

A CONSTRUCTIVIST READING OF STATE MORALITY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This article subjects the concept of state morality to a discourse analysis based on three constructivist perspectives namely those of Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, Friedrich Kratochwil and Alexander Wendt. All three are acknowledged and recognized constructivist theorists who have pursued and written extensively on the merits of their distinctive constructivist theorems. All three are academic endeavours that massively contributed to the popularity of Constructivism as the most novel IR-theories with a strong grounding on shared characteristic concepts such as ideas, norms and values. This paper contains a comparative discourse analysis referring to the main principles of the three mentioned constructivists. The central question in this paper therefore is, how state affairs in the international arena ought to be moral comparing the three constructivist perspectives. The methodology used in this article is a discourse analysis by ordering the arguments on state morality in all three constructivist theorems. For Kratochwil the international environment resembles a society of states sharing some features with the English school (Kratochwil 2018:51) characterized by a common and shared international culture, and a language that represent norms and vocabulary that uphold international order. From this perspective state actors ought to agree and commit to the use of shared norms and culture. The changes in the international environment are considered as opportunities. Once such opportunities are evaluated they can become lessons learned possessing moral worth and become institutionalized. For Onuf constructivism is built around the

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notion of human reason which is why Onuf prefers methodological and a systematic approach in his discourse. This systematic approach does not construct a so-called social reality from the perspective of subjects but rather from the dynamic nature of ideas and how these ideas come to be accepted as reality. For Wendt, the most recent of the three constructivists, constructivism is the opposite (Wendt 1999:20) of what realism argues in terms fear and violence. On the contrary the relations within the international domain is not based on the idea of rigidity of a fixed human condition, but is rather plastic as the human condition can be defined and redefined making it socially alterable.

Keywords: *Constructivism, Morality, States, Nicholas Onuf, Friedrich Kratochwil, Alexander Wendt.*

ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLERDE DEVLET AHLAKININ KONSTRÜKTİVİST OKUNUŞU

ÖZ

Bu makalede devlet ahlakçılığı (morality) kavramı konstrüktivist (sosyal inşacılık) teorisyenleri olarak bilinen Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, Friedrich Kratochwil ve Alexander Wendt'in teorik modellerine bakılarak bir söylem analizine tabi tutulmuştur. Her üç teorisyen de kendilerine özgü birer konstrüktivist teorem geliştirmiş, bu alanlarında kapsamlı bilimsel çalışmalar yapmış, tanınan konstrüktivist kuramcılardır. Her üçü de fikirler, normlar ve değerler gibi ortak karakteristik kavramları sağlam bir akademik temele dayandırmış ve yeni sayılan Uluslararası İlişkiler alanında konstrüktivizmin popülaritesine büyük katkıda bulunmuşlardır. Bu makale yukarıda adı geçen üç konstrüktivist teorisyenin temel ilkelerine atıfta bulunarak karşılaştırmalı bir söylem analizi içermektedir. Bu nedenle, bu makaledeki temel soru, uluslararası ilişkiler arenasında bulunan devlet olgusunun bu üç konstrüktivist bakış açılarına göre nasıl bir ahlakilik anlamı içerebileceği sorusudur. Bu makalede kullanılan metodoloji, her üç konstrüktivist teoremdeki devlet ahlakına ilişkin argümanları sıralayarak söylemsel bir analiz ortaya çıkartmaktır. Kratochwil için uluslararası ortam, ortak ve paylaşılan bir uluslararası kültür ve uluslararası düzeni destekleyen normları ve kelimelerden oluşan bir dağarcığı temsil eden bir lisan ile karakterize edilen İngiliz okuluyla (Kratochwil 2018: 51) bazı özellikleri paylaşan bir devletler toplumuna benzer. Bu perspektiften bakıldığında, devlet aktörleri ortak olması gereken normların ve kültürün kullanımını savunmalı ve taahhüt etmelidir. Uluslararası ortamda oluşan değişimler aslında birer fırsattır ve bu tür fırsatlar değerlendirildiğinde, manevi kıymeti yüksek aktörler tarafından anlaşılmış dersler olup ve kurumsallaşmalıdır. Onuf'a göre konstrüktivizm, insan aklı kavramı etrafında inşa edilmiştir. Bu nedenle Onuf, söylemlerinde özellikle metodolojik ve sistematik bir yaklaşımı tercih eder. Bu sistematik yaklaşım, özneler açısından sözde bir sosyal gerçeklik inşa etmez, daha çok fikirlerin dinamik doğasından ve bu fikirlerin nasıl gerçeklik olarak kabul edildiğinden yola çıkar. Üç konstrüktivist kuramcılardan en yenisi olan Wendt'e göre konstrüktivizm, gerçekçiliğin korku ve şiddet terimleriyle öne sürdüğü şeyin tam tersidir (Wendt 1999: 20). Aksine, uluslararası alandaki ilişkiler, sabit bir insanlık durumunun katılığı fikrine dayanmaz, aksine, insanlık durumu sosyal olarak değiştirilebilir hale getirilerek tanımlandığı ve şartlara göre sürekli yeniden tanımlanabileceği için aslında esnekler.

***Anahtar Kelimeler:** Konstrüktivizm, Ahlak, Devletler, Nicholas Onuf, Friedrich Kratochwil, Alexander Wendt.*

INTRODUCTION

The domain of the international system is subject to rival political theories (Kolodziej 2005) and discussions which is why it is all the more relevant to look into how constructivists perceive state morality as an instrument in the international arena. For most constructivists the global international arena is an aggregate of spatial and temporal processes constituted by legally equal and sovereign states (Ruggie 2003: 33). In its most basic form constructivists argue that the social condition should not only be perceived from the idea of structural arguments as material forces (Katzenstein 1996:13) but also as an aggregate of ideational factors. It is therefore both the material forces as well as ideational factors that constructed the so-called *international reality* as it is accepted by realists today (Kratochwil 2018: 42). The other prominent rival theory is the contribution of political liberal ideas and the belief to preserve universal peace to protect state sovereignty by constructing the United Nations (Heywood 2021:140).

If the Westphalian treaty is a historical landmark (Keohane 1986:6) in the realization of state sovereignty, then the construction of the United Nations is definitely the next best historical landmark that truly converted isolated states into an international system (Fernandez and Fernandez 2017: 289–90). The failure of the League was essentially the reluctance of states' to commit to the idea of preserving global peace. States feared of being sucked into a war that was not theirs (Kratochwil 2018:232). Article 11 of the covenant (Goodrich 1947: 9) of the League was a major threat of waging an unnecessary war of another nation and risk own national interests. The League had failed to prevent the second world war due to commitment issues and a deep ingrained *self-help* (Waltz 2010: 57) reflex. For Thomas Hobbes such an international environment is to be called anarchic which he also refers as the 'state of nature' (S Jr and Welch David 2011: 10). In the state of nature national goals and the *instruments* to conduct international politics determine the state behaviour and in relation to that the relations between states. It is this specific interpretation of the world that inhibits alternative world views other than military instruments. The world prior to the first world war according to A. J. P. Taylor could only be determined by the power of small and large states. Only those states with material capabilities were considered to succeed and survive a war (Taylor 1996:18). As the interpretation of what a real world could mean has been shifting during the last century various political ideologies such as the neo-liberal, social-democratic, communist and neo-conservative have been constructing alternative instruments to view political behaviour. Especially great powers started to experience the costly nature of being a military force to achieve national interests and goals (S Jr and Welch David 2011: 20).

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE TERM ‘MORALITY’

Constructivists too acknowledge states as the main actors of state behaviour in the international arena (Wendt 1999:14–296). It must also be the state that wields the balance between sovereignty, moral behaviour in relation to wielding state power. From this perspective constructivism has become a viable alternative against neorealism and neoliberalism (Gökçekuyu 2019: 4). The Constructivist theory places a major role to the identity of the normative agent (Griffin 2009) who forms and is formed by social structures. Normative agents as social constructs have morals by being a part of a social group. Such a moral foundation cannot be excluded from the constitution of political outcomes. Identities unlike with realism are not rigidly fixed with fear and terror, but they are socially constructed due to human interaction. The normative agent in the political arena adapts, learns and change by way of ‘interaction’.

From a different perspective Charles Taylor views the moral *good* of a normative agent as product of identity, which can be perceived by other agents in society (Taylor 1989: 3). Taylor categorizes identity to be a moral construct that affects the existential part of life, in other words the *meaning of life*. From this perspective identity is a social construction that is connected to human behaviour making it a moral matter. In this sense it is amoral matter as human behaviour possesses social consequences for the person itself as well as for the society as a whole. We may also formulate the former as a way to distribute social meaning being constructed on morals. This construction for Taylor is labelled as the conception of *selfhood* which is an inner process attached to personal characteristics shaping perception of both self and society. The consequence of selfhood is the existence of a group that is unique, it morally pursues a good life that must continue to exist and manifest itself. The opposite condition where such a selfhood is socially denied and even rejected can only be defined as immoral.

Other approaches to view the world are criticized as having deterministic implications toward the international system such as those of the realists. For the realist school of thought there is no correlation between morality and state behaviour. Anything beyond structural materials might mean the end of a state within the international realm. For the liberal school of thought national interests depend on other material arguments such as the influence of economics on politics and political behaviour (Moravcsik 1992: 3). On the other hand liberalism in its essence limits morality and moral worth to human reason (Hardin 1990:131). However, both realist and liberal theories emphasize the central position of material structural arguments over ideational and normative factors in state behaviour.

The Constructivist school of thought derives its characteristic arguments that social reality whether on individual level or state level are subject to change. Such a social change has implications for human behaviour and since states are run by individuals' ideas and human values must be included along with material arguments. What as reality is accepted is a social reflex of individual human beings who are in a constant bargain of constituting a bigger social reality within international politics. It is therefore that realities can be subjective and yet be accepted as objective realities. Even though there are many different arteries of constructivist thinkers all share the idea that realists as well liberals reflect their own ideological principles to what they call international relations in relation to state behaviour. Constructivists also agree that identities, norms, culture have great impact on leaders and societies what moral behaviour should constitute. In some historical periods nations may accept immoral norms and in other periods nations may socially accept moral behaviour in virtue of interaction with others.

ONUF'S PERSPECTIVE ON MORAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

Nicholas Greenwood Onuf views International Relations from a Social Constructivist perspective. Onuf's theoretical frame differs from the two other prominent names whose theories are analysed in this article. Onuf's account of Constructivism is an attempt to search an abstraction of a philosophical account. Onuf follows a systematic and methodological step by step construction of his theoretical account. In fact, his methodological work attempts to be scientific and leans on the thoughts and works of earlier intellectuals such as Immanuel Kant, David Hume, Jeremy Bentham, Max Weber, Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke.

The main idea of social constructivism for Onuf starts with comparing existing paradigms and mainstream theories such as liberalism and realism. Onuf is quite big on what he labels to be the "rule-rules" dilemma. Onuf attempts to develop an inclusive theory that can explain the state relations within the bound of international relations. It is therefore natural for Onuf to criticize the shortcomings of existing IR-theories. Onuf pursues the idea of rule and how law and language are related to reason, judicial culture and the problem of order. Onuf acknowledged the assumption of anarchy in IR and considers the political society as an intrinsic part of the world politics, that require state rationality and the necessary resources.

The social constructivist account for Onuf starts with the *operative paradigm* that is the *modus operandi* for state awareness and seeing the specific social dimension of reality. In this context, thought systems such as liberalism and realism are existing operative paradigms that attempted to explain and understand state relations in IR. These paradigms are abstractions of real-life conditions that

are the carriers of functional explanations, they must be interpreted by words and language that are employed in the world society. These linguistic abstractions have the effect of socialization and directing the attitudes of IR actors.

Onuf places terms as *social reality* and *political society* at the centre of his work. Both concepts are essential parts of Onuf's Social Constructivism. The theory translates that these concepts can never be fixed as the human conditions are apt of change. The linguistic meanings based on these circumstances develop and grow into recognizable expressions that constitute the earlier mentioned *rules* paradigm. By acting on the scientific and systematic method Onuf states the historical importance in understanding the social dimension of IR through David Easton, Kant, Ludwig Wittgenstein. Onuf's Social Constructivism has a historical approach.

For Onuf to construct a theory is the highest attainable status for a scientist, and Onuf sets out to construct a social theory better than existing theories. Like other constructivists, Onuf expresses the conformity of social constructivism to every social field. Accordingly, in Onuf's social constructivist thought, an individual does not come before a group or a group does not come before an individual. All kinds of social phenomena, whether individuals, groups, language, ideas, beliefs or values, are constitutive phenomena that support and follow each other. This idea is subject to criticism by realists and liberals. For this reason, although Onuf argues that social reality consists of abstract concepts such as ideas, norms and values that can be considered phenomenological, he argues that such phenomena can never be a comprehensive category. In particular, he criticizes realism to act on the perception of fear. However, the current social reality can be explained not by observable factors such as fear, pain, and joy, which are not categorical. Therefore Onuf introduces three main categories that form the basis of social constructivism, which are *explanatory*, *directive*, and *commitment* categories. These categories also have equivalent social references reflected in the languages of societies. These are the *rules* that contain the truth (assertive), express the necessity (directive) and express the commitment (commissive) rules that penetrate into the essence of societies and provide the formation of a social culture.

Another point to be emphasized is that the concept of structuralism, which is constructed by realists, is not the same concept as suggested by constructivism. According to realists, structuralism is built on materialist arguments and places factors such as fear and pain that can be observed in society as an invariable fixed reality. According to realists, factors such as word, meaning, value, belief or culture are ignored. Social Constructivism emphasizes the capacity for anything that has an abstract meaning to change over time. In this respect, he advocates systemic diversity according to the different variations of the three categories

and abstract concepts that play a role in the formation of social politics. Because there are many different human societies in the world besides liberalism, but they are generally ignored. Again, he does not find it wrong that post-structuralists such as Foucault and Derrida try to re-interpret concepts such as power and force, which are the field of politics, by dividing their language and meanings into parts (deconstructivism). The reason for this is that post-structuralists prize innovative historical and semantic approaches as valid tools to view the world. However, Onuf aims to develop a comprehensive theory based on variables such as language and meaning, and the concept that preoccupies him is the assumed anarchy problematic perceived from Social Constructivism in terms of state-relations in IR.

At this point, Onuf attributes the emphasis of political science on the concept of power in the international arena and the asymmetrical order stemming from the lack of a central authority as *anarchy* and the central dominance of realist-liberal paradigms. Accordingly, the concept of anarchy in the thought of Social Constructivism cannot be the only factor that defines the field of IR. This idea stems from the central order of realism and liberalism in the western world. Bentham's utilitarian positivist approach has added a moral dimension to liberalism in the popularization of the capitalist economic system that liberalism brought with it in the last century. The opposite situation, that is, what Onuf advocates, is that the absolute dominance of liberalism as a paradigm in the field of IR and the assumed anarchy in the international arena (emphasis on the absence of a social dimension in the international arena) are just expressions.

Therefore, constructivism, in short, refers to the existence of rules (rule) together with humans in the existence, which is expressed as a political society, and when these rules are decisive, they are categories that guide human conduct and impose social meaning. According to Onuf, if the rules in a society cause an unequal distribution, this is accepted as a rule that has resulted. It is not possible for a social society to exist without rules, and the existence of rules has many advantages. Politics, on the other hand, imposes itself on the social society, which is asymmetrical due to the power rules. The point that needs to be questioned is to who the existing system gives priority (privilege) and advantage. For this reason, the opinion of the public, that is, the opinions of the individuals living in the society (public opinion), is a proof of whether rules are applied and highlight the importance of law (rules) in the establishment of justice.

Onuf's explanatory triple categories express that paradigms are determinant in the formation of the social dimension between state relations. Sometimes more than some rules, sometimes less, this is reflected in the language, words and behaviours used by the social society. Words carry the meanings of the effective rules and these meanings form the character of the social society. For example,

Onuf points to the sub-superstructure distinctions that come to fore in the ideas of Marx and Weber and explains that these structures are an invisible part of the social fabric today.

Accordingly, the economic and political elites have transformed the society into a culture that will indirectly feed their interests through concepts such as equality, freedom, the right to choose, contracted business and law. Today, in fact, individuals are neither equal nor free as it is expressed, because the employee does not have as many alternatives as the employer. As soon as the contract expires or is cancelled, the battle for survival has begun for the individual who sold his labour. Individuals cannot pursue their own interests freely and under equal conditions as a result of the social culture formed by the meanings attributed, and they have to make contracts with the economic and political elites in order to keep the fear of the future and the risk of losing their job at a minimum level. This obligation falls into the category of “commitment” from the triple rule. Thus, the individual has to remain committed to the other party, whose conditions are better, under unequal conditions.

This situation is reflected in the field of IR through a similar equation. The field of IR consists of many small and large nation-states. Dominant paradigms such as liberalism and realism assume that there is “anarchy” in the international arena. In other words, anarchy is the absence of a centralized global authority. But, according to Onuf, there is a rigid hierarchy rather than anarchy. Although anarchic order means that there is no central authority in the international arena, IR theorists such as Robert Keohane, Kenneth Waltz, Immanuel Wallerstein accept that states have an asymmetric hierarchical order in terms of power and influence. Therefore, a hegemonic power can accommodate many states in its sphere of influence. A hegemonic power keeps states within a certain circle of influence in the category of “instructive” by building international institutions instead of directing them.

In this work of Onuf, the analysis of social constructivism is that the actors (states, institutions, etc.) active in the field of international relations today desire to control the values produced by societies. Because world politics cluster around the shape and structure of the line formed by values. Although the world is a social construct, the material environment requires action. Therefore, although social reality emphasizes the importance of words according to Onuf, social constructivism begins with actions.

KRATOCHWIL'S PERSPECTIVE ON MORAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

Friedrich Kratochwil too is one of the first proponents of constructivists who is known to attempt and describe the IR discipline through the theorizing Constructivism. Kratochwil other than Onuf has a more theoretical approach and has benefited from philosophies of Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, and Aristoteles. As with Onuf, Kratochwil's book called *Praxis* is also about the normative agent giving the individual a social meaning. As the title of Kratochwil's book indicates most of his approach toward constructivism revolves around *action*, which for Kratochwil is the right utilization of *norms* and *values*. For a proper social use of norms they must be shared and common within the bounds of a social existence. As with Onuf, Kratochwil also heavily accentuates the *action* part, which can safely be placed in the context of human deeds. For Onuf the social order within a society comes first and to be constructed deeds must come first followed by language. For Kratochwil human deeds are as significant, but meanings attained to social understanding are equally important. As with Onuf Kratochwil too ties deeds and meanings to the behavior of the human agents within a social context.

For Kratochwil there is an immediate relationship between norms and human history. The latter has a significant place within Kratochwil's approach toward constructivism as such historical events form social memory and shapes the very human foundation that construct social accepted norms. Historical events make it much safer but also much easier for the normative agent to embrace change. Such is the function of historical events in the construction of collective identities and behaviors. Kratochwil also points out that individuals are enabled self-determination due to norms that have come into existence. However norms must not be perceived as rigidly fixed and do not permanently provide assurance and social stability. As in certain ages individuals may live in uncertainty and great confusion, which may be due to changing meanings in language. It is for this reason that individuals *ought to be* critical of how reality is perceived and maintain an inquisitive attitude toward change as confusing changes will impact political and social wellbeing. Kratochwil does not exclude a social world in any human age that can be void of deviant individuals preoccupied with personal gain. For Kratochwil constructivism is a mere instrument that lets one look at a social context and be critical of human action and where such human action is derived from. Constructivism lets one look at social dimension of the world in order for one to attain understanding. Constructivism for Kratochwil is not a hard scientific theory but should be viewed as an abstraction, a meta-theory that has a methodological orientation (Kratochwil 2018:18). One reason for such a formulation is that Kratochwil argues that that social existence across the globe has many variations in historical experiences, norms, ideas and values. It is therefore a large array of many and diverse social worlds, with unique skills,

wishes, identities that no two individuals can be considered as identical. There may be similarities but identical situations or individuals do not exist, wherein such a uniqueness requires its own sequence of events. For every specific groups of people it is significant what subject was in which context and which subject came first within a sequence of events. Therefore, the order of events and the sequence of these events do matter to understand and construct a narrative (Kratochwil 2018: 62). The historical memory comes the human agents to aid in how such social meanings, motivations converge into collective actions.

Kratochwil too is critical of a reductionist views and subjective narratives that focus on limited capacity of self-determination of individuals and groups. According to Kratochwil's understanding of constructivism one cannot gain understanding of a social meaning by making fixed assumptions as with realists and their emphasis on *fear*. However, a situation or the sequence of steps taken can be reconstructed with proper analytical reasoning, which brings Kratochwil to the concept of context. Kratochwil does acknowledge the partial truth of the realist assumption of fear. One cannot exclude a major human emotion, yet one can also not exclude the existence of other emotions such as *assurances* and the human capacity for the good and moral behavior. To achieve such a good life and moral behavior the most convenient choices is to look at law and the moral weight or law within the social existence.

From the perspective of laws, rules *ought to be* derived norms and norms being derived from historical memories construct *morals* as equal standards for the normative agents to be able to embrace freedom of choice. However, the constructivist positioning of Kratochwil is not impaired by absolute freedoms as laws are inherent to constraints of human behavior and individual choices. This means those who infringe upon law or infringe upon the freedoms of other individuals may forfeit their own personal rights and freedoms. For Kratochwil laws are significant for social order as they are characteristically *inclusive* but also set a standard for moral behavior that may cause the forfeit of freedoms. Therefore, those who do not conform to socially accepted moral behavior and instead corrupt should be accommodated by placing suitable social institutions as in punishments and sanctions (Kratochwil 2018: 232). It is also important to note that for a proper functioning of a system of sanctions, norms must be socially accepted by all parties.

The moral undertone in Kratochwil's constructivism can be found in the potential capacity of individuals to new and better good lives, which can also be found in Aristotle's writings. As Aristotle depicts there are always those who do not have any reason to cooperate. Such people may not have families, morals, or homes to go back to and all that is left could be non-cooperation (Kratochwil 2018: 23). Yet, enlightened self-interest in the ideas of Kratochwil is always a better strategy

and is a skill that can be learned creating common norms to support cooperation.

For Kratochwil the process of human enlightenment and learning is also the instigation of a process of social change which are not always without crises. The human difficulties witnessed by the whole world as with the Russian invasion of Crimea in 2008 and the efforts of the United Nations in Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Libya were all difficult changes in the world. Such changes brought uncertainties for individuals as well as scientists to read and understand social reality. Change for Kratochwil brings about the difficulty to adapt to new situations born out of crises. When changes in the social world are rapid and the crises are bigger, making personal choices become more stringent. Constructed identities, after the crises will be in dire need to be redefined, which will be a long and slow process. When Kratochwil views the international arena he remarks that feudal relations of the past made place for *social contract* discourse and again paved the way for European Concert of power balancing and lastly to liberal ideas of the world of supranational organizations.

For Kratochwil the capacity to register change is also registering social change in the domain of international relations. The European nations were according to Kratochwil too late in registering Russian attitudes toward Georgia and Ukraine, which brought imminent crises for the European nations today. For Kratochwil the global order is changing and together with advent of the Eastern nations it seems that the Western conceptual baggage has become inadequate to register social changes within the IR-domain. Constructivism requires first and foremost to acknowledge the existing diversity of social worlds that have their own logic. It may be possible that not every single social world is ready and equipped to participate as a conversation partner but it must be central to put the effort to understand (Gökçekuyu n.d.). Kratochwil's emphasis on language has a *constitutive* function that can create an temporary social life where people learn from conceptual thinking, reasoning and from others' experiences. People use language and therefore share meanings that produce order, which sometimes is tainted by false judgement attributed to uncertainties and emotions. Beside cognition being characteristically rational human behavior is also a product of language and feelings of fear, remorse, shame, admiration and guilt. The latter have the habit of producing irrational and unpredictable human behavior. In other words, to reduce human behaviour to only pain and pleasure or utilitarian mode of maximizing one's benefits and reducing risks is a shortcoming of the classic liberal action theory. Lastly, for Kratochwil order comes to life in virtue of rule-based norms and institutions and society is in a constant pressure, as it is the case in current age where individuals are uncritical, apathic and escapist which is a result of the dominant norms and common lawed understanding. It comes down to the ability of a social world and individual that is able to socially reproduce and commit to a whole range of cognitive emotional parameters to ascertain social continuation (Gökçekuyu n.d.).

WENDT'S PERSPECTIVE ON MORAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

Where neo-realism perceives a where the distribution of material capabilities within the international system, constructivism for Wendt is the distribution of ideas (Wendt 1999: 5). Wendt is also as critical towards the neo-liberal views of distribution of institutional capabilities. Wendt too emphasizes the centrality of ideas as a constitutive force in state behaviour, however he does not exclude the role that material arguments play in the international arena. Wendt is much more reluctant to pursue constructivism as a theoretical base and redirects the attention toward choosing 'units' and 'levels' of analysis, or 'agents' and 'structures' (Wendt 1999: 7).

Wendt also builds his constructivist approach around the concept of *change* (Wendt, 1999: 21). Change, especially culturally determined social realities can become longstanding cultural imperatives that be socially accepted as imminent and fixed. However, such seemingly fixed realities (Goldstein and Keohane 1993) too have at some point in history started off as ideas that have transformed and constituted, influencing concepts such as power and national interest are perceived. It is this social construction how new members of a social group come to learn what they want. Such is the power of beliefs that make up '*schemas*' which help normative agents to identify things and events. Whether such believes aggregate around beliefs of fear and violence or trade and economic interdependence. In the same line of thought ideas and identities of neither normative agents nor those of states cannot be treated as exogenous or as given (Wendt 1999: 27). If these ideas and constructed identities are not given then state behaviour is also driven by changing ideas and identities.

For Wendt there can be a wide array of schemas that would let various states define state behaviour in the international arena. Wendt does not exclude deliberative action based on rationality and dialectic process or sentimental desires. For the Wendtian constructivism beliefs are nested in ideas and such ideas can be brought in association with human needs. The social need of an individual or a social group may be material, as in security needs but human needs could also refer to expectations about social reality, featuring human needs as a variable.

For Wendt the central idea is that human agents have the capacity to define their own identities as well as their own interests. Such normative agents are self-organizing but they can also evaluate the behaviour of others as dependent agent of a social existence. For Wendt the normative agent is inherent to independence but also very much to dependence making it both causal and constitutive. As soon as such a culture is socially accepted it becomes a shared understanding leading to mutual confirmation establishing values and norms and setting the pace for willingness or reluctance to change.

For states in the international arena have similar behavioural approaches toward causal as well as constitutional factors. States can have cultures of anarchy that are inherent to compliance by coercion. Another dimension could be compliance by interests and costs. A last dimension for Wendt could be compliance based on legitimacy, what Wendt refers as the Kantian perception of friendship. Considering the various ways of cultural and moral perceptions, for Wendt it comes down to which social structure in the international arena becomes culturally dominant. If the Kantian friendship paradigm would result due to social change it would create a culture non-violence in the face of possible threats. The friendship paradigm would depict an international arena of moral state behaviour where states could only coerce each other for the good and benefit of other states. In some perspective the international arena would define its interests in terms of world peace that would also imply to legitimately constrain culturally deviant states to secure world peace collectively and creating ideas and identities to support the friendship paradigm.

CONCLUSION

After having analysed the three constructivist perspectives it can be concluded that constructivism for all three theorists shares key conceptions which are essentially norms, ideas and identities. If there is a major theme in all three theorems it is best described in terms of *change*. Change in the social world from a constructivist perspective is a human condition that is inherent to social human existence. From the constructivist perspective change is an inevitable, however as Wendt argues change also is very much dependent on the normative agent's capacity to *adapt*. Onuf and Kratochwil too adopt the power of change but they also emphasize the human capacity to learn and reason from changes. For all three constructivists social change generates an incremental social benefits that makes the social world temporarily real. On the other hand change is not only slow and long but it is also a part of a crises as it usually brings about uncertainty and emotional responses.

The common denominator in all three analysis is that morality as a state behaviour within the international arena can be based on the attribute of the human agent being social. The social condition of the individual means that states are run by people with the same attributes. This constructivist view of the individual and state behaviour have the same social foundations. Change is therefore not only inherent to the individuals but also quite inherent to the state level entities. Along these lines of reasoning the social conditions that structure social existence also apply to social understandings at the state level. The question from a state level perspective is whether there is a common social understandings in aggregated form among states. From a constructivist perspective there can be a common understanding depending on the historical formation, but it could be equally valid if there was none such understanding. The reasoning behind this is that the world

consists of various cultures, historical experiences and therefore various moral foundations in how states behave according to their perception of social reality.

So to answer the question where moral foundations fit in within the constructivist theories, we may conclude that all three constructivist theorists embrace the importance of how norms, ideas and identities shape state behaviour. The social foundations and the changing character of perception and interpretation are fundamentally derived from norms, which in turn must come from the philosophical and theological discussions of what is called *the good* throughout the last couple of centuries and even longer when we include the ancient Greek philosophers' writings. The good may not be an as explicit point of discussion in the three works of Onuf, Kratochwil and Wendt but the common denominators of ideas, norms and identities are an essential part of what forms the foundation of morality in the works they refer to. According to this foundation for Onuf it comes down to the choice of good deeds, for Kratochwil the law and compliance to laws as well as critical reason of the human being toward what is good for oneself. Last but not least, Wendt too grounds his discourse on the human capacity to reason and compliance to legitimacy. This too is inherent to what Wendt perceives as the capacity for human beings to establish norms and rules that would benefit them in their self-interests as well as being respected of where these norms and rules come from.

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