Constructivist Approach of International Sanctions: Realism, Liberalism, Cosmopolitanism, and Hegemonism

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ABSTRACT
Means-ends analysis based on rational choice approach is popular among students of economic sanctions. In this analytical framework economic sanctions are conceptualized as an ontologically objective means that exists independently of human consciousness and intersubjective ideas. The choice of a means may be subject to an institutional constraint but this constraint is considered to affect actors’ decisions only by changing the cost-benefit ratio of alternative options. Students of economic sanctions, therefore, treat economic sanctions as a foreign-policy instrument that is available to any states and whose use is regulated by, but is not constituted by the underlying institutions of international society. Rationalism and materialism are two metatheoretical positions that students of economic sanctions have taken. In this paper I introduce social constructivism into the study of international sanctions for exposing metatheoretical, theoretical, and empirical distortions that are prevalent in the study of economic sanctions. International sanctions are not a brutal fact but an institutional fact whose existence and functions are constituted by the underlying institution that defines constitutive rules of relevant practices. Therefore, the meaning of sanctions, identities and roles of actors involved, and the functions of sanctions vary as the institution of international sanctions changes. I argue in this paper that we can differentiate four types of international sanctions system by focusing on two factors – the functional differentiation of units (horizontal or vertical) and decision-making procedures in the use of international sanctions (informal or formal). They are realist (horizontal-informal), liberal (horizontal-formal), hegemonic (vertical-informal), and cosmopolitan (vertical-formal) systems.
Introduction

According to E. H. Carr, the study of International Relations (IR) was formed as a distinct discipline within the Western academy after World War I. Although the study of peace and war dates back to the writing of Thucydides’s *The History of the Peloponnesian War* (431BC), the world’s first department of international politics was established in the University of Wales at Aberystwyth only in 1919. World War I shattered Western beliefs in human reason and freedom. About 15 million were killed and more than 20 million were wounded in this war. Oswald Spengler’s *The Decline of the West* (Vol. I, 1918, Vol. II, 1922) became bestsellers among Western intellectuals and laypersons. The popularity of Freud’s psychoanalysis also contributed to make Westerners lose confidence in human rationality and progressive views of history. This pessimism did not corrode the discipline of International Relations during the interwar period, however. Carr in his *Twenty Years’ Crisis* (1946) argued that the IR discipline started from the beliefs in liberal ideas of free will, human progress, and harmony of interests. He evaluated liberal study of international politics negatively and called liberals utopians, theologians, and alchemists. His main target was President Woodrow Wilson who supported the establishment of the League of Nations ardently. The following quotation is oft-cited for illustrating Wilsonian utopianism (Carr 1946: 8-9):

> When President Wilson, on his way to the Peace Conference, was asked by some of his advisers whether he thought his plan of a League of Nations would work, he replied briefly: “If it won’t work, it must be made to work”. The advocate of a scheme for an international police force or for “collective security”, or of some other project for an international order, generally replied to the critic not by an argument designed to show how and why he thought his plan will work, but either by a statement that it must be made to work because the consequences of its failure to work would be so disastrous, or by a demand for some alternative nostrum. This must be the spirit in which the alchemist or the utopian socialist would have answered the sceptic who questioned whether lead could be turned into gold or men made to live in model communities. The pillar of League’s collective security system was collective sanctions on aggressors.

As John Foster Dulles noted, “The natural starting point in any study of economic sanctions is . . . Article 16 of the League Covenant” (quoted in Losman 1979: 3). Article 16 provided that if any member of the League resort to war in disregard of the procedure for the peaceful settlement of disputes, “it shall ipso facto be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nations and the nationals of the covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial, or personal intercourse between the nationals of the covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whereby a Member of the League or not.” It was “the first instance where
specified acts were prohibited and a general penalty or sanctions imposed for transgression” (Nossal 1987: 14) in international society.

The study of international sanctions appeared as an important subdiscipline in the IR study from the beginning. It was pursued and developed by Lockean institutional liberals during the interwar period. Institutional liberals borrowed their ideas of sanctions from municipal laws. Those who supported the establishment of League’s sanctions system argued that (1) international system should be understood not as anarchy but as community that is composed of state- and non-state-actors who share common interests, (2) international activities should be governed not by power politics but by the rule of law, and (3) the use of force should be regulated not by the balance of power but by collective security. Their ideas were very legalistic, that is, international sanctions were understood as a measure to enforce international law. Liberals hoped that League’s sanctions system ensures international peace.

Yet, League’s failure to stop Italian invasion of Abyssinia in the mid-1930s broke up our hope of institutionalizing sanctions system in international society. Classical realists started to bring out the utopian nature of liberal arguments. They claimed that sanctions system cannot be embedded in international system because each state does not sacrifice its own interests for the pursuit of world interests. They, then, argued that not collective security but balance of power is a more promising avenue for maintaining international peace. Liberalism was replaced by realism as a paradigm for the study of international politics and the study of international sanctions has been marginalized in the IR discipline since World War II.

New realists, however, resurrected the study of economic sanctions in the 1970s. They are not concerned with the role of sanctions on international governance but with the efficient use of economic instruments for the pursuit of national interests. New realists are primarily interested in answering two questions: (1) do economic sanctions work?; and (2) under what conditions do economic sanctions work? Then, two important books that have had a great influence on the subsequent study of economic sanctions were published in 1985. They are David A. Baldwin’s Economic Statecraft and Gary Clyde Hufbauer, Jeffrey J. Scott, and Kimberly Ann Elliott’s Economic Sanctions Reconsidered (ESR). Since then the number of published works on economic sanctions has burgeoned and the study of economic sanctions has regained its status as a distinct field of the IR study. But it was not the renaissance of liberal study of international sanctions. It was what I call “realist study of economic sanctions”. Classical realists criticized the study of international sanctions for its liberal biases. New study of economic sanctions changed the discourse of international sanctions fundamentally by abandoning liberal assumptions of international sanctions. New realists adopt the realist assumptions of international
politics - that international system is anarchical, states are primary actors in world politics, and states try to maximize their national interests. Classical realists considered that the liberal tenets of international sanctions are not compatible with these assumptions; therefore, they snubbed liberal arguments. Realist scholars of economic sanctions made this incompatibility obscure by assuming that (1) a primary sanctioner in world politics is not an international organization (IO) but a state, (2) economic sanctions are not a measure of law enforcement but a foreign-policy instrument, and (3) the function of economic sanctions is not to reduce the number of deviant acts in international society but is to coerce an opponent to do what a sanctioning country wants. The sad result of the rise of realist analysis of economic sanctions is an incommensurability of two research programs. Liberals and realists do not talk with one another because the hard cores of each research program – (1) the nature of international system, (2) the conceptualization of sanctions, and (3) the function of sanctions – differ fundamentally from one another.

In this paper I attempt to surmount this incommensurability problem by introducing a new approach of international sanctions. This is constructivist approach of international sanctions. Constructivism is a metatheory that sheds light on ontological and epistemological foundations of research programs. The hard core is generally understood as the basic theoretical postulates or axioms that are nonfalsifiable and incommensurable with other research programs (Lakatos 1970). I consider, however, that incommensurability problems can be surmountable by contextualizing each research program in a more comprehensive metatheoretical framework. As I argue in Section 3-2 sanctions are not a brutal fact but an institutional fact whose existence, meanings, and functions are constituted by the underlying institution that defines constitutive rules of relevant practices. I argue in section 3-3 that we can differentiate four types of international sanctions system by focusing on two factors – the functional differentiation of units in the system (horizontal or vertical) and decision-making procedures (informal or formal). They are realist (horizontal-informal), liberal (horizontal-formal), hegemonic (vertical-informal), and cosmopolitan (vertical-formal) systems. The meaning of sanctions, roles of actors involved, and the functions of sanctions vary as the institution of international sanctions changes. Therefore, I insist that any students of sanctions must think over the underlying institution that constitutes a sanctioning act before engaging in empirical analysis of sanctions.

In the next two sections, I outline the historiography of the study of international sanctions. In section 1 I examine liberal approach of international sanctions. Its content is as follows: 1-1 Traditional Views of International Sanctions; 1-2 The League-of-Nations and the United Nations Sanctions; 1-3 Constitution of International Sanctions; 1-4 Functions of International Sanctions; and 1-5 The Decline of Liberal Approach of International Sanctions. In
this section I explore how liberal approach of international sanctions appeared in the early 20th century and influenced the establishment of IO-based international sanctions system. I show that liberalists define international sanctions as collective punishment on a country that violates rules of international conducts and treat general deterrence as the main goal of international sanctions. In section 2 I examine realist approach of economic sanctions. Its content is as follows: 2-1 The Rise of Realist Approach of Economic Sanctions; 2-2 Realist Ontology of Economic Sanctions; 2-3 Conceptualization of Economic Sanctions; and 2-4 Goals of Economic Sanctions. Realist approach has become a paradigm for the study of economic sanctions for the last twenty years. I show in this section that it is based on ontological individualism, which stands in marked contrast to the earlier study of international sanctions that is based on ontological holism. I discuss how this ontological position affects their arguments over the definitions and goals of economic sanctions in this section.

In section 3 I introduce constructivist approach into the analysis of international sanctions for clarifying metatheoretical problems of both liberal and realist approaches and for suggesting alternative approaches of international sanctions. This section’s content is as follows: 3-1 The Limits of Liberal and Realist Approaches of International Sanctions; 3-2 Constructivism and International Sanctions; and 3-3 International Sanctions as Institutions. Readers must keep in mind that I treat constructivism not as an empirical theory but as a metatheoretical framework of analysis that contextualizes and historicizes a variety of empirical theories. I argue in section 3-2 that sanctions are an institutional fact; therefore, we need to elucidate an underlying institution of sanctions for understanding the meanings and functions of sanctions. Then, in section 3-3 I show that there are four types of international sanctions system by focusing on the two variables – the functional differentiation among actors and the existence of formal procedures that authorize the use of sanctions. They are the institutions of liberalism, realism, cosmopolitanism, and hegemonism. Accordingly, empirical theories of international sanctions can also be fourfold: liberal, realist, cosmopolitan, and hegemonic theories of international sanctions. I suggest as final remarks that realists’ attempt to create a grand theory of economic sanctions must end in failure because their theories are based on flawed ontological assumptions of international system.

1. Liberalism and International Sanctions
1-1 Traditional Views of International Sanctions
That international society lacks a central authority above states is a truism for students of international politics. How does sanctions system work in such a decentralized society? Who are
entitled to impose international sanctions on deviant states? What kinds of acts become the objects of physical sanctions?

Though the terms international sanctions and economic sanctions were popularized among intellectuals and laypersons only after the early 20th century, sanctioning acts were common in international history. Empires and regional hegemons imposed a variety of sanctions on insubordinate subordinates since the B.C. period. One of the most classical examples is Athens’s Megarian decree in 433 or 432 B.C. (Croix 1972: 225-90; Kagan 1969: 251-72). Peripheral barbarians (barbaros for Greek and yi for Chinese) could be exempt from sanctions but sanctions system gradually globalized as peripheral areas cease to exist in the 19th century. Western countries used military instruments for punishing dissenters in semi-colonial states, defaulting countries, and autarky that resisted foreign trade. Yet, the study of international sanctions did not become popular among students of international law until the early 20th century. This is mainly because legal positivism, a dominant school of legal study in the 19th century, denied the existence of sanctions in international society. This position, which was shared by IR realists later, originates from Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* (1651). Hobbes argued that only a public authority could inflict punishment on men. He regarded all other coercive acts not as punishment but as acts of hostility. He notes in *Leviathan* that (Hobbes 1904: 223-6):

> A PUNISHMENT, is an Evill inflicted by publique Authority, on him that hath done, or omitted that which is Judged by the same Authority to be a Transgression of the Law; to the end that the will of men may thereby the better be disposed to obedience. . . . First, that neither private revenges, nor injuries of private men, can properly be stiled Punishment; because they proceed not from publique Authority. . . . Lastly, Harme inflicted upon one that is a declared enemy, fals not under the name of Punishment: Because seeing they were either never subject to the Law, and therefore cannot transgresse it; or having been subject to it, and professing to be no longer so, by consequence deny they can transgresse it, all the Harmes that can be done them, must be taken as acts of Hostility.

This public authority is called a Leviathan. It possesses absolute power on subordinates. As Michael Doyle puts it, “The Leviathan then is sole sovereign; it governs as it sees fit. Its authority is inalienable, once granted. It can do no injustice since it defines what is just and unjust. Its authority is indivisible. It can judge the guilt of a man according to the laws it has decreed, and all citizens are required to carry out the sentence” (1997: 115). Punishment must be public, legal, and authoritative in Hobbesian theory of social contract. The corollary is that punishing acts do not exist in international society where central authority does not exist. The word “social sanctions” was not in his vocabulary. Hobbes also did not envision the necessity to create the Leviathan in international system because he considered that international state of nature is not as severe as domestic state of nature (Vincent 1981; Suganami 1989; Doyle 1997).
Although Hobbes was not interested in exploring international governance system, John Austin and his followers attempted to explain why the institution of sanctions was unlikely to develop in the Westphalian states system (Austin 1995 [1832]). Internal sovereignty – the capacities of a state to choose and implement policies within its territory as she likes – can be ensured only by abiding by the principle of external sovereignty – the immunity from external influence. Legal positivists argued that this self-evident truth suggests that there is no qualified sanctioner in international society. The principle of external sovereignty negates the enforcement of law among states, Austin argued, because law is the command of a sovereign backed by force. Then, he submitted a controversial idea that international law (or the law of nations) is not genuine law.

Austin’s legal theory is called “the command theory of law.” He claimed that only the law of god and the positive law – “the law set by political superiors to political inferiors” (1995 [1832]: 18) – are true laws. According to him, only a ‘sovereign’ – “a determinate human superior who is not in a habit of obedience to a superior and who receives habitual obedience from the bulk of the political and independent society” (Sinha 1989: 133-134) – can enforce the law; that is, “Laws properly so called are a species of commands. But, being a command, every law properly so called flows from a determinate source, or emanates from a determinate author.” (Austin 1995 [1832]: 117-118). Command is “the power of enforcing compliance with a wish by inflicting an evil in case of non-compliance” (Campbell 1997 [1905]: 5). That evil is called sanctions in legal parlance. In this way the concepts of command and sanctions are intimately related to one another: “Every sanction properly so called is an eventual evil annexed to a command. Any eventual evil may operate as a motive to conduct: but, unless the conduct be commanded and the evil be annexed to the command purposely to enforce obedience, the evil is not a sanction in the proper acceptation of the term” (Austin, 1995 [1832]: 118). 1 Legal

1 Unlike Locke and Bentham, Austin did not apply the term sanction to conditional good – the promise to offer rewards. He argued that sanctions must be negative or “The evil which will probably be incurred in case a command be disobeyed or (to use an equivalent expression) in case a duty be broken” (Austin, 1995 [1832]: 22). Contemporary IR scholars who love to employ the term positive sanctions – the academic jargon that is rarely seen in newspapers or journals - for referring to rewards had better reread his following statement (1995 [1832]: 23-24):

Rewards are, indisputably, motives to comply with the wishes of others. But to talk of commands and duties as sanctioned or enforced by rewards, or to talk of rewards as obliging or constraining to obedience, is surely a wide departure form the established meaning of the terms.

If you expressed a desire that I should render a service, and if you proffered a reward as the motive or inducement to render it, you would scarcely be said to command the service, nor should I, in ordinary language, be obliged to render it. In ordinary language, you would promise me a reward, on condition of my rendering the service, whilst I might be incited or persuaded to render it by the hope of obtaining the reward.
positivists in the 19th century denied the existence of international law because it does not emanate from a sovereign. According to Austin, international law is “law (improperly so called) set by general opinion” (1995 [1832]: 171). It is an imperfect law – “a law which wants a sanction, and which, therefore, is not binding” (1995 [1832]: 32). He did not necessarily deny the existence of international sanctions. He called them “moral sanctions”, which are contrasted with “legal sanctions” in domestic jurisprudence. The former is, however, a sanction improperly called because it is imposed by indeterminate bodies whereas the latter is a sanction properly called because it is imposed by determinate bodies.\(^2\) For legal positivists moral sanctions are so incomplete as not to worth examining seriously.

A number of legal scholars had begun to criticize Austin’s theory of positive law in the early 20th century, however. Their criticisms on the Austinian conception of international sanctions focused on two points. The first was his insufficient attention to non-physical sanctions for the enforcement of law. James Brown Scott, the president of the American Institute of International Law (1915-40), claimed in his seminal article entitled “The Legal Nature of International Law” (1907) that the presence of physical sanctions is not a prerequisite for maintaining a system of international law. He argued that a variety of sanctions are available in international society as ancient political communities where their members obeyed rules and norms without the threat of physical sanctions wielded by political superiors. Liberal legal scholars argued that international public opinion could be an alternative to physical force for

\[\text{Again: If a law hold out a reward, as an inducement to do some act, an eventual right is conferred, and not an obligation imposed, upon those who shall act accordingly: The imperative part of the law being addressed or directed to the party whom it requires to render the reward.} \]

\[\text{In short, I am determined or inclined to comply with the wish of another, by the fear of disadvantage or evil. I am also determined or inclined to comply with the wish of another, by the hope of advantage or good. But it is only by the chance of incurring evil, that I am bound or obliged to compliance. It is the power and the purpose of inflicting eventual evil, and not the power and the purpose of imparting eventual good, which gives to the expression of a wish the name of a command.} \]

\[\text{If we put reward into the import of the term sanction, we must engage in a toilsome struggle with the current of ordinary speech; and shall often slide unconsciously, notwithstanding our efforts to the contrary, into the narrower and customary meaning.} \]

\(^2\) W. L. Morison explained the difference between determinate and indeterminate bodies in a following way (1982: 74):

Determinate bodies are those to which people belong by reason of being specifically or individually determined, or to which they belong because the body comprises all those in a generic class. Or parts of the determinate body may be determined in one or other of those ways. An indeterminate body may be an indeterminate portion of a body determinate or certain, but a body or class of persons may also be indeterminate because it consists of persons of a vague generic character. A determinate body is capable of corporate conduct, but an indeterminate body is not because the several persons cannot be known and indicated completely and correctly. Thus it cannot command as a determinate body can. As to how a determinate body commands, Austin has said thus far only that it can act as a body by all or any proportion of its members, without saying in the latter case, when the command is to be attributed to the body.
enforcing international law. As human interactions across states increased, what Nicholas Murray Butler calls “an international mind” (1912) was expected to develop. For instance, Elihu Root, a Nobel Peace Prize winner of American lawyer and public official, claimed that (1908: 454):

In former times, each isolated nation, satisfied with its own opinion of itself and indifferent to the opinion of others, separated from all others by mutual ignorance and misjudgment, regarded only the physical power of other nations . . . Now, however, there may be seen plainly the effects of a long-continued process which is breaking down the isolation of nations, permeating every country, spreading throughout the world a knowledge of each government’s conduct to serve as a basis for criticism and judgment, and gradually creating a community of nations, in which standards of conduct are being established, and a world-wide public opinion is holding nations to conformity or condemning them for disregard of the established standards.

These liberal scholars expected that state officials would not be able to ignore public’s voices as democracy spreads across countries. “Manifestly, this power of international public opinion,” Root continues, “is expected not so much by governments as by the people of each country whose opinions are interpreted in the press and determine the country’s attitude towards the nation whose conduct is under consideration . . . the general opinion, whose approval or condemnation supplies the sanction for the law, may be sound and just and worthy of respect” (1908: 456-457). The most influential believer in the force of public opinion in the early 20th century was Woodrow Wilson. In his speech at Long Branch, New Jersey on September 2, 1916 President Wilson appealed to the audience for the establishment of new international order based on international public opinion (Knock 1992: 96):

A new atmosphere of justice and friendship must be generated by means the world has never tried before. The nations of the world must unite in joint guarantees that whatever is done to disturb the whole world’s life must first be tested in the whole world’s opinion before it is attempted. These are the new foundations the world must build for itself, and we must play our part in the reconstruction, generously and without too much thought of our separate interests.

As K. J. Holsti notes, “Wilson shared the broad public’s concern for institutional reform, but he went much further: the guarantee of peace does not lie in the modification of international

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3 According to Kenneth N. Waltz, one of the earliest proponents of world-public-opinion-as-sanction arguments was Jeremy Bentham. He notes that (1959: 101-102):

The faith in democracies as inherently peaceful . . . was developed by Bentham who, like Woodrow Wilson and Lord Cecil, was convinced that world public opinion is the most effective sanction, and in itself perhaps a sufficient sanction, for peace. Thus he proposed a ‘common court of judicature, for the decision of differences between the several nations, although such court were not to be armed with any coercive powers.’ What would give meaning to the court’s decisions? Public opinion! The court’s proceedings would be open, and the court would be charged with publishing its opinions and circulating them to all states. Refractory states would be put under ‘the ban of Europe,’ which would be a sanction sufficient to dissuade a state from ignoring the court’s directive. Interest and opinion combine to ensure a policy of peace, for if governors are made responsive to the people’s wishes, public opinion can be expected to operate effectively as a sanction.
institutions or in drawing up constitutions for a League of Nations. More important is a fundamental transformation of attitudes toward international relationships. Policies are to be based on right and justice, and the sanctions for correct behavior would derive from morality and world public opinion, not from a balance of power” (1991: 177). Wilson’s idea of open diplomacy in the Fourteen Points addressed to a joint session of the U.S. Congress on January 8, 1918, reflected his confidence in public opinion.

Secondly, anti-Austin legal scholars argued that confederation between states could enforce international law by the threats and uses of organized physical sanctions. Some proponents of public-opinion-as-international-sanction arguments claimed that organized physical sanctions were unnecessary for the enforcement of international law (Oppenheim 1905-6; Latané 1932; Niemeyer 1941), but the inability of the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 to prevent World War I made most liberalists recognize the necessity to create an international organization that monopolizes the use of physical sanctions. As Hidemi Suganami notes, “One of the consequences of this shattering experience was a tendency among the writers on world order to converge on one central theme: the introduction of the element of coercion into the international system” (1989: 79). For instance, President Wilson remarked in May 1915 that (Knock 1992: 77):

I came only to avow a creed and give expression to the confidence I feel that the world is even now upon the eve of a great consummation, when some common force will be brought into existence which shall safeguard rights as the first and most fundamental interest of all peoples and all governments, when coercion shall be summoned not to the service of political ambition or selfish hostility, but to the service of a common order, a common justice, and a common peace. God grant that the dawn of that day of frank dealing and of settled peace, and cooperation may be near at hand!

Amos J. Peaslee also emphasized the necessity of establishing organized sanctions system for the interests of international communities (1916: 331):

Drawing conclusions from analogies is always dangerous, but if the evolution of international law is to follow at all the evolution of international law, it seems probable that the future will realize neither the theory that the right of individual nations to use force will be entirely abolished, nor the theory that the right to employ it will continue without limit; but the responsibility of enforcing international law will at some time by delegated to specially authorized officials, and national “self-help” will be permitted, so far and only so far as it assists in establishing justice and order. Most liberals considered that physical sanctions were only a supplementary instrument for reinforcing the power of international public opinion but Ronald F. Roxburgh argued that, although it is true that the law-abiding spirit is the basis of legal orders, this spirit arises only when physical sanctions are institutionalized (1920:26):

Force also supplies the most important incentive for securing obedience to law. It is true . . . that for every man who keeps the law through conscious fear of punishment, there
may be hundreds who do so as it were instinctively, and without a thought on the subject. But while this law-abiding spirit, which is characteristic of large sections of a modern community, owes its origin to a number of causes, perhaps the most potent of all has been the enforcement of law through long ages in the past. These liberal arguments on international sanction laid the intellectual foundation for the establishment of collective sanctions systems under the League of Nations.


The Covenant of the League of Nations was signed as part of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919 and the first meeting of the League of Nations was held in Geneva on November 15, 1920. Collective sanctions system was established in international society for the first time ever. Article 16 of the League Covenants authorized the imposition of economic sanctions on a member of the League that resorted to war in disregard of the procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes:

Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Articles 12, 13, or 15, it shall ipso facto be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nations and the nationals of the covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial, or personal intercourse between the nationals of the covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not.


1. The balance of power system is dead. It has failed to prevent wars and maintain the peace. What is the alternative?
2. By the establishment of an international organization. How will this system enforce the law without military conflicts?
3. By the establishment of international economic sanctions. This weapon is powerful, effective, relatively cheap, bloodless, and moreover, easy to use to bring any aggressor to his knees.
4. Economic sanctions have a moral power. They enjoy universal public support.
5. States are innately rational. With the economic threat hanging over their heads, they will not find it worthwhile to deliberately wage wars of aggression.
6. Neutrality is a precarious concept which the community of nations needs to abandon. Liberal ideas of international sanctions were based on domestic analogy.  

Richard Nossal notes, "The 'League experiment' was explicitly designed to bring the conditions of domestic order to the international system. A set of rules was laid out in the Covenant; transgressors were threatened with the imposition of clearly specified hurtful penalties if they

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4 Hidemi Suganami defines domestic analogy as “presumptive reasoning (or a line of argument embodying such reasoning) about international relations based on the assumption that since domestic and international phenomena are similar in a number of respects, a given proposition which holds true domestically, but whose validity is as yet uncertain internationally, will also hold true internationally” (1989: 24).
broke the 'law'; and the penalties were to be exacted by an institution that was supposed to come as close to being an 'international public authority' as possible. The penalties against a Covenant-breaking state - harms legitimized by the international community - had all of the structural properties of punishment as we know it in a domestic context" (Nossal 1989: 310-1). Member-states must prioritize collective interests over national interests for maintaining collective security system. As Arnold Wolfers notes, “it was the basic assumption of all collectivist thinking that with the establishment of the League of Nations a universal community of nations had come into existence, to be the acting center of world affairs. The individual sovereign nations were merely the parts of an embracing whole, to which they and their inhabitants owed loyalty. National interests in the traditional sense of the word, therefore, should be subordinated to the interests of the community” (1962: 268-9).

During the 1920s international sanctions system seemed to work for managing interstate disputes. The League’s threats of sanctions prevented Yugoslavia’s intervention in Albania (1921) and the outbreak of war between Greece and Bulgaria (1925). Yet, its failures to impose economic sanction on Japan’s invasion of Manchuria (1931) and to settle boundary disputes between Bolivia and Paraguay (1932-35) presaged the collapse of collective security system. The final blow came in the mid-1930s. It was the League-of-Nation’s failure to stop Mussolini’s invasion of Abyssinia. After border disputes occurred between Abyssinia and Italy at Wal-Wal in Abyssinia on December 5, 1934, Mussolini dispatched Italian troops to Italian colonies of Eritrea and Italian Somaliland. Haile Selassie, the emperor of Abyssinia, asked the League of Nations to arbitrate repeatedly but Mussolini started to invade Abyssinia in October 1935. The article 16 was invoked for the first time. The League of Nations imposed arms, financial, import and export sanctions on Italy on November 18, 1935. But these measures were half-hearted and had a lot of loopholes. Non-members of the League of Nations such as the United States, Germany, and Japan did not have to abide by them. Austria, Hungary, and Switzerland were reluctant to

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5 Scott Burchill also points out the influence of domestic analogy on the establishment of the League-of-Nation’s sanctions system (1995: 41):

Consistent with their view that peace depended on the spread of democracy, collective security was an attempt by liberal internationalists to reproduce the concepts and processes of domestic law at the international level. Liberals believed that the destructive forces of international anarchy could only be brought to an end if the international system was regulated in the same way as domestic society. President Wilson’s 14 points were therefore an attempt to incorporate US constitutional prescriptions globally. The League of Nations was designed as an overarching authority which would regulate the behaviour of states towards each other. Members would be required to submit their disputes to arbitration and, if necessary, use sanctions to compel aggressor states to conform to a peaceful method of conflict resolution. Under the organization's rules, an act of war against one member of the League would be considered an act of aggression against the entire international community (Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations).
participate in international sanctions for fear of endangering their relationship with Italy. Britain and France opposed the oil embargo and failed to block Italian access to the Suez Canal, a route to the invasion of Abyssinia. Abyssinian resistance could not last for half a year. Addis Ababa, the capital of Abyssinia fell and Haile Selassie went into exile in England in May 1936. Then, the League of Nations lifted economic sanctions on Italy on July 15, 1936.

As Martin Wight notes, “the failure to impose effective sanctions against in Italy in 1935-6 was a turning point in international history that has conditioned everything since, a seminal failure, the generator of a whole series of other failures” (1978: 208). It was a prelude to World War II in 1939. Not the failure in stopping an Italy’s invasion of Abyssinia caused the ruin of the League’s sanctions system, however. The more harsh measures such as oil embargoes and the closing of the Suez Canal might also not be effective in stopping it. But most member states supported economic sanctions against Rome not because they believed that they were effective in getting Italian troops out of Abyssinia but because they feared that inaction and appeasement would ruin the League’s collective security system. Yet, Britain and France, the leaders in the League of Nations, were reluctant to punish Italy severely. They were afraid that strong measures against Italy might induce Mussolini into a Hitler’s side. Therefore, British Foreign Secretary Samuel Hoare and French Premier Pierre Laval arranged a plan to allow Italy to control large areas of Abyssinia secretly in December 1935. The so-called Hoare-Laval Pact was leaked to press on the same month and caused the outcry and disappointment around the world:

Whereas the day before the plan out in the open, the smaller countries in the League – states like Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia – could feel that, after all, there might be some safety for them under the League umbrella, where Britain and France were bravely holding over their heads, the news that these two erstwhile League champions had been plotting for months to carve up the victim’s body and reward its attacker with substantive parts of it dealt the campaign for collective action a mortal blow. . . . After all, the Hoarse-Laval plan had shown that the bully’s method paid off, at least in the short run (Northedge 1986: 243-44). Small countries were also upset about the decision to lift economic sanctions against Italy in two months after the collapse of Abyssinia. They considered that the League of Nations should have continued to impose sanctions on Italy for preserving collective security system. As F. P. Walters puts it, “The purpose of sanctions was to prevent an aggressor from imposing his will by war, and the fact that the victim was no longer able to keep up the fight did not affect the legal or moral obligations of the Members of the League” (1960: 683). Yet, Britain and France decided to sacrifice collective security system for securing Italian friendship.

Liberalists’ hope of establishing international sanctions system was shattered completely. The world headed straight down the road to destruction. German militarized the Rhineland (1936), Japan resumed the war in China (1937), Britain and France agreed to cede Sudetenland to
Academic mood also changed. Liberal institutionalists lost their prestige and realism emerged as an alternative approach of the IR study. As David A. Baldwin puts it, “The ‘realist’ school of international relations emerged after World War II largely as a reaction to the overly optimistic expectations associated with the League of Nations. It was the ‘utopian’ ideas associated with the League that provided grist for the ‘realists’ mill; therefore, it would only natural that economic sanctions, as the policy instrument most closely identified with the League in the public mind, should also be denounced. Whereas military force symbolized hard-headed ‘realism,’ economic sanctions symbolized fuzzy-minded ‘idealism’ and unwillingness to face up to the hard facts of international life” (1985: 155).

Nonetheless, the failure of the League’s collective security system did not made liberalists lose their appetite for institutionalizing international sanctions system. The United Nations entered into force on October 24, 1945 and the Security Council has assumed full charge of enforcing mandatory sanctions on a non-peaceful state under the UN Charter. The Security Council judges whether a state in dispute is in violation of the Charter and what action should be taken by the United Nations (Article 39). Articles 41 and 42 authorize the Security Council to decide what non-military and military measures are taken to restore international peace and security. Yet, this sanctions system had a loophole. Five permanent members are allowed to have veto power on Security Council resolutions, making the imposition of the UN sanctions on permanent member-states and their allies impossible. Inis Claude explains the rationale for this veto system in a following way (1962: 160):

> the insertion of the veto provision in the decision-making circuit of the Security Council reflected the clear conviction that in cases of sharp conflict among the great powers the Council ought, for safety’s sake, to be incapacitated – to be rendered incapable of being used to precipitate a showdown or to mobilise collective action against the recalcitrant power. The philosophy of the veto is that it is better to have the Security Council stalemated than to have that body used by a majority to take action so strongly opposed by a dissident great power that a world war is likely to ensue.

The UN sanctions system malfunctioned during the Cold War period. The Security Council decided to impose economic sanctions only twice from 1945 through 1989 (Rhodesia in 1966 and South Africa in 1977). Nonetheless, the UN sanctions against Rhodesia awaked many IR scholars’ interests in international sanctions, bringing about the renaissance of the liberal study of international sanctions from the mid-1960s through the 1970s. Representative liberal scholars were Johan Galtung (1967), Frederik Hoffman (1967), Peter Wallensteen (1968), C. Lloyd Brown-Jone (1975), and Margaret Doxey (1971, 1972, 1975-76). They dealt with the same problems with which the early liberals were concerned, such as the effectiveness of collective
sanctions, the legality and legitimacy of economic sanctions, and institutional reforms of collective sanctions system. Yet, the liberal approach of international sanctions has declined since the late 1970s. The new approach – what I call “realist approach of economic sanctions” – started to dominate the study of international sanctions in the 1970s. Before examining this paradigm shift, I discuss conceptual schemes of liberal approach in the next two subsections. What are preconditions for the use of sanctions in international society? How do liberalists conceptualize international sanctions? Who is a legitimate sanctioner in international society? What is a goal of economic sanctions? Liberalists’ answers are totally different from the ones current students of economic sanctions would make.

1-3 Constitution of International Sanctions

Liberalists define international sanctions as collective or organized punishment on a country that violates rules of conduct in international society. This definition is composed of two parts. First, international sanctions are collective or organized punishment. Second, international sanctions are punishment on a violator of international rules of conducts. I discuss the latter first.

Liberalists assume the existence of laws and/or norms for the constitution of sanctions. According to liberal paradigm there are no sanctions without common norms or laws that specify deviant behaviors. The distinction between coercion and sanctions is important in liberal paradigm. The possession of coercive power is not a sufficient, albeit necessary, condition for the resort to sanctions. Sanctions are coercive acts but not all coercive acts are sanctions. Sanctions are coercion that is used for promoting common interests. All coercive acts from self-interest are treated as acts of hostility, not sanctions. Liberalists believe that norms or laws must preexist for the exercise of sanctions because they work as constitutive rules that specify which practices are counted as legitimate coercion, that is, sanctions.

Liberal scholars of sanctions consider that international sanctions are modern phenomena. States started to engage in the practice of sanctions, they believe, only after international system was transformed into international society. This idea was shared with

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6 Hedley Bull distinguishes between international system and international society in a following way (1977: 10, 13):

_A system of states (or international system) is formed when two or more states have sufficient contact between them, and have sufficient impact on another’s decisions, to cause them to behave – at least in some measure – as parts of a whole._

_A society of states (or international society) exists when a group of states, conscious of certain 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 another, and share in the working of common institutions._
classical realists. For instance, Quincy Wright notes that Greek city-states failed to impose sanctions on non-Greek states because they did not share common rules of war: “The sanctions of rules of war have been inadequate between peoples of similar civilization, and observance of such rules has been almost wholly lacking in wars between peoples of very different civilizations. Among the Greek city-states, for example, rules recognized in hostilities between one another were considered inapplicable in war with barbarians” (1964: 152). Most liberalists consider that international sanctions originated from the establishment of the League of Nations and the United Nations. As Frederik Hoffman notes, “Both world organisations came into being just after world wars when there still was a high consensus among the victors that there existed morally ‘good’ and morally ‘bad’ nations, and it is implied in the very term ‘sanction’ that this measure is not just any political action; it is intended to be used against nations that deserve ‘punishment’ (1967: 144).

In this way liberalists treat international sanctions as punishment on a country that violates rules of conduct. But what kinds of misconduct become the objects of international sanctions? There are two kinds of liberal positions. The first is a juristic position. Most liberalists before WWII treated international sanctions as a punitive measure on a country that infringes on international law. For instance, the Royal Institute of International Affairs defined international sanctions as “action taken by members of the international community against an infringement, actual or threatened, of the law” (1938: 16). Juristic interpretation of international sanctions was predominant before WWII because the study of international sanctions was conducted mainly by legal scholars (see, for instance, Root 1908; Butler 1912; Coudert 1912; Peaslee 1916; Roxburgh 1920; Clark 1932; Hyde 1933). It is still an orthodox approach for students of international law (Kunz 1960; MacDonald 1967, 1969; Reisman 1971; Bowett 1972, 1976; Kuyper 1990; Provost 1992; Schrijver 1994; Pierce 1996). Joseph L. Kunz’s statement below is representative of juristic interpretation of sanctions (1960: 324, n. 3):

> Political measures against a state not guilty of an international delinquency may be legal or illegal; but they do not constitute sanctions. A delict is a violation of a legally binding norm; one cannot speak of a sanction against a non-acceptance of the proposals of a mediator or conciliator, of the report of an international commission of inquiry, against the non-fulfillment of a normal, legally not binding recommendation of an organ of an international organization.

Most liberal-oriented IR scholars consider, however, that the juristic approach is not useful for understanding international society where legalization is underdeveloped. Therefore, they adopt sociological definition of sanctions. Sociologists treat sanctions as a measure of norm enforcement. For instance, James Coleman notes that, “Social norms . . . specify what actions are regarded by a set of persons as proper or correct, or improper or incorrect. . . . Norms are
ordinarily enforced by sanctions” (1990: 242). They do not deny the significance of legal sanctions but laws are subsumed under the category of norms in their arguments. As Anthony Giddens puts it, “Sanctions, classified as formal or informal, are applied by society to reinforce social norms. Laws are formal sanctions promoting conformity to government-defined norms” (1996: 95). Myres S. McDougal and F. P. Feliciano also claim that (1961: 280-1, n. 45a):

The term ‘sanction’ can have different meanings. In its widest sense, it means any measure taken in support of a social order regulating human behavior. The purpose of a sanction is to bring about that behavior which, according to the opinion of the social authority, is useful to society and hence is considered to be in conformity with the social order; and to prevent that behavior which, according to the opinion of the social authority, is harmful to society and hence is considered to be contrary to the social order.’

The narrower conception of ‘legal sanctions’ . . . is that of ‘coercive reactions against a violation of the law.’

Margaret Doxey supported legalistic approach of international sanctions in the 1970s but abandoned it in the early 1980s because she realized that its definition of international sanctions is too restrictive to understand the prevalence of unilateral sanctions in international society:

“One would fight a losing battle in attempting to restrict the term to penalties for illegal acts, imposed by a legally constituted authority, and perhaps it is a battle which should be lost, particularly at the international level” (1980: 485). She adopts sociological definition of international sanctions now. According to her, international sanctions are “penalties threatened or imposed as a declared consequence of the target’s failure to observe international standards or international obligations” (1987: 4). This is an orthodox liberal definition of international sanctions.7

Liberalists are also concerned with the specification of legitimate sanctioners in international society. The juristic approach contends that only an international organization is entitled to impose physical sanctions on a delinquent state and the most legitimate sanctioner in international society was the League of Nations before WWII and has been the United Nations since then. The corollary is that a state cannot impose physical sanctions on another state without authorization from an international organization. In other words, juristic scholars do not accept the legitimacy of unilateral sanctions. They are treated as either acts of hostility or bad sanctions. For instance, the Royal Institute of International Affairs noted: “Sanctions are measures taken in support of law. It is of the essence of law that its sanctions are applied with and by the general authority, not by any individual. With the substitution of the word ‘state’ for the word ‘individual’, this is true in principle, and ought to be true in fact, of the sanctions of international

7 Deon Geldenhuys adopts similar definition of international sanctions: “Sanctions are international punitive measures in the diplomatic, economic, military and socio-cultural fields against a state that violates international law or refuses to honor its international commitments” (1990: 20-1).
as well as of international law. In so far as sanctions are punitive, they are applied only after due inquiry and judgement by a competing authority” (1938: 4). Due process matters for the exercise of international sanctions because some states may justify infringing on other state’s sovereignty in the name of sanctions. As Peter Wallensteen notes, “Since the international system consists of a number of sovereign, although not entirely independent states, there is a great pluralism of norms and laws. Sanctions could therefore be used by any state against other states that do not comply with the norms one of them believes to be significant. Since this could lead to a rapid breakdown of all kinds of economic and other types of transactions, sanctions tend to be channeled through international organizations because they express a wider international (although not necessarily global) consensus on the significance of particular norms (1983: 89).

There is no vocabulary of “unilateral sanctions” in juristic approach. The United Nations delegitimizes unilateral coercive acts because they infringe on state’s sovereign rights. Article 2 (4) of the UN Charter forbids “the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state” except for collective or individual self-defense against an aggressor. The UN’s General Assembly repeatedly declared that forceful measures that violate the right of sovereignty include economic coercion. For instance, the General Assembly Resolutions 2131 (XX, December 21, 1965) and 2625 (XXV, October 24, 1970) say that “No State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights or to secure from it advantages of any kind.” The use of coercive instruments for self-defense is accepted but most legal scholars do not treat them as sanctions. The only legitimate sanctions in juristic approach are collective sanctions authorized by an international organization, preeminently the United Nations.

Yet, the juristic interpretation of international sanctions is too narrow to grasp a variety of sanctions in decentralized society. Most non-legalistic liberalists, therefore, consider that a state can resort to sanctions unilaterally as long as they are measures for promoting the interests of international community (Lillich 1975: 366). Legal and procedural legitimacy is not necessary for the constitution of international sanctions here. This sociological view of sanctions distinguishes between (legitimate) sanctions and (illegitimate) coercion by focusing not on procedural legitimacy but on the legitimacy of coercer’s motives. It considers that a state cannot impose sanctions on another country for its own self-interests. D. W. Bowett argues, for instance, that a state can engage in economic coercion only when its motive is proper: “Much of State economic activity is harmful to other States for the very obvious reason that State economies are competitive and that promoting one’s own economy may well be injurious to others. This
suggests that it will be necessary to characterise unlawful economic measures by their intent rather than their effect. In other words, measures not illegal *per se* may be become illegal only upon proof of an improper motive or purpose” (1972: 5). He suggests that economic sanctions should not be understood as a foreign-policy instrument. Margaret Doxey claims that unilateral coercion is legitimized only when it is used for the interests of the international community (1987: 4-5):

But the moral claims of competing ideologies, particularly those reflected in East-West rivalry, have encouraged widespread official use of the term *sanction* to invest foreign policy action with an aura of righteousness. . . . But it is still possible – and desirable – to preserve the sense of sanctions as penalties linked to real or alleged misconduct. From this perspective, violations of international law and/or the use of institutionally-based enforcement mechanisms are possible but not essential components of sanctioning. What is important to distinguish sanctions from violent or non-violent techniques employed specifically to further the interests of one or more states at the expense of others. International sanctions . . . are penalties threatened or imposed as a declared consequence of the target’s failure to observe international standards or international obligations. That a state cannot employ economic sanctions for self-interests is a liberal consensus.

But this understanding of international sanctions is quite distinct from the current usage of economic sanctions in the IR discipline. Most cases of economic sanctions listed in Gary Clyde Hufbauer, et al’s *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered* (1990a) - the bible for students of economic sanctions – are not treated as economic sanctions in liberal terminology. It is a book on economic coercion and economic warfare, not economic sanctions, for liberals. Most cases listed in *ESR* are U.S. unilateral measures that are employed for advancing its self-interests. For instance, in liberal interpretation the U.S. embargo against Cuba ceased to be sanctions when the Organization of American States (OAS) voted to rescind its mandatory sanctions against Cuba in July 1975. Few people would believe that the United States continues to impose economic sanction on Cuba for the interests of the Cubans and the world community. The UN General Assembly’s resolutions on the “Necessity of Ending Diplomatic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States of America against Cuba” have become annual events since 1992. The latest resolution on October 28, 2004 (A/RES/59/11) was approved by a record vote of 179 to 4 (United States, Israel, the Marshall Islands, and Palau) with one abstention (the Federated States of Micronesia). The General Assembly follows liberal usage, therefore, the U.S. measure on Cuba is not called sanctions in the United Nations.

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8 The usage of the term “embargo” in this resolution is wrong. Embargo refers to prohibition or restriction of trade. Diplomacy and finance cannot be embargoed
ESR also lists ten cases of economic warfare\(^9\) - “economic measure that aims for weakening target’s military power” – but liberalists do not treat it as economic sanctions. As Margaret Doxey notes, “Economic warfare, whether supplementing force in a ‘hot’ war or used alone in a ‘cold’ war should also be distinguished from sanctioning when its object is to improve the relative position or chances of ‘winning’ or the state(s) employing these tactics. . . . western strategic embargoes were not described as sanctions; nor should they have been; similarly, Arab League boycotts of Israel and Israel’s allies and trading partners are not sanctions and have not been so labeled” (1987: 5; see also Doxey 1975-6: 59-60). It is, of course, not easy to assess coercer’s motives correctly, making the utility of liberalists’ conceptualization of international sanctions lower. For instance, Richard B. Lillich argues that the Arab oil embargo of 1973 is not sanctions because ensuing worldwide inflation damaged the overall interests of the world community (1975: 368).\(^10\) Yet, he claims that the U.S. restriction of trade on the former Soviet Union by the application of the Jackson-Vanik amendment (Section 402 of the Trade Reform Act of 1974) is economic sanctions because “just as with the UN sanctions against Rhodesia, the U.S. stand on Soviet Jews serves the overall interest of the world community” (1975: 369). It is doubtful that the majority of liberalists agree on his subjective judgments. Margaret Doxey also maintains that the U.S. food embargo on the Soviet Union after its invasion of Afghanistan is not sanctions whereas she treats the U.S. embargo and assets freeze on Iran during the hostage crisis as economic sanctions (1980: 485). Her justification for this judgment is also unclear.

Liberal approach of international sanctions looks bizarre for most students of economic sanctions now. It is nonsensical to deny the prevalence of American unilateral sanctions in the current international society. Nevertheless, we need to keep in mind that liberalism was the orthodox approach of international sanctions in the IR discipline until the 1960s. Even classical realists understood international sanctions in the same way as liberalists even though they were not optimistic about the development of international sanctions system. The term sanctions in E. H. Carr’s Twenty Years’ Crisis referred to the League of Nations sanctions (1946: 29, 30, 46, 95-96). Quincy Wright claimed that the use of sanctions must be authorized by an international organization (1964: 206):

The word ‘sanction’ has often been applied to measures of self-help taken by single states under circumstances which they deem render such action permissible under international


\(^10\) Margaret Doxey also does not consider that the Arab oil embargo is sanctions. See Doxey 1975-6: 59-60 and 1980: 485.
law. . . ‘Sanctions’ in the present connection is confined to organized sanctions, or positive action which a community has authorized in a particular situation for the purpose of inducing its members to observe the law to which they are bound as members of that community. Sanctions would thus be distinguished from war, which implies a struggle between equals. Sanctions can only be authorized by the community of which the state or other persons against which the sanctions are directed is a member; they can only utilized to enforce a rule which bound the delinquent state or person before its wrongful act; they should be utilized only after impartial procedures have demonstrated that the rule has been violated; and they must involve action taken with the purpose of such enforcement.

Hans J. Morgenthau also argued that international sanctions system stands in contrast to power politics. According to him, sanctions are punishment on a violator of rules of conduct (1993: 220-1). As international society is civilized, he envisioned, states would maintain international peace not by the mechanism of power politics but by rules of conduct ensured by commands and sanctions (1993: 220):

When a society or certain of its members are unable to protect themselves with their own strength against the power drives of others – when, in other words, the mechanics of power politics are found wanting, as sooner or later they must be – these normative systems try to supplement power politics with their own rules of conducts. . . . Power is subject to limitations, in the interests of society as a whole and in the interest of its individual members, which are not the result of the mechanics of the struggle for power but are superimposed upon the struggle in form of norms or rules of conduct by the will of the members of society themselves.

 Classical realists criticized the liberal scheme of international sanctions system not because their definition of international sanctions is “narrowly legalistic and therefore unsuitable for general foreign policy analysis” (Baldwin 1985: 36) but because they believed that international society was not civilized enough to rely on rules of conducts for the maintenance of international order. For classical realists it was apparent that sanctions entail moral and legal connotations. As I argue in the next section, American foreign-policy analysts, not classical realists, demolished the liberal approach of international sanctions by changing the meaning of sanctions.

1-4 Functions of International Sanctions

11 Quincy Wright also argued that the resort to war as a measure for settling interstate disputes is replaced by the measure of collective sanctions in a civilized society (1964: 94):

With the progress of a civilization the justification for resort to war has tended to become abstract and more objective. As the civilization has become economically and culturally integrated, the subjective desire of a small group has appeared to continue a less and less adequate reason for resort to violence. More and more the interest of the civilization as a whole, objectively manifested in principles of law, has been invoked. From being justified as a protection of ‘natural rights’ interpreted by the fighting group itself, war has progressively been justified as a ‘duel’ or ‘trial by battle’ to vindicate honor or to establish rights in pursuance of the general interests that disputes and feuds be definitely settled; as an instrument of policy authorized by legitimate authority to improve the welfare of the community; and finally as a sanction for enforcing peace and justice within the civilization as a whole.
Current students of economic sanctions tend to assume that the primary goal of economic sanctions is the change of target country’s behavior as desired by a sanctioning country. Liberalists do not think so. They also desire to stop target country’s misconduct. But target country’s compliance is not considered as the primary goal of international sanctions in liberal approach. Realists assume that policymakers employ the most efficient means for bringing about target’s compliance; therefore, the use of incentive strategy or what they call positive sanctions is a viable option in their theory of economic sanctions. Liberal institutionalists refuse to offer rewards to a delinquent state even if it is more useful than the strategy of sanctions for stopping her misbehaviors. There is no theory of positive sanctions in the liberal approach. Liberals support the imposition of sanctions on a wrongdoer not because sanctions are the most efficient instrument for stopping her misconduct. The low effectiveness of compellent sanctions does not dissuade them from supporting the infliction of punishment on an outlaw state. To put it differently, liberalists prefer punishment without compliance to compliance without punishment. As the infliction of punishment on criminals is mandatory in municipal law, they believe, a delinquent country must be punished automatically. The goal of compliance is secondary here.

Then, what is a goal of international sanctions liberalists deem primary? We often demand punishment on a wrongdoer for retribution but liberalists do not support the use of retributive sanctions. They are rationalists in essence, rejecting non-rational use of international sanctions. Liberalists consider that the primary goal of international sanctions is what legal scholars call general deterrence. It refers to “the effect that punishment has when it serves as a public example or threat that deters people other than the initial offender from committing similar crimes” (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, 1993-2003). A primary target of deterrent sanctions is not an actual wrongdoer but potential wrongdoers that observe an act of punishment on misconduct. Deterrent sanctions are used not for stopping particular misconduct but for reducing the total number of offences in a society. Therefore, they are judged effective if they are successful for dissuading other actors from engaging in similar misconduct. Liberalists insist on punishing a wrongdoer even if it is not expected to be effective in altering her behaviors:

There is always a minority which does not accept the law, and when the law is flouted by a member of that minority, whether deliberately or in the heat of passion, law must be supported by sanctions if its rule is to survive and not to dissolve in anarchy (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1938: 4).

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12 Students of economic sanctions use other terms for referring to this goal, such as tertiary objectives (Barber 1979a), symbolic instrumental uses of economic statecraft (Baldwin 1985), or international symbolism (Lindsay 1986) with a little modification. The term general deterrence in IR theory refers to deterrence against an opponent who does not pose an immediate military threat (Morgan 1977: ch.2).
If the central idea of the League should not be ‘betrayed’, the members of the League had to make the decision to apply sanctions just to show that the principles of the Covenant were valid quite irrespective of the constellations of power politics – that was what the League enthusiasts called the ‘test’ of the League. . . . the decision may also be explained by the fact that the important members of the League did not openly want to disavow ‘the principles’ of the League. They wanted to preserve the principles in order to use them against Germany. It is thus quite characteristic that none of the leading politicians (from Eden to Litvinov) were especially interested in Ethiopia. What they wanted was both to preserve the principles and keep Italy as an ally. Italy and the ‘principles’ were then intended to be used in the political campaign against Germany (Hoffmann 1967: 142).

In a juristic sense a sanction is a hyphen between prescribed law and law enforcement, although certainly sanctions tend to be more closely related to enforcement than to prescribed law. Be the sanction implicit in existing societal norms or explicit within prescribed law, its primary roles are to function as a deterrent to unacceptable behavior and to exist as a means for enforcing prescribed behavior when the deterrent fails. Thus, in domestic or municipal law where there exists a prescribed law ‘A’ there also will be a correlated sanction ‘B’ that will be imposed should the law require enforcement. The law is subscribed to because the deterrent sanction ‘B’ is known to exist and it is known, or at least generally believed, that sanction ‘B’ will be imposed if the law is violated. The process has been simplified, of course, but the essential relationships nevertheless stand (Brown-John 1975: 2).

Sometimes, political elites probably do understand the limited ability of sanctions to induce immediate political compliance, but this may not be their intent. Frequently, in fact, the purpose is to deter objectionable future policies by demonstrating an ability to retaliate rather than to modify extant behavior. If the undesirable behavior is punished with sufficient severity it may not be repeated by the target country. In addition, the example of the chastisement may discourage other countries from engaging in the unacceptable activities (Nincic and Wallensteen 1983b: 6).

Whether based on legal or utilitarian considerations, the thrust of this approach is to make a wrong-doer suffer a penalty for his act. It is analogous of sentencing a burglar to a term in jail for his crime, not in the hope that he will be rehabilitated by the uplifting environment of the penitentiary, but in punishment for the offense. The imposition of economic sanctions in this spirit serves to define unacceptable behaviour, either unilaterally or multilaterally, and thus serves to contribute to the establishment of internationally accepted standards of legitimated conduct. . . . Economic sanctions are not only intended to punish those who have acted unacceptably in the past. They are also intended to deter those actors and others from engaging in similar behaviour in the future (Leyton-Brown 1987: 303-4).

By imposing economic sanctions and announcing publicly the reason why the target deserves to be punished, the imposer can let the world (not just the target) know what principles it considers to be rules which members of a particular grouping should

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13 Makio Miyagawa also argues that the main goal of the League-of-Nations sanctions against Italy was general deterrence: “One of the reasons why France and Britain participated in the League’s economic sanctions against Italy, though haunted by the resurgence of a militant Germany and, therefore, reluctant to offend one of their most important allies in Europe, was that failure to punish a violator of the Covenant would undermine the status quo established after World War I” (1992: 93). See also Carr 1946, 30).
observe, and that it is prepared to punish any member offending against those principles (Miyagawa 1992: 91).

A more logical aspect of the argument about deterrence is the classic position attached to systems of punishment domestically. In some philosophical defences of punishment within political communities, it is argued that harms should be imposed on individuals for one reason alone: to deter others from doing wrong. In other words, the purpose of punishment should not be the reform or rehabilitation of the wrong-doer, but the deterrence of all others. Applying this philosophy to the international system, it could be argued that sanctions imposed on a wrong-doer are designed to ‘send a signal’ – deter other potential wrong-doing states from engaging in comparable behaviour. Potential wrong-doers, perceiving the harm that is being visited on actual wrong-doers, recalculate the costs and benefits attached to a policy deemed wrongful, and decide to avoid doing wrong (Nossal 1994: 9).

In this way liberals, the originators of international sanctions system, conceived of international sanctions as organized punishment on a deviant country for maintaining international order and justice. Liberals dominated the discourse of international sanctions for a long time. However, current IR students do not see sanctions phenomena through the lens of liberalism. The liberal approach almost vanished in the study of economic sanctions for a long time ago. I briefly discuss the decline of liberal approach in the next subsection.

1-5 The Decline of Liberal Approach of International Sanctions

Current students of international sanctions do not refer to textbooks written by liberals. New paradigm emerged in the 1970s and revolution occurred in the mid-1980s. The alternative view, which I term a realist approach of economic sanctions, has become an orthodox way for understanding international sanctions. The realist approach differs substantially from the liberal approach in conceptual schemes of international sanctions. The former assumes that (1) a main sanctioner is not an international organization but a state, (2) economic sanctions are not punishment on a delinquent state but a policy instrument for changing target country’s behavior as desired by a sanctioning country, and (3) the function of international sanctions is not to promote general interests of international society but to benefit sanctioning country’s national interests.

The United States has employed economic instruments actively for promoting American hegemonic order since the end of World War II. President Truman compelled the Netherlands to evacuate from Indonesia by threatening the withdrawal of Marshal Plan aids (Taylor 1960; McMahon 1981) and banned the export of strategic goods to the former Soviet Union and its satellite countries in Eastern Europe under the CoCom forum in 1948 (Adler-Karlsson 1968; Wolf 1973; Mastanduno 1992). The trade with China and North Korea was also restricted in 1949 and 1950, respectively (Lee and McCobb 1971; Evans 1987; Lee 1996; Eberstadt 1997;
M. S. Daoudi and M. S. Dajani argue that the turning point in American economic sanctions policy was its success in toppling Iran’s Mosaddeq regimes by the refusal to buy Iranian oil in 1953 (1983: 41-2).

Until the 1960s the main targets of the U.S. economic sanctions are socialist countries (North Vietnam, Laos and Cuba) and the countries that confiscated American multilateral corporations (Cuba, Ceylon, Brazil, Peru). As the détente with the Soviet Union had progressed in the early 1970s, however, the United States began to employ economic sanctions on a variety of issues. Those countries that engage in nuclear development, human rights abuses, drug trafficking, and terrorism have become the targets of economic sanctions since the 1970s. The end of the cold war also pushed the U.S. government to broaden the scope of issues that become the objects of sanctions. Non-democracy, the transfer of the weapons of mass destruction (WMD), war responsibility, labor rights violations, and human trafficking have become interpreted as deviant acts on which the use of economic sanctions are justified.

Liberalists consider that most unilateral sanctions initiated by the United States should not be treated as economic sanctions. How and why can a state punish another state in anarchical society whose basic principle is the equality of sovereignty? International sanctions are originally construed not as a supplement to power politics but as its replacement. Nevertheless, the United States obviously uses its economic instruments unilaterally for its own national interests. Is it appropriate to call them sanctions?

Margaret Doxey, a champion of liberal theory of international sanctions, criticizes American usages of the term sanctions. She notes that (1987: 4):

No doubt in the 1930s things seemed more straightforward. In line with the concept of enforcement of international law, international sanctions meant League of Nations sanctions; in other words, penalties to be collectively imposed by members of the body responsible for international peace and security on those who violated the obligations under the League Covenant. This concept of penalties in an international framework was carried forward in the United Nations Charter which introduced new norms of human rights and also gave limited authority to regional bodies to act in defence of regional peace and security. Until quite recently the major cases of sanctions which attracted scholars’ attention were those sponsored by the League, the UN and regional bodies, particularly the Organization of American Sates (OAS). Unilateral acts of retaliation were not usually referred to as sanctions; nor was economic warfare so described, whether employed in a ‘hot’ or ‘cold’ war.

She claims that “one of the reasons for the increasingly common use of the term ‘sanction’ is the preference of governments to assert ethical grounds for their foreign policy behaviour” (1987: 6). John C. Scharfen also states that “For sound political reasons the U.S. leadership has avoided using the term economic war in its peacetime commitments to the use of
economic force. The preferred term is economic sanctions. Academics and the media have followed suit” (1995: 9). Doxey laments this conceptual confusion (1986: 102-103):

Regrettably, in the writer’s view, the word is being progressively drained of content in the international context, so that in popular and media usage (and also in the writing of scholars) a negative sanction has come to mean no more than an influence attempt, i.e. action by one or more states directed against another which the latter finds unwelcome. . . . there are difficulties in attaching authoritative status to international sanctions; they cannot always be characterized as penalties imposed by bodies which are authorized both to make judgments that rules have been broken and to enforce them. But to equate international sanctions with all injurious acts of foreign policy further confuses an issue which is already sufficiently confused. Negative sanctions must be a response to previous acts of impermissible or unacceptable behavior, real or alleged, and it is in this sense that the term is used here.

Yet, her admonition has been neglected by students of economic sanctions since the 1980s (see, however, Nossal 1987, 1989, 1994; Geldenhuys 1990: Christiansen and Powers 1995; Klotz 1995; Ngobi 1995; Crawford and Klotz 1999). At any rate, the meaning of international sanctions has changed. Students of international politics had understood economic sanctions as one type of international sanctions and distinguished economic sanctions from economic coercion until the early 1970s. But the majority of IR scholars treat economic sanctions as a synonym for economic coercion and its abbreviated word sanctions has begun to mean economic coercion now. 14 Why did the change of the meanings of economic sanction occur? What is its

14 Current students of economic sanctions lack the vocabulary of military and diplomatic sanctions, therefore, the word sanctions has become synonymous with economic sanctions. See the following examples (all emphases added):

To abandon altogether the idea of recourse to sanctions in response to acts of aggression or other flagrant violations of international law or human rights would be to reduce the choice of response to one between military action and acquiescence – an unattractive choice at the best of times and particularly so in a nuclear age (Renwick 1981: 92).

sanctions are sometimes used as a surrogate for other measures. A diplomatic slap on the wrist may not hit where it hurts, but more extreme measures, such as covert action or military measures, may be excessive. Sanctions provide a popular middle road: they add teeth to international diplomacy, even when the bark is worse than the bite (Hufbauer, et al. 1990a: 11).

sanctions fill a part of the gray area on the continuum between diplomacy and war. Sanctions are often used when the transgression being addressed is not enough to justify the use of force, or when the use of force is politically impossible (Selden 1995: 27).

the costs to senders of imposing sanctions are far smaller than the cost of threatening or using force, a prime policy alternative. While sanctions cost the United States $7 billion in lost exports, the defense budget – a crude measure of the cost of preparing to use force and of using force – cost a far larger $283.5 billion in 1987. Moreover, sanctions have the obvious advantage of not risking the lives of U.S. citizens (Rogers 1996: 53).

In cases combining economic and military measures, we believe that some degree of success may be attributed to sanctions if they contributed at least modestly to the outcome. (Elliott 98: 54-5).
implication on states’ uses of economic instruments in world politics? In the next section I
examine the current paradigm of economic sanctions study – the realist approach of economic
sanctions.

2. Realism and Economic Sanctions

2-1 The Rise of Realist Approach in the Study of Economic Sanctions

Liberal approach of international sanctions is forgotten framework of analysis among students of
International Relations now. It is still an orthodox approach for students of international law but
IR students have stopped referring to books and journals on international law for a long time ago.
In a class of economic sanctions they are taught to understand international sanctions through the
lens of what I call a realist approach of economic sanctions. This paradigm shift has changed the
discourse of international sanctions in the IR community fundamentally. Paradigm change
affects how we problematize, theorize, observe, and interpret empirical phenomena deeply (Kuhn
1970). As Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow note, “The conceptual models are much more than
simple angles of vision or approaches. Each conceptual framework consists of a cluster of
assumptions and categories that influence what the analyst finds puzzling, how he formulates the

Understanding the limits of both sanctions and force as coercive instruments may help policymakers
identify situations in which diplomacy may be a better approach than coercion, or in which the United
States may have to accept that it simply cannot impose its will at an acceptable cost (Pape 1998: 77).

Choice implies alternatives. If policymakers have no alternatives, there is no choice to be made.
This has implications for the concept of sanctions, for the question of whether sanctions are a
substitute for force, and for the evaluation of sanctions as a policy option (Baldwin 1999/2000: 82).

In our usage, engagement refers to a foreign policy strategy that depends to a significant degree on
positive incentives to achieve its objectives. Certainly, engagement does not preclude the
simultaneous use of other foreign policy instruments such as sanctions or military force (Haass &
O’Sullivan 2000: 2).

There may be merit in treating sanctions ‘on their own,’ but it is as important if not more so to
conceive of them as complements to other means of statecraft. This is a case of practice preceding
theory. More often than not, policymakers treat economic sanctions as part of a package of foreign
policy measures. Nonetheless, scholarly analysis thus far has not addressed systematically the
interaction of sanctions and other instruments of statecraft. (Mastanduno 2000: 299).

Throughout history, countries and organizations have used economic sanctions to coerce and to
change the policies of an adversary. Sometimes sanctions have been the sole policy instrument, and
at other times sanctions have been accompanied by diplomatic or military actions (Askari, et al.
2003: xi).

For the purpose of this book, a sanction will be defined as the deliberate withdrawal of normal trade
or financial relations for foreign policy purposes (O’Sullivan 03: 12).

Yet the term sanctions do not connote economic means at all. It is apparent that the counterconcept of
sanctions is neither force nor diplomacy. Sanctions can also be used militarily and diplomatically.
question, where he looks for evidence, and what he produces as an answer” (1999: 379). It is interesting that this paradigm change occurred without intense intellectual battles between liberalists and realists. Realists triumphed over liberalists simply by ignoring the latter’s studies of international sanctions. Liberal tradition is still alive in the literatures on international law but students of economic sanctions in the IR discipline rarely consult them. In this section I examine how realist approach differs from liberal one by focusing on its ontological assumptions of international sanctions, its definitions of economic sanctions, and the goals of economic sanctions that realists presuppose. Before answering these questions I illustrate the intellectual history of economic sanctions study during the Cold War period briefly.

Unlike liberalists, realists conceptualize (economic) sanctions not as punishment on illegal or immoral acts but as a state’s foreign-policy instrument used for the pursuit of national interests. When did paradigm shift occur? It is difficult to get a definite answer. Division of labor has existed between the studies of economic sanctions and of economic statecraft until the 1960s. Neither Albert O. Hirschman’s National Power and the Structure of Foreign Trade (1980 [1945]) nor W. N. Medlicott’s The Economic Blockade (1952) was considered as the books on economic sanctions at that time. Nevertheless, as the U.S. government identified its economic coercive acts as economic sanctions, the term economic sanctions began to be treated as a synonym for economic coercion in the 1970s and economic statecraft in the 1980s. Realists made the distinction between sanctions and coercion obscure by getting rid of legal and moral connotations of the term sanctions. James Barber defined economic sanctions simply as “economic measures directed to political objectives” (1979a: 367). Richard Stuart Olson rejected the liberal approach by claiming that we need to “make ‘coercion’ interchangeable with ‘sanctions,’ in order to capture more of the element of threat in these situations and to move a bit further away from legal terminology” (1979: 474). Nevertheless, Margaret P. Doxey continued to be recognized as a leading scholar of international sanctions in the IR community by the early 1980s. In addition, students of economic sanctions treated multilateral sanctions initiated by an international organization as exemplary cases of sanctions.

15 On the early studies of economic statecraft, see also Zimmern (1918); Guichard (1930); Zeuthen (1930); Jack (1940); Polk (1941); Domke (1943); Gordon and Dangerfield (1947); Wu (1952); Siney (1957); Schelling (1958, chapters 30 and 31); Strange (1958); Fairbank (1964); Holsti (1967: ch. 10); Adler-Karlsson (1968).
16 On the early realist arguments of economic sanctions, see also Schreiber (1973); Knorr (1975); Knorr and Trager, eds., (1977); Paarberg (1978, 1980); Barber (1979a); Losman (1979); Von Amerongen (1980); Ayubi, et al. (1982); Weintraub, ed. (1982); Hufbauer and Schott (1983); Nincic and Wallensteen, ed. (1983a); Jentleson (1984).
17 The UN sanctions on South Africa and Rhodesia, and the OAS sanctions on Cuba were treated as representative cases of economic sanctions by the mid-1980s. On South African sanctions, see Barber.
The gestalt switch seemed to occur in 1985, however. Two important books that have become exemplars of the study of economic sanctions were published on that year. They are Gary Clyde Hufbauer, Jeffrey J. Scott, and Kimberly Ann Elliott’s *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered* and David A. Baldwin’s *Economic Statecraft*. Current students of economic sanctions do not consider that each work belongs to the same school. The former is inductive and quantitative while the latter is deductive and qualitative in their research orientations. The definitions and goals of economic sanctions are also quite different from each other. In fact, Baldwin was very critical of Hufbauer and Scott’s earlier works (Hufbauer and Scott 1983; Baldwin 1985: 111, 117, 120-121, 128, 132, 136, 147, 150-152, 175, 286, 371-373). Yet, these differences should not blind us to their similarities on the ontological assumption of international system (ontological individualism), an epistemological standpoint (government officials in a sanctioning country), methodology (behavioralism\textsuperscript{18}) and a theoretical orientation (rationalism). It is not too much to say that these two books have established the study of economic sanctions as a distinct discipline in the American IR community since the mid-1980s. Many books on economic sanctions have been published since then but it is difficult to find books and articles that challenged their metatheoretical positions.\textsuperscript{19} Someone may mention harsh debates conducted by Robert Pape, Kimberly Ann Elliott, and David A. Baldwin in the journal *International Security* as an evidence to refute the existence of paradigm in the study of economic sanctions (Pape 1997, 1998; Elliott 1998; Baldwin and Pape 1998; Baldwin 1999/2000), but they could discuss technical issues such as the effectiveness of economic sanctions with one another because the study of economic sanction has already transformed from a preparadigm stage into normal science. As Paul Diesing notes, normal science “is a stage of solving detailed puzzles on the basis of a given theory and following a given pattern or exemplar. Fundamentals have been settled, and the scientist is a narrow specialist or technician” (1991: 57).

\textsuperscript{18} Baldwin notes that his approach is based on behavioralism even though his analysis focuses mainly on symbolic effects of economic sanctions: “The narrow ‘behaviorists’ definitions of behavior in terms of policy changes should also be noted. If behavior is defined more broadly to include beliefs, attitudes, opinions, expectations, emotions, and/or predispositions to act, then supporting a war effort, imposing costs on the target, and manipulating symbols in order to change the image of the sender would be included in the estimates of the effectiveness of sanctions” (1999/2000: 88).

\textsuperscript{19} On representative realist works of economic sanctions since the 1990s, see, for instance, Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott (1990a and 1990b); Tsseblesis (1990a); Martin (1992); Cortright and Lopez, eds. (1995); Mansfield (1995); Rodman (1995); Kirshner (1997); Morgan and Schwebach (1997); Drury (1998); Haass (1998a); Dreznier (1999, 2003); Selden (1999); Shambaugh (1999); Cortright and Lopez (2000); Haass and O’Sullivan, eds. (2000); Blanchard, Mansfield, and Ripsman, eds. (2000a); Chan and Drury, eds. (2000); Rodman (2001); Askari, et al. (2003); O’Sullivan (2003).
The primary research questions are predetermined in a realist approach. *Do economic sanctions work?* *Under what conditions do economic sanctions work?* You are not identified as a specialist of economic sanctions until you have a firm opinion on the answer of these questions. Current students of economic sanctions can concentrate on solving these questions because they (mistakenly) believe that they do not have to justify their ontological, epistemological, and moral positions before engaging in empirical studies. Paul Diesing is right in saying that “The strengths of a perspective consist of its ability to bring certain aspects of society into clear focus, thereby making their empirical study possible; the weakness(es) of a perspective consist of the way it distort or hides other aspects of society” (1982: 12). With the appearance of comprehensive data and a refined theory, the study of economic sanctions has developed rapidly since the mid-1980s, establishing it as a distinct subfield of the IR discipline. 20 Yet, we had to pay the price. Non-American scholars, students of international law, critical theorists, and many laypersons have begun to see their works as irrelevant to real problems and biased in favor of the United States. I show how realist works have distorted the essence of economic sanctions. How do realists distort and hide the essential aspects of economic sanctions in world politics? Before discussing conceptual and theoretical problems of their works in the next section, I summarize their main arguments as impartial as possible in this section.

2-2 Realist Ontology of Economic Sanctions

Realists assume that international system is anarchic. It is a self-help system that is composed of functionally like units called states (Waltz 1979: 105). Current students of economic sanctions *implicitly* accept this assumption. According to them, there are no common rules and institutions that regulate and administer the use of physical instruments for coercion. Every state is (or does not have to be) entitled to impose economic sanctions on other states in this world. Small countries may hesitate to impose unilateral sanctions on a powerful country but it does not mean that they cannot do that. Realist approach of economic sanctions is based on methodological individualism. 21 No structural factors constitute sanctions. If economic sanctions are understood as economic statecraft (Baldwin 1985), this is a reasonable assumption. By definition, any states can engage in statecraft. Castro would not be irrational enough to attack the United States but it

20 David A. Baldwin’s *Economic Statecraft* (1985), Lisa L. Martin’s *Coercive Cooperation* (1992), and Daniel W. Drezner’s *Sanctions Paradox* (1999) are probably the most successful books on economic sanctions that are read widely among non-specialists of economic sanctions.

21 Methodological individualism refers to the ontological position that “all complex social phenomena are to be explained in terms of the elementary individual actions from which they are composed” (Scott 1995: 76).
does not mean that he cannot do that. Therefore, realist ontology of sanctions does not rule out the possibility of Cuban imposition of economic sanctions on the United States.

Nonetheless, only a few states employ economic sanctions as a foreign policy instrument. According to ESR’s data only three countries (the United States, the former Soviet Union, and the Great Britain) initiated economic sanctions for more than three times from 1914 through 1990. The number of countries that engaged in unilateral economic sanctions for at least one time during this period is only twelve. The United States used economic sanctions for 73 times but became the target of economic sanctions only two times during this period. Why is the use of economic sanctions so skewed even though it is not physically difficult for any states except for autarkies to restrict or terminate extant economic interactions with other states?

Realists explain it through the logic of power, interests, and rationality. All are attributes of agency, not of structure. First, realists agree with E. H. Carr on his statement that “The economic weapon is pre-eminently the weapon of strong powers” (1946: 131). Hossein G. Askari, et al., for instance, note (2003: 4):

> The imposition of economic sanctions, whether in the form of embargoes, blockades, or other economic restrictions, . . . requires the accompanying resources and means to enforce the sanctions and that the sender country commands significant influence over commercial activities. This is a capacity of the largest and most powerful nation-states and international entities.

Yet, the asymmetry of power does not negate a small state’s use of economic sanctions. What is denied is an effective use of economic sanctions by small states. Most liberalists deplore this asymmetry of power in international politics. A. LeRoy Bennett, for instance, claims that “If power is sufficiently dispersed, the threat of massive sanctions would be effective against both large and small states. No state could hope to defy the united will and effort of all other states acting in concert” (1995: 146). His lament will have practical implications if liberalists can find out a way of redistributing power resources among states. They still have not invented such alchemies.

Second, realists assume that a state imposes economic sanctions on another country when conflicts of interests arise. They adopt what Steven Lukes calls the one-dimensional view of power in their analysis of economic sanctions. This view of power “involves a focus on behaviour in the making decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests” (Lukes 1974: 15). Powerful states are more likely to employ economic sanctions than small states in the international arena because their interests are at stake on a

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22 They are USSR vs. United States, United Kingdom, and France (Berlin embargo) (1948-49) and Arab League vs. United States and the Netherlands (oil embargo) (1973-74). We need to keep in mind that journalists and historians do not treat these two cases of embargoes as sanctions. I discussed in my dissertation in progress why it is problematic to treat embargoes as a synonym for sanctions.
worldwide scale. As Hossein G. Askari, et al. claim, “powerful nation-states invariably have broad interests in territories in close proximity to their own, including national security and economic interests. Yet, even territories on the other side of the world have long attracted the economic interests and the engagement of powerful countries” (2003: 4; see also Cashman 1993: 138). For instance, Malaysia does not care about human rights violations in Latin America as the United States is concerned with Aung San Suu Kyi’s health conditions.

Third, realists assume that a state is more or less rational actors. Without this assumption realists cannot explain the asymmetrical use of economic sanctions among states. This is because the majority of states’ non-use of economic sanctions cannot be explained solely by the logic of opportunity. It is not physically difficult for small states to stop or restrict import from or export to another country. Castro can stop economic intercourse with the United States and Qaddafi can stop the export of oil to the United States without any physical difficulties. It is also hard to believe that conflicts of interests between a small state and a big power do not exist. Then, why does not the former impose economic sanctions on the latter? Realists must argue that this is because policymakers in a small state are not irrational enough to have the willingness to impose economic sanctions that are unlikely to be successful for changing target’s behaviors. The rationality assumption is the hard core of realist approach.

Liberal ontology is quite different from realist one. Liberalists in the study of international sanction are ontological holists. In a realist world there is no distinction between acts of hostility and sanctions but liberalists consider that the existence of common interests and values make this distinction possible. They argue that sanctions cannot exist in a system where shared rules and norms do not exist. International sanctions system is understood as an institution that promotes civilization in international society through the use of punishment on the violators of rules, norms, and laws. By civilization Hans J. Morgenthau refers to “the automatic reactions of the members of a society to the rules of conduct by which that society endeavors to make its members conform to certain objective standards, to restrain their aspirations for power, and to domesticate and pacify them in all socially important respects” (1993: 222). Violators of rules, laws, and norms exist in any society. Liberalists, therefore, claim that it is necessary to institutionalize sanctions system in international society as in domestic society. Coercive acts that do not live up to this goal are not treated as sanctions in the liberal approach. They are understood as acts of hostility that must be delegitimized. On the other hand, realists are foreign-policy analysts in essence. They do not care about structural factors that constitute the use of sanctions. Realists oppose the use of economic sanctions only when it looks irrational from the standpoint of policymakers (“economic sanctions do not work!”). They do not oppose the use of
sanctions by saying that “your country is not entitled to impose sanctions on another country on this issue!” Liberalists argue that an international organization is the most legitimate sanctioner in international society. On the other hand, realists do not treat an international organization as an autonomous agency. It is relegated to a forum where an initiating country induces or compels other countries to participate in multilateral sanctions (Martin 1992; Mansfield 1995). Daniel Drezner pushes forward an extreme view that “situations where the sender or target is an international organization” in ESR’s data set is excluded from sanctions cases. According to him, “the League of Nations sanctions, the Arab boycott of Israel . . . and the United Nations sanctions imposed against South Africa” are not “typical” sanctions episode because “they are not really bilateral disputes, and thus the actors are not clearly defined” (1999: 104; see also Lektzian and Souva 2003). Liberalists and classical realists must be dumbfounded at the bizarre development of the theory of economic sanctions.

2-3 Conceptualization of Economic Sanctions

Do realists conceptualize the term economic sanctions properly? There is no generally accepted definition of economic sanctions among them. In fact, they often dispute over the proper definitions of economic sanctions one another (Pape: 1997, 1998; Elliott 1998; Baldwin 1998, 1999/2000; Baldwin and Pape 1998; Drezner 2003). Yet, we can still categorize their definitions of economic sanction into two groups – the broad and narrow views of economic sanctions.

The meaning of the adjective economic is clear enough not to have to think it over seriously. It represents economic technique, measure, means, or instrument of sanctions. We should not confound means and goals/effects of sanctions. Even if the use of sanctions brings about economic deprivations on a target, it is not called economic sanctions if it results from the use of non-economic techniques. As David A. Baldwin notes, “‘Bombing a library is not called cultural warfare; bombing homes is not called residential warfare; bombing nuclear reactors (with conventional bombs) is not called nuclear warfare; and bombing factories should not be labeled economic warfare’ (1985: 39-40). Medieval siege that threatened to starve the besieged people in a target area (Bradbury 1992; Simons 1999) and Britain’s gunboat diplomacy on debtor nations in Latin America during the 19th century (Lipson 1985; Mandel 1986) were not economic but military sanctions though its immediate effects and goals were economic.

Then, what are sanctions? Sanctions are an intentional act; therefore, the question arises on what purpose a sanctioner imposes sanction on another actor.23 Realists answer that sanctions

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23 We kill and hurt others inadvertently but we can neither commit murder nor inflict punishment on others unintentionally. In the same way we do not impose sanctions on others by accident.
are an influence attempt to affect a target country’s intentions, resources, and/or behaviors for the benefits of a sanctioning country. In this conceptualization there is no way of distinguishing between coercion and sanctions, therefore, realists use the terms sanctions and coercion interchangeably. The following are examples of the broad view of economic sanctions. In this view a sanctioning country’s foreign-policy goals are not specified.

influence attempts relying primarily on resources which have a reasonable semblance of a market price in terms of money (Baldwin 1985: 14).

the deliberate, government-inspired withdrawal, or threat of withdrawal, of customary trade or financial relations (Hufbauer, et al. 1990a: 2).

governmental policies that cut or curtail economic relations in order to coerce the target country(ies) into behaving in accordance with the sanctioner’s objectives (Ellings 1991: 16).

a coercive foreign policy action of a nation(s) in which it . . . intentionally suspends customary economic relations such as trade and/or financial exchanges in order to prompt the targeted nation to change its policy or behavior (Lopez and Cortright 1995: 15, note 3).

the denial of customary interactions (strategic, economic, or social); they are intended to promote social, political, or economic change in a target state (Crawford 1999: 5).

an economic penalty or cost that is imposed by a sender on a designated target, regardless of the particular form that it takes or the ends that it serves (Shambaugh 1999: 4).

a coercive foreign policy in which a state disrupts its normal economic relations with another state in order to achieve one of the following objectives: (1) to induce the targeted state to change its behavior; (2) to generate popular pressure on the government that causes it to change its policies; or (3) to provoke a coup or revolt that leads to the emergence of a new government that will act in accordance with the sanctioning state’s wishes (Blanchard and Ripsman 2000: 219)

coercive measures imposed by one country, or coalition of countries, against another country, its government or individual entities therein, to bring about a change in behavior or policies (Rennack 2000).

the deliberate withdrawal of normal trade or financial relations for foreign policy purposes (O’Sullivan, 2003, p. 12).

The narrow view of economic sanctions, on the other hand, restricts a sanctioner’s goal to a political one. Coercive attempts used for achieving non-political goals are not treated as sanctions in this view. Supporters of this view define economic sanctions in a following way (all emphases added).

economic measures directed to political objectives (Barber 1979a: 367).
the imposition of economic penalties to bring about a change in the political behavior of the country against which they are directed (Renwick 1981: 2).

a severe reduction in trade accompanied by publicly declared political demands of at least one party (the initiator, here called the sender) on the other party (the target, here called the receiver) (Wallensteen 1983: 90).

measures in which one country (the initiator) publicly suspends a major portion of its trade with another country (the target) to attain political objectives. . . . the pursuit of political objectives distinguishes sanctions from curbs on trade designed to secure economic ends (Lindsay 1986: 154).

the imposition of punitive economic measures to secure political goals (Lipton 1989: 336).

the threat or use of economic punishment (trade embargoes, aid reductions or termination, and asset freezing) by one state or coalition of states to produce a change in the political behavior of another state or group (Rogers 1996: 42).

Economic sanctions seek to lower the aggregate economic welfare of a target state by reducing international trade in order to coerce the target government to change its political behavior (Pape 1997: 93-4).

the threat or act by a nation-state or coalition of nation-states, called the sender, to disrupt economic exchange with another nation-state, called the target, unless the targeted country acquiesces to an articulated political demand (Drezner 1999: 2).

the use of economic means to influence the behavior of another international actor in a non-economic area (Lektzian and Souva 2003: 641).

But what does political objective, demand, goal or behavior mean? To put it differently, what are non-political goals? The debate over the appropriate definition of economic sanctions conducted by realists, which I consider futile, arises mainly over the meaning of political. 24

2-4 Goals of Economic Sanctions
I argued that liberalists consider that general deterrence is the primary goal of international sanctions. Realists do not think so, except David A. Baldwin. They assume that the main goal of economic sanction is to change target country’s behaviors as desired by a sanctioning country. The primary goal of economic sanctions is not an empirical question but a conceptual premise for them. Most realists define economic sanctions as coercive attempts (see their definitions of economic sanctions in the last subsection). ESR, for instance, claims that economic sanctions seek “changes expressly and purportedly sought by the sender state in the political behavior of the target states” (1990a: 2). This goal is called compellence (or compellance), a counterconcept of

24 I discussed the futility of political arguments over the definitions of economic sanctions in my dissertation in progress.
deterrence in a game-theoretic term (Schelling 1966). Most researchers use the terms compellence and coercion interchangeably but, according to David A. Baldwin, coercion refers to “a situation in which one actor (A) is able to manipulate the cost/benefit ratios of the alternatives perceived by another actor (B) so that the latter would be foolish to choose any alternative other than X, where X represents either a single alternative or a category of alternatives” (1985: 38). In this definition coercion includes both compellence and deterrence. Baldwin’s usage of the term coercion is more consistent with ordinary language. “Don’t move or you’ll be shot!” is obviously a coercive attempt. Nonetheless, students of international politics tend to use the term coercion for referring to compellence. Robert A. Pape, for instance, defines coercion as “efforts to change the behavior of a state by manipulating costs and benefits” (1996: 4). Another terms used for referring to compellence are compliance (Lindsay 1986: 155)\(^{25}\), coercive diplomacy (George 1991; George and Simmons 1994)\(^{26}\), coercive economic power (Knorr 1977: 99), and coercive foreign policy action (Lopez and Cortright 1995: 15, n. 3).

Nevertheless, most realists do not consider that compellence is the only goal a sanctioning country pursues. Although they assume that it is the primary goal of economic sanctions, most of them emphasize the multiple nature of economic sanction’s goals.\(^ {27}\) As George A. Lopez and David Cortright note, “The official or publicly declared purpose of sanctions, usually defined as a specific policy change in the targeted state, is often considered the primary goal. Yet other objectives can always be identified” (1995: 7).\(^ {28}\) Other goals of economic sanction realists mention are specific deterrence, weakening, international and domestic symbolisms. These secondary goals have trade-off relationship with the pursuit of compellent goals but realists tend to mention these goals only for explaining away contradictory empirical findings.

\(^{25}\) James M. Lindsay defines compliance as “to force the target to alter its behavior to conform with the initiator’s preferences” (1986: 155).

\(^{26}\) Alexander L. George notes that coercive diplomacy refers to “efforts to persuade an opponent to stop and/or undo an action he is already embarked upon” and it includes the use of economic sanctions (1991: xi-xii, 5).

\(^{27}\) Liberalists also notice that the goals of international sanctions tend to be multiple. But they deemphasize it because their arguments are normatively-oriented. For liberals general deterrence is not an empirical claim but a normative goal that a sanctioner must pursue. On the other hand, the realist theory of economic sanctions is essentially an empirical theory, therefore, realists are more careful to specify the actual goals of economic sanctions.

Deterrence policy is understood within the IR community as “an effort by one actor to persuade an opponent not to take action of some kind against his interests by convincing the opponent that the costs and risk of doing so will outweigh what he hopes to gain thereby” (Craig and George 1990: 179). This goal is called special deterrence in legal studies, which contrasts with the goal of general deterrence. James M. Lindsay defines the goal of deterrence as the attempt to “dissuade the target from repeating the disputed action in the future” (1986: 155). That is, deterrent sanctions are imposed on a target country not for stopping its misconduct but for deterring it from engaging in misconduct again. The U.S. sanctions against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1980-1981 are often cited as an exemplary case of deterrent sanctions (Baldwin 1985: 260-78; Lindsay 1986; Doxey 1987: 93; Hufbauer, et al. 1990a: 11; Eland 1995: 30).29 These scholars argue that Carter’s grain embargo did not aim for compelling the Soviet armies to withdraw from Afghanistan but for deterring the Soviet Union from engaging in further expansionist move in the Middle East. Yet, how can actual punishment deter other actors from engaging in further wrongdoing? Deterrence theory is based on a threat of punishment, not an actual use of punishment (Schelling 1966). That is, sanctions are imposed on a target country when deterrence has already failed. A sanctioner may inflict punishment on a target for signaling to it that a further wrongdoing incur more severe punishment but Kim Richard Nossal rejects this reasoning: “if the threat of sanctions did not forestall one act of wrongful behaviour by the target, it is unlikely that harms imposed would deter further wrongful behaviour” (1994: 8). It seems that realists have failed to clarify how a sanctioning country can pursue both compellent and deterrent goals at the same time. Ad hoc inclusion of deterrent arguments in their analysis seems to lead to the overestimation of the utility of economic sanctions.

Several realists also argue that a state often employs economic sanctions for weakening target country’s economic and military potentials (Knorr 1977; Baldwin 1985; Jentleson 1986; Hufbauer, et al. 1990a; Mastanduno 1992; Miyagawa 1992; Crawford 1993; Forland 1993; Drezner 1999). Sometimes it is rational for a state to weaken an adversary’s national power by restricting trade with it. As Lori Fisler Damrosch notes, “if the military option remains a last resort, then prior application of economic sanctions should weaken the military capabilities of the target and make it possible to achieve the objectives of sanctions at lower level of violence”

29 Elizabeth S. Rogers (1996: 50, n. 21) claims that ESR’s data include five cases of deterrent sanctions. They are the League of Nations v. Yugoslavia (1921), the League of Nations v. Greece (1925), the United States v. Israel (1956), Western allies v. German Democratic Republic (1961), and the United States v. El Salvador (1987). Except for Israeli sanctions in 1956, initiating countries did not actually impose sanctions on target countries.
ESR listed ten cases of economic sanctions that aimed for “impairing military potentials” (1990a)\(^{30}\).

But are these attempts to weaken target’s military power really sanctions? The use of sanctions presupposes extant misconduct by another actor. We may try to weaken a wild bear before capturing him but it is not called sanctions. Only when a domestic bear does not obey us, we can slap sanctions on him. To put it differently, we cannot impose sanctions on a fair player. We must, therefore, assume that a target country has already committed an offense for justifying the use of sanctions for weakening its economic and military capabilities. In legal parlance this goal is called incapacitation and is inseparably related to the goal of special deterrence (Packer 1968: 48-53). We keep criminals in a prison for depriving them of the opportunity to commit crimes again. Although we cannot imprison a rogue country, economic sanctions may be used for deterring its repeated offenses by incapacitating its national power. Makio Miyagawa justifies the use of this type of economic sanctions in a following way (1992: 101):

In peacetime, however, such economic measures cannot be adopted as easily as in wartime. . . . The mere fact that State A has increased its military strengths seems to be insufficient grounds for State B’s imposing economic sanctions against it, unless and until it becomes obvious that State A has the clear intention to use these forces. But once State A’s military build-up leads to a wrong-doing which gives State B a reason sufficient to justify sanctions, then State B may resort to economic sanctions. The aim of sanctions here may be termed the ‘strategic effect’. The term is all the more appropriate where, as is quite probable, State B takes advantage of the opportunity to impose sanctions as a means of removing the broader threat posed by State A by damaging State A’s economic ability to maintain its military build-up. As Klaus Knorr notes, this use of economic leverage is different from compellent sanctions because “there is no specific demand on behalf of which the action is initiated” (1977: 121). This does not mean that a sanctioner lacks coercive intents (Baldwin 1985: 39). This use of sanctions attempts to affect target country’s behaviors indirectly by weakening its power bases. Therefore, the goal of incapacitation can be understood as a variation of the goal of coercion (Drezner 1999). But is it really appropriate to treat the use of economic statecraft for impairing target country’s military potentials as economic sanctions? I consider that most cases are not economic sanctions. For instance, the CoCom embargo was placed on the former Soviet Union irrespective of its extant misconduct. It was an act against a rival, not a culprit. As I noted earlier, sanctions must be punishment on misconduct. We can deter a potential criminal from committing a crime by banning the possession of guns but this is not sanctions because he has not

committed crimes yet. We can compel a target to change his behaviors by weakening his physical ability but this is not sanctions unless it is an act on his misbehavior. Realists are unclear about how weakening arguments are conceptually related to sanctions arguments.

The goals of international and domestic symbolisms differ from other goals – compellence, special deterrence, and weakening – in that a target of an influence attempt is not a county whose economic interaction is restricted but a third party who observes a sanctioning act. A sanctionee is merely a sacrificial lamb for affecting others’ behaviors. As David A. Baldwin notes, “Statesmen usually behave as if others were watching, i.e., they usually consider the effects their behavior may have on such onlookers” (1985: 97). In a game-theoretic term it is understood that a sanctioner engages in a game in multiple arenas. George Tsebelis summarizes it as follows (1990b: 8-9):

In the case of games in multiple arenas, any of the actor’s moves has consequences in all arenas; an optimal alternative in one arena (or game) will not necessarily be optimal with respect to the entire network of arenas in which the actor is involved. Although the observer of only one game considers some behavior irrational or mistaken, the behavior is in fact optimizing inside a more complicated situation. The actor may choose a suboptimal strategy in one game if this strategy happens to maximize his payoffs when all arenas are taken into account. The substantive contribution of this examination of games in multiple arenas is that it presents a systematic way to take into account contextual factors (the situation in other arenas). Such contextual factors influence the payoffs of the actors in one arena, leading to the choice of different strategies; therefore, the outcomes of the game are different when contextual factors are taken into account.

David A. Baldwin made a similar point (1985: 106):

Promoting the American image abroad is a mixed motive game in which failure on one dimension may be offset by success on another. Any attempt to assess the overall net impact of using economic sanctions on the U.S. image abroad must take account of the multidimensional nature of that image. Symbolic arguments imply that policymakers may decide to use economic sanctions even if they do not expect target country’s changes of behaviors. Most realists, however, assume that the primary target is an actor whose economic intercourse is restricted. Therefore, they tend to mention symbolic goals just for explaining away anomalous phenomena. In fact, realists have consistently failed to incorporate David A. Baldwin’s insightful arguments on symbolic, instrumental uses of economic statecraft into their theoretical framework.

Baldwin criticizes Johan Galtung and Peter Wallensteen for their tendency to treat symbolic use of sanctions as expressive action (1985: 97-8). By an expressive action I mean “spontaneous enjoyment of value-expressive action, performed for its own sake, with no apparent rational consideration of material consequences for the actor” (Abelson 1996: 27). Symbolic action can perform both instrumental and expressive functions but students of economic sanctions tend to treat it as non-instrumental action. For instance, David A. Cortright and George A. Lopez
argue that “A full accounting of sanctions success must take into account both instrumental and symbolic purposes. Separating the different functions creates a false dichotomy that ignores the positive effects of expressive sanctions and expects too much in terms of immediate policy impact (2000: 17; see also Jentleson 1986: 30-1; Nossal 1994: 10; Eland 1995: 30-1; Nooruddin 2002: 67-8). The antonym of symbolic effects is not instrumental but behavioral effects in a narrow sense, however. Students of economic sanctions, I believe, had better abandon the term symbolic for referring to a variety of non-behavioral goals of sanctions. Any acts have symbolic effects on others unless we live in a solitary island. Symbolic arguments made by students of economic sanctions are rather confusing. For instance, Cortright and Lopez argues that symbolic goals include “deterring future wrongdoing, demonstrating resolve to allies or domestic constituencies, uphold international norms, and sending messages of disapproval in response to objectionable behavior” (2000: 16). But why do they categorize deterrent sanctions not as instrumental but as symbolic sanctions? How can we differentiate between the last two goals?

As long as symbolic sanctions are used instrumentally, their effectiveness can be assessed by checking instrumental effects of sanctions on targets. Therefore, students of economic sanctions must always examine sanctioner’s underlying purpose of symbolic sanctions.

The targets of symbolic uses of sanctions can be either international or domestic actors. The goal of international symbolism refers to the attempt to send messages to other international actors (Schreiber 1973: 413; Daoudi and Dajani 1983: 161-2; Baldwin 1985; Jentleson 1986: 30; Lindsay 1986: 155; Carter 1988: 12; Lenway 1988; Nossal 1989: 302-3, 1994: 9-10, 222; Eland 1995: 30-1; Lopez and Cortright 1995: 7; Cortright and Lopez 2000: 15-6). It seems that realists point out three instrumental goals of international symbolism. All goals aim for strengthening international alignment but each goal should be treated separately because their fundamental purpose of using sanctions differ from one another. First, an initiator of economic sanctions seeks international alignment for increasing the pressure to a target country. The primary goal of economic sanctions here is to alter the behaviors of a wrongdoing country; therefore, this symbolic use of sanctions can be subsumed under the category of compellent sanctions.

International alignment is treated as an intervening variable here. Makio Miyagawa calls it a demonstration effect of economic sanctions (1992: 93):

> economic sanctions may be imposed in order to demonstrate to the world, by the taking of decisive public action, the imposer’s firm conviction of the justice of its position or cause. In such cases, by so doing, the imposers have sought to mobilize world opinion to put pressure on the target. This is not an expressive action because its utility can be assessed by measuring the extent to which the level of international support is conducive to the change of target country’s
behavior. We tend to assume that the level of international cooperation correlates positively with the effectiveness of compellent sanctions (Strack 1978: 12; Carswell 1981-82: 265; Weintraub 1982: 3; Daoudi and Dajani 1983: 13; Martin 1992: 3, 6; Eland 1995: 36; Joyner 1995: 74; Rogers 1996: 70-1; Kirshner 1997: 35; Weiss, et al. 1997: 15; Haass 1998c: 200, 206; Butterfield 1999: 47; Cheney 1999: 22-3; Collins and Bowdoin 1999; Hufbauer 1999: 93-4; Klotz 1999: 276; Tanter 1999: 25; Cortright and Lopez 2000; Mastanduno 2000: 296). Yet other scholars argue that this relationship is found to be non-existent or conditional (Hufbauer, et al. 1990a: 96; Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1992, 1999; Selden 1995: 282; Pape 1997: 107-109; Drezner 2000; Miers and Morgan 2002). The important thing is that these scholars, whether they believe positive relationship between international cooperation and compellent effectiveness of sanctions or not, argue that the ultimate goal of this type of sanctions is not international alignment but the change of target country’s behavior. International alignment is merely an intervening variable that affects the effectiveness of changing target country’s behaviors here.

Secondly, economic sanctions are imposed on outlaw states for preventing a third party from engaging in similar misconduct. This is called general deterrence in legal parlance. Students of international politics tend to assume inadvertently that the primary target of deterrence policy is an actor on which sanctions are imposed. But sanctions are often imposed on deviant actors for preventing a third party from engaging in similar misconduct. As I showed in the last section, liberalists believe that this goal is more important than the goal of compellence. Some realists also emphasize the importance of this goal (Barber 1979a; Baldwin 1985; Lindsay 1986; Rogers 1996) although, unlike liberalists, they are more interested in a state’s use of deterrent sanctions than the UN sanctions. The Soviet sanctions against Yugoslavia (1948-55) and the U.S. sanctions against Cuba are often cited as exemplary cases of sanctions for maintaining their sphere of influence (Baldwin 1985: 174-89; Miyagawa 1992: 91). In each case a regional hegemon punished a disloyal satellite country for discouraging other satellite countries to follow suit. This type of sanctions is also used for inculcating hegemon’s ideology in international society. The U.S policymakers are often insensitive to the compellent effectiveness of sanctions on the issues of expropriation, human rights abuses, non-democracy, and drug trafficking. But the low prospect for stopping delinquent state’s misconduct does not have to prompt the U.S. government to stop using economic sanction on these issues if other potential delinquent states start to refrain from engaging in similar misconduct.

Third, a state initiates and participates in multilateral sanctions for strengthening international alignment without little concerns about compellent and deterrent effects of sanctions. Global or regional hegemons are often forced to impose economic sanctions on outlaw
states for living up to other countries’ expectations. As Makio Miyagawa notes, “failure to satisfy international public opinion calling for the punishment of wrong-doers may mean a shift in international public opinion support to the other block” (1992: 96). He argues that Western countries decided to impose economic sanctions on South Africa for preventing African countries from allying with Communist countries that supported the movement of racial equality and anti-colonialism (1992: 97-98). David M. Rowe also claims that the Great Britain decided to impose economic sanctions on Rhodesia for “prevent(ing) the breakup of the Commonwealth and divert(ing) African political pressure for even more drastic – and in British eyes, more dangerous – actions against the colony” (2000: 257). The logics of compellence and deterrence are not useful for explaining decision-making process in this type of sanctions. This goal is important especially for small states which participate in multilateral sanctions. They have an incentive to become cheaters in multilateral sanctions because their individual actions do not affect the effectiveness of sanctions very much, and yet it becomes profitable to trade with a target country as sanctions tighten. As William H. Kaempfer and Anton D. Lowenberg note, “A large terms-of-trade effect, resulting from multilateral sanctions, itself creates incentives for circumvention of the sanctions and noncooperation within the multilateral alliance. The larger the deterioration in the target’s terms of trade, the greater the potential gain to a renegade nation that remains willing to trade with the target. . . . By refusing to go along with a multilateral sanctions agreement, nonparticipating traders can earn excess profits, or rents, arising from the sanctions-induced improvement in the terms of trade with the target (1999: 44). But small states do not necessarily defect from multilateral sanctions regimes. There are three instrumental reasons. First, a leading country often offers selective benefits to participating countries and/or threatens to impose secondary sanctions on non-participating countries (Martin 1992; Shambaugh 1999). Second, they fear being labeled as accomplices of a target country by not participating in multilateral sanctions. The domain of an influence attempt is not an initiating country but international actors in general here. Third, a non-initiating country participates in multilateral sanctions for maintaining good relations with an initiating country. As Makio Miyagawa notes, “economic sanctions have often been imposed for the purpose of meeting the demands and requests of friendly nations for participation, so as not to harm relations with them” (1992: 98). Kim Richard Nossal also argues that “the friends and allies of the sanctioning state will have an interest in demonstrating their solidarity, even if the issue that prompted the sanctions might not directly

affect them, and even if they might have no particular quarrel with the target of the sanctions. Paradoxically, in this view, sanctions – an instrument of interstate hostility – are employed primarily to demonstrate friendship for another state” (Nossal 1994: 70). In this way the goal of international symbolism can be grouped into three types – compellence, deterrence, and international alignment. Students of economic sanctions had better not mix them up because behavioral goals and domain of sanctions differ from one another.

Many students of economic sanctions also argue that economic sanctions are often used for domestic symbolism. They argue that economic sanctions tend to be employed for placating public demands for an action against another state’s wrongdoing (Barber 1979a; Nincic and Wallensteen 1983b: 7-8; Lindsay 1986: 156; Doxey 1980: 486, 1986: 112, 1987: 94-5; Miyagawa 1992: 94; Nossal 1994; Joyner 1995: 74-5). When it is not desirable to use military force, economic sanctions, they argue, become a useful foreign-policy instrument as a middle ground between “doing nothing” and “using force” for assuaging domestic frustration (Lindsay 1986: 170-1; Carter 1988: 234; Lenway 1988: 412; Russell 1990: 48; Gregorian 1991: 1-2; Nossal 1994: 155; Selden 1999: 6-7). This use of sanctions is sometimes understood mistakenly as an expressive act. Kim Richard Nossal, for instance, claims that “Sanctions may be designed not so much to have an instrumental purpose – that is, a concrete impact on the wrong-doer – as an expressive, or symbolic, purpose. In other words, sanctions may be meant to express to targets other than the wrong-doing state the sender’s abhorrence of wrongdoer’s actions” (1994: 10; see also Nooruddin 2002: 67). But this is not an expressive act at all. Politicians support the use of this type of sanctions for enhancing their popularity among constituents. The primary target of an influence attempt changes from a country that is embargoed (compellence, weakening, or direct deterrence) and from the third countries (general deterrence) to domestic constituents (reelection). The attempt to change constituents’ voting behavior is clearly an instrumental act. As Margaret Doxey claims, “Groups in the sanctioning states who wanted action are pleased; others may not be enthusiastic, or even interested, but there may be general approval for positive leadership, for an indication that something is being done to meet provocative behaviour by other states. The sanctions provide a fortifying diet for the media and for public opinion, and may be helpful for politicians. In a presidential election year in the United States, for instance, the symbolic effect of sanctions may not be unimportant” (Doxey 1980: 486).

Domestic symbolism argument is based on pluralist or interest-group theories of domestic politics (Dahl 1961; Gourevitch 1986; Milner 1988). As Helen Milner writes, “pluralist theories suggest that the preferences of interest groups and the dynamics of party system should matter most. . . . The national interest will be the sum of the preferences of different interest
groups as weighted by their access to policy-making institutions. Because these societal groups play such a central role, they can limit the international strategies available to a state” (1992: 494). Statesmen who are regarded as a disinterested promoter of the public good disappear in pluralistic arguments. They are assumed to be slaves to domestic constituents or “impartial broker(s) of interest group pressures, its only objective being to maximize political support” (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1992: 163). In other words, nobody pursue public interests in domestic symbolism argument. Domestic politics determines whose preferences are sublimated from parochial interests into national interests. As William H. Kaempfer and Anton D. Lowenberg note, “the interest group approach implies that sanctions, like any other regulatory policy, are enacted not with a view to maximizing social welfare, either globally or in the sanctioning nation. Instead, the policy is motivated by interest group lobbying, and the ultimate result will reflect the relative political influences of the competing groups” (1992: 46). Politicians, in this perspective, do not care about the efficient use of economic sanctions as a foreign-policy instrument. For instance, Raymond Tanter emphasizes the domestic origin of the U.S. policy toward rogue states: “American political leaders see sanctions as historically successful. In contrast to business leaders, these politicians want to win elections; hence, they view sanctions as a means of appealing to the values of their domestic political constituencies. The pro-Israel community in New York applauds the Clinton Administration’s hard-line approach toward four of Israel’s enemies: Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. The anti-Castro community of Cuban-American exiles in Florida praises the Administration’s tough stand toward Cuba” (1999: 22-23). The option of doing nothing on foreign misconduct is a risky strategy for politicians who want to be reelected. Lloyd George, for instance, justified the British decision to impose economic sanctions on Italy for domestic reasons: “They came too late to save Abyssinia, but they are just in the nick of time to save the Government” (Barber 1979a: 380).

However, realists have failed to incorporate domestic symbolism arguments into their analytical framework coherently. Some realists reject domestic arguments by assuming that a state is a unitary rational actor (Baldwin 1985: 5, 48-50, 1998: 190; Hufbauer, et al. 1990a; Martin 1992; Drezner 1999). Others arbitrarily introduced domestic politics arguments without any attempts to develop domestic theory of economic sanctions. They are essentially realists, therefore, except William H. Kaempfer and Anton D. Lowenberg (1992, 1999, 2000), who rejects economic sanctions as compellence arguments explicitly, they could not abandon the assumption that the primary goal of economic sanctions is compellence.

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Realism is dominant conceptual schemes of economic sanctions study now. Almost all students of economic sanctions posit that economic sanctions are a foreign-policy instrument that is used for changing other country’s behaviors. This is a paradigm, therefore, metatheoretical debates between them do not exist in current economic sanctions researches. In the next section I attempt to problematize both liberal and realist approaches of international sanctions and propose an alternative approach of international sanctions. This is a constructivist approach of international sanctions.

3. Constructivism and International Sanctions

3-1 The Limits of Liberal and Realist Approaches of International Sanctions

Both liberal and realist approaches of international sanctions have serious problems on the ontological assumptions of international system, the conceptualization of international sanctions, and the specification of sanctions’ goals. International sanctions system is more complex than they presuppose. Liberalists conceptualize international sanctions as punishment on a violator of international norms or laws. The relationship between norms/laws and sanctions is unidirectional in their arguments. That is, the existence of international norms or laws is a prerequisite for the use of international sanctions in liberal approach. This relationship is not causal but constitutive. Without norms or laws, liberalists believe, there is no sanctioning act. They argue that coercive acts stripped of normative and legal contents are illegitimate or illegal acts that should not be called sanctions. Liberalists are more concerned with the legitimacy of coercive acts than with their coercive effectiveness. For instance, their interests in the Arab oil embargo of 1973 did not lie in its effectiveness on stopping Western countries’ pro-Israeli policy but in its legality from the standpoint of international law (Shihata 1974; Paust and Blaustein 1974; Lillich 1975). But is the existence of laws/norms really a prerequisite for the use of sanctions? It is evident that liberal scholars are influenced by domestic analogy of municipal laws. Domestic legal system is highly institutionalized. In such a society the use of physical sanctions is preceded by the institutionalization of norms and laws. All laws are put in the statutory form and the retroactive application of laws is prohibited in principle. Yet, international society is underlegalized. There is no world government that enacts and enforces international laws. The relationship between laws and sanctions is not unidirectional but interactive in such a society where no central authority exists. International laws specify offending acts that need to be punished but the enactment and enforcement of international laws are often preceded by the use of unilateral sanctions. The United States has employed economic sanctions on a variety of issues such as human rights, terrorism, the transfer of WMD, communist regimes, religious freedom, labor
standards, abortion rights, unfair trade practices, etc. Not all U.S. sanctions are legitimized by international laws and norms, however. For instance, the United States imposed economic sanctions on many communist countries during the Cold War era but the U.S. ideology of anticommunism was not espoused globally at that time.

Liberalists may contend that American embargoes on communist countries are not economic sanctions but economic warfare. They are concerned not with unilateral sanctions but with multilateral sanctions authorized by the United Nations Security Council. The Council has so far imposed sanctions against Rhodesia, South Africa, Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, Libya, Liberia, Somalia, parts of Cambodia, Haiti, parts of Angola, Rwanda, Sudan, Sierra Leone, and Afghanistan. Yet, even in these cases it is not clear whether laws preceded the use of sanctions. It is true that their misconduct is despicable from an ethical point of view. Almost all of us would not support racial discrimination (Rhodesia and South Africa), territorial aggression (Iraq and former Yugoslavia), terrorism (Libya, Sudan, and Afghanistan), non-democracy (Cambodia, Haiti, and Liberia), civil war (Somalia, Angola and Sierra Leone), and genocide (Rwanda). Yet, it is not clear whether these sanctions were employed after the relevant norms are institutionalized globally or the acts of sanctions became the threshold of embedding new norms in international society. The norm-making process is more politically dynamic than legalists believe. Norms can be established without physical sanctions (Barkun 1968; Ostrom 1990) but the repeated use of sanctions on undesirable behaviors is usually indispensable for institutionalizing embryonic norms. In other words, norms and the use of sanctions on a particular issue are institutionalized synchronically. For that reason, we cannot fail to examine the institutionalizing process of new norms through the exercise of unilateral sanctions. Who started to employ international sanctions on a particular issue? How did the use of sanctions affect the perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors of third parties who observed it? Liberalists take procedural legitimacy seriously; therefore, they tend to reject international sanctions which are not authorized by an international organization. Yet, over 90 percent of economic sanctions cases listed in *ESR* are state-initiated sanctions. It is not prudent to throw these babies out with the bathwater. If the existence of establish norms or laws is not prerequisite for the use of sanctions, the liberal approach totally collapses as an empirical theory. In fact, students of international politics have already abandoned it. Yet, an alternative approach of international sanctions – the realist approach – has also failed to answer many important questions of international sanctions. It distorts the reality of international sanctions in a different way.

Realist conceptualization of international sanctions is more problematic than liberal one. Liberal approach is acceptable as long as it is understood as a normative theory that specifies the
conditions under which coercive acts are permissible in interstate relations. We do not live in a Kantian world now, therefore, their arguments are not useful for understanding the realpolitik of international sanctions very much. Yet, the unreality of liberal prescriptions can be a real force for civilizing our international society in the long run. As E. H. Carr notes, “The ideal, once it is embodied in an institution, ceases to be an ideal and becomes the expression of a selfish interest, which must be destroyed in the name of a new ideal. This constant interaction of irreconcilable force is the stuff of politics. Every political situation contains mutually incompatible elements of utopia and reality, of morality and power” (1946: 94). Realists, however, distort both the ideal and the reality of international sanctions. The meaning of sanctions is lost completely in their arguments. They conceptualize economic sanctions as the attempt to change another country’s behaviors by restricting economic interactions. They fail to realize how distorted their conceptualization of economic sanctions is. Their definitions of economic sanctions defy common sense. Ask them three questions. Some realists may start to apprehend the problems of their arguments. First, ask them to give us a few examples of military sanctions? Representative military sanctions they mention would be Great Britain’s gunboat diplomacy in the 19th century, Theodore Roosevelt’s “big-stick diplomacy” in the early 20th century, China’s attacks on Vietnamese forces in 1979, or the U.S.-led invasions of Iraq in 1991 and 2003. Then, ask them how to distinguish between these cases and many other cases of wars listed in the Correlates of War projects (Singer and Diehl 1990). Our common sense tells us that Mussolini’s invasion of Abyssinia, Hitler’s invasion of Poland, and Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor are not military sanctions. What is the difference between Japan’s Pearl Harbor attack of 1941 and the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003? Realists cannot explain the difference between them because they treat sanctions as synonymous with coercion and military attacks are also coercive acts. In their theory of sanctions the study of military sanctions becomes indistinguishable from the study of wars. But how many realists could say that “of course, Japan imposed military sanctions on the United States in December 1941” without hesitation?

The second question is: why can we distinguish between a sanctioner and a target so easily? In ESR there is no case in which a state becomes both a sender country and a target country on a particular dispute at the same time. But the resort to sanctions can be interactive in realist theory of sanctions (Baldwin 1985). Then, how do realists differentiate a sanctioning country from a target country? Realists may respond to this question with a laugh: “Why are you concerned with such a silly question? This distinction is just a simplifying device for clarifying the chronological order of coercing process. The country that starts to restrict economic interaction is a sender country. The opponent is a target country.” This answer is not convincing,
however. Students of economic sanctions often disregard the chronological order of coercive process for distinguishing between a sanctioner and a target. Take an example for the cases on the issues of expropriation. David A. Baldwin lists the attempt of expropriation as an example of negative sanctions (1985: 41). Developing countries have confiscated many U.S. corporations. Charles Lipson counts 170 cases of foreign takeovers of U.S. firms from 1946 through 1973 (1985: 98). Stephen D. Krasner lists 38 cases of foreign takeovers of U.S. raw materials investments (1978: 144-5). Nonetheless, none of them is treated as economic sanctions against the United States in the study of economic sanctions. Some realists may retort that these cases are not economic sanctions because expropriation belongs to a nonpolitical issue. But developing countries sometimes (threaten to) expropriate American corporations as part of their foreign policy. In fact, the (threat of) expropriation of multilateral corporations is one of a few instruments on which developing countries have leverage (Grieco 1982). We cannot understand why Castro and Qadhafi nationalized foreign oil companies without examining how they attempted to link them to their goals of anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism. But in the study of economic sanctions a sanctioning country is always not a county that confiscated multinational corporations (MNCs) but a country whose MNCs are expropriated. For instance, Gary Claude Hufbauer, et al. list four cases of economic sanctions on this issue. They argue that “many expropriation episodes harbor political disputes that go beyond the compensation issues, and those are the episodes we seek to include in our analysis” (Hufbauer, et al. 1990a: 3). Kimberly Ann Elliott also notes that (1998: 53):

Four cases – the United States and the United Kingdom versus Mexico (1938), France versus Tunisia (1964), the United States versus Ceylon (1961), and the United States versus Peru (1968) – involve nationalization by the target country of property owned by citizens of the sanctioning country. We include them because nationalization is typically a highly politically charged act that is intended to send a signal of independence and nationalism not only to domestic constitution but also to the home countries of the property owners affected. The signal is often interpreted by the sanctioning country as evidence that the target government is moving in a direction inimical to the broader interests of the sanctioning country.

They admit that these developing countries decided to nationalize foreign companies as foreign-policy measures. Then, why do they fail to imagine that not Mexico, Tunisia, Ceylon, and Peru but the United States, the United Kingdom and France were targets of “the deliberate, government-inspired withdrawal, or threat of withdrawal, of customary trade or financial relations” (Hufbauer, et al. 1990a: 2)? I am not arguing that developing countries are sanctioners on the issue of expropriation. My point is that the flawed conceptualization of sanctions in realist theory makes it difficult for us to understand why developing countries cannot impose sanctions on developed countries.
The last question with which realists cannot deal: why do only a few countries initiate economic sanctions? Realists treat economic sanctions as a foreign-policy instrument. Yet, ESR shows that only fifteen countries employed it as a foreign-policy instrument from 1914 through 1990. They are the United States (75 times), the former Soviet Union and the United Kingdom (7 times), Canada and France (4 times), India (3 times), China and Indonesia (2 times), and Australia, Japan, the Netherlands, Nigeria, South Africa, Spain, and West Germany (1 time). Moreover, the United States dominates the use of economic sanctions. 64.7 percent of economic sanctions during this period were initiated or co-initiated by the United States. Why do most countries fail to initiate economic sanctions as a foreign-policy instrument? Realists would reply that this is because only a few countries have enough economic power to engage in economic statecraft. This answer is not persuasive, however. According to Hufbauer et al.’s data Japan and Germany have never initiated economic sanctions unilaterally. Why have these economically powerful countries failed to use economic weapons? Do Japan and Germany forget to pursue foreign policy after their complete defeats in World War II? This cultural explanation that constructivists love to make (Berger 1998; Katzenstein and Okawara 1993) does not solve this puzzle, however. A state does not have to possess extensive economic power for restricting existing trade or financial relationship with other countries. Even Jamaica has the capacity to impose an embargo on American goods. Therefore, realists must rely on rational choice theory for explaining away small countries’ failure to employ economic sanctions. That is, they would argue that small countries are not so irrational as to challenge major powers for explaining small state’s non-initiation of economic sanctions. But this counterargument is inconsistent with their theoretical presupposition. Some realists adopt robust rational choice assumption but most of them leave room for non-rationality of policymakers. This is because the analysis of economic sanctions has been developed as policy science. The belief that the U.S. government does not pursue economic sanctions policy rationally is the motivating force to analyze the U.S. economic sanctions policy for many students of economic sanctions (Hufbauer, et al. 1990a; Cortright and Lopez, 1995, 2000; Haass 1998a; Haass and O’Sullivan 2000). If a sanctioning country can be understood as a rational actor, their policy analyses become fifth wheels because the U.S. government does not need any policy advice from academics. Then, how do realists explain why only small countries are so rational as not to bite Uncle Sam by economic means? Why do irrational rogue states that trigger U.S. sanctions by engaging in conduct that anger Americans rationally refrain from challenging American hegemony by the use of economic means? The fact

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33 ESR lists one case of co-initiated economic sanctions that involves Japan and the West Germany. It is economic sanctions against Burma’s human rights abuses (1988-).
is that small states have also used economic techniques of statecraft many times but realists exercised common sense by not listing them as cases of economic sanctions. All realists become unfaithful to their analytical framework whenever they engage in large-N study of economic sanctions.34

Realist approach of economic sanctions is conceptually flawed, theoretically inconsistent, and metatheoretically dumb. I introduce an alternative approach of international sanctions in the next subsection for remedying metatheoretical flaws of economic sanctions study. This is constructivist approach of international sanctions.

3-2 Constructivism and International Sanctions

As I argued in the last subsection, liberal and realist approaches of international sanctions have serious problems on explaining sanctions phenomena in international society. Liberal theory of international sanctions is based on a normative theory that attempts to elucidate the conditions under which state’s coercive acts are justified in interstate relationship. But normative theory is not useful for explaining empirical phenomena unless their normative ideas develop into empirical facts. On the other hand, the empirical theory of realism treats sanctions as synonymous with coercion or statecraft, bringing about serious confusions over the analysis of economic sanctions. I consider that both approaches are not useful for explaining current international sanctions system very much. I present, therefore, an alternative approach of the study of international sanctions in the next subsection. This is a hegemonic approach of international sanctions. My hegemonic arguments are based not on rationalism (Gilpin 1981; Kennedy 1987; Lake 1999) but on constructivism, therefore, I review constructivist arguments in this subsection.

Constructivism is not an IR theory but a metatheory that explores ontological and epistemological problems on social inquiry. It does not specify empirical puzzles, the nature of international system, key actors in international society, their preferences, and the logic of actions in international politics. Constructivist challenges to the orthodox IR theories have shed light on unrealistic realist assumptions of international systems and state behaviors (Katzenstein 1996; Ruggie 1998; Wendt 1999). Nevertheless, a variety of constructivist arguments have failed to add up to coherent IR theory (Kowert and Legro 1996; Desch 1998). Constructivist arguments at a total just appear to say that all conditions cannot be held constant. As rationalists have developed a variety of IR theories, constructivists also need to develop middle-range IR theories

34 No realists have operationalized the concept of economic sanctions when they collect cases of economic sanctions, therefore, the gap between theory and cases become obscure in their empirical analyses.
that specify the logics of state actions for describing and explaining empirical phenomena in international politics.

Constructivism has become popular among students of international politics since the late 1980s (Wendt 1987; Dessler 1989; Kratochwil 1989; Onuf 1989). It is a metatheory that holds the view that (1) social reality is shaped by shared ideas as well as material forces and (2) the identities and interests of agents are shaped primarily by these shared ideas (Checkel 1998: 325-6; Ruggie 1998: 33; Wendt 1999: 1). To put it another way, constructivism rejects materialism and methodological individualism. As Nicholas Onuf notes, “Fundamental to constructivism is the proposition that human beings are social beings, and we would not be human but for our social relations. In other words, social relations made or construct people – ourselves – into the kind of beings that we are. Conversely, we make the world what it is, from the raw materials that nature provides by doing what we do with each other and saying what we say to each other” (1998: 59). This interactive relationship between agents and structures is presented as the agent-structure problem by Alexander Wendt (1987: 337-8):

The agent-structure problem has its origins in two truisms about social life which underlie most social scientific inquiry: 1) human beings and their organizations are purposeful actors whose actions help reproduce or transform the society in which they live; and 2) society is made up of social relationships, which structure the interactions between these purposeful actors. Taken together, these truisms suggest that human agents and social structures are, in one way or another, theoretically interdependent or mutually implicating entities. Thus, the analysis of action invokes an at least implicit understanding of particular social relationships (or ‘rules of the game’) in which the action is set – just as the analysis of social structures invokes some understanding of the actors whose relationships make up the structural context. It is taken a plausible step to believe that the properties of agents and those of social structures are both relevant to explanations of social behavior.

In Anthony Giddens’s structuration theory structure refers to the sets of rules and resources that individual actors draw on in the practices that reproduce social systems (1984: 185). I use the term institution instead of structure for referring to stable pattern of social relationship that constitutes the property of agents. It is an objectified social reality that shapes social actions. As John Scott notes, “Once objectivated, institutions acquire a reality and autonomy that leads people to lose sight of the fact that they are human products. They are shared by other people and come to be seen as natural and inevitable features of the world over which individuals have little or no control. They come to be seen as unavoidable constraints on social actions” (1995: 111). Yet, this objective reality exists only in and through human practices. “This objectivity is,” he continues, “merely an appearance. Institutions do not actually possess a different ontological status from human action. People produce a world through action, but they come to experience that world as being something other than a human product. The
objective reality of society is reinforced by socialization. People create social meanings that they pass on to subsequent generations who accept them as part of the natural order of things.” (1995: 111). In other words, human practices produce and reproduce institutions because its essence is ideational.

Students of economic sanctions have failed to recognize that the practice of sanctions is constituted by and constitute the institution of international sanctions. Realists are ontological individualists. As I noted earlier, realist theory of economic sanctions adopts rational choice theory for understanding the acts of sanctions in international society. Realists believe that a state would or must pick the option that is expected to be the most efficient for achieving desired ends. Some realists adopt the robust assumption of sanctioners’ rationality (Baldwin 1985; Martin 1992: 9-10; Drezner 1999). Policy analysts who deplore the non-rational aspects of the U.S. economic sanctions policy also accept the assumption of policymakers’ rationality for making their normative “statements of how decisions ought to be made with no necessary implications that they actually are made in that way” (Steinbruner 1974: 26). In this analytical framework economic sanctions are understood as an instrument which is available to a state that pursues national interests. The notion of means-end rationality is prevalent in economic sanctions literature. David A. Baldwin, for instance, notes that (1999/2000: 82):

Choice implies alternatives. If policymakers have no alternatives, there is no choice to be made. This has implications for the concept of sanctions, for the question of whether sanctions are a substitute for force, and for the evaluation of sanctions as a policy option. ‘Rational decision-making,’ as Herbert Simon notes, ‘always requires the comparison of alternative means in terms’ of their respective consequences. Setting economic sanctions in the context of choice, therefore, requires that they be defined in terms of means rather than ends. As tools of foreign policy, they are presumably available to policymakers for a variety of purposes and not restricted to particular foreign policy goals. . . . Just as Clausewitz defined war in terms of the ‘peculiar nature of its means,’ the logic of choice counsels students of economic sanctions to define them in terms of the ‘peculiar nature’ of their means rather than in terms of particular foreign policy goals. Rational choice theorists treat means as a non-institutional entity. Means are conceptualized as physical or ontologically objective materials that are independent of human consciousness and intersubjective ideas. The choice of a means may be subject to institutional constraints but this constraint affects actors’ decisions only by changing the cost-benefit ratio of alternative options. Realists, therefore, assume that any states can employ economic sanctions as a foreign-policy instrument in an interdependent world. Small states will not be able to impose their will on big powers but they still have the capability to interrupt economic interactions with other states. In this way, realists are materialists in essence.

Constructivists reject these materialistic arguments. They argue that the building blocks of social reality are ideational rather than material. Sanctions are also social reality that cannot be
reduced to material entity. John R. Searle’s distinction between brute facts and institutional facts clarifies their ideas of idealism (1995). Rocks in the moon are brutal facts. They exist independently of any human opinions. We need the institutions of languages for expressing their existence but they continue to exist even if human beings cease to exist. On the other hand, many facts in our social life are institutional in the sense that they require human institutions for their existence. We can play chess because there are rules of chess. We can count money because there is an institution of money. Some of us become criminals because there is an institution of legal punishment. Without these rules or institutions there are no chess players, no money, and no criminals. This means that shared ideas have constitutive effects. Searle explains this point in a following way (1995: 27-28):

Some rules regulate antecedently existing activities. For example, the rule ‘drive on the right-hand side of the road’ regulates driving; but driving can exist prior to the existence of that rule. However, some rules do not merely regulate, they also create the very possibility of certain activities. Thus the rules of chess do not regulate an antecedently existing activity. It is not the case that there were a lot of people pushing bits of wood around on boards, and in order to prevent them from bumping into each other all the time and creating traffic jams, we had to regulate the activity. Rather, the rules of chess create the very possibility of playing chess. The rules are constitutive of chess in the sense that playing chess is constituted in part by acting in accord with the rules. If you don’t follow at least a large subset of the rules, you are not playing chess. The rules come in systems, and the rules individually, or sometimes the system collectively, characteristically have the form

‘X counts as Y’ in context C.’

Thus, such and such counts as a checkmate, such and such a move counts as a legal pawn move, and so on.

X [a move, a paper, or an act] counts as Y [checkmate, money, or a criminal act] in context C [the game of chess, monetary institutions, or legal institutions]. These effects are not causal because X does not temporarily precede and is not independent of Y. Alexander Wendt elucidates this point in a context of international politics (1999: 87-88):

Ideas or social structures have constitutive effects when they create phenomena – properties, powers, dispositions, meanings, etc. – that are conceptually or logically dependent on those ideas or structures, that exist only ‘in virtue of’ them. The causal powers of the master do not exist apart from his relation to the slave; terrorism does not exist apart from a national security discourse that defines ‘terrorism.’ These effects satisfy the counterfactual requirement for causal explanations, but they are not causal because they violate the requirements of independent existence and temporal asymmetry. Ordinary language bears this out: we do not say that slaves ‘cause’ masters, or that a security discourse ‘causes’ terrorism. On the other hand, it is clear that the master-slave relation and security discourse are relevant to the construction of masters or terrorism, since without them there would not be masters or terrorism. Constitutive theories seek to ‘account for’ these effects, even if not to ‘explain’ them.

At the most fundamental level, ideas define the universe of possibilities for action. As John Ruggie has pointed out, ‘fundamental modernist concepts such as market rationality, sovereignty, and personal privacy would not have been comprehensible before the development of appropriate terms of social discourse. These conceptions of possibility, or world views, are embedded in the symbolism of a culture and deeply affect modes of thought and discourse. They are not purely normative, since they include views about cosmology and ontology as well as about ethics. Nevertheless, world views are entwined with people’s conceptions of their identities, evoking deep rationality that is emblematic of modernity.

These statements may mislead some readers, however. Not only constitutive theory but also causal theory deals with the question of possibility. For instance, Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr’s concept of ‘opportunity’, which refers to “the total set of environmental constraints and possibilities” (1989: 23) is purely materialistic. They argue that geography and technology are the two main factors that make it possible for states to engage in conflicts. For instance, without ships or planes the United States cannot invade Iraq. Yet, these material factors do not have constitutional effects on state behaviors. In this way materialists also deal with the question of ‘possibility’. Still, constructivists are right in claiming that the failure to understand the constitutive effect of shared ideas seriously hinders our understanding of international politics. Geographic and technological factors surely affect state’s ‘opportunity’ to engage in wars but material conditions do not constitute wars. Without shared rules we cannot determine which violent acts are counted as wars. So is the count of international sanctions. Material change affects the frequency of state’s use of international sanctions. Some scholars, for instance, pointed out that the growing economic interdependence has increased states’ uses of economic sanction (Kirshner 1997: 32-3; Selden 1999: 3; Winkler 1999: 137). Ideational changes such as the détente and the end of the Cold War also affected state’s incentive to employ economic sanctions by changing the nature of interstate relationship (Hufbauer, et al. 1990a: 107; Kirshner 1997: 32-3; Winkle 1999: 138). Constitutive ideas have deeper effects on international sanctions by affecting the way in which we count the cases of sanctions. This is because the specification of sanctioning acts depends on the constitutive rules of international sanctions system. As John Gerard Ruggie notes, “Constitutive rules define the set of practices that make up any particular consciously organized social activity – that is to say, they specify what counts as that activity” (1998: 22). Today’s sanctions may cease to be sanctions tomorrow. If the liberal conception of international sanctions becomes our shared ideas, the number of sanctioning acts in international society becomes fewer because unilateral coercion is branded as non-sanctioning
illegal acts. On the other hand, the realist conception of economic sanctions increases the cases of sanctions considerably, making it impossible for us to count their total number (Baldwin and Pape 1998: 191).

I do not claim that the definition of sanctions is changeable and manipulable easily. If so, we have to throw all dictionaries into wastebaskets. Most institutional facts such as states, families, or crimes retain their basic meanings for a long period of time. I criticized a realists’ way of treating sanctions as coercion but it does not mean that I deny coercive aspects of sanctions. Sanctions have been coercive since the ancient times. Some idealists might argue that sanctions could become non-coercive if the underlying institution changes but this is a hypothetical claim which is irrelevant to our reality. Still, the meaning of institutional facts changes as institutions change. This is because most institutional facts are “cluster concepts” (Connolly 1983). Reference to broad range of criteria is involved for characterizing a cluster concept. For instance, sanctions imply coercion, punishment, order, law, and condemnation, etc. In the words of William E. Connolly, “any large set of . . . criteria grouped together in a particular act of practice is capable of qualifying the act as” sanctions (1983: 14). Then, institutional change alters the relative weight of each criterion for characterizing a given concept even if its list does not change. Therefore, a cluster concept tends to be an “essentially contested concept”.

Connolly characterizes it in a following way (1983: 10):

When the concept involved is appraise in that the state of affairs it describes is a valued achievement, when the practice described is internally complex in that its characterization involves reference to several dimensions, and when the agreed and contested rules of application are relatively open, enabling parties to interpret even those shared rules differently as new and unforeseen situations arise, then the concept in question is an ‘essentially contested concept.’ Such concepts ‘essentially involve endless disputes about their proper uses on the part of their users. The term sanctions are an “essentially contested concept”. Students of economic sanction love to define economic sanctions, but forget to operationalize it and do not care about the inconsistency between their definition of sanctions and cases collected for testing the explanatory power of competing hypotheses. Of course, the conceptualization of key terms is highly theory-dependent; therefore, the definition of economic sanctions does not have to correspond to the ordinary usage perfectly. Yet, a serious problem occurs if researchers fail to notice the gap between an academic definition and an ordinary usage of the term sanctions. Their causal arguments become distorted because they mistakenly examine cases that are irrelevant to phenomena they want to analyze (low internal validity). Even if internal validity is gained by examining cases of sanctions that correspond to the hypotheses researchers try to test, the problem occurs if they fail to understand that their conclusions are applicable only to specific
institutional contexts (low external validity). They may jump into conclusions that their arguments have high generalizability and misapply their theory to irrelevant cases. The introduction of constructivist arguments into the analysis of international sanctions is important because it sheds light on the historical contingency of the applicability of realist and liberal arguments. For clarifying this point, I show in the next subsection that four institutions of international sanctions and four relevant approaches to the study of international sanctions are conceivable. They are liberal, realist, cosmopolitan, and hegemonic systems and relevant approaches of international sanctions analysis. The realist approach, a paradigm in the study of economic sanctions, is not suitable for analyzing liberal, cosmopolitan, or hegemonic systems of sanctions. Students of international sanctions must abandon the illusion that we can construct a universal theory that can be applied to all cases of sanctions across time and space.

We cannot play chess without mastering the rules of chess. The knowledge of playing backgammon is not useful for playing chess. In the same way we need to comprehend the institutions of international sanctions before analyzing particular cases of international sanctions.

3-3 International Sanctions as Institutions
International sanctions are institutional facts; therefore, the meaning of sanctions, identity of actors involved, and the function of sanctions vary as the institution of international sanctions changes. This is what Alexander Wendt calls “a variation question” of constructivist analysis. To paraphrase his expression, there is no such thing as a ‘logic’ of sanctions per se (1999: 247). I argue that four kinds of institutional settings that constitute and regulate sanctioning acts are conceivable in international politics (see Figure 1). International sanctions system is distinguished by horizontal-vertical and informal-formal dimensions. Horizontal-vertical distinction is made by identifying the (non-)existence of functional differentiation among state actors. Horizontal system is composed of functionally like units while vertical system is composed of functionally different units. Informal-formal distinction is made by identifying the (non-)existence of formal procedures that authorize the use of international sanctions. In informal system a state can use international sanctions unilaterally without authorization from an international organization or world government. In formal system unilateral sanctions are delegitimized and only a formal entity decides the use of sanctions.

Horizontal-informal system is a realist world. Each state retains its autonomy to use sanctions unilaterally. Sanctions become indistinguishable from acts of hostility in this world because there is no authoritative entity to prescribe the use of sanctions and to proscribe illegitimate coercive attempts. Horizontal-formal system is a liberal world. The main actors of
this system are also states but they agree to establish a formal organization that administers the use of sanctions. In this system unilateral sanctions are delegitimized and a state needs to acquire procedural legitimacy for the use of sanctions through international organization’s collective decisionmaking process. Still, this system is characterized as a horizontal institution because an international organization lacks the autonomous power to punish member states. It is only a forum where states engage in collective decision-making. This collective decision-making procedure endows coercive acts with formality and legitimacy but the actual implementation of sanctions is made by member states. Vertical system can also be formal and informal. The system of sanctions is vertical and formal in domestic society. The state monopolizes legitimate use of physical sanctions on deviant citizens. World-government project or cosmopolitanism envisions the establishment of a central authority that monopolizes the use of physical sanctions in international society. But the world government has not been established in human history; therefore, this institution is only a hypothetical one. On the other hand, informal systems of hierarchy have been common in international history. Vertical-informal system is a hegemonic world. Functional differentiation between superior states and subordinate states is institutionalized in a hegemonic system. A world hegemon and regional hegemons punish subordinate states, but not vice versa. These four systems are ideal types. I consider that the current international sanctions system is a hybrid of hegemonic and liberal systems. As I emphasized earlier, we cannot understand sanctioning phenomena in international society without understanding an institution of international sanctions that constitute them. Then, what are the main characteristics of each institution?

Figure 1: International Sanctions System and Sanctioners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional differentiation of units/ Decision-making procedure</th>
<th>Horizontal</th>
<th>Vertical</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Realism</td>
<td>Hegemonism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>States</td>
<td>Hegemons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Liberalism</td>
<td>Cosmopolitanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International organizations</td>
<td>World government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I examine cosmopolitan or world government project first. This project proposes to establish a central authority that performs legislative and enforcing functions in international society. It is an attempt to create a world-state. Domestic analogy is clear in this proposal. Sanctions system is developed in the most elaborate form in a modern state. Most political
scientists and laypersons would agree that a modern state is the best governance system in human history. Realists also think so, therefore, they are not called anarchists even though they are experts on the study of anarchical system. They do not criticize domestic legal system as repressive, inefficient, or utopian. Some realists even hoped that international system is transformed from anarchical system to world-federal system (Schuman 1954; Schwarzenberger 1964: ch.36; Morgenthau 1993: ch.22).

According to Thomas Hobbes all members of domestic society surrender their natural liberty to the state authority for ensuring internal peace. Physical sanctions are monopolized by state. As Max Weber notes, the modern state is the monopolist of all legitimate physical force within a given territory (Gerth & Mills 1958: 78)

‘Every state is founded on force,’ said Trotsky at Brest-Litovsk. That is indeed right. If no social institutions existed which knew the use of violence, then the concept of ‘state’ would be eliminated, and a condition would emerge that could be designed as ‘anarchy,’ in the specific sense of this word. Of course, force is certainly not the normal or the only means of the state – nobody says that – but force is a means specific to the state. Today the relation between the state and violence is an especially intimate one. In the past, the most varied institutions – beginning with the sib – have known the use of physical force as quite normal. Today, however, we have to say that a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory. Note that ‘territory’ is one of the characteristics of the state. Specifically, at the present time, the right to use physical force is ascribed to other institutions or to individuals only to the extent to which the state permits it. The state is considered the sole source of the ‘right’ to use violence. Hence, ‘politics’ for us means striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state.
Sanctioning system in the modern state is based on the principles of hierarchy and formality. A sanctioner is the state as sovereign whose power is indefinite and whose order is absolute potentially. Its legitimacy is ensured formally by procedural justice of law enactment and enforcement. As Margaret Doxey notes, “One of the functions of government, as a designated political authority, is to ensure that anti-social behavior is discouraged and, if possible, prevented. Persons and offices in an authority structure claim support; they also have the right to prescribe and enforce sanctions. Government enjoys the legal monopoly of force and the right to make laws for the system, although authorities in sub-systems may have the right to set rules for their own areas of jurisdiction within the limits prescribed by law. It is usual for a mature political system to be equipped with a full apparatus for law enforcement – courts, police, correctional institutions and other subsidiary services – financed by taxation of citizens for whose benefit it is designed to operate” (1972: 529). In the modern state informal sanctions are restricted and relegated to the edges of the state’s sanctioning system.
Some cosmopolitans have proposed to introduce the similar system into international society. World government has never been established and most IR students are not serious about this possibility. Still, there are several scholars who have proposed world government projects. Erasmus of Rotterdam, Christopher Martin Wieland, and Anarcharsis Cloots are well-known cosmopolitans (Heater 1998) but the best-known proponent of world government project would be the French philosopher, Claude Henri de Rouvroy, Comte de Saint-Simon (1760-1825). He proposed to establish Scientific World Government in Europe (1952 [1814]). Its legislative body was called ‘Council of Newton’ which comprises three mathematicians, three physicists, three chemists, three physiologists, three litterateurs, three painters and three musicians for governing world society. As Hidemi Suganami notes, his arguments were influenced by domestic analogy (1989: 48):

Saint-Simon’s 1814 proposal appears to involve a federal merger of European states. What he wished to do was to extend the existing domestic institutions to cover the whole of Europe rather than to apply the principles of domestic society to the relations of European sovereign states as such. Although Saint-Simon’s concern did not cover the entire globe, the domestic analogy he used can be said to be in its ‘cosmopolitanist’ as opposed to its ‘internationalist’ form.

Cosmopolitan ideas have never become popular within the IR discipline. Some members of World Order Models Project (WOMP) have proposed to found a world police force that monopolizes the legitimate use of physical force for enforcing cosmopolitan laws (Kothari 1974; Galtung 1980) but their arguments are largely ignored by IR scholars. I could not find out any students of economic sanctions theory who supported the establishment of a world government. It seems that no students of economic sanctions have consulted the works of WOMP for elaborating international sanctions system. Even liberal scholars accept the argument that international sanctions system is fundamentally different from domestic sanctions system.

Yet, liberals also rely on domestic analogy for elaborating international sanctions system. Their image of domestic order is not state-centric but society-centric, not authoritative but pluralistic, and not coercive but cooperative. International liberals do not believe that world government will be established in a foreseeable future. Nonetheless, they argue that world politics is not full of conflicts and disorder. They envision international sanctions system based on global governance. Global governance system refers to a non-hierarchical system of coordination among states and non-state actors across national borders (Rosenau and Czempiel 1992; Hewson and Sinclair 1999; Prakash and Hart 1999; Väyrynen 1999; Nye and Donahue 2000). As Lawrence S. Finkelstein notes, “Global governance is governing, without sovereign authority, relationships that transcend national frontiers. Global governance is doing internationally what governments do at home” (Finkelstein 1995: 369). In this system formal
organizations such as the United Nations play important roles on coordinating interstate relationship but no political entity stands above states. Therefore, this system is called governance without government. James N. Rosenau explains the difference between government and governance concisely (1992: 4):

governance is not synonymous with government. Both refer to purposive behavior, to goal-oriented activities, to systems of rule; but government suggests activities that are backed by formal authority, by police powers to insure the implementation of duly constitutive policies, whereas governance refers to activities backed by shared goals that may or may not derive from legal and formally prescribed responsibilities and that do not necessarily rely on police powers to overcome defiance and attain compliance.

For liberalists physical sanctions are not a principal instrument for prompting states to comply with international laws and norms (Mitrany 1966; Keohane 1984; Keohane and Nye 1989; Goldstein, et al. 2000). Global governance system does not rely primarily on physical power to maintain international order. Its main function is instead to encourage state’s compliance by enhancing the benefits of international cooperation. Peter Gourevitch, for instance, argues that “The power of an institution arises not just, or even principally, from its capacity to use physical force. Rather, it emerges from the benefits members derive from participation in them. Institutions do things for members that they cannot obtain without them. Members acquire incentives to preserve institutions. The test of the power of an institution is thus its utility, not its coercive force” (Gourevitch 1999: 138). This is an interest-based argument. In addition, norm-based arguments are also popular among liberalists. They argue that states comply with international norms because they internalize rules into their value systems. Sociologically-oriented scholars consider that interest-based arguments are insufficient to explain states’ compliant behaviors. As David Beetham notes, “To explain all action conforming to rules as the product of a self-interested calculation of the consequences of breaching them is to elevate the attributes of the criminal into the standard for the whole of humankind” (1991: 27). In fact, civilized people feel pangs of conscience after engaging in immoral acts: “An individual feels internally generated rewards for performing actions that are proper according to an internalized norm or feels internally generated punishments for performing actions that are improper according to an internalized norm” (Coleman 1990: 243). Margaret Doxey argues that international sanctions cease to play a major role in such a highly civilized society (1972: 530):

Where there is a groundwork of common values, and authority is accepted as defending these values and promoting relevant social goals, one may reasonably expect voluntary adherence to group norms. Thus in a legitimized system, negative sanctions would not be the primary mechanism of social control, and to prospect of penalties for deviant conduct would not be required to act as a deterrent in the majority of cases. If, on the other hand, authority is non-legitimized and is maintained primarily on a power base, sanctions may
play a more important role. They will be designed to support the regime and its personnel and may have little relevance to wider community values.

In fact, some early liberal scholars of international laws argued that physical sanctions are not necessary for maintaining international peace (Root 1908; Lawrence 1913; Oppenheim 1905-6). But these utopian arguments have lost influence on the IR discipline and the current liberalists do not disregard the functions of international sanctions for maintaining international order. Still, they try to restrict the states’ use of physical sanctions by delegitimizing unilateral sanctions. According to liberalists, states can employ economic sanctions only when an international organization declares its implementation. Collective decision-making process in the United Nations and other international organizations gives international sanctions a formal status. Procedural legitimacy of sanctions is the thing that liberalists cannot sacrifice. Yet, this sanctions system is still decentralized. An international organization does not stand above states. It is only a forum where member states gather, discuss, and decide what measures to be taken on deviant states. The United Nations can mandate and recommend the implementation of international sanctions only when wide consensus on the use of sanctions exists among member states. As Margaret Doxey notes, “the UN is no more able to regulate state conduct than any other international organisation unless member states are willing that it should do so. It has no independent authority and no independent resource” (1987: 16). Moreover, enforcement measures of the UN sanctions are taken by individual states. An international organization lacks enough physical resources to implement international sanctions. As A LeRoy Bennett puts it, “If a state must be coerced, it will be by action of other states. International organizations generally have no independent means of carrying out coercion” (1995: 3). Still, member states in the United Nations are bound to the Security Council resolutions. In other words, states are internationalized. As Alexander Wendt puts it, “the internationalization of the state requires the development of two qualities: identification with respect to some state function, be it military security, economic growth, or whatever; and a collective capacity to sanction actors who disrupt the performance of that function. The result of such developments would be an institutionalization of collective action, such that state actors treated as normal or routine that certain problems will be handled on an international basis” (1996: 59-60). Participants of collective security system must be international states. It is based on three preconditions that realists consider unrealistic. First, the majority of states need to share a primary interest in maintaining peace all over the world. Arnold Wolfers calls it “indivisible peace” (1962: 170):

If aggression is allowed to go unpunished anywhere, it is said, potential aggressors will be encouraged everywhere, and as a result no nation will be secure. Instead, if any aggressor anywhere is stopped or deterred by overwhelming police power, all other potential aggressors will understand the warning and cease to constitute a threat. Thus,
by a kind of detour, nations which for reasons of collective security are forced to divert strength or to weaken alignments against specific opponents gain more security in the end, even against their national foes.

This means that the main goal of international sanctions is not compellence but general deterrence in collective security system. Second, there is no concentration of power on a particular state or a group of allied states, therefore, any states cannot defy collective measures individually or collectively with its allies. Third, collective action procedures are highly institutionalized, therefore, all members can reach a consensus on the existence of a threat of peace, the identification of an aggressor, and the sanctioning measures to be taken without difficulty (Bennett 1995: 145). In this way collective security system differs substantially from collective defense mechanism. In collective defense system states are allied with another state for defending against their common enemies but in collective security system a potential target country is “any and every country anywhere that commits an act of aggression, allies and friends included” (Wolfers 1962: 183). In this system member states are required to sacrifice their own immediate security interests for maintaining international peace as collective goods. For instance, when Italy attacked Abyssinia the Great Britain and France were urged to impose economic sanctions on Italy, a country who shared common interests on encircling Hitler’s revisionist activities. How can a state subordinate their national interests to global interests in collective security system? A LeRoy Benett says that “if the world situation were conducive to the success of a system of collective security, we would also be ready for world governments” (1995: 147). This is a Hobbesian paradox of relying on collective decisions for solving collective action problems (Bates 1988).

In a realist world there exists no central authority and norms to (de)legitimize coercive, violent acts. Any states can employ coercive means for their own self-interests. Hobbes would claim that these acts should not be called sanctions but acts of hostility. Yet, new realists save economic sanctions theory by obfuscating terminological distinction between sanctions and coercion. This semantic problem does not annoy them. Strictly speaking, sanctioning acts do not exist in a Hobbesian state of nature. Yet, realists need to accept Hobbes’s arguments for saving their theory of economic sanctions. If sanctioning acts that are distinct from coercion does not exist in an international system, treating both terms as synonyms does not cause serious semantic confusion. Paradoxically, realist theory of economic sanctions can prosper only when sanctioning acts do not actually exist in interstate relationship.

According to realists, the institution of international sanctions is organized horizontally. Shared ideas do not constitute a sanctioning act in a realist world. The ultimate authority belongs to each state; therefore, coercion becomes sanctions if a coercing country thinks so. Therefore, a
state can employ economic sanctions for any purposes in a realist world. Some realists do not seem to feel comfortable with this idea; therefore, they claim that sanctions are an act against a violator of norms a sanctioning country deems important. For instance, Johan Galtung defines sanctions as “actions initiated by one or more international actors (the ‘senders’) against one or more others (the ‘receivers’) with either or both of two purposes: to punish the receivers by depriving them some value and/or to make the receivers comply with certain norms the senders deem important” (1967: 379, emphasis added). Donald Losman argues that “Economic sanctions are penalties inflicted upon one or more states by one or more others, generally to coerce the target nation(s) to comply with certain norms that the boycott initiators deem proper or necessary” (1979: 1, emphasis added). Shaheen Ayubi, et al. also claims that sanctions attempt to “make the target state(s) comply with certain norms deemed important” (1982: 1, emphasis added). Yet, these definitions do not imply that sanctions are constituted by norms. Norms here mean just values or preferences a sanctioning country holds. The existence of norms suggests, however, that “the socially defined right to control the action is held not by the actor but by others” (Coleman 1990: 243). If norms constitute sanctions, they must be shared with non-sanctioners.

In this way a coercing country becomes the ultimate authority to decide which acts are sanctions or not in a realist world. No formal procedures to legitimize coercive acts do not exist in this system. Realist theory of economic sanctions follows neorealist arguments of state actions. Economic sanctions are treated as statecraft that any states can make use of. Variations of states’ use of economic sanctions are explained by variations of capabilities and of interests. The fact that county A does not impose economic sanctions on country B is explained by three arguments: (1) country A does not have enough economic resources to challenge country B; (2) country A does not have serious disputes with country B; and (3) country A is rational. Why does not Cuba impose economic sanctions on the United States? Realists would argue that Cuba’s economic weakness makes Castro rational enough not to challenge the United States by using economic instruments.

The contrast with liberalism is clear. Liberalists argue that states cannot decide to use sanctions unilaterally because sanctions must be a collective action. Therefore, they focus on the UN sanctions because they believe that the United Nation is the most legitimate forum to decide the use of sanctions collectively. In realist analysis, however, collective sanctions are understood only as the extension of unilateral sanctions. The change of quantity, realists believe, does not

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35 You may be puzzled over my characterization of Galtung as a realist. Yet, his definition of international sanctions is not different from the ones defined by realists.
change quality. They believe that states make use of international organizations only when it enhances the effectiveness of sanctions. As Peter Gourevitch notes, “To realists, governance disputes are not particularly interesting because for them institutions are not of primary importance. International institutions, for realists, have no capacity to enforce compliance among their members. Since they cannot sanction, they lack authority. Since they lack authority, they have no power. They exist only to the extent countries choose to delegate authority to them. Should countries dislike what the institution does, the delegation can be revoked. Governance institutions are thus epiphenomena of other elements of power relationships, and disputes about them are best analyzed from the standpoint of these other elements.” (1999: 138). The example of teacher-student relationship may be helpful for understanding the difference between liberalism and realism. Why do not students impose sanctions on a teacher except for unusual circumstances? Liberals would argue that students can impose sanctions on a teacher only by acting collectively. Examination boycott, for instance, is sanctions, liberals would argue, because it is a collective action. But the lack of formal procedure for collective sanctions in a school, liberals would argue, makes it difficult for students to engage in collective actions. Realists, on the other hand, would argue that students do not impose sanctions on a teacher because the former is not so irrational as to engage in an act whose probability of success is very low. In this way realists must be dyed-in-the-wool rationalists for explaining sanctioning acts. Hegemonic approach rejects both arguments. According to this approach students do not impose sanctions on a teacher because role relationship between teachers and students is constituted hierarchically. It claims that inferiors cannot impose sanctions on superiors by definition. Rational choice argument is irrelevant to it because human rationality does not add ontological implications to our conducts. A student ceases to be a student if he acts like a teacher. Slaves are enfranchised and ceased to be slaves if they punish masters successfully. Family institution is disintegrated if children start to punish parents. In a hierarchical relationship a superior monopolizes the use of sanctions. This relationship between a sanctioner and a sanctionee is not causal but constitutive.

Hegemonic approach of international sanctions claims that international sanctions system is an informal system that is composed of functionally differentiated units. Unlike the systems of an empire, a world government, or the United Nations it is an informal system. As in a realist word a sanctioning country can decide the use of sanctions unilaterally. Yet, unlike in a realist world only a few countries can employ physical sanctions. This is because international system is organized hierarchically. Neorealists do not think so. Kenneth N. Waltz argues that international political system is composed of functionally like units (1979: 96-7):
States are alike in the tasks that they face, though not in their abilities to perform them. The differences are of capability, not of functions. States perform or try to perform tasks, most of which are common to all of them; the ends they aspire to are similar. Each state duplicates the activities of other states at least to a considerable extent. Each state has its agencies for making, executing, and interpreting laws and regulations, for raising revenues, and for defending itself. Each state supplies out of its own resources and by its own means most of the food, clothing, housing, transportation, and amenities consumed and used by its citizens. All states, except the smallest ones, do much more of their business at home than abroad. One has to be impressed with the functional similarity of states and, now more than ever before, with the similar lines their development follows. From the rich to the poor states, from the old to the new ones, nearly all of them take a large hand in matters of economic regulation, of education, health, and housing, of culture and the arts, and so on almost endlessly. The increase of the activities of states is a strong and strikingly uniform international trend. The functions of states are similar, and distinctions among them arise principally from their varied capabilities. National politics consists of differentiated units performing specified functions. International politics consists of like units duplicating one another’s activities. Examples of states’ functions that Waltz gives are not international but domestic functions, however. It is nonsensical to claim that the Microsoft Corp. is composed of functionally like units because its workers take care of their family members in their homes as Bill Gates does. What matters here is whether the functions of Bill Gates and other workers such as typewriters, programmers or marketing executives are same or different in their company. Domestic function of states is not role identity but type identity whose similarities across states are explained well not by realists but by sociological institutionalists (Meyer, Ramirez, and Soysal 1992; Soysal 1994; Finnemore 1996). Socialism is Cuba’s type identity whose existence does not require others’ recognition and counter-identities. In contrast, role identity can exist only in relation to others. As Alexander Wendt notes, “Whereas the characteristics that give rise to type identities are pro-social, role identities are not based on intrinsic properties and as such exist only in relation to Others. There is no preexisting property in virtue of which a student becomes a student or a master a master; one can have these identities only by occupying a position in a social structure and following behavioral norms toward Others possessing relevant counter-identities. One cannot enact role identities by oneself” (1999: 227). Subordination is Cuba’s role identity in relation to the United States; therefore, Castro cannot impose sanctions on the United States. In this way hegemonic approach of international sanctions presupposes the existence of functionally different units in international society. Why has the United States dominated the use of economic sanctions since the Second World War? Realists argue that this is because economic sanctions are a costly foreign-policy instrument that only a few powerful states can afford to use. Hegemonic approach offers an alternative explanation. It argues that this is not because the United States possesses overwhelming economic resources but because other states treat the U.S. as a legitimate
sanctioner in international society. A hegemon is a state that is entitled to punish other states, not a state that can employ economic sanctions effectively. That is, its source of power does not lie in “power over” other actors but “power to” engage in specific socially defined practices. A hegemon ceases to be a hegemon if she stops imposing sanctions on other states. The United States is often criticized for its abuse of economic sanctions but an actor can abuse its power only when specific role is assigned to him. Other states cannot abuse economic sanctions not because they are rational but because they are not entitled to impose sanctions on other states.

Hegemonic approach treats sanctions as a superior’s act of punishment on an inferior that has already engaged in misconduct. Hierarchical role relationship between actors must preexist for the use of sanctions. Why was not Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor military sanctions? This is because it was not superior’s act on inferior’s misconduct. How do we distinguish between a sanctioner and a sanctionee? Hierarchical role structure among international actors predetermines who are a potential sanctioner and a potential sanctionee. Why do only a few states use economic sanctions as a foreign-policy instrument? This is because only a world hegemon and regional hegemons can impose sanctions on subordinate states. Hegemonic approach also argues that realists’ focus on compellent sanctions is misplaced. Students of economic sanctions undervalue the importance of other goals because they failed to understand that current international sanctions system is hierarchically organized. A hegemon does not only seek the change of primary target’s behaviors but also use economic sanctions for achieving the goals of retribution and general deterrence. Realists assume that a state uses economic sanctions for changing target country’s behaviors as desired by a sanctioning country. The corollary is that a state would (or should) not pursue economic sanctions policy whose compellent effectiveness or efficiency is expected to be low. Hegemonic approach does not assume sanctioner’s rationality because systemic constraints on hegemon’s activities are not tight. Therefore, it expects that a sanctioner in a hegemonic system often resorts to economic sanctions on a deviant state for retribution without making cost-benefit calculus of alternative measures seriously. A hegemon also employ economic sanctions rationally for the pursuit of general deterrence. It is rational for a hegemon to punish deviant states that interrupt hegemonic order even if its policymakers do not expect its compellent effectiveness. A hegemon must continue to punish rogue states for reproducing its authority as a punisher in international society. It also uses economic sanctions for creating and consolidating international norms that are consonant with its own ideology. Realists do not necessarily fail to discuss these goals but they usually explain away these non-compellent uses of

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36 For lack of space I briefly explain hegemonic approach of international sanctions in this paper. I elaborated on it on my dissertation in progress.
sanctions because the pursuit of retributive and deterrent goals does not accord with their ontological assumptions of international system. In this way hegemonic approach offers an alternative view of international sanctions system.

**Conclusion**

In this paper I overviewed the conventional approaches of international sanctions – liberal and realist approaches thoroughly and cosmopolitan approach briefly - and introduced alternative approaches of international sanctions – constructivism as a metatheory and hegemonic approaches as an IR theory. I argued that both liberal and realist approaches are not useful for understanding international sanctions because their conceptual schemes are not consonant with the current institutions of international sanctions. Liberalists claim that preexisting norms or laws constitute sanctioning acts and international organizations are the only legitimate sanctioners in international society. Yet, some states often resort to unilateral sanctions for advancing their interests in disregard of international laws and norms. Realists assume that any states can employ economic sanctions as a foreign-policy instrument. They cannot explain why only a few states impose economic sanctions on other states.

Realists dominate the study of economic sanctions now. They conceptualize sanctions as a foreign-policy instrument that exists independently of intersubjective ideas. Yet, this is a faulty ontological position. Sanctions are not a brutal fact but an institutional fact. They are social entity that cannot be reduced to material entity. As the underlying institution of sanctions changes, the meaning and the function of sanctions also change. In other words, sanctions are a social construction of reality. I argue that four kinds of sanctions system are conceivable in international politics. They are institutions of realism (horizontal-informal system), of liberalism (horizontal-formal system), of hegemonism (vertical-informal system), and of cosmopolitanism (vertical-formal system). In realist system of sanctions no authoritative entity that prescribes the use of sanctions exists; therefore, every state is supposed to decide the use of sanctions as she wishes. But this is a hypothetical system that does not actually exist. In a Hobbesian state of nature there is no distinction between sanctions and acts of hostility but we have little problems on distinguishing between them. Realists try to create a grand theory of economic sanctions that is applicable across time and space by obfuscating the distinction between sanctions and coercion. It must end in failure because their theories are based on flawed ontological assumptions of international system.
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