

There may be some lifted eyebrows over this criticism : and I am not sure that I would make it as emphatically as does Hoffman. However, it is certain that when you say that the Great Powers' sense of responsibility and self-restraint is to be balanced with their power (one of Liska's concepts) it is apparent that, at best, you will have one hell of a time putting this into measurable quantities. There is a distinct danger that, if we try, we will wind up in an ocean of platitudes, or else in one of dubious hypotheses based on a too-limited set of variables or a too-distorted set of assumptions.

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assert that the concept is also, in a real sense, too narrow. It is narrow because it attempts to subsume the huge field of International Relations, with all the variables therein, under one concept. This, despite the concept, would be difficult. The selection and definition of key forces in political analysis is certainly a major problem.<sup>(61)</sup>

Next, one could point to an inevitable inherent contradiction in the balance-of-power concept.

The balance is supposed to fulfill the function of creating stability in the power relations among nations. However, by their very nature these functions are subject to continuous change. In short, they are unstable. Thus the weights which determine the relative position of the scales tend to get heavier or lighter. Your stability is thus precarious and subject to perpetual readjustment, dictated by intervening changes.

Now, if this be the case — and it demonstrably is — are you not merely creating castles in the air by calling this constant instability temporary stability? If so, then it would seem that as a tool, the concept is so forced and artificial as to be dubious.

Finally, one could fault the metaphoric basis of the equilibrium concept — the fact that, as I have noted, it is largely based on economic theory. Concerning this, Stanley Hoffman comments :

The concept of equilibrium makes sense in a universe of measurable variables, in which human behaviour can be treated as a parameter, and whose rules are determined by the political and social universe which includes it. Such analyses make little sense in the political universe, for here the establishment of these rules is one of the main stakes, human behaviour must be treated as uncertain, most variables are not measurable, and the empirical verification of equilibrium is limited to very small sectors of behavior.<sup>(62)</sup>

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61. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

62. *Ibid.*

not efficient if it cannot separate the two areas, at least roughly enough to allow analysis ? In short, as Stanley Hoffman has noted, though «the central concept is supposedly used as an analytical tool, and not as an explanation, the difference becomes almost invisible in practice.»<sup>(58)</sup>

If this concept is not normative, but rather descriptive, several objects can be raised.

First, there is absolutely no **logical** reason why a state of equilibrium should exist. In Quincy Wright's words : «concepts of equilibrium do not lend themselves to precise logical deduction but have to rest on the calculation of probabilities.»<sup>(59)</sup>

We thus must observe, and see if there is actually equilibrium ; thus, in the absence of logical proof, we must all become sailors on a sea of induction.

A quick glance at history assures us that there has most certainly **not** always been an equilibrium. The long years of Roman ascendancy are the most obvious example. More immediately, in the years immediately following the Second World War, until the Soviet Union tested nuclear weapons, the U.S. held almost complete control in the world arena, with the United Nations functioning placidly.

In short, neither must there be an equilibrium ; there has not, in fact, been one.

If the concept is to be normative, it must be accused of dodging an essential philosophical "previous questions."<sup>(60)</sup> Why should equilibrium be the ideal ? Further, if it is, just which kind of equilibrium is ideal ? Here, we return to the statement by Thomas Cook quoted on a previous page. Either as an analytical tool, or as a desirable state, the concept is so general and broad that further refinement is necessary.

At the risk of being accused of playing with words — for I have continually stated that it is too broad a concept — I would

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58. Stanley Hoffman, *Contemporary Theory in International Relations* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1960), p. 60.

59. Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 515.

60. Hoffman, *op. cit.*, pp. 50 - 51.

Thus, there is a continual «balancing of opposing forces», until one nation (or both) change their objectives, or until one gains a decisive advantage.

When the balance is operative, it performs two functions. First, there is created a precarious and continuously endangered stability. However, under the assumed conditions of the power pattern, this is the only stability possible. Secondly, a successful balance of power insures the freedom of one nation from domination by another.<sup>(55)</sup> Here again, though this is a precarious freedom from domination, it can be based on no other foundation «than the power of each individual nation to prevent the power of other nations from encroaching upon its freedom.»<sup>(56)</sup>

### 3. Commentary on the Equilibrium Concept

One major and, I feel, in the long run damning criticism of the equilibrium concept is that it is simply too broad and too vast. Thomas Cook sums this view up well when he asserts that «manifestly a concept which is offered (a) as a criterion for choice among possible policies, on the basis of a professed good; (b) as a statement of desirable ideal which is rarely attained even in imperfect form, and cannot be attained perfectly ; and (c) as an interpretation of what is in fact a tendency of history or of the necessary outcome of the interplay of social forces, does not, at least in existing formulations, provide a coherent framework of science or constitute a political system.»<sup>(57)</sup>

Secondly — and, perhaps, a **narrowing** of the first point — the theory is so broad that the line between normative and analytical is never successfully drawn. We are never sure just whether we are dealing with what is or what should be.

Liska attempts to make a strength of this, rather than a weakness, when he asserts that one of the reasons that this is a valuable unifying concept is that it brings together the normative and analytical elements. However, though it may be profitable to bring these together, is your analytical construct

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55. *Ibid.*, p. 174.

56. *Ibid.*

57. Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

ing certain policies ; or a statement of a long-time trend for which the evidence was either slight or conflicting.»<sup>(51)</sup>

I have mentioned Hans Morgenthau's work, and should certainly add a note concerning the role of equilibrium in that work. He states :

Two assumptions are at the foundation of all such equilibriums : first, that the elements to be balanced are necessary for society or are entitled to exist and, second, that without a state of equilibrium among them one element will gain ascendancy over the others, encroach upon their interests and rights, and may ultimately destroy them. Consequently, it is the purpose of all such equilibriums to maintain the stability of the system without destroying the multiplicity of the elements composing it.<sup>(52)</sup>

Morgenthau argues that there are two main factors at the base of international society : (1) the multiplicity of its elements ; and (2) their antagonism. In their struggle for power, the nations use two means : direct opposition and competition.

In both situations, the concept of balance of power is operative.<sup>(53)</sup> Morgenthau comments :

In the pattern of direct opposition, the balance of power results directly from the desire of either nation to see its policies prevail over the policies of others. **A** tries to increase its power in relations to **B** to such an extent that it can control the decisions of **B** and thus lead its imperialistic policy to success. **B**, on the other hand, will try to increase its power to such an extent that it can resist **A**'s pressure and thus frustrate **A**'s policy, or else embark upon an imperialistic policy of its own with a chance of success.<sup>(54)</sup>

51. Thomas Cook, «The Political System : The Stubborn Search for a Science of Politics,» *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. LI, No. 4 (Feb. 18, 1954), p. 136.

52. Morgenthau, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

53. Morgenthau uses «balance of power» virtually synonymously with «equilibrium».

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 173 - 74.

other views, and offer a criticism of Liska's work. For these reasons I will not go into the balance of Liska's book, which is an essay applying his theoretical scheme. In this, he deals with the traditional balance-of-power system, discusses contemporary international organization — largely the United Nations — as well as regional security organizations, analyses the functional scope and geographic scope of these bodies, and then concludes that a return to a new balance-of-power arrangement characterizes the contemporary scene.<sup>(48)</sup>

By no means do I intend to imply that this section is unimportant. Indeed, if the study is to stand or fall, on practical grounds, we must check to see whether it corresponds to the reality of the contemporary international scene. However, I am interested in examining the theory more as theory, and criticizing it on those grounds.

Before I proceed with a criticism, let me mention two other adaptations of the equilibrium concept.

Essentially, all David Easton is doing in his oft-quoted study, **The Political System**,<sup>(49)</sup> is to incorporate the economic concept of equilibrium into Political Science. In doing so, he resorts to a short-cut method. Rather than forcing Political Science to go back to the early stages of Economics and parallel them, Easton felt that politics could start where Economics now was. Catlin had, previously, tried to go back to the early beginnings and draw a parallel in **The Science and Method of Politics**,<sup>(50)</sup> and this effort was clearly unsuccessful.

Equilibrium in political analysis — or something very much like it — was certainly nothing new. The concept has long been used in a manifold fashion. Thomas Cook states that the concept, or its equivalent, «was variously a statement of an ideal, of a moral aspiration or obligation ; a description of conditions held to prevail temporarily ; a prophecy, often not in the event fulfilled, of what would happen or might be made to happen follow-

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48. *Ibid.*, pp. 23 ff.

49. David Easton, **The Political System** (New York, 1953).

50. G. E. G. Catlin, **The Science and Method of Politics** (New York, 1927).

Why does Liska feel that, from any of these three stand-points, equilibrium is a «convenient unifying concept ?» He cites four reasons :

In the **first** place, all states seek to secure for themselves by all kinds of policies the best attainable position in the international equilibrium. **Secondly**, the majority of states must behave so as to promote the equilibrium of the state system as the necessary, if not the sufficient, condition of the system surviving and evolving by no other than peaceful means into higher forms of community. **Thirdly**, many important aspects of the environment of international relations can be interpreted in equilibrium terms. And, finally, the dual character of the equilibrium concept as a theoretical construct and a desirable policy for safeguarding human values brings together the analytical and the normative perspectives, as well as some casual implications, of the investigated dynamics.<sup>(46)</sup>

Liska then proceeds to argue that «international law and international organization are inseparable in both function and scope». Both register «the interaction of the subjects of power and norms under the concentric pressure of interdependence.»<sup>(47)</sup> In other words, both international law and international organization are to be considered as the products of this interdependence, and are thus defined in considerably broader terms than are normally used.

Liska feels that such a concept is more adequate than that of power, since it is not necessary to think only in terms of a clear-out struggle between individual states, or pure cases of dominance and submission. The spectrum is thus enlarged to include phenomena which affect national policies, but which are of such a magnitude that no one state can exert effective control independently of other states.

Even at this length, I have presented Liska's views only sketchily. And I still want to correlate these briefly with some

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46. *Ibid.*

47. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

In considering International Relations, emphasis can be placed on three complementary standpoints. (1) The individual states «as collective actors in the international political process, animated by a more or less unified will under the guidance of their respective elites, and pursuing a measure of security, welfare, and prestige which would exceed — whenever possible — their share as determined by their relative power.»<sup>(41)</sup> When the balance of power is effectively controlled by international organization, the quest for welfare, security, and prestige is replaced by “an authoritative distribution of the coveted values, governed by the norms and sanctions of the organization’s security commitment, functional scope, and institutional structure.”<sup>(42)</sup> Liska concludes :

Whatever the means to it, however, when individual states feel that the existing distribution of security, welfare, and prestige is the best possible one relative to their power positions, and could not be substantially improved by unilateral efforts at redistribution, the state system as such is in an ideal state of equilibrium.<sup>(43)</sup>

The second emphasis is a consideration of the state system (or developing international community) as a «going concern». Here, the theory is to examine whether the policies of the various states are «functional» or «dysfunctional». The criteria will vary for different systems. However, among the criteria will be “the sanctions attached to the different forms of behaviour, the conditions of stability and organized change, the functional requirements and alternatives for the attainment of postulates values, and the functionality of a course of action for the entire state system or for only one of its segments in a dis-united world.»<sup>(44)</sup>

The third standpoint is “the social and material environment in which states seek to maintain and improve their position individually and in combination.”<sup>(45)</sup>

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41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

45. *Ibid.*

He applies his central concept of «institutional equilibrium»<sup>(35)</sup> primarily to «international organization with respect to its structure, the commitment of its members, and its functional and geographic scope.»<sup>(36)</sup>

Liska States :

A composite organization is in structural equilibrium if there is an over-all correspondence between the margins of restraints it imposes on members and their willingness to tolerate them; if the ratios between the influence exercised by individual members and their actual power are not too unequal; and if the respective powers of the different organs correspond to the composition of their membership.<sup>(37)</sup>

More important than this structural requirement is the commitment of individual states to the organization, mainly for assistance against threats to their security.

What matters is that the actual readiness of members to perform correspond to their formal obligations. A disequilibrium between readiness and obligations results in pressure on the commitment toward its reduction, decentralization, or evasion, which tends to be cumulative. And, lastly, an international organization is in equilibrium with respect to its functional scope when the functions and jurisdiction which it actually exercises correspond to the extent of the needs relevant to its purpose.<sup>(38)</sup>

The balance-of-power concept is a persistent feature of International Relations. However, it is not a fixed and unalterable standard. «It is rather a standard perpetually varying as new materials of compensation arise.»<sup>(39)</sup> Many factors and pressures — military-political, socio-economic, and institutional — come into play, thus making a multiple equilibrium.<sup>(40)</sup>

35. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

quiry into the means of implementing the value postulated or implied in the analysis.<sup>(29)</sup>

A notable problem is that «concepts developed to analyze a relatively integrated society will not automatically fit a state system that is far from constituting an integrated system of action and a community...»<sup>(30)</sup>

Liska projects a «systematic equilibrium theory.» He turns, in his presentation, to the use of equilibrium in economic theory.<sup>(31)</sup>

It becomes immediately necessary, Liska asserts, to recognize the variety within the concept (i.e., the fact that developments must be included which do not conform to the ideal self-maintaining concept) and thus to define cautiously just what «kind of equilibrium one is prepared to defend as operative in the uninvestigated realm.»<sup>(32)</sup>

There is, of course, a «maximalist» idea of a «static» equilibrium which acts «as a self-maintaining system of automatic compensatory reactions to disturbances restoring the original state». Liska comments : «If such an unfailing equilibrium operates anywhere, it is certainly not in the social realm.»<sup>(33)</sup>

He feels that it is more realistic (and hence, of value as an analytical tool), to postulate a temporary equilibrium — he calls it a «state of relative temporary stability» — which is continually upset by factors of change and replaced by a new temporary equilibrium. Further, when the actors become «intelligent and purposeful,» one may speak of equilibration or balancing as a purposeful policy.<sup>(34)</sup>

Liska uses the concept of equilibrium in two ways : (1) As a theoretical norm, or point of reference ; and (2) As signifying an actual tendency toward constantly changing states of temporary equilibrium in existing political institutions.

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29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

Given these three conditions (plus the data of the problem), we can determine three things ; (1) the number of firms in the industry ; (2) the output of each firm; and (3) the price for the product.<sup>(26)</sup>

This has, I realize, been a rather lengthy foray into the field of economics. However, I feel that it is important to show the workings of the equilibrium concept in this field, since it is largely from the economic concept that the use of equilibrium in International Relations has been derived.

Let us now turn to the use of the concept in International Relations.

## 2. Equilibrium in International Relations

The particular study under consideration here is George Liska's **International Equilibrium**.<sup>(27)</sup>

Liska, certainly, is not trying to transfer the equilibrium concept directly from other fields into political inquiry. Rather, he is trying to transfer into International Relations a concept already adapted to political inquiry — and even, in a less rigorous and exclusive fashion — to International Relations. Among these earlier efforts which Liska mentions are those of Catlin, Lasswell, Parsons, Easton, and Wright.<sup>(28)</sup> Liska writes of the above five :

They all center their analysis in the human personality, or will, and in the action and interaction of individuals and groups within a social and material environment. The interaction constitutes a process which is somehow related to structure. These writers are all concerned with the distribution and integration of chosen values by means of an authoritative institutional mechanism, seeing coercive control through power as a more or less sublimated technique. With varied emphasis they try to encompass the conditions of both social stability and change. They are, lastly, more concerned with a fundamental analysis than with an in-

26. *Ibid.*

27. George Liska, *International Equilibrium*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1957).

28. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Next, an equilibrium may be independent of or dependent on the path by which it is reached. It is, in practice, virtually impossible to deal with the latter state. Economists therefore generally postulate that the final equilibrium is reached immediately, thus eliminating influences of the path of movement.<sup>(23)</sup>

Stigler notes :

The conditions of equilibrium are the relationships which must be fulfilled if the economic system in question is to be in equilibrium. Given the data of a problem, the conditions of equilibrium contain a complete summary of all the forces that are influential in the final outcome of the economic process. A problem in economic theory is therefore solved once its conditions of equilibrium are known.<sup>(24)</sup>

The conditions of equilibrium are characterized by being equal in number to the unknown prices and quantities which are to be determined. Thus, in mathematical terminology, the conditions are the equations of the economic system, and the prices and quantities are the unknown.

Let us note two examples of the above.

First, a simple case of fixed supply of commodity. The quantity available and the demand curve of the commodity are known data. In this example, there is only one condition of equilibrium : the quantity demanded at the equilibrium prices is equal to the quantity available. Knowing this relation between the data, we can determine the previously unknown price.<sup>(25)</sup>

Second, let us consider long-run equilibrium in a competitive industry. There are three conditions of equilibrium : (1) Every firm is operating at the level of output which will maximize its profits ; (2) The price is fixed so that the quantity supplied is equal to the quantity demanded ; and (3) the price is such that each firm earns only the competitive rate of return from its investment.

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23. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

25. *Ibid.*

Pigou's explanation is clarified succinctly by his own simple analogy :

A ship with a heavy keel is in stable equilibrium , an egg lying on its side in neutral equilibrium, an egg poised on one of its ends in unstable equilibrium.<sup>(19)</sup>

Situations in which neutral and unstable equilibria occur exist, but they are almost always artificial. Since price theory is concerned with real phenomena, it deals almost exclusively with the conditions necessary to stable equilibrium — the conditions which are usually fulfilled in real situations.<sup>(20)</sup>

Further, equilibrium may be unique or multiple. There is a position of unique equilibrium when there is a single set of prices and quantities which fulfill the conditions of equilibrium. There is a multiple position of equilibrium when there are different sets of prices and quantities which will meet the equilibrium conditions. The former prevails ; the study of multiple economic conditions is largely formal.<sup>(21)</sup>

There may be a partial or general equilibrium. A partial one is based on only a restricted range of data. An example is the price of a single product when the prices of all other products are held (or assumed) fixed during the analysis. General equilibrium is based, supposedly, on all the data relevant to the problem under consideration: for example, the prices and outputs of all industries.

In fact, general studies are never general ; they simply include a wider range of data than partial studies. The problem here is to focus rigorously on the most relevant data. While it is, strictly speaking, correct to say that the price of creamed herring in Washington depends upon, among other things, every other price in the United States, it is of no value whatsoever to make this assertion.<sup>(22)</sup>

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19. *Ibid.*, p. 795.

20. Stigler, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

Thus, «when a system remains steady it does so because any tendency towards change is met by increased effectiveness of the factor or factors which resist the change.»<sup>(15)</sup>

It is not, I think, remiss to imagine that the example of the equilibrium in the human (and other animal) body, as well as the visible characteristic balance in the universe, led to speculation upon the value of an equilibrium concept to explain (or assist in explaining) other fields of human behaviour.

### B. The Field of Economics

One of the most successful adaptations of the concept is in the field of economics. To discuss this, I shall turn to what is, I suppose, the «standard» work : George Stigler's **The Theory of Price**.<sup>(16)</sup>

Stigler notes that «equilibrium economics» is often used synonymously with «modern economics» — in short, contemporary economic theory is dominated by the concept of equilibrium. The investigation of the nature and characteristics of equilibrium is the core of price theory. Outputs and prices of a commodity are said to be in equilibrium «if, given the governing data on demand and supply, there is no tendency for the outputs and prices to undergo additional changes.»<sup>(17)</sup>

A. C. Pigou summarizes the various types of equilibrium: a system is in stable equilibrium if, when any small disturbance takes place, forces come into play to reestablish the initial position; it is in neutral equilibrium if, when such a disturbance takes place, no reestablishing forces, but also no further disturbing forces, are evoked, so that the system remains at rest in the position to which it has moved; it is in unstable equilibrium if the small disturbance calls out further disturbing forces which act in a cumulative manner to drive the system away from its initial position.<sup>(18)</sup>

15. Morgenthau, *op. cit.*, p. 168, note 2, quoting from Cannan, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

16. George Stigler, **The Theory of Price** (New York, 1947).

17. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

18. A. C. Pigou, **Economics of Welfare** (London, 1932), p. 794.

## 1. Equilibrium : The General Concept

The concept of «equilibrium» is frequently employed as a synonym for "balance." In such usage, the concept assumes a number of things : (1) a system ; (2) that the system is composed of a number of autonomous forces ; and (3) that there is a certain stability within the system.<sup>(12)</sup> When this system is disturbed — either by a change in one of the internal elements or by the introduction of an outside force — the system has a tendency either to re-establish the old equilibrium, or to establish a new one.<sup>(13)</sup> At this time, I should like to consider two fields in which equilibrium is operative.

### A. The Field of Biology.

The human body is, of course, characterized by continual change. When growth takes place, there is a constant adjustment within the body to preserve the equilibrium which allows life to continue. This equilibrium persists as long as the change which occur in the different organs of the body do not disturb the basic stability of the body. When quantitative and qualitative changes in the different organs are proportionate to one another — the "normal" state in a healthy, growing organism — the stability is easily maintained.

However, if the body suffers the loss of an organ — or even the serious wounding of an organ, so as to render it incapable of performing its normal function adequately — or when, through either a malignant growth or a pathological transformation of an organ, the equilibrium is seriously disturbed, the body reacts to this disturbance by attempting to reestablish the equilibrium, either on the same level as before, or on a changed level, in order that the organism may again function properly.<sup>(14)</sup>

12. Morgenthau, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.* Morgenthau's discussion is based on Walter B. Cannon, *The Wisdom of the Human Body* (New York, 1932).

search. Such a concept «assumes that all social life consists of interaction within and between social systems.»<sup>(9)</sup> The building-up and collapse of these systems, as well as their characteristics, are the subject of this work.

One of the more promising approaches is that of «decision-making», developed by Richard Snyder, H.W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin. The level of consideration in any state : «An understanding of all states is to be found on an understanding of any one state through the use of a scheme which will permit the analytical construction of properties of action which will be shared in common by all states.»<sup>(10)</sup>

Decision-making is defined as «a process which results in the selection from a socially defined, limited number of problematical, alternative projects of one project intended to bring about the particular state of affairs envisaged by the decision-makers.»<sup>(11)</sup>

The above chronicle—actually little more than a brief annotated bibliography—is intended merely to be illustrative. I am not interested in discussing these efforts further, save as they bear directly on the concepts of equilibrium, in International Relations.

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9. Jessie Bernard, «The Sociological Study of Conflict» in International Sociological Association, **The Nature of Conflict (Studies on the Sociological Aspects of international Tensions)** (Paris, 1957), p. 64.
  10. Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin, **Decision-Making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics** (Monograph No. 3 of the Foreign Policy Analysis Project Series), p. 34.
  11. *Ibid.*, p. 60. This quotation is in italics in the original.

From this, with an analysis which combines factual observation and «theorizing», Professor Morgenthau surveys the world scene, both in history and from a contemporary point of view.

Morgenthau's effort led to what has become known as the «Great Debate», in which the concept of national interest was roundly attacked by many as being an unacceptable standard for political action. Here, we come face-to-face with what will be shown later in this paper to be a chief problem of the concept of equilibrium : the confusion between the analytic and evaluative aspects of the concept.<sup>(5)</sup>

Quincy Wright's **The Study of International Relations** appeared in 1953. With his usual encyclopaedic approach, Professor Wright deals with the meaning of International Relations ; objectives in studying it ; and with both practical and theoretical analysis of the field. His closing section, entitled «Toward a Unified Discipline of International Relations»,<sup>(6)</sup> affords some valuable suggestions for future work.

Among the efforts to heed this and other calls may be mentioned the work of Morton Kaplan, Jessie Bernard, Snyder, Bruck and Sapin.

Kaplan postulates a «systems theory» of International Relations, asserting that «scientific policies can develop only if the materials of politics are treated in terms of systems of action.<sup>(7)</sup>» A system of action is defined as «a set of variables so related, in contradistinction to its environment, that describable behavioral regularities characterize the internal relationships of the variables to each other and the external relationships of the set of individual variables to combinations of external variables.»<sup>(8)</sup>

Bernard has attempted to bring sociological conflict theory to the fore as an analytical tool in International Relations re-

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5. See p. 105.

6. *Op. cit.* Wright's closing section provides more of a framework for research than any central unifying concept, as those proposed by Morgenthau, Liska, and others.

7. Morton Kaplan, **System and Process in International Politics** (New York, 1957), p. 3.

8. *Ibid.*

# AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF EQUILIBRIUM

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## Introductory

Perhaps the most significant of recent trends in the study of International Relations has been a growing effort to make this study more scientific in our look and method. It would be highly illusory, however, to pretend that these efforts have been successful in creating a consistent theory capable of guiding and ordering research. All that can be done is to commend these writers for their pioneer blood, and hope that their followers can improve on the initial products.

Quincy Wright wrote in 1957 of **International Relations** that «at least the discipline implies consciousness by the writers that there is a subject with some sort of unity.»<sup>(1)</sup> This presumption of unity—combined with the desire to approach the study of International Relations in a more systematic fashion — has led to much of the work in contemporary theory of International Relations.

The name of Hans Morgenthau immediately comes to mind. **Politics Among Nations**<sup>(2)</sup> initially appeared in 1948, and had a significant impact on the field of International Relations. As revised,<sup>(3)</sup> this study is still the basic text in both undergraduate and graduate courses in many institutions. Professor Morgenthau's concept is as simple in statement as it is complex in operation. He states : «The main signpost that helps political realism to find its way through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power.»<sup>(4)</sup>

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1. **The Study of International Relations** (New York, 1957), p. 23.
  2. In the atmosphere of idealism which permeated the American scene — or at least a good bit of it — immediately following World War II, Morgenthau's concept was quite unpopular. This must be kept in mind in considering the work. Had it appeared in, say, 1958 there would have been much interest but little controversy.
  3. The present edition is the third, and was published in 1960.
  4. **Politics among Nations** (3rd ed., 1960), p. 5.