power capabilities as well as advancing economic or other goals are examples of these ideals. Power is employed to optimize individual payoffs in game theory. It is power used to further certain interests.

#### **a. Using power for the common good**

A lengthy history in classical and neoclassical economics connected with the provision of public goods represents the first stance. The hidden hand was Adam Smith's most convincing argument: egoism is justified by the benefit of all coming from the selfishness of each. However, Smith understood that the state had to provide some communal goods. These included standards for goods, standards for newborn Structural Causes and Regime Consequences 11 Industries, the maintenance of order, basic welfare standards, and public works. Economists have emphasized the significance of the state in establishing property rights and upholding contracts, i.e., in building the framework that forbids predatory rather than market activity. Institutions that balance public and private rates of return must be developed by the state. According to Keynesian analysis, the state has a significant

role in controlling macroeconomic factors. According to each of these defenses, the goal of government action is to advance society interests in general.

### **b. Using Power to Advance Specific Interests**

It is simpler to discern between two significant variations of the perspective of power in the service of individual interests using a game-theoretic analogy. The first presupposes that rewards are fixed and that an actor's decision about a strategy is made purely based on these rewards. The second is predicated on the idea that power may be utilized to change rewards and affect actor strategy. The first strategy closely resembles the analysis that is employed when just cosmopolitan goals are at play, with the exception that political power is utilized to maximize individual payoffs rather than joint ones. The supply of these regimes is a result of the allocation of power and there is an incentive to develop them under specific interest combinations. According to the notion of hegemonic leadership, regimes would deteriorate in the face of waning hegemony. Without strong leadership, it is difficult to uphold values, norms, standards, and decision-making processes. The collective commodities required to ensure the regime operates efficiently won't be offered by any one player. On the other side, since the hegemon is no longer providing common benefits, there will be more incentives for cooperation as hegemony fades. The global system resembles an oligopoly more than it does a perfect market. Actors are conscious of the impact of their actions on others. Smaller states are more inclined to convert to paying clients when they believe a hegemon is no longer prepared to provide a free ride.

The second line of reasoning around the use of power for particular purposes looks at the potential that strong individuals may be able to change the payoffs that other individuals face or have an impact on the strategies they decide to use. Here, the idea of power takes on a much more significant role since compulsion is present. Weaker performers may not be capable of making decisions on their own. You may alter the values that have been set to a specific cell. The regime is kept captive by the permanence of the current power structure in the international system when a hegemonic state attempts to shape the strategy of other players. The regime will fall if the hegemon's relative capabilities deteriorate. For instance, the colonial regime's standards fell because the big European powers that supported it lost power. The analysis that results from an emphasis on the supply of common goods for either cosmopolitan or particularistic grounds varies from this collection of ideas regarding regime transition and hegemonic decline. Here, a reduction in power results in a change in regime because the hegemon is no longer able to exert control over the reward matrix or influence the tactics of the weak, rather than because an actor is absent to offer the collective goods required for an effective regime to operate.

### **3. Standards and Guidelines**

Norms and principles have been seen as endogenous up to this point in the debate since they are the essential elements that characterize any given regime. However, norms and principles that have an impact on a regime in a certain problem area but are unrelated to that issue area may also be taken into account as reasons for the emergence, survival, and dissolution of regimes. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism by Max Weber is the most well-known illustration of such a statement. According to Weber, the development of a Calvinist theological philosophy that encourages hard effort while forbidding profligacy and views material achievement as a sign of destiny is closely linked to the establishment of capitalism. According to Fred Hirsch, precapitalist ideals like tenacity, selflessness, loyalty, and honor are necessary for capitalist institutions to function. Such standards are essential limits on self-interested calculations that would much too often result in dishonest and unreliable conduct.

The financing provided by numerous pariah organizations throughout the globe is a prime illustration of how noneconomic standards have aided market activity. For instance, Jewish bankers created bills of exchange in the late Middle Ages to prevent violence and extortion from the nobility: it was safer to carry a piece of paper than it was to carry actual currency. The addressee, however, had to respect the document. This demanded a high degree of confidence, and this trust was strengthened through customs: established customs were reinforced by the group's exclusive character, which made monitoring and the imposition of punishments easier. The importance of conventions for the use of bills of exchange is demonstrated by the fact that, in the 16th century, they were widely used in the Mediterranean region but not in Syria, where, in the words of Braudel, "two mutually suspicious worlds met face to face." Here, barter, gold, and silver were the primary forms of exchange.

### **4. Usage and Custom**

Usage and custom as well as knowledge are the last two groups of causal factors influencing the evolution of a regime. This part will address use and custom, while the following will discuss knowledge. This does not approach use, custom, or knowledge as external factors that may create a regime on their own. Instead, they add

to and strengthen the pressures brought on by egoistic self-interest, political influence, and ambiguous principles. Usage and custom both relate to consistent patterns of conduct based on real experience. Actions based only on instrumental calculations might start to be seen as rule-like or principled conduct. Patterned behavior accompanied by shared expectations is likely to become imbued with normative meaning. Western business law really grew significantly from use and custom that were first motivated by self-interest. Ad hoc private agreements that were formerly commonplace practices subsequently served as the foundation for formal business law.

The reason why certain behavioral patterns are first established is because they support personal utility. When such behaviors become entrenched, regime expansion strengthens them. Outside of New York City, the majority of American drivers would experience at least a little discomfort if they were to blatantly disregard a red light at an empty crossroads. Norms that are universally accepted today support behavior that was formerly exclusively motivated by egoistic self-interest. Those who have been subjected to a pattern of conduct that was first formed by economic pressure or force may eventually learn to accept it as acceptable. Usage creates common expectations that are then imbued with values and conventions.

## 5. Knowledge

Knowledge is the last factor that is utilized to describe how regimes form. Knowledge is often seen as an intervening variable rather than an external one, similar to use and custom. A well-known proponent of the value of knowledge, Ernst Haas, defined it as "the sum of technical information and of theories about that information which commands sufficient consensus at a given time among interested actors to serve as a guide to public policy designed to achieve some social goal" in an earlier study. In a different piece, Haas highlights the advantages of a perspective known as "cognitive evolutionism," which stresses sensitivity to the effects of the creation of new information. By revealing previously unknown intricate relationships, knowledge establishes a foundation for collaboration. In addition to improving the chances for convergent state conduct, knowledge has the power to cross "prevailing lines of ideological cleavage."

It may serve as a bridge between what Haas refers to as mechanical methods (the majority of traditional social science ideas) and organic approaches (egalitarianism and diverse arguments with an emphasis on the environment). It is necessary for information to be broadly accepted by decision-makers for it to have a free-standing influence on the international system. In a world of sovereign nations, information can only have a limited influence on regime evolution in the absence of consensus. If a certain set of views is held by just certain parties, the influence of those who have such beliefs totally determines how significant they are.

## III. CONCLUSION

According to the Grotian viewpoint, regimes are a widespread aspect of social interaction. It explains the root reasons of regimes in a catholic manner. In the emergence of a regime, interests, power, amorphous norms, traditions, and knowledge may all be important. These contributing variables may show themselves in the actions of certain bureaucracies, governments, non-governmental groups, and people. The attitude of structural realists is more cautious. International regimes are not the exemplar or standard instance for the realist approach. Regimes only develop under constrained circumstances when individual decision-making fails to provide the intended results. Power and interest are the two main factors that cause regimes to form. The main players are states, who reject a restricted structural analysis that holds that changes in fundamental causative factors directly affect associated behaviour and results. They also contest the usefulness of the regime idea. The fundamental parametric restrictions for these analyses, however, are the same as those used by more traditional structural arguments. The fundamental analytical premise is the same. Arguments that accept state interests and state power as fundamental causative factors and treat regimes as intervening variables unquestionably fit within the structural realist paradigm. When regimes are seen as autonomous factors that independently influence not just linked behaviour and outcomes but also the fundamental causal variables that first caused their existence, a more substantial departure from structural thinking takes place.

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