Introduction to classical and neo realist, Idealist and Constructivists views on Anarchy

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Introduction to classical and neo realist, Idealist and Constructivists views on Anarchy

"The international relations is the state of war of everyone against everyone." : Machiavelli[1]

In International Relations, anarchy is a central concept which fosters war and competition among states. It can be defined as a shaping force for state behaviour, preferences and their actions. It has remained in International Relations field satisfying the answers to question about causes of war. Kenneth Waltz who is a pioneer in neo-realistic school refers anarchy as the absence of a world government and overreaching global authority that provides security and stability in International Relations.[2] In his book "Man, State and War" Waltz defines anarchy as a conditions of possibility for or "permissive" cause of war, arguing that "wars occurs because there is nothing to prevent them".[3] Such lack of order is often associated with the existence of a war. On the other hand Classical Realists argued that in an anarchical system war occurs due to the destructive tendency of human nature not because of the absence of world government. As an example classical realist Thomas Hobbes describes international relations as an arena of struggle in each state is pitted against every other.[4] Above realistic ideologies reflects that the international system has marked by persistent war and states' behaviour. Despite these realistic views idealists have promoted the innate goodness of individual and success of political institutions in promoting social progress. According to them they too believed that states are engage in power struggles. But according to them their solution for the war is to form an alliances and institutions which promotes world peace.[5] But their view on world peace that idealism can curtail war was shattered with the failures of League of Nations in failing to stop the outbreak of World War II. Alexander Wendt who is trailblazer in constructivism says in a socially constructed world the existence of war depends on peoples believes and if people believe in war then that is what they will act on. For them it is possible to adjust ideas of people about war and socially acceptable reactions to different

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[1] Niccolo Machiavelli, *"The Laughing Lion and the Strutting Fox"*, http://www.aisdp.it/file/7/22/43/rassegna%20machiavelliana%20-%20def.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[2] Manjari Chatterjee, *"Man, State and War"*, http://www.olivialau.org/ir/archive/wal16.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[3] Ibid.

[4] Helen Milner, (1991), *"The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory: A Critique"*, Cambridge University Press, Great Britain, pp 69

[5] Ambersagen, *"Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism in International Relations"*, http://hubpages.com/politics/Realism-Liberalism-and-Constructivism-in-International-Relations, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

situations.[6]Along with this ideological understanding he asserted that "anarchy is what states make of it".[7] Therefore both aspects of realism and its counterpart theories have addressed anarchy which is interrelated with war but in different ways.

Key Features

"States are seen to be in constant fear of the intentions of other states within the anarchical structure": Kenneth Waltz[8]

Realists justify the threat of violence and war in the anarchical system by adding the concept of fear. As waltz's work "Theory of International Politics" suggest the anarchy is location of fear[9] and states behaviour is seen to be in fear of the intentions of other states underpinned by competition, struggle. In the light of Westphalia peace treaty states are characterized by territorial boundaries since 1648 [10] and their own national security is identified as a primary interest. As realists pointed out behaviour of above nation states depends on circulation of violence across international political spaces to expand and accomplish their own power. E.H Carre and Hans Morgenthau quoted that in this power struggle there is no harmony of among states.[11] In that anarchical system classical realists argue that states need to remain actual power (military strength) or potential power (other aspects that support military strength such as economic and human power) in order to sustain their survival in anarchical context.[12] When it comes to idealism they too believes in the view that states are seeking military power to combat with anarchy. But they have noted that there is a hope for world peace if states form alliances and institutions based on common beliefs.[13] It has illustrated that idealists see the opportunity for cooperation where realists only consider the possibility of conflict. According to

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[6] Ian hurd, *"Constructivism",* http://faculty.wcas.northwestern.edu/~ihu355/Home_files/17-Smit-Snidal-c17.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[7] Alexander Wendt, *"Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics",* https://ic.ucsc.edu/~rlipsch/Pol272/Wendt.Anarch.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[8] Miriam Dornan, *"Realists and Constructivist Approaches to Anarchy",* http://www.e-ir.info/2011/08/29/realist-and-constructivist-approaches-to-anarchy/, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[9] Ambersagen, *"Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism in International Relations",* http://hubpages.com/politics/Realism-Liberalism-and-Constructivism-in-International-Relations, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[10] Christian Pfenninger, *" The Virtues of Anarchism",* http://www.e-ir.info/2015/10/26/the-virtues-of-anarchism/, (Accessed on 18 May 2016.)

[11] Musarat Ami, Rizwan Naseer *"Realism - Dominating Theory in International Relations: An analysis",* http://www.berkeleyjournalofsocialsciences.com/july1.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[12] Miriam Dornan, *"Realists and Constructivist Approaches to Anarchy",* http://www.e-ir.info/2011/08/29/realist-and-constructivist-approaches-to-anarchy/, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[13] Ambersagen, *"Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism in International Relations",* http://hubpages.com/politics/Realism-Liberalism-and-Constructivism-in-International-Relations, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

constructivist anarchy and the distribution of relative power drive most of what goes on in world politics. They have quoted that the International Relations are socially constructed and "imbued with social values, norms, assumptions and with the absence of theses norms state feel fear and insecure within an anarchical system.[14] They have highlighted fear can be overcome through interaction with other states. Ultimately it shows that the idea of fear in anarchical context which was developed by realists have touched by Idealists and constructionists as well.

"Anarchical environment is a self-help system without any centralized authority" - Kenneth Waltz[15]

According to realists states are the only one relevant actors in international politics and there is no centralised legitimate authority to regulate or govern states. It means if anarchy exists, conflicts and war make constant threat to states. Viewing the international system as a self-help system rendering accountability of states to look after themselves. It happens due to state behaviour in international system to gain power. As an example the first sentence of the Kenneth Oye's edited volume, cooperation under anarchy asserts that 'Nations dwell in perpetual anarchy, for no central authority imposes limits on the pursuit of sovereign interests[16] and wars occur because of there is no authority to prevent them. It shows that realists are unable to find the possibilities for cooperation in an anarchical system. Idealists believed that states can centralized under international institutions and work within the anarchy of world. But that ideology was challenged due to the failures of League of Nations which was established to prevent Second World War Above lack of centralized authority establishes a security dilemma which encourage states to use pre-emptive force. Security dilemma can simply explained as "a situation in which states' action to attain security from a potential attack. Waltz, argue that anarchy and its resulting security dilemma cannot be overcome unless a 'world government' is created. Within Security dilemma more power obtain by one state will make other state insecure and then seek to increase its power as well. That anarchy forces states to enter "recurrent security competition"[17]. This type of recurrent security competition was emerged

[14] Dale C. Copeland, *"The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism: A Review Essay"*, http://www3.nccu.edu.tw/~lorenzo/Copeland.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).
[15] Helen Milner, *"The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory"*, http://www.rochelleterman.com/ir/sites/default/files/Milner%201992.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).
[16] Kenneth A. Oye, "*Explaining Cooperation under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies"*, http://www.drmalikcikk.atw.hu/wp_readings/oye.PDF, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).
[17] Alexander Wendt . (1999). *"Social theory of international politics",* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

during cold war between USA and Soviet Union. After each had acquired a second strike capability and weapons of mass destruction weapons both powers started to engage in a security competition. Constructivist challenged the neo- realism approach while highlighting the fact that presumptions about the power centric nature of states in the International System do not create anarchic situations and it is only constructed by social practices. Within this ideology they give higher priority to the institutions which effect to the structure of international system. Above arguments and examples illustrate that the essence of security dilemma and self-help are constant challenges to ensure survival of states within anarchical society.

"Uncertainty about the intentions of other states is unavoidable which means that states can never be sure about offensive capabilities of other states": John Mearsheimer

Realists also have pointed that the anarchy of states is driven by its level of capability. As waltz mentioned all states are not equal as a result of the distribution of their capabilities.[18] It generates polarity within international system. As Waltz identified, the Polarity of in international system is determined by examining the "distribution of capabilities" across units, at any given time.[19]. Within this scenario states increase their offensive capabilities such as nuclear power through the rationalization of their power struggles. In modern politics these offensive capabilities which seek aggressive projection of armed forces has become a product of technology that magnifies state security. The competition for nuclear weapon construction between United States and the Soviet Union during the cold war is a well –known example for offensive capabilities of states. Ultimately these methods will lead to constraining the concept of anarchy. It may also assume that an anarchical international system is likely to continue in the future due to India and Pakistan's nuclear testing and it would be there with the absence of commonly accepted power within the region. According to Neorealism often called "structural realism", if states are to be secure in an anarchic world, they need to pay heed to the structural constraints. It simplistically stated, powerful states should or must "do more" then less powerful states. This may increase relative power within the international system. Therefore it is possible to create a sense of order within anarchy through the balance of power. John Mearsheimer argued that great power states are crucial to the balance of power in the

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[18] Elif Dibek, *"What are the basic concepts of neorealism?"*, https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_are_the_basic_concepts_of_neorealism, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).
[19] Ibid.

international system. For an instance the power struggle between United States and Russia affect to the the structure of the international system in terms of unipolarity, bipolarity or multiploarity. Waltz argued under these systems states are operate in a context of anarchy which dictates behaviours of states to ensure relative advantage within it. Especially the distribution of power among the states is not equitable and as a consequence of this disparity every nations try to develop their own capabilities under a competition. Barry Buzan has pointed out that the degree of domestic socio- political cohesion is the quantifying factor which indicates the relative strength or weakness of a state.[20] An unequal of distribution of capabilities generate wars as a as a result of the consolidation of power. This reality was proved not only in world history but also in modern world. As an example during Second World War era Nazis in Germany wanted to open Eastern Europe for them to be dominate in Europe and to conquer the world. Also within the current international politics, if the government regime in Syria comes to an end, the US will establish their democratic system in the country while isolating Iran. In this regard Russia's main concern is that the overthrow of President Assad could increase USA influence in the entire Middle East. Due to these outcomes "the Kremlin is telling the world that neither UN, no any other body nor group of countries has right to decide who should or should not govern a sovereign state" (BBC News, 2012)[21]. It has proved Carr's ideology that law and morality of world spring from power is practiced by powerful nations in modern international system. [22] The occupation of power also changing from time to time. For an example great power formation in European continent has been shifted in numerous times since18 century. Before 18 century French military power was the greatest in Europe. But After the congress of Vienna marked a power shift from unipolar system (dominate by France) to a multipolar system countries like United Kingdom, Austria, Prussia France and Russia placed as the great powers. At the end of World War II several countries such as USA, United Kingdom, China, France and Soviet Union emerged as great powers. Other than that Idealists imagine much wider possibilities for cooperative arrangements among states than realists who tends to see power arrangements. Even though idealists do not underestimate state sovereignty they argued state can work more selflessly with other states and international institutions

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[20] Pine Roehrs, (2005)"*Weak States and Implications for Regional Security: A Case Study of Georgian Instability and Caspian Regional Insecurity*."
mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/31842/...singledocument/.../rieas097.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[21] Emanuela Voinea , "*Realism Today*", http://www.e-ir.info/2013/03/01/realism-today/. (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[22] Helen Milner," *The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory: A Critique*",
http://www.rochelleterman.com/ir/sites/default/files/Milner%201992.pdf,(Accessed on 18 May 2016).

without creating a polarity. Moreover idealists emphasize international institutions, multinational corporations, and international law than many realists. Maintain a cooperative relationships within anarchical systems is not always easy as Idealists mentioned. Especially the emergence of additional great powers does increase the existing level of uncertainty. Unlike Realists constructivists also takes power into account that people make the states and institutions that work within the anarchical system. They have viewed that power does not reside in the state or institutions, but rather in ideas that people use power collectively. For an instance The EU example clarify creation of institutions is possible in anarchical context. It means after the devastation of World War II entire Europe was looks like anarchic and every nations tried to promote their own ideologies. Therefore European nations came to a decision to build an institution with highlighting of "make war unthinkable and materially impossible" as Robert Schuman mentioned in his "Schuman Declaration in 1950.[23]. But in current international system it is very clear that multilateral cooperation promote polarity among states. It refers that after 9/11 attack USA used its unilateral military supremacy to invade Afghanistan with the support of NATO. These invasion was carried out because of the Taliban rejection to turn over Bin Laden to them. It has emphasized Dahl's relational power approach that "A" has power over "B" to the extent that he can get "B" to do something that "B" would not otherwise do" and it clearly shows that USA's exercises on unilateralism is the game of its domination.[24] Most importantly concepts like interdependence which was touched by idealists and constructivists implies widespread harmony or cooperation. But Schelling has pointed out interdependent situations are really mix of conflict and cooperation.[25]But according to constructivists when these institutions fail to address cooperation it may follow methods of use of force and retribution. Therefore it is unrealistic to think anarchy can be overcome as the states will never feel secure enough to cede sovereignty to a higher authority. These are indicate that uncertainty is likely to occur under anarchy [26]

Above all facts arguments have proved that Anarchy is a central concept in International Relations theory and all major theories such as Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism

[23] Robert Schuman, *"Schuman Declaration of 9 May 1950"*, http://www.internationaldemocracywatch.org/attachments/293_Schuman%20Declaration%20-%209%20May%201950.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[24] Miriam Dornan, *"Realists and Constructivist Approaches to Anarchy"*, http://www.e-ir.info/2011/08/29/realist-and-constructivist-approaches-to-anarchy/,(Accessed on 18 May 2016).

[25] Helen Milner*,"The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory: A Critique"*, http://www.rochelleterman.com/ir/sites/default/files/Milner%201992.pdf. (Accessed on 18 May 2016)

[26] Robert D. Kaplan, *"The coming Anarchy: Shattering the dreams of the post- cold war"*, http://www.hjil.org/articles/hjil-23-1-fredland.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

embrace the view that the International System is anarchic. However distinction can be made as how each major theory tackles the anarchic nature of the international system.

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➢ Schuman Robert*, "Schuman Declaration of 9 May 1950",* http://www.internationaldemocracywatch.org/attachments/293_Schuman%20Declaration%20-%209%20May%201950.pdf, (Accessed on 18 May 2016).

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