

The State-as-Person in International Relations Theory

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Summary

Having identified a prevalence of the discipline to treat the state as a person, the thesis critically engages with the idea of psychological state personhood in IR, prominently put forward by Alexander Wendt. As a result, an alternative conception in the form of the *constructed state-as-person* is suggested which argues that the state-as-person is best understood as a metaphor and utilises constructionist psychology to point out that self and emotions are best located at the discursive level.

In contrast to Wendt, who insists on the reality of the state-as-person, this thesis argues that the state is a real social structure which is made intelligible through the idea of state personhood. Agency firmly rests with individual human beings, acting alone or in groups. Concepts such as the state-as-person become relevant when they engage in the production and reproduction of the social structure.

Wendt's position on the role of metaphors and his conception of psychological personhood are areas in which this thesis suggests an alternative perspective. It is argued that metaphors are more than figures of speech and need to be taken seriously as theory-constitutive elements in IR scholarship. Constructionist psychology is utilised to present an alternative vision of how people make sense of themselves and how self and emotions are created discursively. In this regard this thesis aligns itself with the "emotional turn" in the discipline to argue against the dichotomous treatment of rationality and emotions and to suggest that emotions should be treated as forms of knowledge.

With the *constructed state-as-person*, this thesis presents an account of the state that allows for theorising about self and emotions of states. With regard to systemic interactions, this thesis points to the importance of culturally specific concepts of self and emotions and, ultimately, suggests that anarchy is what *we* make of it.

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Part of this thesis draws on constructionist psychology which maintains that we acquire our key psychological characteristics only in interaction with other people. In this sense, I owe a lot to the people that have been part of my life. In the following, I would like to acknowledge those who have been vital during my work on this thesis.

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Introduction

This thesis is driven by a fascination with the idea of the state-as-person in International Relations (IR) theory. Its starting point is marked by the observation that ideas of persons and ideas of states influence each other and that state-as-person thinking is still prevalent in IR theory. More specifically, it critically engages with Alexander Wendt's conception of the state-as-person, which led to his strong statement that "states are people too".¹

This thesis suggests an alternative to Wendt's approach. This alternative conception is driven by the conviction that the idea of the state-as-person is indeed valuable, and – given the current self-understanding of the mainstream of the discipline as well as prevalent lay perceptions – even necessary in making sense of IR. However, it also maintains, in contrast to Wendt, that agency rests with individual human beings, acting alone or in groups, and that we have to seek, first, to understand how people make sense of themselves in order to engage with the state-as-person.

Following a critical engagement with Wendt, it is argued that the relation between concepts of the state and concepts of the person is a metaphorical one. States are people, too, but they are so only metaphorically. It is also argued, however, that this metaphorical connection does not mark the idea of the state-as-person as unscientific or as a mere rhetorical device. Indeed, the argument pursued here is that such metaphorical processes are inescapable in making sense of the (social) world. Going beyond the metaphor as a rhetorical device, we can understand metaphors as those tools that connect concepts and structures by facilitating an understanding of the social structure and by also becoming relevant for social action that ultimately plays an important part in the production and reproduction of the structure.

With regard to the state-as-person, a position is developed in this thesis that maintains that in order to make sense of the state, understood as a person, we need to look at how people make

¹ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 215.

sense of themselves. Imagining the state as a person is to be able to make sense of an abstract concept in human terms. At the core of such as a metaphorical process is the idea that we make sense of something abstract and intangible in terms of something more familiar and more tangible. These categories are, of course, fluid and depend on the position of the observer. However, drawing on conceptual metaphor theory, metaphorical reasoning is seen as a general principle of how the world is rendered intelligible. And further, metaphors are seen as being at the heart of the scientific process and those processes that constitute the social world. Yet, this is not to argue that it is “ideas all the down”. Concepts are enabled and constrained by social structures. The state is such a structure and as part of the metaphorical process it needs to be carefully teased out what parts of the structure the metaphor of the state-as-person highlights, what parts it hides, and what structural constraints the idea of the state-as-person is facing.

Part of the motivation behind this thesis is the conviction that the conceptualisation of the state in human terms is preferable to mechanistic or biological understandings. It is suggested that understanding states in terms of persons should start by looking at the ways in which selves, identities, and emotions are fashioned and acquire meaning in everyday discourses. This allows us to find answers to the question of how to conceptualise the state and the question of what is appropriate or acceptable behaviour of states in IR.

Further, it is argued that, if we accept the person as a starting point, it is fruitful to draw on psychology in order to develop an understanding of what it means to be a being with a subjective understanding of the world and with the capacity for emotions. To a certain extent, this position is already present, albeit in a nascent form, in Wendt’s change of focus from his 1999 book *Social Theory* to his 2004 article “The state as person in international theory”. While *Social Theory* is ultimately aimed at conceptualising systemic interaction, the 2004 article begins by asking “[w]hat is a person” and then moves on to define psychological personhood in more detail.² I take this as an invitation to look to psychology for an answer.

However, this thesis also cautions that it is necessary to critically question the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions of the specific findings from psychology that we wish to render useful for IR in general and the idea of the state-as-person in particular. In this

² Alexander Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', *Review of International Studies* 30 (2004), 292.

regard, the thesis seeks to make a contribution to the recently renewed interest in incorporating findings from psychology into IR, especially as part of the so-called emotional turn.³ Ultimately, I argue that it is most useful to look to constructionist psychology for an answer. Constructionist psychology maintains that selves and emotions are socially constructed and fundamentally bound up with language use. It avoids methodological individualism and the postulation of entities “inside” the mind. It calls for a look not inside the mind of any particular person but for research into the concepts about self and emotions held in a particular society. It is noticeable that those approaches that are interested in the idea of the state-as-person or tacitly use such an understanding of the state, often adhere to an understanding of person and the state-as-person that is strangely devoid of subjective experience and emotions. By drawing on constructionist psychology, this thesis seeks to remedy this situation. By drawing on constructionist psychology to theorise state personhood, it also makes an important addition to the emerging emotional turn.

The aim of the project just outlined can be restated in the following terms. There is a prevalent assumption in IR theory that the state is like a person. Any account that wishes to address the idea of the state-as-person needs to grapple with the following concerns: Where is agency located in this account? What is the structural context in which actors operate and what is its impact on possibilities for construction? What is the specific understanding of the person utilised to make sense of the state? How are concepts of persons and concepts of states related?

Building on these questions, the central research question that guides this thesis is the following: Can a constructivist approach with a strong input from constructionist psychology, which treats the state-as-person as a metaphor while acknowledging the constraints of the state-as-structure, provide a valuable alternative understanding of the assumption that the state is like a person? In answering this question, I will offer what I call the *constructed state-as-person* as an alternative to the conception of the state-as-person that prompted Wendt’s proclamation that “states are people too”. In so doing, I will draw on conceptual metaphor

³ For seminal contributions to the emotional turn compare for example Neta C. Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', *International Security* 24, 4 (2000). And Roland Bleiker and Emma Hutchison, 'Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics', *Review of International Studies* 34, 115-135 (2008). Also Jonathan Mercer, 'Rationality and Psychology in International Politics', *International Organization* 59, 1 (2005).

theory and constructionist psychology. Having briefly outlined the project, I now turn to situating the project further in terms of highlighting some of the fundamental assumptions that the present investigation takes as starting points and that locate this project within wider IR debates.

Four observations on the state in IR

To begin with, four observations are made that, taken together, illustrate the intellectual puzzle that lies at the heart of this thesis. In short, these observations are the following. First, I start from the assumption that the state still matters, normatively as well as empirically, in IR. Second, we can observe that while the state matters for IR, it nevertheless remains strangely opaque. The discipline does not agree on a definition of what the state is; nor does IR agree on the ontological status of the state or on how to go about making and validating knowledge claims regarding the state.⁴ Third, building on this assumption, it seems that one of the most important tasks for a discipline whose founding myth is so profoundly tied up with the idea of the state is to question its most important concept. More specifically, in the context of this thesis, one way of imagining the state, the state-as-person, is scrutinised. It is maintained that scrutinising and developing ways of imagining the state offer a solution to engage with both the ubiquity as well as the opacity of the state. Fourth, there seems to be a strong tendency in IR theory to personify the state. This makes the connection between conceptions of states and conceptions of persons an important candidate for further study. Yet, imagining the state does happen in the context of pre-existing social structure which needs to be explicitly acknowledged.

Let me elaborate on these four observations briefly before returning to them in more detail in Chapter 1. First, we can observe that the state is ubiquitous. Modern social and political theory is fundamentally shaped by the concept of the state and the same can be said about much of our thinking about world politics. Put simply, “over the last five centuries the state is *the* major political reality that humanity has constructed.”⁵ More specifically with regard to IR theory, we can observe that the very identity of the discipline depends fundamentally on the concept of the state. The discipline, understood as *inter*-national relations, rests on the foundational assumption that the state matters. While the state and sovereignty are highly contested, and rightly so, the state forms the most important element of the founding myth of the discipline. It is the state and what the state is said to be that makes IR possible.

⁴ The phrase “ontological status of the state” is taken from Erik Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State', *European Journal of International Relations* 2, 4 (1996b).

⁵ Mark Neocleous, *Imagining the State* (Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press, 2003), 2, emphasis in original.

Ludwig Wittgenstein observed that it is “the first step”, the first fundamental decision about the world, that is often forgotten but that fundamentally shapes the possibilities of our thinking. Building on this observation, Colin Wight argues that “the first step for IR theory, and one upon which its identity might be said to depend, is the construction of the ‘state-as-agent’.”⁶ And further he points out that “[w]ithout a notion of the ‘state-as-agent’, the distinction between political theory and international theory collapses.”⁷ It is worth noting that the implication here is that not just the state, but specifically the idea of the state as an agent, is a fundamental first move on which IR theorising depends. It follows that there is something about the state that is irreducible to the activities of individual human beings. Yet, everything depends on accepting this first move. Projects like the one undertaken by Wendt as well as the one proposed here depend fundamentally on the acceptance of this move for their rationale. This is one of the key points that the present thesis questions. At the end of this process stands, in contrast to Wendt, the rejection of agency of the state.

It is not surprising then that IR finds it hard to go beyond the state when the idea of the state itself is part of its founding myth. In addition, this is also the reason why it seems so hard to question some of the underlying assumptions when it comes to states in IR, such as the concept of agency as well as more implicit assumptions about what the state is and what it does. Lastly, the ubiquity of the state in IR not only leads to the treatment of the state as an agent but also forms the corner-stone of the so-called level of analysis problem.⁸

All of this is not to say that the state is the only aspect of importance for the study of IR. This is not even to say that the state is, empirically, still the most important driving force of IR. I agree that raising questions about the role and importance of the state in IR is crucial. For the purpose of this thesis, however, I wish to put these questions “on hold”. Despite the clear need to have a debate about the role of the state in IR, it is still uncontroversial to assume, as it is done here, that the state matters after all. If we were to assume something else, we would have to fundamentally question the discipline as a whole.

⁶ Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 177.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ J. David Singer, 'The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations', *World Politics* 14, 1 (1961).

Second, we can observe that even when we accept the importance of the state for IR, the state remains opaque and questions of how to conceptualise and study it remain highly contested. In a first step, it might be worth distinguishing between reductionist and non-reductionist accounts of the state. We can find numerous examples in IR scholarship that acknowledge the state as an important element in making sense of IR only to then quickly focus on individual human beings, state leaders, or diplomats, who are doing the *actual* thinking, acting, and, for a small but nascent part of the discipline, feeling. Wendt is especially critical of such reductionist approaches. When analysing the state in non-reductionist terms, however, we are faced with the question of how to conceptualise it and at this point the challenge of opacity comes in. To put this in other words, the state is not directly observable and, if we follow a non-reductionist approach, IR scholarship needs to find methods of investigation that do not rely on a positivistic tradition. Unsurprisingly, a discipline whose mainstream appears to be tied to the idea that to be scientific is to be empiricist struggles with the opacity of the non-reductionist state.

Third, building on this, I argue that the state, especially when understood as one entity among others, needs to be imagined. Between the ubiquity and opacity of the state, ways of making sense of the state need to be found and the assumption made here is that these are to be found in ways of imagining it. In an article on “Symbolism in Political Thought”, the political philosopher Michael Walzer observes that the “state is invisible” because it has no “palpable shape or substance”.⁹ Given the invisibility of the state on the one hand and the tremendous importance of the state in modern politics on the other hand, Walzer suggests that the state “must be personified before it can be seen, symbolized before it can be loved, imagined before it can be conceived”.¹⁰ This thesis makes a similar suggestion. However, while agreeing with Walzer, it also maintains that this process of imagining does not happen in a vacuum and is enabled and constrained by aspects of the state-as-structure.

Fourth, when it comes to imagining the state, we can observe a relatively widespread tendency for personification in IR. Wendt with his statement that “states are people, too” is clearly one of the most recent and strongest proponents of this tendency. But a general trend across the

⁹ Michael Walzer, 'On the Role of Symbolism in Political Thought', *Political Science Quarterly* 82, 2 (1967), 194.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

mainstream of the discipline can be identified. Observations by Erik Ringmar as well as Charles Beitz can serve as examples. Ringmar points out that

[a]lthough the state can be described in many different ways, when viewed from the outside – as one entity among others in world politics – it is almost invariably talked about in anthropomorphic terms. It is seen as an ‘actor’ or ‘a person’; it is ‘someone’ or a ‘subject’ to whom intentions, memories, rights and obligations are attached.¹¹

Similarly, Beitz observes that “[p]erceptions of international relations have been more thoroughly influenced by the analogy of states and persons than by any other device.”¹² While the concept of the state-as-person is clearly not the only way of imagining the state in IR, it is one of the most powerful images. This prevalence of the idea of the state-as-person in IR theory forms the motivation behind this thesis. The idea then calls for navigating between agency and structure on the one hand and between really existing structures and language and social processes relating to these structures on the other hand.

¹¹ Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State', 443.

¹² Charles R. Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 69.

A note on methodology and terminology

This thesis takes Wendt's strong statement that "states are people, too" as its starting point. A close reading of Wendt is used to generate key questions with regard to how to conceptualise states as persons. The two key questions emerging from this critical engagement with Wendt's writings are the following. First, what role do metaphors play in generating an understanding of abstract entities and concepts, and how, to paraphrase Patrick T. Jackson, do these metaphors function in relating mind and world to each other?¹³ Second, what can psychology tell us about how people create an understanding of themselves, and how can we make these findings useful for IR? These two questions are answered with the help of a literature-based investigation of the philosophy of science of metaphors and with a critical examination of potentially fruitful contributions of psychology to IR and the study of the state. The first line of investigation leads to the suggestion to look towards conceptual metaphor theory; the second concludes that constructionist psychology is the most useful candidate for the aims of this thesis.

With regard to both conceptual metaphor theory and constructionist psychology, it is important to note that this thesis aims at making a contribution to IR theory, especially constructivist scholarship, and hence is written with an IR audience in mind. Therefore, the approach towards the relevant literature is guided by the needs of the project of the *constructed state-as-person*. Ultimately, the findings generated from the literature on the role of metaphors in science and constructionist psychology, and here especially Rom Harré's writings, are brought into dialogue with IR conceptualisations of states and the international system.

This cross-disciplinary approach also calls for a note on terminology. For the purposes of this thesis, it will be important to use the terms *constructionism* and *constructivism* alongside each other. Although there are great similarities between the two, it will be important to uphold the distinction.

The difference in terminology simply reflects disciplinary differences. The term constructivism, on the one hand, is firmly embedded in IR literature. Its introduction into IR is often traced back

¹³ Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011).

to Nicholas Onuf's *World of our Making*.¹⁴ Constructionism, on the other hand, is the term more prevalent in sociology and the sociology of knowledge with the seminal publication of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann – *The Social Construction of Reality* – credited as the first widely read publication in this area.

More importantly, with regard to the kind of psychological literature on which I am drawing, constructionism is the preferred term to highlight a new turn in the discipline that is critical of the mainstream and stresses the role of language and the social constructedness of key psychology phenomena.¹⁵ Hence, in the first instance, the usage of the two terms reflects the fact that this thesis draws on two different disciplines that have both experienced a linguistic turn.

Moreover, the difference in terminology can also be taken to reflect differences in philosophy of science positions. The term constructivism in IR is a catch-all phrase for a wide range of approaches whereas constructionist psychology is to be located towards what Wendt would call a thick constructivism that is far more radical than the moderate constructivism he subscribes to in *Social Theory*.¹⁶ These are important differences that need to be carefully scrutinized if borrowing between disciplines is to be useful. Hence, upholding the distinction between the two on the level of terminology is crucial.

¹⁴ In their introductory textbook Robert Jackson and Georg Sørensen go as far as saying that Onuf coined the term. This is a controversial claim given its much longer history in the sociology of knowledge. Robert H. Jackson and George Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations Theories and Approaches*, 3 ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 168. Karin Fierke credits Onuf for introducing the term “constructivism” into IR. Karin M. Fierke, 'Constructivism', in *International Relations Theories. Discipline and Diversity*, ed. Tim Dunn, Milja Helena Kurki, and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 172.

¹⁵ For an introduction compare Vivien Burr, *An Introduction to Social Constructionism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

¹⁶ For Wendt's self description as a moderate or thin constructivist compare Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 1-2.

Structure

The seven chapters of this thesis represent three steps towards developing the *constructed state-as-person*. Ultimately, based on a critique of Wendt, the alternative conception of the *constructed state-as-person* is proposed which treats the state-as-person as a metaphor and makes insights from constructionist psychology regarding the construction of selves and emotions central to conceptions of the state in IR.

Chapters 1 and 2 situate this thesis and the idea of the state-as-person in the IR literature. Whereas Chapter 1 gives a general overview based on four observations on the state and the historical relation between concepts of states and concepts of persons, Chapter 2 focuses on Wendt's work on the state-as-person in particular. Both chapters aim at generating a position from which to develop an alternative to Wendt's approach by teasing out key questions that need to be addressed when investigating the idea of the state-as-person.

Chapters 3 and 4 form the second part of this thesis and introduce conceptual metaphor theory and constructionist psychology, respectively. Both elements are seen as necessary additions to the idea of the *constructed state-as-person*, given the outcome of the discussion in the first part of this thesis. The introduction of conceptual metaphor theory in Chapter 3 aims at providing an avenue that takes the need to imagine the state seriously but that also provides a position from which to answer sceptics, such as Wendt, who are critical of *as-if* approaches, reserve only a rhetorical function for metaphors, and mark them as unscientific. Constructionist psychology is introduced in chapter four with the aim of providing an alternative conception of persons, self, and emotions. Further, Chapter 4 contributes to the nascent emotional turn in IR by offering a critique of mainstream approaches in psychology that are rooted in a positivistic understanding of science in general and human beings in particular and suggesting avenues for fruitful incorporation of findings from psychology into IR's research programme.

The third and last part of this thesis is devoted to fleshing out the idea of the *constructed state-as-person*. Chapter 5 draws on constructionist psychology to open up an argument in favour of a more radically constructed notion of persons. Self and emotions are seen as socially constructed and firmly based in language rather than on the material world of the body. Here, the argument is put forward that self and emotions form part of a meaningful story that makes the world

intelligible to us. Emotions, constructed in this way, also imply judgements of appropriateness and express and create moral guidelines. Yet, it is also argued that the state only becomes what I call a *second-order person* because it lacks embodiment.

Chapter 6 brings these assumptions into closer contact with IR scholarship on the state and articulates the idea of the *constructed state-as-person*. A process of metaphorical mapping between the state-as-structure and elements of person-oriented discourse is fleshed out. This allows me to stress the point that the state is a really existing structure while the state-as-person is to be located the level of linguistic realism. Further, Chapter 6 relates the idea of scientific metaphors, and the commitment to the social construction of selves and emotions put forward by constructionist psychology – with key IR literature. In doing so, the chapter stresses the departure from Wendt’s approach of the state-as-person and the contribution to key IR literature.

Chapter 7 takes the idea of the *constructed state-as-person* and uses it to debate some of the hard questions raised by Wendt’s approach and larger disciplinary debates. It addresses the disciplinary divide between those scholars that are committed to investigating the real existence of the state and those scholars that focus on language and social practices by suggesting that both need to be put in focus when dealing with the state-as-person. Chapter 7 also articulates and illustrates a clear position within the agent-structure debate. Lastly, it makes suggestion towards understanding international systemic change from the perspective of the *constructed state-as-person*. It is argued that it is not “anarchy is what state make of it” but “anarchy is what we make of it.”¹⁷

¹⁷ Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics', *International Organization* 46 (1992).

Chapter 1: The state and the state-as-person in IR theory

Although the state can be described in many different ways, when viewed from the outside – as one entity among others in world politics – it is almost invariably talked about in anthropomorphic terms. It is seen as an ‘actor’ or ‘a person’; it is ‘someone’ or a ‘subject’ to whom intentions, memories, rights and obligations are attached.¹

The state remains undoubtedly one of the most important players in international relations and the main focus of many IR theories. Yet, there is something about the state that makes it hard to grasp. Quentin Skinner describes this problem as “the extraordinary elusiveness of the concept, the difficulty of identifying the state with anyone or anything in particular”.²

Further, we can easily detect a prevalent assumption within IR theory that the state is or can be treated like a person. This contention finds support in Charles Beitz’s observation that “[p]erceptions of international relations have been more thoroughly influenced by the analogy of states and persons than by any other device.”³ Similarly, as we see in the opening quotation, Erik Ringmar stresses that IR as a discipline, with its focus on an “outside” perspective of the state, has a tendency to conceptualise it in anthropomorphic terms.

Using these observations as a starting point for this thesis, it will be important to carefully analyse what statements such as these entail. It is important to also keep in mind that any observation on the state and the state-as-person is wrapped up in much larger points of contention that the discipline continues to grapple with. One such point of contention is the role

¹ Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State', 443.

² Quentin Skinner and Bo Stråth, 'Introduction', in *States and Citizens. History, Theory, Prospects*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Bo Stråth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003b), 3.

³ Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations*, 69. It is important to stress that Beitz ultimately rejects the analogy between people and states on the descriptive and the prescriptive level. For this observation compare also Chiara Bottici, *Men and States. Rethinking the Domestic Analogy in a Global Age* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 88.

of language and the question whether language is merely descriptive or also constitutive of the key “entities” of the discipline. A further question concerns ontology and the quest for criteria that allow us to conclude that something can be said to exist. Related to that is the disagreement over the question whether it is only individual human beings that can be said to *really* exist and that should ultimately concern us. A final preliminary point worth mentioning here centres on the question of moral agency and whether it is to be located solely with individual human beings or whether it should be extended to groups and the state.

To illustrate these points of contention briefly, it can be pointed out that some scholars maintain that the state does not really exist; for them, it is an abstract construct of our mind, an *imagined* entity.⁴ Only people can be said to really exist and it is only people that really think, feel and act.⁵ Understanding states as persons merely results from a sloppy use of language and is ultimately a fallacy.⁶ This group of scholars is committed to ontological individualism.⁷ Others, such as Colin Wight, argue that states exist but that the state-as-person does not have the same ontological status.⁸ In contrast, Alexander Wendt boldly states that “states are people too”.⁹ Not only does the state exist, it is also a person. Emphasising cognitive aspects of treating states as persons, thereby switching the focus to epistemology, is another approach to the debate. From this perspective, the argument is “that the international context provides an apparent environment for the individual experiencing of the state as a distinctive unitary and cohesive actor with its own intentionality and personhood”.¹⁰ It is argued that the state depends on the mental constructions people form and hold of the state.

⁴ The term *imagined entity* is used in imitation of Benedict Anderson’s *imagined communities*. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2006 [1983]), 6. It should be added that Anderson is actually concerned with the nation, not the state and that he is not concerned with the ontological status of nations or individual human beings.

⁵ See for example Robert G. Gilpin’s response to Richard K. Ashley’s critique of (neo-)realism. Robert G. Gilpin, ‘The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism’, in *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ed. Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986 [1984]), esp. 318. For Ashley’s critique see Richard K. Ashley, ‘The Poverty of Neorealism’, in *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ed. Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986 [1984]).

⁶ Robert G. Gilpin, ‘The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism’, in *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ed. Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 318.

⁷ Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 62-68.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 188.

⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215.

¹⁰ Alisher Faizullaev, ‘Individual Experiencing of States’, *Review of International Studies* 33, 3 (2007), 531.

Finally, others, such as Toni Erskine, warn that while IR, especially in the political realist tradition, has a tendency to understand states as persons, the result is a strangely “inhuman, amoral incarnation” of a person devoid of moral agency commonly and crucially associated with the personhood of individual human beings.¹¹ This is a useful reminder that even though we might accept that the state is an agent in IR theory, the question of what kind of agent the state is remains up for debate.

These lines of contention and their respective examples illustrate a maze of different approaches to the state and the state-as-person based on a diversity of aims pursued when engaging the idea and diverse and sometimes *seemingly* incommensurable ontological and epistemological positions.¹² In the midst of this, this chapter sets the scene for the engagement with the idea of the state-as-person. Before looking more closely into Wendt’s approach in Chapter 2, this chapter aims at illustrating what it is that makes the state so fundamental to the study of international relations and what is at stake in the debate on the state-as-person. Further, based on an engagement with IR’s state-as-person debate, Chapter 1 concludes with preliminary suggestions towards an alternative conception of the state-as-person in IR that is to be developed in this thesis.

First, Chapter 1 further elaborates the four observations on the state touched upon in the introduction. I argue that the state in IR theory is ubiquitous, yet strangely opaque. From the perspective taken in this thesis this leads to a need to imagine the state. The lack of direct observability suggests the need to conceptualise the state in terms of something else. In IR, we find a prevalence to think of states in terms of persons. Following this line of argument, a particular angle is developed which gives a first indication of where to locate the idea of the *constructed state-as-person* developed in this thesis. In a second step, it is important to point

¹¹ Toni Erskine, 'Assigning Responsibilities to Institutional Moral Agents: The Case of States and Quasi-States', *Ethics & International Affairs* 15, 2 (2001), 67, emphasis in original. Compare also Toni Erskine, 'Locating Responsibility: The Problem of Moral Agency in International Relations', in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Chris Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 702-703.

¹² I use the term state-as-person very loosely here. However, it is important to keep in mind that key theoretical distinctions such as the one between agency and personhood should not be glossed over. Wendt seems to do just this in *Social Theory*, in which one cannot find any explicit distinction between what it means to be a person and what it means to be an agent. For an explicit treatment of this, see Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 289, fn 1. For a critique see Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, chapter five, esp. 180 and 188.

out that modern concepts of states and modern concepts of persons have developed together; following Ringmar's observations, we can say that both grew up together.¹³ Further, building on scholars such as Skinner, we can observe a process of increasing abstraction from identifying the state with the person of the king to a position, emerging in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, that interprets the state as a person that is neither identical with the ruler nor the subjects of the state. This step is not intended to make a judgement on the question whether the state indeed is a person. Rather, it is used to illustrate that the idea of the state-as-person draws on a long history of an intimate connection between the two concepts. From this perspective, IR's tendency to personify the state is not necessarily justified but seems more understandable and indeed in line with a tradition beginning with Thomas Hobbes. Yet, while these observations can help to highlight the underpinnings of IR's tendency to resort to some form of personification with regard to the state, they are not suitable to make a judgement on the ontological status of the state and the state-as-person.¹⁴ In a third step, this chapter introduces the main trajectories of the recent state-as-person debate in IR. The above-mentioned ontological status of the state is one key point in the debate. And while Wendt skilfully re-ignited the debate with his strong statement that "states are people too", the responses to his claim are extremely varied and the different positions need to be highlighted.

The three final parts of the chapter aim to further illustrate the line of inquiry that this thesis follows with regard to working towards what I call the *constructed state-as-person*. First, the position taken in this thesis towards the role of language, specifically metaphors, in making sense of the state and the state-as-person is briefly outlined. Second, in line with suggestions by Patrick T. Jackson, I draw on Hobbes's concept of personation to illustrate how the relation between concepts of persons and concepts of states can be usefully re-interpreted for the idea of the state-as-person. In a final move, I highlight that IR's personified state, in its current form, is a strange kind of person in so far as it lacks what can be called psychological personhood, understood as a subjective, emotional experience of the world. This is identified as a gap that this thesis aims to close.

¹³ Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State', 444. And Erik Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action. A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996a), 44-65.

¹⁴ I take the term "ontological status of the state" from Ringmar. Compare Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State'. For Wendt's usage of the term compare Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215ff.

Four observations on the state in IR

Jens Bartelson points out that “questioning the identity of the state is tantamount to questioning the identity of the international domain itself as well as that of International Relations.”¹⁵ It is fair to say that for the mainstream of the discipline the state is simply a given; the state exists before and is constitutive of the discipline.¹⁶ If we accept the view that the international domain, and hence the discipline of IR, has been defined in relation to the state, it follows that to contest the state is to contest the discipline.¹⁷

Similarly, taking the step from asserting the centrality of the state to arguing the centrality of the state as an *actor*, Colin Wight points out that ascribing agency to the state is the first fundamental move made by the discipline. Invoking Ludwig Wittgenstein, he argues that this move is so fundamental that it escapes our attention for the most part.¹⁸ Exemplary of this view and the apparent givenness that is ascribed to the state, we might quote J. D. B. Miller who argues that “[s]tates are the principal actors in world politics. It is of them and of other corporate bodies, rather than of individual persons, that the world is made.”¹⁹

Taking a broader view, we can observe that modern thinking in general is dominated by the state as a concept and that the state serves as a key point in relation to which others are defined. Skinner points out that “by the beginning of the seventeenth century the concept of the State had come to be regarded as the most important object of analysis in European

¹⁵ Jens Bartelson, 'Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself', *European Journal of International Relations* 4, 3 (1998), 295-296.

¹⁶ Compare also *ibid.*, 298-299. Obviously, this move might also be made for entirely practical reasons. This is the point of view taken by Wendt. In *Social Theory* he maintains that the state is taken as a given but that this is a pragmatic decision guided by the demands of his specific research question. On the need to take certain elements of a research project as a given see Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 36. And on taking the state as a given, see *ibid.*, 198.

¹⁷ However, critical scholars such as Immanuel Wallerstein remind us that “analysing the nation state as if it were the locus and level at which problems are both generated and solved is to accept an ideological account of it, to analyse appearance, not reality.” In other words, the centrality of the state for the discipline can, from Wallerstein’s perspective, be seen as part of an ideology of IR. It is a useful reminder that neither the state nor its centrality are natural. Roger Dale, 'Nation State and International System: The World-System Perspective', in *The Idea of the Modern State*, ed. Gregor McLennan, David Held, and Stuart Hall (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1984), 183.

¹⁸ Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 177.

¹⁹ J.D.B. Miller, *The World of States. Connected Essays* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), 16.

political thought.”²⁰ Indeed, one does not need to look far to find the observation that the state is the most dominant feature in social and political theory.²¹ Mark Neocleus, for example, argues that

[t]he axiom, which constitutes the core feature of the statist political imaginary, has become so predominant a part of modernity that much of how we think is shaped by it. Every historian and theorist of the state has for some time now emphasized that over the last five centuries the state is *the* major political reality that humanity has constructed.²²

Mirroring this, David Held observes that “[t]here is nothing more central to political and social theory than the nature of the state, and nothing more contested.”²³ To give another example, in his famous “Why there is no international theory?,” Martin Wight argues that political theory and international theory are both chiefly concerned with the state and their realm of interest is defined in relation to it.²⁴ Political theory, according to him, can be described as “speculation about the state”; international theory is engaged in “speculation about the society of states, or the family of nations, or the international community”.²⁵

Unsurprisingly, the centrality of the state is critically debated. It is often pointed out that while, as Neocleus rightly observes, the state has been a constant and central element of understanding the social and political realm in modernity, this is neither a given nor an unchanging fact. The move to post-modernity, for example, includes a fierce questioning of the relevance of the concept for theoretical endeavours and attempts to overcome its dominance in shaping politics.

²⁰ Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought. Vol 2. The Age of Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 349.

²¹ Mark Neocleus argues that the image of the state is dominant in both social and political theory. Neocleus, *Imagining the State*, 2. We might also add that the state becomes the element in relation to which other concepts, such as citizenship, are defined. Gianfranco Poggi for example asks “[w]hat do citizens (as it were) look like when viewed from the vantage point of the state? In other words, how people construct themselves or are constructed in relation to the state.” Gianfranco Poggi, ‘Citizens and the State: Retrospect and Prospect’, in *States and Citizens. History, Theory, Prospects*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Bo Stråth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 39.

²² Neocleus, *Imagining the State*, 2, emphasis in original.

²³ David Held, ‘Central Perspectives on the Modern State’, in *The Idea of the Modern State*, ed. Gregor McLennan, David Held, and Stuart Hall (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1984), 29.

²⁴ Martin Wight, ‘Why Is There No International Theory?’, in *Diplomatic Investigations. Essays in the Theory of International Politics*, ed. Martin Wight and Herbert Butterfield (London: Allen & Unwin, 1966), 17.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

It is not the aim of this thesis to contribute to or even settle this debate. Rather, I start from the assumption that the state still matters empirically as well as normatively for the study of international relations. This is not to say that the state is necessarily the most important actor in IR and it is also not a judgement on the relevance of non-state actors. However, what is important to observe and to keep in mind is the fact that IR as a discipline is, at its core, still wedded to the concept of the state. Often, we encounter an essential conception of the state; the state is understood as a concept with transhistorical features, which allows us to identify it across time and space.²⁶

There is another shift in focus that we need to take into account at this point. Despite acknowledging the centrality of the state, Martin Wight's concern in *Diplomatic Investigations* lies with understanding *international* relations chiefly through history and the actions of individuals. He argues that "the quality of international politics, the preoccupations of diplomacy, are embodied and communicated less in works of political or international theory than in historical writings." And further that "[w]orks of international history [...] convey the nature of foreign policy and the working of the states-systems better than much recent theoretical writing based on the methodologies."²⁷

However, with the advent of IR systemic theorising we see a fundamental shift in focus. In this context, Richard Ashley identifies a move away from the concern with diplomatic practice to a concern with the state in a more abstract sense. According to Ashley, this is a move to "objectify political life and improperly seek to make international relations into a social science".²⁸ From this perspective, the state becomes central to systemic theorising because supposing the state as an entity and as an agent becomes an important step in being able to do "scientific" systemic theorising.

These points taken together are what I would describe as the ubiquity of the state in IR. We encounter the state as the dominant idea of political life and social organisation. Further, the state becomes the central element for third image theorising. Yet, precisely because the state appears to be so foundational to the discipline, debating its status and its very conceptualisation

²⁶ Bartelson, 'Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself', 299.

²⁷ Wight, 'Why Is There No International Theory?', 32.

²⁸ Gilpin, 'The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism', 307.

is important. Such a debate is then also an exercise in questioning the very foundations of the discipline. Further, with systemic theorising new problems and questions arise.

For this reason, I argue that the above-described ubiquity of the state goes hand in hand with its opaqueness. What the state is within the realm of IR is far from settled. David Held argues that it is precisely the persuasiveness of the state which makes it hard to grasp.²⁹ One way to explain the absence of a common ground regarding what we talk about when we talk about the state is, as Held does, to argue that the term is polysemic. When speaking about the state, we are often referring to quite disparate political phenomena.³⁰

Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach, in their *The Elusive Quest*, bemoan the absence of an agreed-upon definition of what the state in IR is. Despite the centrality of the state for the discipline, its opacity is seen as an impediment to further study since, in the absence of consensus, each new project needs to start by defining the state anew.³¹ They argue that “[a]n autonomous discipline requires a stable of concepts unique to it and over which there is substantial agreement. In the absence of such concepts, international relations will remain a derivative field of study.”³²

However, in defining a concept, we also lose important insights. Drawing on Bartelson, we can point out that defining a concept freezes its meaning in the present which, sometimes conveniently, allows us to forget the history of the concept.³³ This search for a generally accepted definition and clear reference fixing is especially important when operating from within a neopositivistic framework of science and subscribing to the search for regularities and law-like principles as the main purpose of science in general and IR in particular.³⁴ In this sense,

²⁹ Held, 'Central Perspectives on the Modern State', 29.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 70.

³¹ Compare Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach, *The Elusive Quest. Theory and International Politics* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 7 and 221.

³² *Ibid.*, 112.

³³ Jens Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 13. I take this argument from Thomas J. Bierstecker and Cynthia Weber, 'The Social Construction of State Sovereignty', in *State Sovereignty as Social Construct*, ed. Thomas J. Bierstecker and Cynthia Weber (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 3.

³⁴ Ferguson and Mansbach, for example, conclude that the state is a highly subjective concept which is “inseparable from the norms, ideologies, and political aspirations that animate the practitioners and scholars”. Hence, they conclude that “concepts like ‘state’ can never assume the objective and operational qualities that are prerequisites to scientific observation and analysis.” Ferguson and Mansbach, *The Elusive Quest. Theory and International Politics*, 424.

IR is trapped between two opposing demands on the concept of the state. Recognising its historic contingency and constructedness matters greatly for projects that are in some form critical of the status quo.³⁵ Yet, having a stable concept to use in a neopositivistic framework of science is important if the focus rests on discovering regularities of social (state) behaviour.³⁶ Which argument one subscribes to often depends on a pre-established philosophy of science position. However, with Jackson, I would like to argue that neither position should be privileged from the outset and that the position one takes should depend on the kind of question one is asking.³⁷ This kind of argument is exemplified in Wendt's approach; he chooses to treat the state as a given and relies on a definition of the state drawing on a number of supposed essential features. He argues that he does so because of the demands of his specific research project and points out that "by virtue of the simple fact that it is humanly impossible to problematize everything at once" some aspects need to be taken as a given.³⁸ In his case, the state, understood as a unitary actor, is taken as such a given.

Systemic IR, including Wendt's states systemic project, tends to privilege the outside view of the state. We are confronted with a tradition that, building on state sovereignty, tends to define the state as an indivisible unit.³⁹ Sovereignty then is an attribute of the state and is also the element that brings about the indivisible state that is seen as a unity from the outside.⁴⁰ This view of the state as a unity has of course been widely criticised. Systemic IR, however, is wedded to the idea of an indivisible state.⁴¹

This is also a prime example why IR needs philosophy of science debates and why the discipline might be riddled with and divided by such debate more than other disciplines. In a sense the problem comes in at the moment that IR as a discipline moves away from conceptualising international relations as the interactions between state officials to conceptualising it as the

³⁵ For such a description of social constructionists (using the term in this case in line with the author) compare Ian Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 6-7.

³⁶ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 41ff.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 36.

³⁹ Bartelson, 'Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself', 299. Here Bartelson relies on Andrew Vincent, 'Can Groups Be Persons?', *Review of Metaphysics* 42, 4 (1989), 694-695.

⁴⁰ Bartelson, 'Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself', 300.

⁴¹ Ibid., 303.

interaction between states. With the kind of abstraction the problem of *what* the state is becomes more pressing than ever.

One solution to the problem of opaqueness is to answer it by saying that any reference to the state existing or acting is only a matter of rhetorical convenience. In a response to Ashley's critique of neorealism, Robert G. Gilpin stresses that neorealists, as far as one is able to speak of them as a unified camp (a point doubted by Gilpin) are very much aware that "the state does not really exist."⁴² However, this uneasiness with slipping into a reductionist account as exemplified by Gilpin is precisely the motivation behind Wendt's systemic project.⁴³ Relegating the central aspect of the discipline to rhetoric is what Wendt wants to argue against. If the discipline has been successful in the past in making sense of international relations, the concept of the state must be located somewhere beyond language, Wendt and others argue.⁴⁴ Further, the reductionist account misses important aspects of social behaviour. We can argue that the representatives of states do not act as individuals; they are agents of the states acting within "the structural context of the state".⁴⁵ Once a non-reductionist approach is followed, which is necessitated given the disciplinary founding myth of the state-as-agent, an array of ontological and epistemological struggles appears. More than ever, the state of systemic IR remains elusive.

Having rejected a reductionist account of the state, the problem of defining the state re-appears with some force. However, we need to wonder, how we can possibly answer the question of "what the state is". One suggestion is that it needs to be imagined, and here I understand imagining simply as doing conceptual work in the sense of setting the boundaries of how to study the state by associating it with tangible elements or certain abstract principles.

What is suggested here can be illustrated by drawing on what Bartelson calls the "intelligibility of the state".⁴⁶ What he means by this is described in the following question. "[U]nder what conditions is [the state] accessible to human knowledge and human action?"⁴⁷ He outlines two

⁴² Gilpin, 'The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism', 318.

⁴³ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 290.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 289-290.

⁴⁵ Colin Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity', *Review of International Studies* 30, 2 (2004), 276. Compare also Jorg Kustermans, 'The State as Citizen: State Personhood and Ideology', *Journal of International Relations and Development* 14, 1 (2011), 3.

⁴⁶ Bartelson, 'Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself', 297.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

potential, diametrically opposed answers to this question. Either the state is accessible because it “really” exists or it exists “only” by virtue of intersubjective beliefs and social practices and is instantiated through them. Further, he argues that on which side of the debate one is positioned depends on the relationship between language and the world that one subscribes to. Michael Walzer’s statement already mentioned in the introduction to this thesis is worth repeating here. He argues that “[t]he state is invisible; it must be personified before it can be seen, symbolized before it can be loved, imagined before it can be conceived.”⁴⁸

However, imagining should not be taken to imply the argument that the state or the state-as-person does not *really* exist. If we subscribe to the first approach outlined by Bartelson, the state exists but, having rejected a reductionist account, it is not directly observable. In this context, to imagine the state means to find ways of making sense of that which is not directly observable. In the case of the second approach outlined by Bartelson, the state is to be located at the level of intersubjective beliefs and these beliefs create the image of the state. I argue that in either case, making the state accessible to human knowledge, making it intelligible, requires us to imagine it. This does either imply the need to explore the intransitive realm of an unobservable or ask us to locate it in the usage of language.

As we have seen in the introduction to this chapter, and as will become clearer in the following sections, one prevalent way of the discipline imagining the state is to ascribe agency or personhood to it. Following Beitz for example, we can argue that central principles of the relations between states such as state autonomy and the resulting principle of non-intervention are based on an analogy between persons and states. Beitz links this with the emergence of a new conception of international order in the seventeenth century that rejected the idea that states are part of a larger moral order in the form of the *respublica Christiana* and proceeded to define states autonomously.⁴⁹ Further, he identifies the analogy between states and persons in the works of *jus gentium* scholars such as Christian Wolff and Emerich de Vattel and argues that the basic principles they outlined are still relevant today.⁵⁰ Wolff expressed the analogy between persons and states most clearly when he argued that “nations are regarded as

⁴⁸ Walzer, 'On the Role of Symbolism in Political Thought', 194.

⁴⁹ Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations*, 71.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 75.

individual free persons living in a state of nature.”⁵¹ Following this line of thought, Wolff defined states, in analogy with persons, as moral equals with equal rights and obligations. We can see this exemplified in the principle of non-intervention and hence can argue that the state-as-person idea is fundamentally entrenched with key principles of international relations.⁵² This example of a state-as-person idea in IR falls under Bartelson’s criteria of intelligibility understood as shared intersubjective meanings and practices. On the other end of the spectrum of intelligibility, the investigation of the real existence of the state-as-person, we find, most prominently, Wendt’s approach.⁵³

To summarise this section, there are four points that can be highlighted. First, this thesis does not seek to question the prevalence or importance of the state in the discipline. This foundational move of the discipline is accepted as a given. Second, an opaqueness of the state has been highlighted. Systemic theorising in particular, with its focus on the interaction between states, having rejected a reductionist account that would reduce the state to the actions of individuals, has to face this opaqueness. It was argued that this leads to the need to imagine the state whereby the term “to imagine” does not necessarily imply that the state does not really exist.

However, even if we accept that the state really exists, what the state is remains unclear. If the state is opaque and needs to be imagined, those stable platforms that enable us to use the concept can only ever be temporary and deserve further scrutiny. Depending on philosophy of science commitments, this questioning has different aims. Regardless of what side is taken, the image of the state-as-person builds on a long tradition of imagining political entities in terms of person. Further elaborating upon this tradition is the task of the following section.

⁵¹ As quoted in *ibid.*

⁵² Beitz draws a parallel between current moral understandings of states in international relations and nineteenth-century liberalism’s view on the individual person. We also need to note that after having outlined this view he goes on to criticise it and to make suggestions towards its revision. *Ibid.*, 66.

⁵³ These different stances on what it means to make the state intelligible stem, unsurprisingly, from the fundamentally different orientations of these projects. Beitz describes his project as international political theory whereas Wendt emphasizes that his approach is a social scientific one. For Beitz compare *ibid.*, 9 and 65. For Wendt compare Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 47.

“From the state of princes to the person of the state”⁵⁴

In light of the tendency to treat the state as a given in mainstream IR, it is worth stressing that the state is a contingent concept.⁵⁵ Questioning concepts of states and concepts of persons, as it is done as part of this thesis, best begins by pointing to historical contingency.⁵⁶ As we have seen in the introduction to this chapter, we can easily find a number of IR scholars attesting to a tendency of the discipline to think of the state as a person. Here, I would like to highlight aspects of a historical trajectory of thinking of states in terms of persons.

Stuart Hall reminds us that “[t]he state is a *historical* phenomenon.”⁵⁷ Linking political communities with notions of human bodies or individual persons is also a historical phenomenon whose beginnings can be traced back to Greek antiquity.⁵⁸ Highlighting the historical contingency of both terms and their relation is an important addition to the recent IR debate surrounding Wendt’s “states are people too” which is characterised by a problematic tendency to treat both states and persons as timeless concepts.⁵⁹ It is worth reminding ourselves that when IR speaks about the state as acting, thinking, and feeling, it does so before the background of a much larger history of thinking about states in terms of persons. This is especially valuable given the prominence of transhistorical positions, especially in the realist and

⁵⁴ This sub-heading is taken from Skinner’s *Visions of Politics*. Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002a), 368.

⁵⁵ For this tendency compare for example Bartelson, ‘Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself’, 298.

⁵⁶ Indeed, it can be argued, as we have seen in the previous section, that certain research programmes need to treat the state as a given, transhistorical concept – as it is done by Alexander Wendt in *Social Theory* for example. However, the project pursued here and the angle of critique levelled against Wendt starts from the assumption that acknowledging historical contingency is important when engaging the idea of the state-as-person. Compare Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 36.

⁵⁷ Stuart Hall, ‘The State in Question’, in *The Idea of the Modern State*, ed. Gregor McLennan, David Held, and Stuart Hall (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1984), 1, emphasis in original.

⁵⁸ Compare for example Arnold D. Harvey, *Body Politic. Political Metaphor and Political Violence* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007). In the context of the recent state-as-person debate compare Mika Luoma-Aho, ‘Political Theology, Anthropomorphism, and the Person-Hood of the State: The Religion of IR’, *International Political Sociology* 3, 3 (2009), 296.

⁵⁹ This is of course most prevalent in Wendt’s work while others such as Erik Ringmar, Friedrich Kratochwil, and Patrick T. Jackson criticise the a-historic treatment of persons and states. Ringmar, ‘On the Ontological Status of the State’. Friedrich Kratochwil, ‘Constructing a New Orthodoxy? Wendt’s Social Theory of International Politics and the Constructivist Challenge’, in *Constructivism and International Relations. Alexander Wendt and His Critics*, ed. Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander (London and New York: Routledge, 2006). Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, ‘Hegel’s House, or ‘People Are States Too’’, *Review of International Studies* 30, 2 (2004b).

liberalist tradition of mainstream IR, that treat the state as a given, as “a *brute* fact of international reality”.⁶⁰

The historical perspective introduced below reminds us that the suggestion that Wendt’s proclamation that “states are people too” is, first, not without historical precedent and second, in its current form, as exemplified by Wendt’s work, needs be understood as grounded in the idea of the state that emerged in the seventeenth century. In this vein, the state-as-person of Wendt and others should be understood as part of a process of increasing abstraction of the concept of the state during which the state came to be thought of as separate from both the ruler and the ruled – separate from government and representatives on the one hand and citizens on the other hand. This is what Skinner calls this the “doubly abstract notion of state authority”.⁶¹

In his *Visions of Politics*, Skinner gives a concise account of the conceptual changes in understanding states in terms of persons that took place from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century. What he is identifying in this time period is, in his own words, a “process by which the state eventually came to be viewed as an independent agent”.⁶² Generally speaking, this is a process of increasing abstraction, moving from complete identification of the state with the king to conceiving of the state as a separate entity in the form of an artificial or fictitious person.⁶³ As we have seen, it can be assumed that in many cases IR as a discipline builds precisely on this notion of the state as an independent agent.

Skinner begins his chapter “From the state of princes to the person of the state” by pointing out that in the fourteenth century, terms like *estat*, *stato*, or *state* could be found in common usage. However, up until then, they were referring to the standing and grandeur of the rulers themselves and not to the political entity as a whole.⁶⁴ The kingdom was viewed through the

⁶⁰ Bartelson, 'Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself', 298-305, for the quotation see 298, emphasis in original.

⁶¹ Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues*, 394.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 379.

⁶³ It is worth noting that there is a debate between Quentin Skinner and David Runciman concerning the question whether or not Hobbes’s state is an artificial or fictitious person. Quentin Skinner, 'Hobbes and the Purely Artificial Person of the State', *Journal of Political Philosophy* 7, 1 (1999). And David Runciman, 'What Kind of Person Is Hobbes's State? A Reply to Skinner', *Journal of Political Philosophy* 8, 2 (2000b). A more detailed analysis can be found in the penultimate section of this chapter.

⁶⁴ Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues*, 369-370.

person of the king; referring to the status and wellbeing of the king was to refer to the status and wellbeing of the state.⁶⁵ In other words, the king *was* the kingdom. However, at the end of the fourteenth century, the manifestation of a second, parallel usage of the term state and related ones can be detected. Now the term state could also refer to the condition of the commonwealth. And it is here that we can find the beginning of establishing it as a separate entity.⁶⁶ Similarly, the “mirror-for-princes” literature of this time, a form of advice books for governing, now used terms like state in an extended meaning. Statecraft, apart from being about the attainment of power and the benefit for the rulers, was now also about “managing to promote the happiness and welfare of their subjects”.⁶⁷ Further, Skinner argues that by the fifteenth century, the subjects of the kingdom were incorporated into this reasoning through the emergence of the idea of the common good.⁶⁸ It was now no longer the king alone that was referred to when speaking of the state and the obligations of those who governed now also included the so-called public benefit.⁶⁹ Finally, in Nicolo Machiavelli’s *Il Principe* we begin to find a distinction between, on the one hand, the state (*lo stato*) and, on the other hand, those who govern it.⁷⁰ Hence, with Machiavelli we complete the move to a period in which the state is no longer identical with those who govern it. In addition, the term state can now also refer to forms of government and prevailing regimes.⁷¹ Machiavelli uses it to also include the territories of the prince.⁷² A final innovation, also taking place in Renaissance Italy, concerns the extension of the term state to include “the institutions of government and the means of coercive control that serve to preserve order within political communities”.⁷³

Skinner describes the process of teasing out these changes as tracing “linguistic innovation[s]”.⁷⁴ He starts by analysing the common usage of a term and then follows the changes in its usage. In the case of the state, we can observe an extension of the referents of the term and a process of abstraction.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 371.

⁶⁶ Skinner argues that in the case of Italian city-republics this development can already be seen in the thirteenth century. Ibid., 370-371.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 374.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 372-373.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 372.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 378.

⁷¹ Ibid., 376.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., 377.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

It is then Hobbes who marks the definite end of the era of understanding public power in more personalised and charismatic terms.⁷⁵ Hobbes achieves a clear separation of ruler and state and establishes the state not only as a separate entity but as an agent and as a person.⁷⁶ In his *Leviathan*, Hobbes “was concerned first and foremost with defining the essence of a commonwealth or state”.⁷⁷ Using Hobbes’s terms, we can say that a multitude (of people) are united through the fact they are represented by a single entity or person. The emerging position is that it is the subjugation of the individual to a sovereign power that now allows us to speak of the state as a unity and even as a person.⁷⁸ Following Hobbes, the process of, first, subjugation and, second, representation “as one” leads to the creation of the commonwealth, the state, as an artificial or fictitious person.⁷⁹ *Leviathan* also makes it clear that the state is separate from both the multitude as well as those that represent it. Further, Skinner argues that, with the emergence of republics, the state can no longer be conceived solely through its ruler. From this moment on, the citizens of the state have to be considered in a way that goes beyond the notion of the earlier common good. Hence, with Hobbes, state authority takes on its “doubly abstract notion” that is key for IR’s understanding of the state as an agent.⁸⁰ “[I]t is Hobbes who first speaks systematically and unapologetically in the abstract and unmodulated tones of the modern theorist of the sovereign state.”⁸¹ He introduces an “abstract vision of sovereignty as the property of an impersonal agency”.⁸²

While we can trace a process of increasing abstraction eventually leading to the idea of the state as an artificial or fictitious person with the help of Skinner, drawing on the medievalist Ernst Kantorowicz is helpful in understanding part of the conceptual influences stemming from

⁷⁵ Ibid., 368.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Murray Forsyth, 'Thomas Hobbes and the Constituent Power of the People', *Political Studies* 29, 2 (1981), 192.

⁷⁸ Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues*, 398-400.

⁷⁹ See Runciman, 'What Kind of Person Is Hobbes's State? A Reply to Skinner'. For a different interpretation of Hobbes’s state as an artificial person see Skinner, 'Hobbes and the Purely Artificial Person of the State'. Regarding the terms commonwealth and state, Skinner observes that Hobbes uses both interchangeably and that by the second half of *Leviathan*, the term state becomes more prominent. Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues*, 402.

⁸⁰ Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues*, 394.

⁸¹ Ibid., 413.

⁸² Ibid., 368-369. In his 'On the Role of Symbolism in Political Thought', Walzer also points to the connection between church and state in the form of the “body politic” and highlights how the Reformation and social contract thinking weakened this connection but did not lead to its complete rejection. Compare Walzer, 'On the Role of Symbolism in Political Thought', 193.

Roman Law and Christian theology regarding the idea of the state-as-person and the corresponding changes in the understanding of the state that were taking place from the twelfth to the sixteenth century.

Kantorowicz reminds us of the influence of the ecclesiastical model on the conceptual understanding of the late medieval and early modern commonwealths.⁸³ The key concept is the so-called *corpus mysticum*. *Corpus mysticum* is the idea that the church can be understood as one body, with Christ as its head.⁸⁴ In twelfth-century theologian circles, a distinction was made between the two bodies of Christ. One is understood as being the collective body of the church; the other one is understood as being the individual body of Christ.⁸⁵ Kantorowicz explains that the individual, “natural” body of Christ was understood as an organism acquiring social and corporational functions; it served with head and limbs, as the prototype and individuation of a super-individual collective, the church as *corpus mysticum*.⁸⁶

Before this background of religious imagery, the idea of the King’s Two Bodies emerged as a model for thinking about secular communities.⁸⁷ On the one hand, there is the individual and mortal body of the king; on the other hand, there is the image of a body that is referring to the institution of the king or, by extension, the body of the political entity over which he governs.

The more secularised version of Christ’s two bodies can be credited to Thomas Aquinas who replaced the “liturgical idiom by a juristic idiom”, by adding sociological and organicist notions to what was hitherto a more literal understanding.⁸⁸ This secularised version of Christian mythology later forms the basis of elaborations of sixteenth-century English legal scholars who sought to develop a distinction between the king as a mortal man and the king as the embodiment of the commonwealth.⁸⁹ Building on this, Elizabethan lawyers were able to address questions of succession and property by utilising the legal fiction of two different bodies in one person: one body was natural and mortal and the other one was political and

⁸³ Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 194.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁸⁶ Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*, 201.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 201.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

transcended time.⁹⁰ We have to note though, that the notion of the king's corporate body, as utilised by English lawyers of the time, integrates the king and the subjects. We observed that "the king in his body politic is incorporated with his subjects, and they with him."⁹¹ It is only with Hobbes that the two become separate.

One of Kantorowicz main achievements in *The King's Two Bodies* is the description of a process of secularisation in which the state becomes an "autonomous institutional subject", separate from the church.⁹² In the context of the idea of the state-as-person, Kantorowicz is important because we can trace a process of abstraction that includes the separation of the king as an individual person from the kingdom. By the end of this development, the king is still seen as an embodiment of the kingdom but in an abstract, less literal sense. Kantorowicz highlights the establishment of the fiction of a political body in sixteenth century English law. The separation of ruler and ruled by establishing the artificial or fictitious person of the state as introduced by Hobbes is yet a further abstraction. We need to keep this historical background in mind as the more recent state-as-person debate is brought into clearer focus in the following.

⁹⁰ Cynthia Herrup, 'The King's Two Genders', *Journal of British Studies* 45, 3 (2006), 493.

⁹¹ Ernst H. Kantorowicz, 'Mysteries of State: An Absolutist Concept and Its Late Mediaeval Origins', *The Harvard Theological Review* 48, 1 (1955), 80.

⁹² For the quotation see Bernhard Jussen, 'The King's Two Bodies Today', *Representations* 106, 1 (2009), 102. However, we also need to keep in mind that the two spheres remain in close exchange. Kantorowicz argues that the exchange between church and state did not come to an end after the Middle Ages. He argues that "[o]nly the objectives changed, as the center of gravity shifted, so to speak, from the ruling personages of the Middle Ages to the ruled collectives of early modern times, to the new national states and other political communities. That is to say, the field of exchanges between Church and State, and of mutual influences, was expanded from individual dignitaries to compact communities." Kantorowicz, 'Mysteries of State: An Absolutist Concept and Its Late Mediaeval Origins', 66.

The state-as-person in IR theory

Recent engagements with the idea of the state-as-person often begin with the observation that IR has failed to deal with this aspect of its most important concept adequately. It is often said that the debate has been lying dormant since Arnold Wolfers' 1959 essay on "The actors in world politics."⁹³ Wendt, for example, describes Wolfers' work as the "only sustained modern treatment" of state personhood and "virtually the last word on the subject".⁹⁴

Despite IR's prevalence for taking state agency for granted and of personifying the state, it seems – if we follow the argument made by Wendt and others – that the question, through not new at all, has not been discussed since the 1950s. This is all the more surprising since, as we have seen in the first part of this chapter, the state and the state-as-person form the foundations of the discipline. However, any debate on these central elements inevitably touches upon larger epistemological and ontological questions. In the broadest terms, we need to engage the question of what it means to do social science when faced with intangible "entities" and social facts.

From this perspective, we can see how a substantial part of the debate on the state-as-person is grouped around philosophy of social science rifts. It is fair to suggest that positions within this debate are often determined by a specific, *a priori* philosophy of science commitment. This is

⁹³ Wolfers' essay can be found in the 1962 collection *Discord and Collaboration*. Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1962), 3-24, *ibid.* For this observation on Wolfers' status compare Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, 'Forum Introduction: Is the State a Person? Why Should We Care?', *Review of International Studies* 30, 2 (2004a), 255. Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 290. See also Kustermans, 'The State as Citizen: State Personhood and Ideology', 4. Compare also Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 178.

Two additional points are worth noting. First, Wolfers is to be located in the political realist camp of the discipline. Further, the room for action that his states-as-agents have is quite limited. He uses – and is most likely the originator – of the famous house on fire metaphor which aims to illustrate that international relations leave little room for alternative courses of action. According to the metaphor, the state is an agent with a very limited ability to choose alternative paths of action. Its activities are, for the most part, already determined by the circumstances of the situation. Moreover, Wolfers limits the usefulness of what he calls the state-as-actor theory to situations as extreme as the "house on fire." Hence, state agency is limited in at least two senses for Wolfers. See Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, 13-15. For the metaphor of the house on fire and its relevance for IR compare also Ted Hopf, 'The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory', *International Security* 23, 1 (1998), 173. For the role of Wolfers' "house on fire" metaphor for the relation and interplay of domestic and international politics compare Elisabetta Brighi, *Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics and International Relations: The Case of Italy* (London: Routledge, 2013), 31.

⁹⁴ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 291. Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 195.

perhaps unsurprising and true for almost any question in the social sciences. However, with regard to the state-as-person, these rifts become fundamental to the extent that they lead to full endorsements such as Wendt's suggestion that "states are people too" on the one hand or complete rejections such as Gilpin's remark that "the state does not really exist" on the other.⁹⁵ In the introduction to this chapter, I tentatively pointed to two such areas of contention – the role of language in constituting social reality and the criteria for establishing ontological status. Dividing lines identified earlier, such as the question of the "intelligibility of the state" raised by Bartelson, apply to the question of the state-as-person just as well.⁹⁶ In addition, already hinted at in the introduction to this chapter, the state-as-person debate also includes the question of what kind of person the state is.

Following the recent debate on the state-as-person in the discipline, the story, as we have seen, usually starts with the observation that the discipline, despite almost three decades of discussing the agent-structure problem, has failed to engage this question.⁹⁷ It is argued that Wendt re-introduced the question of state personhood more prominently in 1999 when he pointed out that "states are people too". Wendt's *Social Theory* and a 2004 special forum in *Review of International Studies* which centred on an article by Wendt are then presented as a first move to remedy this situation after a long silence.⁹⁸ Here, the main protagonists, along-side Wendt, are Iver B. Neumann, Colin Wight, and Patrick T. Jackson.⁹⁹ After the forum debate a number of articles followed-up on what had now been established as a legitimate discourse in

⁹⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215. And Gilpin, 'The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism', 318.

⁹⁶ Bartelson, 'Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself', 297.

⁹⁷ Here, Wendt's 1987 article is taken as the starting point for explicitly debating questions of agency and structure in IR. Alexander Wendt, 'The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory', *International Organization* 41, 3 (1987). For the observation that Wendt significantly contributed to the agency-structure debate see Emmanuel Adler, 'Constructivism in International Relations', in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse-Kappen, and Beth A. Simmons (London: Sage, 2002).

⁹⁸ Compare Jackson's introduction to the forum debate. Jackson, 'Forum Introduction: Is the State a Person? Why Should We Care?'

⁹⁹ The special forum in *Review of International Studies* was preceded by a roundtable discussion at the 43rd Annual Convention of the International Studies Association. Under the title "Are States People Too? Roundtable on the Constitution of State Agency in World Politics" Alexander Wendt, Patrick T. Jackson (chair), Iver B. Neumann, Heikki Patomäki, Cynthia Weber, and Colin Wight discussed ideas of state agency and state personhood. See also the forum publications: Iver B. Neumann, 'Beware of Organicism: The Narrative Self of the State', *Review of International Studies* 30, 2 (2004). Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity'. Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too''. Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory'.

the discipline.¹⁰⁰ In the following, I will refer to this as the state-as-person debate. Running parallel to this, we find a discussion on moral agency of the state.¹⁰¹ However, it remains separate from the forum debate and its offshoots. While acknowledging the importance of moral questions, those partaking in the state-as-person debate are more concerned with making a contribution to the agent-structure debate and settling the question of the ontological status of the state.¹⁰²

In *Social Theory*, the state, understood as a person, becomes central to Wendt's systemic approach that puts a symbolic interactionist exchange between states at the centre of establishing an international culture of anarchy.¹⁰³ In Wendt's work, anarchy is not seen as a self-fulfilling prophecy that inevitably leads to a Hobbesian world of enmity.¹⁰⁴ Rather, it is a systemic structure that can be changed by the interaction of states. Hence, a Hobbesian international culture of enmity is not the only possible world in which states can live. In Wendt's words "anarchy is what states make of it."¹⁰⁵ It is this general thrust of the argument that, I believe, necessitates Wendt's claim that "states are people too" and ignites the state-as-person in the discipline. In Jackson's words, Wendt delivers the "first systematic account [of the idea of the state-as-person] that the field has seen in many years".¹⁰⁶

Building on this, Wendt's 2004 article links the question of state personhood with the standing of the discipline as a whole. The argument is that if the state-as-person is only a fiction, we need

¹⁰⁰ Here we can note Peter Lomas' critique of Wendt. Peter Lomas, 'Anthropomorphism, Personification and Ethics: A Reply to Alexander Wendt', *Review of International Studies* 31, 2 (2005). A number of additional articles also use the 2004 debate as a starting point. Among these are Luoma-Aho, 'Political Theology, Anthropomorphism, and the Person-Hood of the State: The Religion of IR'. Ulrich Franke and Ulrich Roos, 'Actor, Structure, Process: Transcending the State Personhood Debate by Means of a Pragmatist Ontological Model for International Relations Theory', *Review of International Studies* 36, 4 (2010). Kustermans, 'The State as Citizen: State Personhood and Ideology'. Faizullaev, 'Individual Experiencing of States'. And Jacob Schiff, 'Real'? As If! Critical Reflections on State Personhood', *Review of International Studies* 34, 2 (2008).

¹⁰¹ For instance, Chris J. Brown, Toni A. Erskine, Mervyn L. Frost, Jenna L. Sindle, and Molly M. Cochrane discussed the moral responsibility of collective actors under the title "Institutions and Moral Agency: In Concept" at the 41st Annual Convention of the International Studies Association.

¹⁰² For example, Jackson cites ethical questions as one reason why the state-as-person is highly relevant. In his 2004 article, Wendt mentions moral personhood as important but also moves on to say that this will not be his main focus. Jackson, 'Forum Introduction: Is the State a Person? Why Should We Care?', 258. Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 295.

¹⁰³ Compare Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, chapter seven.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 309.

¹⁰⁵ Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics'.

¹⁰⁶ Jackson, 'Forum Introduction: Is the State a Person? Why Should We Care?', 256.

to wonder why this fiction has worked so well in making sense of international relations and why a “more realistic” picture has not emerged over time.¹⁰⁷ In Wendt’s view, understanding states as persons is central to IR; yet, it is also a fundamentally neglected aspect. This rhetorical move is similar to what has been described in the first section of this chapter as the ubiquity and opacity of the state in the discipline. In Wendt’s case, arguing from within the agent-structure debate, the personhood of the state and its ontological status become central to the discipline’s self-understanding.¹⁰⁸ Wendt argues that we need to go beyond treating the personified state *as-if* it existed and debate its ontological status. Colin Wight agrees and adds that “[t]o continue with a metaphorical and/or fictitious account of the state is to conduct ‘business as usual’.”¹⁰⁹ Both take a scientific realist stance, putting ontological questions first and arguing, against positivism on one side and narrativism on the other side, that unobservable entities such as the state are real. Related to this, they share a strong commitment to argue against a reductionist view of the state.¹¹⁰ Looking at the question of the ontology of the state, it can be argued that Wendt and Wight represent one side in the 2004 state-as-person debate, while Jackson and Neumann can be located on the other. Jackson suggests focusing on the “process of personation” and argues that in order to make sense of the state-as-person we need to look at the processes by which social actors are constructed and reproduced.¹¹¹ These should be similar for persons and states alike and hence the statement “states are people too” can be inverted and it is equally plausible to say that “people are states too”.¹¹² Neumann suggests a narrativist account of the state-as-person. He argues that thinking depends on language and language operates largely through metaphors. Hence, the attempt to escape the *as-if* world and search for the *really* existing state is futile in his opinion. As each metaphor has potential to be constraining and enabling, the question we need to be asking, according to Neumann, is what metaphors constitute a particular phenomenon.¹¹³ From this perspective, Neumann criticises the organic metaphors he detects in Wendt’s work on the state-as-person and argues that these

¹⁰⁷ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 290.

¹⁰⁸ It is worth noting that agency and personhood are conflated in Wendt’s approach. This is criticised by others who engage in the state-as-person discussion. For treating “state” and “actor” synonymously compare *ibid.*, 289, fn 1. For a discussion compare Kustermans, 'The State as Citizen: State Personhood and Ideology', 4.

¹⁰⁹ Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity', 271.

¹¹⁰ For Wight compare *ibid.*, 276.

¹¹¹ Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too'', 281-282.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 281.

¹¹³ For these observations compare Neumann, 'Beware of Organicism: The Narrative Self of the State', 265.

need to be overcome. This debate on where to locate the state and the state-as-person between Wight and Wendt on the one hand and Neumann and Jackson on the other hand marks the first dividing line in the debate. As mentioned above, it is reminiscent of Bartelson's criteria of the "intelligibility of the state".¹¹⁴

A second division in the debate rests on the question of what kind of person the state is. Wendt, drawing on an article by Andrew Vincent, re-introduces the helpful distinction between moral, legal, and psychological personhood.¹¹⁵ Wendt argues that this distinction has important consequences for whether or not we can locate the state in the world of really existing entities or whether the state is to be located in social practices. For him, legal and moral personhoods are constituted "entirely by social recognition".¹¹⁶ In contrast, psychological personhood, Wendt argues, requires a suitable inside and is to a certain extent pre-social and "cannot be reduced to social context".¹¹⁷ Hence, psychological personhood is the hard case for a philosophical realist treatment of the state that Wendt regards as important for the discipline. Ultimately, this is the reason for Wendt's engagement with psychological state personhood in his 2004 article. Although Wendt's points regarding these types of personhood and the degree of their intersubjective constitution need to be further questioned, it becomes clear that to what kind of state personhood we subscribe has important consequences for the possibilities we see for making the state intelligible.¹¹⁸

In addition, three offshoots of the 2004 state-as-person debate are worth mentioning. Jorg Kustermans makes a direct contribution to the state-as-person debate by drawing on Jackson's notion of personation to argue in favour of personhood-as-status with regard to the state.¹¹⁹ With this focus on personhood-as-status, understood primarily as legal personhood, Kustermans circumvents the ontological questions at the heart of the state-as-person debate.

¹¹⁴ Bartelson, 'Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself', 297.

¹¹⁵ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 294. Vincent, 'Can Groups Be Persons?'

¹¹⁶ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 294.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 295.

¹¹⁸ For a different take on moral personhood which disagrees with the argument that moral personhood is solely based on social recognition compare for example Erskine, 'Assigning Responsibilities to Institutional Moral Agents: The Case of States and Quasi-States'. Toni Erskine, 'Kicking Bodies and Damning Souls: The Danger of Harming "Innocent" Individuals While Punishing "Delinquent" States', in *Accountability for Collective Wrongdoing*, ed. Tracy Isaacs and Richard Vernon (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011 [2010]).

¹¹⁹ For his self-declared aim to make a contribution to the debate compare Kustermans, 'The State as Citizen: State Personhood and Ideology', 22. For a summary of the personhood-as-status argument compare ibid., 1-2.

Further, he suggests that there is an ideological dimension to personhood and argues that it is always also a political question. In the case of the state it is about membership in the community of states and the process of being accepted as such a member.¹²⁰ In both Kustermans and Jackson's account social practices are in the foreground and the material reality of the state is less important if not neglected all together. Hence, Kustermans can argue that the state *is* a person but given his approach he can also argue that "states do not necessarily have desires, or interests, identities or emotions."¹²¹ One can, he argues, remain agnostic regarding these aspects and still maintain that states are persons.¹²² While Kustermans makes a valuable contribution, I think the ontological question of psychological state personhood, Wendt's "hard case", needs to be engaged to further the debate, even if the result is a rejection of the idea.¹²³

A second response and contribution to the state-as-person debate is Ulrich Franke and Ulrich Roos' "Actor, structure, process". They seek to speak directly to the agency-structure debate in IR and focus specifically on ontological questions with regard to the state-as-person. Drawing on both Wendt and Wight, they find a position that transcends some of the dichotomies of the earlier debate by drawing on pragmatist scholarship. With Wight and against Wendt, they argue that the state is not an agent but a structure and reserve the status of actorhood only for individual human beings.¹²⁴ They are able to argue that the state is a structure of corporate practice which means that the state is seen as more than the sum of its parts and a reductionist account is clearly rejected. However, at the same time the state depends on individual human beings to produce and reproduce this structure.¹²⁵ Hence, they suggest a way that avoids reductionism and, at the same time, does not confer agency to the state, thereby transcending

¹²⁰ This is based on the distinction between a liberal and a republican notion of citizenship which each demands a different kind of community and brings forth a different kind of citizen. Compare *ibid.*, 12-17.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 2.

¹²³ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 295.

¹²⁴ It is worth noting that in his 2006 book, Wight developed a more subtle understanding of agency. Compare Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 224. Similarly, we also need to acknowledge the difference between structure and structuratum. *Ibid.*, 220. Also Milja Kurki, *Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 254.

¹²⁵ For this argument compare Franke and Roos, 'Actor, Structure, Process: Transcending the State Personhood Debate by Means of a Pragmatist Ontological Model for International Relations Theory', 1058, also 1064.

the dichotomy that Wendt takes as a starting point for his 2004 article.¹²⁶ First, to the notion of the state as a structure of corporate practice and secondly, to the individual human being as the sole holder of agency, they add the idea of process “understood as the dialectical interrelation between those structures and actors”.¹²⁷ Their main aim is not to contribute to the state-as-person debate by suggesting an alternative view of the personhood of the state. Instead, they reject all ideas of the state as an actor or person and bring the individual human being back into the agency-structure debate by introducing the role of processes more explicitly. This, they argue, “is for the most part implicitly taken for granted, yet largely marginalized in theoretical models”.¹²⁸ While this thesis, in contrast to Franke and Roos’ approach, seeks to make a direct contribution to the debate by accepting the idea of the state-as-person as useful, their point about a false dichotomy between reductionism on the one hand and full acceptance of the reality of the state-as-person on the other is taken on board as a helpful critique. Similarly their emphasis on process is valuable.

Last but not least, Mika Luoma-Aho utilises the renewed state-as-person debate to illustrate how IR is, in his view, a form of religion. He, too, sees the personified state at the heart of the discipline. Arguing that anthropomorphism is a defining criterion for religion, he observes that IR is a “system of thought that takes the metaphorical image of the personified, embodied state more seriously than other more idiosyncratic forms of anthropomorphism”.¹²⁹ Hence, in IR we encounter the personified state as a religious image put into disciplinary form.¹³⁰ Luoma-Aho begins by illustrating a historical connection between religious imagery and ideas about the state, similar to what has been pointed out above by drawing on Skinner and Kantorowicz.¹³¹ In line with the other scholars of the state-as-person debate, he argues that the state is central to IR, but, disagreeing with Wendt and Wight, he also argues that it is a matter of collective belief only. Drawing an analogy between the state in IR and God in Christian belief, he provides an

¹²⁶ They argue that “[d]ifferent from Wendt who [...] has framed the state personhood debate as a dilemma from which it is only possible to escape by either confessing reductionism or recognising the real personhood of states, we hold that our model offers a third possibility to deal with the problem at hand.” *Ibid.*, 1058.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1077.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Luoma-Aho, 'Political Theology, Anthropomorphism, and the Person-Hood of the State: The Religion of IR', 293.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ He further draws on Carl Schmitt and Eric Voegelin to advance his argument in political theology. Compare *ibid.*, 298-299.

interesting answer to what has been described as the ubiquity and opacity of the state in the first part of this chapter. Luoma-Aho certainly provides ample material for re-thinking the status of the state in the discipline with regard to its sacrosanct position in the mainstream. However, arguing that the anthropomorphised state in IR is a matter of faith does not lead to making any headway in the debate. Rather it is an argument to end all debate and hence it is not helpful in the context of this thesis and the main disciplinary dichotomies outlined earlier.¹³²

Going back to one of the starting points of the state-as-person debate, it is useful to draw on the closing remarks of Wendt's 2004 article. Here, Wendt concludes with a normative suggestion as to why we might want to support the idea of the state-as-person. He argues that "states help bring order, and yes, even justice to the world, and if we want to have states then it is better they take the form of persons rather than something more amorphous, because this will help make their effects more politically accountable."¹³³ I entirely agree with Wendt that states, given their omnipresence in political life in general and in IR specifically, better take the form of persons rather than of something more mechanistic. This conviction forms one of the motivations behind this thesis.

Building on, but also fundamentally distinguishing the approach taken here from Wendt's, this thesis will make a suggestion towards what I call the *constructed state-as-person*. Based on this overview on the state-as-person debate in IR, there are three areas in which the *constructed state-as-person* seeks to make a contribution. The three elements which will be outlined in the following and further developed throughout subsequent chapters are: the role of metaphors, the process of personation, and the question of psychological state personhood.

¹³² It is especially in the conclusion that Luoma-Aho seems to argue that, despite some unhelpful implications, the anthropomorphised state is simply an inescapable matter of belief. And he adds that he certainly shares this belief. Ibid., esp. 307-308, ibid.

¹³³ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 316.

Towards the *constructed state-as-person*: metaphors that matter

Given the state-as-person debate just described, I argue that the role of metaphors in the discipline in general and specifically with regard to the idea of the state-as-person deserves to be given more room. As outlined, we can see how the recent state-as-person debate operates along one key dichotomy. Wendt argues that either the state is real or it is *merely* a metaphor.¹³⁴ Depending on the position regarding the role of language, a scholar might come down on one side of this divide or the other. However, with regard to the role of metaphors I argue that this is a false dichotomy.

The point worth stressing is that unless we assume, perhaps in a naïve empiricist fashion, to have direct, unmediated access to the world, we need to have a form of mediation between the phenomenon “out there” in the world and our concepts of them. I argue that this role is taken on by metaphors. As we have seen above, it is uncontroversial to argue that we do not have direct access to the state as there is nothing that can easily and unmistakably be taken to *be* the state.

In other words, the argument put forth here is that the intelligibility of the state is mediated by metaphors regardless of whether or not we subscribe to the idea that the state really exists or locate it “only” in intersubjective beliefs and shared practices. In this sense, I agree with Neumann whose key contribution to the state-as-person debate is a reminder to question our metaphors. Yet, at the same time and against Neumann, I argue that this does not commit us necessarily to a narrativist account of the state and the state-as-person.

This suggestion will be developed further over the course of this thesis and especially in Chapter 3. For now, it is enough to first register a scepticism regarding the problematic attitude towards the role of metaphors in the state-as-person debate and second, the false dichotomy opened up in the debate that gives the impression that the possible utilisation of metaphors should solely be confined to one side in the debate. Second, in the remainder of this section, I would like to highlight how a metaphorical approach can be a useful analytical tool even before the harder

¹³⁴ Ibid., 289-291.

questions of epistemology and ontology are addressed. By highlighting the difference between body-politic and state-as-person arguments as well as the difference between anthropomorphisation and personification, I aim to show how a metaphor-perspective is helpful in making important analytical distinctions that tend to get glossed over in the debate.

At a very basic level, to use a metaphor is to “talk and, potentially, think about something in terms of something else”.¹³⁵ Often, this is seen as a process whereby something that is more familiar and more tangible is used to make sense of something else that is regarded as unfamiliar and less tangible. Based on this assumption, conceptual metaphor theory introduces a distinction between the source and the target domain of a metaphor. The source domain is taken to be the more familiar element that is drawn upon in order to make sense of the target domain. For example, in the case of the state-as-person, the source domain is constituted by ideas about persons which are applied to the target domain, the state.¹³⁶ Further, we can distinguish between theory-constitutive metaphors, those metaphors that form the core of a system of thought, and pedagogical metaphors, those metaphors that are utilised to explain that system of thought.¹³⁷ The assumption, to be elaborated in more detail in Chapter 3, is that the state-as-person in IR is a theory-constitutive metaphor. As a first step towards re-framing metaphors in the state-as-person debate we can say that

[s]uccessful metaphors may contribute to the development of whole research programmes, and influence research paradigms for considerable periods of time. In this sense scientific metaphors can play an important ideological role since they can be central to the dominant ways in which particular phenomena are understood by influential groups of experts in particular cultural and historical contexts.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Elena Semino, *Metaphor in Discourse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1.

¹³⁶ A number of points of caution need to be added here that will be further elaborated in Chapter 3. First, we need to be careful not to interpret this relationship between source and target domain as a form of comparison. Second, the relationship between the two domains is more appropriately conceptualised as an interanimation of thoughts than as a one-directional application of concepts from one area to another. Compare Max Black, *Models and Metaphors. Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962). Max Black, 'More About Metaphor', in *Metaphor and Thought*, ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 [1979]). Ivor Armstrong Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936).

¹³⁷ For this distinction compare Richard Boyd, 'Metaphor and Theory Change: What Is "Metaphor" a Metaphor For?', in *Metaphor and Thought*, ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 [1979]).

¹³⁸ Semino, *Metaphor in Discourse*, 135.

Based on this, I argue that this way of interpreting ideas of states-as-persons as an interaction between two different concepts is helpful in making a number of analytical distinctions. First, I argue that we need to distinguish the body politic from the state-as-person. The body politic – the older form of making sense of political communities – carries connotations of unity and potentially a functional division of labour but it certainly does not imply a mind, and based on that does not imply reasoning, feeling, or actions.¹³⁹ In this sense we need to draw a distinction between the Roman law conception of certain groups as “corpus”, and the late medieval idea of the king’s two bodies on the one hand and later state-as-person ideas on the other.¹⁴⁰ In addition, the body politic understood as a metaphor can further be distinguished into a mechanistic and an organic understanding of the body politic.¹⁴¹ For example, looking at French organicist thought of the late nineteenth century, we find that the organism metaphor was used to imagine a society as consisting of functional parts that form an emergent single entity.¹⁴²

This distinction between metaphors that draw on the body and metaphors that draw on the person also helps in highlighting a key move that Hobbes introduced. As we have seen, Hobbes can be credited for giving agency to the state. With Harry D. Gould we can argue that this move is a transformation of the Roman law idea of the state as a corpus to the idea of the state as a person.¹⁴³ Gould argues that “[b]y eliding person and body, artificial person and body politic, Hobbes changed the metaphor, and created the corporate person, opening the door to a new set of associations – especially cognitive –that body does not entail.”¹⁴⁴ Hence, in Hobbes we encounter the transformation of the political community as a body to the political community as a person. This opens up potential for attaching actions, intentions, and even feelings to the new image of the state.

Keeping this in mind, we should also draw an analytical distinction between anthropomorphisation and personification which will form the basis for how the terms will be

¹³⁹ Harry D. Gould, 'International Criminal Bodies', *Review of International Studies* 35, 3 (2009), 706.

¹⁴⁰ With regard to the corporation in Roman law, compare *ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Compare Harvey, *Body Politic. Political Metaphor and Political Violence*, 37.

¹⁴² One has to keep in mind that this approach of an early sociology was part of the attempt to model the social sciences onto the “scientific model” of the natural sciences and establishing society as an object of “scientific study”. Daniela S. Barberis, 'In Search of an Object: Organicist Sociology and the Reality of Society in Fin-De-Siecle France', *History of the Human Sciences* 16, 3 (2003), 57-59.

¹⁴³ Gould, 'International Criminal Bodies', 708.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 709.

used in the subsequent chapters I take the below distinction from James J. Paxson's study of different tropes related to personification in literature theory.¹⁴⁵ *Embodiment* describes the giving of a physical form to an abstract entity, in other words the transformation from a non-corporeal entity into a corporeal one. *Anthropomorphisation* can be understood as a next step towards understanding an abstract entity in human terms. It is a kind of embodiment where the form given to an abstract entity is explicitly human. *Personification*, last but not least, describes the transformation of an abstract entity into a sentient human form possessing a face, a voice, thought and language. This last aspect has been the focus of the recent state-as-person debate and will also be the focus of this thesis.

To re-iterate, the position taken here is that metaphors play a role in making the state intelligible regardless of whether one subscribes to the idea that the state really exists or that it is only to be located in intersubjective meanings and social processes. Further, drawing on the distinction between target and source domain of a metaphor is useful for introducing further analytical distinctions between different kinds of metaphors regarding the state.

In the following, a closer look at the target domain, the state, is necessary. Given the discussion in the previous sections, this warrants a closer look at Hobbes' conception of the person and the process of personation that Jackson and Kustermans re-introduced in the state-as-person debate.

¹⁴⁵ For this and the following see James J. Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 42.

Towards the *constructed state-as-person*: personification as representation

As we have seen by drawing on Skinner's work, the modern concept of the state that separates it from both the ruler and the ruled fully emerged with the writings of Hobbes. It has been argued that it is precisely the fact that the state is not easily identifiable with the citizens or the representatives that lies at the heart of IR's struggle with the concept.

As a first step towards developing the *constructed state-as-person*, a turn to Hobbes's theory of representation is useful. It is worth bearing in mind that it is Hobbes "who first speaks systematically and unapologetically in the abstract and unmodulated tones of the modern theorist of the sovereign state".¹⁴⁶ And despite the presence of rival ideologies put forward by the monarchomachs at the time and found in classical republican visions, Hobbes's notion of the state quickly became a central part of the political discourse of seventeenth-century Western Europe.¹⁴⁷ We should also not forget that Hobbes's main aim is "to work out a new the meanings of authority and subjection".¹⁴⁸ Despite the fact that Hobbes is a thinker of absolute power and a defender of monarchy, the impact his writings had on the modern conceptualisation of the state is enough reason to begin thinking about states-as-persons with a close look at the theoretical moves he performs in order to establish the person of the state.¹⁴⁹

Further, as we have seen, in the more recent literature on the idea of the state-as-person, a similar suggestion is made by Jackson.¹⁵⁰ The main thrust of Jackson's critique of Wendt's state-as-person has already been outlined. Jackson inverts Wendt's famous statement and finds it at least equally plausible to claim that "*people are states too*" because both are similar social

¹⁴⁶ Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues*, 413.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 406.

¹⁴⁸ Walzer, 'On the Role of Symbolism in Political Thought', 191.

¹⁴⁹ This is done keeping the critique of the so-called Cambridge school in mind that "the central texts in the canon of the history of political thought should not be read as through written to instruct us." David Runciman, 'History of Political Thought: The State of the Discipline', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 3, 1 (2001).

¹⁵⁰ Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too'', 286-287. Karin Fierke makes a similar suggestion, albeit in passing, by building on Jackson. Compare Karin Fierke, *Political Self-Sacrifice. Agency, Body and Emotion in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 82.

actors.¹⁵¹ In the context of this critique, Jackson makes recourse to Hobbes's theory of representation and what Hobbes calls personation in order to outline an alternative view that allows Jackson to shift the focus from the state-as-person understood as an entity to the state-as-person understood as a social process.¹⁵²

Taking this as a starting point, in the following, I would like to go back to the ideas of Hobbes regarding the state and his theory of attributed action in particular.¹⁵³ With Skinner we can argue that it is Hobbes who "eventually worked out a distinctive and highly influential approach to the question of how it is possible for a state – or any other abstraction or collectivity – to perform actions and take responsibility for the consequences".¹⁵⁴

Hobbes lays out his theory of attributed action in a number of his writings, but the most prominent source is Chapter XVI of *Leviathan*, "Of Persons, Authors and things Personated". Here, Hobbes distinguishes between three kinds of persons: natural, artificial and fictitious persons.¹⁵⁵ This distinction is meant to answer questions of representation on the one hand and questions of ownership of actions on the other. The three types of persons are "set apart from each other in accordance with the different number of subjects or vehicles of personality that they require."¹⁵⁶ Natural persons represent themselves through their own actions and take responsibility for them. In contrast, an artificial person acts on behalf of another natural person. The artificial person represents a natural person while the natural person that is represented still bears the responsibility for things done in their name. The fictitious person is a construct of

¹⁵¹ Here, the term social actor refers to Jackson's point that "both are entities in the name of which actions are performed." This assumption is based on the Hobbesian concept of personation. Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too'', 281, emphasis in original.

¹⁵² It is worth pointing out that the term "entity" is used as a shorthand expression here. Rhetorically, it is convenient to juxtapose entities and processes. However, entity is not to be understood in strictly material terms. Rather, Jackson's insistence on process is a reply to and critique of the scientific realist account of the state and the state-as-person and particularly the search for "constitutive essences", understood as those elements that are fundamental to a definition of an entity. Compare *ibid.*, 281 and for the critique of scientific realist accounts 283.

¹⁵³ For the term compare Skinner, 'Hobbes and the Purely Artificial Person of the State', 26.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁵⁵ David Runciman, *Pluralism and the Personality of the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 9. While Runciman identifies about three kinds of persons in Hobbes's thinking, Skinner only distinguishes between natural and artificial persons and views fictitious persons as a special case of artificial ones. Compare Skinner, 'Hobbes and the Purely Artificial Person of the State'. In his reply to Skinner, Runciman defends this distinction. Runciman, 'What Kind of Person Is Hobbes's State? A Reply to Skinner'.

¹⁵⁶ Runciman, *Pluralism and the Personality of the State*, 9.

three different elements: owner, actor, and fictitious author.¹⁵⁷ In “Of Persons, Authors and things Personated”, Hobbes gives the example of a bridge acquiring the status of a fictitious person. He argues that a bridge has a physical presence in the world but cannot act itself or bear responsibilities. However, the owner of the bridge can authorise someone else to represent the bridge. And through this act of representation the appearance of the bridge acting can be created.

In a next step, we need to ask how Hobbes’s concept of a person by fiction can be applied to the state.¹⁵⁸ In order to escape the state of nature, people, each with everyone else, agree to come together and transfer their power onto a single entity, the sovereign. This act of transformation creates the sovereign as a representative of what Hobbes calls “the multitude”. The multitude becomes transformed into a single person through the unity of their representative.¹⁵⁹ However, the people themselves do not need to be unified, it is the fact that they are represented as one, by the sovereign, that transforms them into one person.¹⁶⁰ For Hobbes there is no “double contract”. He rejects the idea of having one contract with which people agree to form a society and another one to authorise a representative for themselves.¹⁶¹ Rather, the society and the sovereign to represent that society are created in a single move. The state-as-person, distinct from both the sovereign and the multitude, is created when the multitude decides to transfer their power onto a representative, the sovereign.¹⁶²

In this context we also need to note the crucial distinction between artificial and fictitious personhood. What I have described so far is in line with Hobbes’s concept of artificial personhood. A group of natural persons – the multitude – is represented by an artificial person – the sovereign. It is this mechanism of representation that allows for people to escape the state of nature. However, what is created in this process is the fictitious person of the state. The natural persons that are represented by the sovereign are represented as one, but only because

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ It is important to note that Hobbes himself argues that the state is a person but that he does not specify what kind of person – natural, artificial, or fictitious – it is. Compare Runciman, 'What Kind of Person Is Hobbes's State? A Reply to Skinner', 274.

¹⁵⁹ Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues*, 400.

¹⁶⁰ Runciman, *Pluralism and the Personality of the State*, 11.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 12.

¹⁶² Ibid., 13.

they are represented by one, the sovereign.¹⁶³ This unity is a fiction. To put it in Runciman's own words: "For though the sovereign is authorised by the multitude, he does not bear a multitude of persons but only one, a person distinct from his own and also from those of his many natural authors."¹⁶⁴ In other words, the sovereign does not represent the people, as would be the case with artificial personhood. The sovereign represents the state that has been formed in the moment of the contract. And the state thus created is a fictitious person.

Following Runciman's account, the state-as-person remains a fiction because it appears to bear responsibility but cannot actually do so; it appears to act but cannot act.¹⁶⁵ Herein lays the key difference between artificial and fictitious personhood. The state-as-person thus created is much like the bridge in the example mentioned earlier.¹⁶⁶ Actions are performed by individual human beings but no responsibility is taken.¹⁶⁷ Yet, Runciman cautions that this should not lead to a dismissal of the fictitious personhood of the state as inconsequential. The state's appearance "as a real person has real consequences, because the multitude and sovereign both condition their actions to take account of its presence".¹⁶⁸ He argues that through representation, the state is given "an enduring presence in the world [...] of real people".¹⁶⁹ This is not a presence in the world of fiction, a play on the stage for example, but a presence in the real world with real consequences which is made possible by the "combined efforts of real persons".¹⁷⁰

¹⁶³ Ibid., 11.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 13.

¹⁶⁵ Runciman, 'What Kind of Person Is Hobbes's State? A Reply to Skinner', 272-273.

¹⁶⁶ A point of caution needs to be added here because the example of the bridge and the example of the state, though both fictitious persons by authorisation and representation, differ from each other. First, in contrast to the bridge the state does not exist prior to the social contract. Its presence is a more fragile one and unlike the bridge, there is nothing in the real world that can readily be identified as the fictitious person of the state. Second, in the example of the bridge it is the owner who authorises the actor to represent the bridge as a fictitious person. However, in contrast to the bridge, the state is not owned previously. The multitude differs from the owner of a bridge who authorises action on behalf of the bridge based on having "dominion" over the bridge. Compare *ibid.*, 273-274. Despite their disagreement, Skinner also classes the state in the same group as, for example, hospital and bridges. Compare Skinner, 'Hobbes and the Purely Artificial Person of the State', 22.

¹⁶⁷ It is important to note that the question of responsibility is key for Runciman. Whether or not there is the possibility of taking responsibility for actions performed on behalf of another person or entity lies at the heart of the distinction between artificial and fictitious persons. Compare Runciman, 'What Kind of Person Is Hobbes's State? A Reply to Skinner', 272.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 276.

Conceptualising the state as a fictitious person leaves us then with three components: the people, the sovereign, and the state. Both people and sovereign act in such a way as to make the fiction of the state a reality. This way of conceptualising the state broadly falls within a constructivist framework. It can be taken beyond the idea of a social contract to establish sovereign and state. The sovereign represents the multitude as one person, not as a collection or aggregation of individual members. This means that Hobbes's state is not a belief in group identity or the personality of groups.¹⁷¹

To summarise then, in Hobbes's framework there are two elements to the process of personation of the state. First, there is the social contract that establishes the unity of the multitude. Second, there is an element of process to the fictitious person of the state as it depends on representation and, as Runciman argues, the continuous effort of real people.¹⁷²

I conclude this section with one further question. If, as Runciman and Skinner's interpretations of Hobbes suggest the sovereign is to represent the state as opposed to the collectivity of the people, what is it that the sovereign actually represents? Referring to the fictitious personality of a bridge, Runciman remarks that "because the act of personation is predicated on the personality of whatever is to be personated, this is not possible unless the bridge itself is conceived as a person."¹⁷³ Based on this observation, we can ask, what is the personality of the state that is to be represented? We have seen that it can neither be reduced to the personality of the sovereign nor the characteristics of the citizens, either understood as an aggregation of individuals or as a group. In Runciman's account, we are dealing with the state-as-person as an idea that is given life through the concerted actions of individuals. However, this leaves the question of what kind of person the state is still unanswered.

¹⁷¹ Skinner, 'Hobbes and the Purely Artificial Person of the State', 21.

¹⁷² Whether or not this second part depends on the continuous active participation and acceptance of the citizens is debated. In his interpretation, Runciman seems to imply just that when he speaks of the "combined efforts of real persons." Runciman, 'What Kind of Person Is Hobbes's State? A Reply to Skinner', 276. However, Hobbes's social contract is often interpreted as leaving only the most minimal right of resistance. From this perspective, much like the social contract, the fictitious person of the state would not depend on the active participation of the state's citizens. Compare for example Philip Pettit who gives only a passive role to the represented people. Philip Pettit, *Made with Words. Hobbes on Language, Mind and Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 162, note 1. Further, Kustermans adds yet another source of personation we can take note of in this context. He suggests that the international realm can now also be considered a source of personation. Kustermans, 'The State as Citizen: State Personhood and Ideology', 4.

¹⁷³ Runciman, *Pluralism and the Personality of the State*, 8.

Towards the *constructed state-as-person*: bringing emotions in

Having observed a prevalence in IR to treat the state as a person, there is a second tendency to be observed. Erskine for example points out that “there is a fascinating proclivity in International Relations for accepting states as purposive, yet amoral, actors.”¹⁷⁴ State agency, based on the assumption of the state as a rational, unitary actor, is often seen as an unproblematic assumption.¹⁷⁵ In many cases, the state as a rational, unitary actor is based on a conception of individual human beings drawn from microeconomics, leading to the curious amorality of the state.¹⁷⁶ Even after a cursory look at the recent debate regarding the state-as-person, it becomes evident that the concept we encounter is missing two key aspect of what it means to be human: the capacity for moral judgements and the capacity for emotions. It is this second aspect that this thesis takes issue with.

In his article on the “The state as person in international theory”, Wendt focuses on what he calls psychological personhood, as distinguished from legal and moral personhood. This thesis follows him in this focus. However, while the capacity for subjective experience, which includes the capacity for emotions, forms part of his definition of psychological personhood, it is a strangely neglected aspect. It is added almost as an after-thought and with the caveat that by dealing with this facet of psychological personhood and by relating it to the person of the state, we enter highly controversial theoretical territory.

I believe that if we want to further engage with this facet of psychological personhood, there are two general tendencies in the social sciences that need to be questioned. On the one hand, we can identify a general absence of interest in emotions in IR’s mainstream and a prevalence of rational actor assumptions. On the other hand, even when the importance of emotions is acknowledged, we are still faced with a tendency to adhere to a clear dichotomy between rationality and emotions. Wendt needs to be credited with introducing important qualifications to the rational actor assumption in IR. *Social Theory* especially needs to be seen as the move to

¹⁷⁴ Erskine, 'Locating Responsibility: The Problem of Moral Agency in International Relations', 702.

¹⁷⁵ Toni Erskine, 'Introduction: Making Sense of 'Responsibility' in International Relations - Key Questions and Concepts', in *Can Institutions Have Responsibilities? Collective Moral Agency and International Relations*, ed. Toni Erskine (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 3.

¹⁷⁶ The role of microeconomic analogies in Waltz’s systemic theory can serve as an example here.

include rational actor assumptions in a constructivist framework that emphasises the importance of identities and interests.¹⁷⁷

However, I argue that the tendency to separate rationality and emotions is reflected in Wendt's work. In his 2004 article, he separates being an intentional actor from the ability for a subjective experience of the world. Hence, his first element of psychological personhood, being an intentional actor, is described as being "purposive or goal-directed".¹⁷⁸ However, being critical of the rational actor assumption, it seems curious to separate intentions from "having a subjective experience of the world" and emotions.

Hence, parallel to what has been observed regarding the strange amorality of the person of the state, we can ask why the state-as-person is also a strangely unemotional person. This relates this thesis to the so-called emotional turn in IR.¹⁷⁹ One of the main drivers behind the emotional turn is the argument that we cannot assume a pure rationality. In this sense, the emotional turn is a move against one of IR's core assumptions, namely that the agents of international relations can be assumed to be rational actors.

Part of the emotional turn are, on the one hand, those scholars who see this renewed commitment to questioning the divide between rationality and emotionality as an invitation to bring psychology to the discipline.¹⁸⁰ On the other hand, there are those who aim to question scientific methods and draw on the humanities and especially aesthetic considerations.¹⁸¹ This thesis is aligned with the first group. However, this brings the question of what kind of psychology we are drawing on into sharper focus. It will also require a closer look at the specific philosophy of science commitments of the discipline of psychology. In Chapter 4, it will be argued that for the idea of the state-as-person we best draw on so-called constructionist

¹⁷⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 115.

¹⁷⁸ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 295.

¹⁷⁹ As an early proponent we can point to Jonathan Mercer who is also a direct critic of Wendt's *Social Theory*. However, the recent emotional turn in the discipline is best described as originating with Neta C. Crawford's seminal article as well as Ronald Bleiker and Emma Hutchison's contribution. Jonathan Mercer, 'Anarchy and Identity', *International Organization* 49, 2 (1995). Mercer, 'Rationality and Psychology in International Politics'. Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships'. Bleiker and Hutchison, 'Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics'.

¹⁸⁰ Jonathan Mercer can be mentioned as a proponent here. Mercer, 'Rationality and Psychology in International Politics'.

¹⁸¹ Bleiker and Hutchison belong to this group for example. Bleiker and Hutchison, 'Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics'.

psychology in order to gain an understanding of how people make sense of themselves and how emotions come about. Constructionist psychology locates the self and emotions at the level of discourse and shared practices. This has important implications for how the constructed state-a-person is developed.

Conclusion

The chapter outlines examples which illustrate that it is common practice to anthropomorphise or personify the state in IR. This is taken as a reason to engage further with this prevalent tendency of the discipline and especially the arguments put forward in what I call the recent state-as-person debate.¹⁸² Wendt's strong statement that "states are people too" is taken as a starting point.¹⁸³

As an introduction to this discussion, I have outlined how the discipline faces a particular conundrum with the state when the need for a non-reductionist understanding is accepted. The state appears to be everywhere and nowhere.¹⁸⁴ It is ubiquitous and opaque at the same time. This was taken to argue that IR is in part constituted by arguments on how to make the state intelligible which ultimately results in a sharp disciplinary division between those who argue that the state is real and those who aim to locate it in intersubjective meaning and social processes.¹⁸⁵ I argue that regardless of what side one is positioned on, making the state intelligible includes the need to imagine it. One of the most prominent images of the discipline is the image of the person.

This prevalence in the discipline was taken as a motivation to point out, mainly with the help of Skinner and Kantorowicz, that thinking of states in terms of human bodies or persons has significant historical precedent and that neither the state nor the state-as-person should be treated as transhistorical concepts or simply as given. It is Hobbes who emerges as a prominent figure in the debate and the theorist most central to the conception of the state-as-person in IR. With Skinner it was argued that he is the first modern thinker of the state. Hobbes introduces a clear separation of the state from both the ruler and the ruled in the form of what Skinner calls the "doubly abstract notion of state authority" which eventually allows for the state to be

¹⁸² For this argument I take inspiration from Jackson who points out "that analysts can and should take their bearings from extant classificatory practices, seeking only to bring some abstract order to the sorts of things that are already and empirically going on in the social domain under investigation". Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 34.

¹⁸³ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215.

¹⁸⁴ Compare Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State'.

¹⁸⁵ Compare Bartelson, 'Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself', 297.

viewed as an independent agent.¹⁸⁶ This is also taken as the reason why Hobbes's state is a prominent basis for IR's understanding of its most important concept.

Looking specifically at the recent state-as-person debate the key point of contention of the debate is the question of intelligibility of the state. Here, two fundamentally opposing views can be identified. On the one hand there are those scholars, represented by Wendt and Wight, who stress the need to accept the state as really existing. On the other hand, there are those, exemplary we can name Jackson and Neumann, who argue that the state and the state-as-person are best located in intersubjective practices and social processes. A second point of differentiation in the debate centres on the question of what kind of person the state is. The debate distinguishes between legal, moral, and psychological personhood. Wendt focuses on psychological personhood as he regards this as the hard case for a philosophical realist view of the state. This thesis follows him in this interest in the state as a psychological person, albeit for different reasons.

Three observations in particular have been extracted from the debate. These will form the basis of the alternative vision of the idea of the state-as-person in IR that this thesis aims to develop. First, it was argued that the role of metaphors in the scientific process is underappreciated in the state-as-person debate. In his 2004 article, Wendt argues that either we treat the state and the state-as-person as *merely metaphorical* or we engage the much harder question of their ontological status. He points out that disciplinary progress only results from engaging the latter question. I agree with him but also argue that his view represents a false dichotomy. The contention is that regardless of how we answer the question of intelligibility of the state, metaphors matter and are potentially theory-constitutive. A closer engagement with their role in the scientific process and their specific role with regard to state-as-person ideas is warranted and will take place in Chapter 3 of this thesis. Second, building on Jackson's intervention in the state-as-person debate, Hobbes's process of personation was put into sharper focus. The key insight is that the state is established as a fictitious person through a process of representation. It is not the unity of what Hobbes calls the multitude that establishes the state as a person but their representation as a unit. Further, the state is not to be identified with either the ruler or the ruled, its person is separate from both. Lastly, building on Runciman's account, it is vital to

¹⁸⁶ Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues*, 394.

stress that arguing that the state-as-person is a fictitious person does not imply that it is without real consequences in the world of real people, as “the multitude and sovereign both condition their actions to take account of its presence.”¹⁸⁷ It is this conception of the state as a fictitious person which is regarded as a fruitful response to the state-as-person debate. It is important to note that this puts the emphasis on the processes by which something becomes a person which stands in contrast to Wendt and Wight’s approaches to the state-as-person debate. To argue that a greater emphasis on process, as opposed to essential qualities of persons, is indeed preferable will be the task of Chapters 2 and 5.

Last but not least, despite the prevalence of the idea of the state-as-person in IR, it remains a strangely unemotional person. It is argued that the recent emotional turn in the discipline can make a key contribution here. Two insights are taken on board. First, the dichotomous view of rationality and emotionality is unhelpful. Second, insights from psychology can and should be integrated into IR theorising. It is hypothesised that psychology can provide important insights into how people make sense of themselves that can be made useful for an understanding of the state-as-person. The suggestion, to be further developed in Chapters 4 and 5 and applied to the state in Chapter 6, is that it is constructionist psychology with its emphasis on the socially constructed nature of the self and of emotions that can make the most fruitful contribution here. This constitutes an emphasis on process to the detriment of essences that will need to be carefully weighed against the key contribution to the debate made by Wendt. Chapter 7 will highlight the departure from Wendt more specifically and outline contributions to larger disciplinary debates.

Keeping these three points regarding the role of metaphors, the process of personation, and the importance of emotions in mind, the research focus of this thesis can be formulated as follows. There is a prevalent assumption in IR theory that the state is like a person. Any account that wishes to address the idea of the state-as-person needs to grapple with the following concerns: Where is agency located in this account? What is the structural context in which actors operate and what is its impact on possibilities for construction? What is the specific understanding of the person utilised to make sense of the state? How are concepts of persons and concepts of states related? Building on these questions, the central research question that guides this thesis is the

¹⁸⁷ Runciman, 'What Kind of Person Is Hobbes's State? A Reply to Skinner', 272.

following: Can a constructivist approach with a strong input from constructionist psychology, which treats the state-as-person as a metaphor while acknowledging the constraints of the state-as-structure, provide a valuable alternative understanding of the assumption that the state is like a person? As a result, I will offer what I call the *constructed state-as-person* as an alternative to Wendt's conception of the state-as-person and address key disciplinary debates regarding the role of language, possibilities for construction of the social world, and the role of emotions in a discipline wedded to the rational actor assumption.

Chapter 2: The Wendtian state-as-person

Alexander Wendt is the most important point of reference for many recent engagements with the idea of state personhood. He can plausibly be credited for putting forward the “first systematic account of states *as actors* that the field has seen in many years”.¹ This chapter aims at clarifying Wendt’s position with a view to finding an avenue to develop the idea of the state-as-person further. A close look at Wendt’s conception of the person and the state, the philosophy of science position he is taking, and the resulting idea of the state-as-person is therefore paramount.

Wendt directly addresses the idea of the state-as-person in two publications. These are his 1999 book *Social Theory of International Politics* and his 2004 article “The state as person in international theory”.² The ultimate aim of *Social Theory* is to stress the relevance of the states’ interests and identities for the “states systemic project”.³ In this sense, the idea of the state-as-person is necessary for Wendt in order for his systemic project, based on a symbolic interactionist account of identity and interest formation among states, to function. As the title suggests, we also find a strong engagement with social theory, especially in the form of bringing scientific realism to bear on IR theorising. Indeed, critics praise Wendt for bringing social theory closer to IR debates. For example, Iver B. Neumann observes that “[o]ne of the many services that Wendt has done IR is to link the discipline more firmly to social theory overall.”⁴ And

¹ Jackson, 'Forum Introduction: Is the State a Person? Why Should We Care?', 256, emphasis in original.

² Early writings draw on the idea of the state-as-person implicitly. But it is only in *Social Theory* that we find a strong articulation of the idea for the first time. For example, in “Constructing International Politics,” the state is described as an agent that produces and reproduces the (international) social structure. In “Anarchy is what states make of it” Wendt argues that “a theoretically productive analogy can be made between individuals and states.” Alexander Wendt, 'Constructing International Politics', *International Security* 20, 1 (1995), 76-77. Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics', 397 fn 21.

³ For the term “states systemic project” see Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 7.

⁴ Neumann, 'Beware of Organicism: The Narrative Self of the State', 264.

Hayward Alker credits Wendt for the fact that he “systematically ‘sociologizes’ IR’s disciplinary self-understanding” in his *Social Theory*.⁵

In “The state as person”, Wendt aims at something else; his 2004 article is to be understood, in his own words, as “part road map and part bibliographic essay” that aims at charting the debate about state personhood and its related questions.⁶ The article draws on social theory as well as philosophical, biological, and psychological literature – going substantially beyond the argument in favour of treating states as persons presented in *Social Theory*. The endeavour of “The state as person” can aptly be described as an “exercise in philosophical anthropology”.⁷

Looking at Wendt’s earlier articles, especially “Anarchy is what states make of it” and “Levels of Analysis vs. Agents and Structures”, two trajectories that are relevant for the investigation into Wendt’s position on state personhood can be teased out.⁸ First, we can identify a concern with the relation between agents and structures and how structures constitute agents and vice versa. Indeed, Wendt is credited for making a significant contribution to the agent-structure debate in IR.⁹ Second, his work, prior to 2006, is concerned with the balance between ideational and material factors within a *via media* constructivist framework. With regard to the first, Wendt takes a systemic perspective; with regard to the latter, Wendt uses scientific realism as a basis and posits a “rump materialism” of the social world.

Last but not least, two more recent articles by Wendt warrant attention. In “*Social Theory as Cartesian Science*”, Wendt tries to draw some of his main themes, especially the question of the relation between the ideational and material together by using quantum theory assumptions. In responding to critiques, some of the core questions related to the concept of the state-as-person re-emerge here and are addressed from the perspective of a “quantum social science”.¹⁰

⁵ Hayward R. Alker, 'On Learning from Wendt', *Review of International Studies* 26, 1 (2000), 141.

⁶ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 291.

⁷ I take this term from Kustermans, 'The State as Citizen: State Personhood and Ideology', 5.

⁸ See for example Alexander Wendt, 'Levels of Analysis Vs. Agents and Structures: Part Iii', *Review of International Studies* 18, 2 (1992). And Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics'.

⁹ Compare for example Adler, 'Constructivism in International Relations', 104-106.

¹⁰ Most notably for the context of this investigation are: state agency, collective unconsciousness, and superorganisms. For the term “quantum social science” see Alexander Wendt, 'Social Theory as Cartesian Science: An Auto-Critique from a Quantum Perspective', in *Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and His Critics*, ed. Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 196. For a similar argument see also Alexander Wendt, 'Flatland: Quantum Mind and the International

In “Why a world state is inevitable”, Wendt engages in a teleological argument that sees a world state as the final stage of a development driven by what he calls the logic of anarchy. Two things are interesting to note. First, in this process the state is not to be overcome but will remain as one subject among others.¹¹ Secondly, Wendt also describes the world state as a subject; he also personifies it and attributes a corporate personhood and even a “self” to it. As a result, a personified world state and a personified state exist side by side.¹² Both articles “Why a World State is inevitable” and “*Social Theory as Cartesian Science*” go back to some of the key questions underlying Wendt’s work that are teased out in this chapter.

In the following, I give an overview and critique of Wendt’s conception of the state-as-person. I will start by giving a description of Wendt’s state-as-person and then will move on to pay closer attention to his philosophical, social science and IR theory commitments. The focus will rest on *Social Theory*, “The state as person”, and the critical engagement with both offered by, among others, Colin Wight, Patrick T. Jackson, Iver B. Neumann, Hidemi Suganami, and Friedrich Kratochwil. Following the outcome of the discussion of the state-as-person debate in IR in Chapter 1, special attention will be paid to the argument that the state and the state-as-person are real and do not merely exist in an *as-if* fashion. Further, we need to question what kind of person Wendt’s state is. In order to do so, Wendt’s constructivist position and his commitment to scientific realism and their implications need to be carefully analysed.

Hologram’, in *New Systems Theories of World Politics*, ed. Mathias Albert, Lars-Erik Cederman, and Alexander Wendt (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

¹¹ At the final stage of the “logic of anarchy”, the stage of the world state, state sovereignty will have been transferred to the world state and the recognition of individuals will no longer be mediated by states. Both, individuals and states are subjects that behave in relation to the world state. They recognise and are recognised by the world state. Alexander Wendt, ‘Why a World State Is Inevitable’, *European Journal of International Relations* 9, 4 (2003), 525 and 527.

¹² The most explicit statement in this regard is probably the following. “[L]ike today’s states I am arguing that a world state would be a subject – a corporate person or Self” *ibid.*, 527.

Wendtian constructivism: the *via media* and ideas *not all the way down*

When talking about Wendt's specific version of constructivism, it is worth stressing that most constructivists, including Wendt, do not regard constructivism as a theory operating on the same level as realism or liberalism.¹³ Constructivism is best described as a set of assumptions. Wendt's *Social Theory* is the attempt to construct the next big theory of IR taking Kenneth N. Waltz's work as a starting point and re-working *Theory of International Politics* from a constructivist and social theory perspective.¹⁴

Wendt himself labels his constructivism as "thin" and "moderate".¹⁵ In *Social Theory*, Wendt sets himself the goal of operating on a middle ground, a *via media*, between rationalist and reflectivist theories.¹⁶ He points out that this perspective "concedes important points to materialist and individualist perspectives and endorses a scientific approach to social inquiry".¹⁷ It is important for him to stress that his constructivist approach should not be considered "ideas *all the way down*".¹⁸

Closely connected to this is Wendt's proposal of rump materialism.¹⁹ By starting from Waltz's neorealism to construct his social theory of IR, Wendt engages with the materialism that goes hand in hand with Waltz, especially the distribution of capabilities as a material factor of the state system. However, Wendt also argues that neorealism "fetishizes" material capabilities by attributing meaning and power to them that can only be attributed to human beings.²⁰ He aims at opening up Waltz's conception of interests by arguing that state interests and systemic

¹³ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 7.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 40. Interestingly, Wendt points out that the term *via media* was suggested to him by Steve Smith. See *ibid.*, 40, fn 98.

Yet, in a critique of *Social Theory*, Smith argues that "Wendt does not succeed in constructing his philosophically principled middle way." Steve Smith, 'Wendt's World', *Review of International Studies* 26, 1 (2000), 152.

¹⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 1.

¹⁸ See for example *ibid.*, 132, emphasis in original. In this passage, Wendt argues, based on observations regarding individual human beings, that interests are based within a biological realism which does not preclude social construction but limits the possibilities of construction.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 109.

²⁰ *Ibid.* Here Wendt is quoting Tim Dant, 'Fetishism and the Social Value of Objects', *The Sociological Review* 44, 3 (1996), 496.

culture have been implicit in Waltz all along.²¹ Yet, it is not ideas all the way down. With regard to the interactions of states, Wendt calls for the acknowledgement of material forces that have independent effects on international life.

Similarly, with regard to individual human beings, fundamental material needs are, in Wendt's framework, given and determined by human nature.²² This point is important because it distinguishes Wendt from what he calls radical constructivists who, according to his description, deny the social significance of biological needs.²³

While acknowledging that this rump materialism is a concession to political realists, Wendt, nevertheless defends it by arguing that "material capabilities do have *some* intrinsic causal powers" and can therefore not be ignored.²⁴ Material capabilities matter in Wendt's world to the extent that they make certain outcomes more likely and constrain others. For Wendt, there is a *material* basis to what is possible in a *constructed* world. However, we should also note that Wendt's treatment of social structures, when he, for example, describes the state-as-person as a social structure based on shared knowledge, is fundamentally idealist at times.²⁵ Depending on where the focus is put, Wendt can indeed be read, on the one hand, in more idealist terms and on the other hand, in more realist terms. This might be a consequence of seeking a middle ground position.²⁶

²¹ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 109.

²² The "rump materialism" of the state is given by material capabilities, the composition of material capabilities, and geography as well as natural resources. The rump materialism of the individual is given by fundamental human needs which are physical security, ontological security, sociation, self-esteem, and transcendence. *Ibid.*, for the former see 110-111 and for the latter see 131-132.

²³ *Ibid.*, 131.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 98, emphasis in original. See also the following for a more general comments on this issue *ibid.*, 96.

²⁵ Compare *ibid.*, 215. For a critique, see Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 183. Friedrich Kratochwil identifies several different definitions of the state system in Wendt's *Social Theory* ranging from a Waltzian notion that is close to a natural system to a system that is best understood exclusively in cultural terms. Kratochwil, 'Constructing a New Orthodoxy? Wendt's Social Theory of International Politics and the Constructivist Challenge', 43.

²⁶ It might also be part of a process in Wendt's work that resembles a move towards a more radical constructivism. Eric Ringmar, a former Wendt student, for example observes that there are "two Wendts". The later Wendt is much more "ideas all the way down". Similarly, Wendt's work on quantum social science, despite the insistence on a scientific realist framework, brings him even closer to a radical constructivism of the social. Erik Ringmar, 'Alexander Wendt: A Social Scientist Struggling with History', in *The Future of International Relations. Masters in the Making*, ed. Iver B. Neumann and Ole Weaver (London and New York: Routledge, 1997). Wendt, 'Social Theory as Cartesian Science: An Auto-Critique from a Quantum Perspective'.

Wendt's aim to find a middle ground becomes more concrete when looking at his epistemological and ontological commitments. He is explicit about his choices. In his own words, he follows an idealist ontology but chooses a positivist epistemology.²⁷ He adds that "[c]onstructivism should be construed narrowly as an ontology, not broadly as an epistemology."²⁸ Constructivism, is, according to Wendt, not incompatible with a positivist epistemology, or as he puts it "with a scientific approach to social inquiry".²⁹ He bridges this gap by building a *via media* constructivism based on scientific realism.³⁰

It is important to stress that Wendt's approach represents only one version of constructivism. On the one hand, we have Wendt's self-description as a constructivist and his view of constructivism as an approach to IR. On the other hand, we can find various categorisations of Wendt's constructivism introduced by other scholars. Depending on where they stand within a constructivist spectrum and depending on their (implicit) definitions of what constructivism means or what such an approach should or should not entail, we find very different descriptions of Wendt. In the following, a look at two key figures and their perspective on Wendt serves to illustrate this point and helps to gain a more nuanced grasp of the version of constructivism that we encounter in Wendt and that underpins his state-as-person.

Emanuel Adler points out that the 1992 article "Anarchy is what states make of it" as well as *Social Theory* established Wendt as one of the leading constructivist scholars. He outlines three specific debates that were shaped by Wendt. First, there is the agent-structure debate. Based on Anthony Giddens's structuration theory, Wendt seeks to show how agents and structure mutually constitute each other.³¹ The second debate develops out of the distinction between understanding, *Verstehen*, and explaining, *Erklären*. Crystallising in a debate between Wendt on one side and Martin Hollis and Steve Smith on the other, a key question is whether one should start from ontology or epistemology when attempting to theorise about international relations. Wendt, in scientific realist fashion, starts from ontological premises whereas Hollis and Smith

²⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 38-40.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 41.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ These moves and Wendt's *via media* position are of course not without criticism. Steve Smith for example argues that "Wendt ... sides with positivists in terms of epistemology, but with post-positivists in terms of ontology." However, Smith sees Wendt's approach as a failed attempt at constructing this middle ground. Smith, 'Wendt's World', 152.

³¹ Adler, 'Constructivism in International Relations', 105.

argue that ontology can only be addressed after one has made a decision about epistemology. In other words, they argue that we first need to decide how we can know the world before we can study the objects in the world. Wendt, in contrast, argues that we need to start from ontology and take the objects in the world as the starting point for making knowledge claims.³² A third constructivist debate, outlined by Adler in which Wendt is a key figure – in fact it took mainly place between him and his critics – is the debate about causal and constitutive relations in the social world.³³

Worth mentioning is also Chris Reus-Smit's characterisation of Wendt's constructivism. Reus-Smit distinguishes between three kinds of constructivism that evolved in the 1990s: systemic, unit-level, and holistic constructivism.³⁴ Wendt is presented as not only the dominant exponent of systemic constructivism, but as "the only true example of this rarefied form of constructivism".³⁵ According to Reus-Smit, systemic constructivism adopts "third-image" theorising, thereby following neorealists. Systemic constructivism focuses on the interactions between states understood as unitary actors; staying true to the name systemic constructivism, everything that belongs to the domestic realm is bracketed.

It is worth stressing that this position is not surprising given that Wendt takes his starting point from Waltz. He defends his perspective by arguing that the questions he asks shape his enquiry and that for his type of enquiry – an interest in the states systemic project – a systemic perspective that brackets off elements of state identity that have a domestic source is needed. While theoretically elegant, Reus-Smit criticises that this move "confines the process that shape international societies within an unnecessarily and unproductively narrow realm".³⁶ And further, he emphasises that this is one of the reasons why Wendt's systemic constructivism seems at a loss when trying to explain change, at the level of the international society as well as at the level of the state.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., 106.

³⁴ For this and the following see Christian Reus-Smit, 'Constructivism', in *Theories of International Relations*, ed. Scott Burchill, *et al.* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 213 and 223f.

³⁵ Ibid., 223.

³⁶ Ibid., 223-224.

More importantly for the characterisation of Wendt as a constructivist is, however, the point that Wendt's systemic constructivism is at odds with the positions taken by other constructivists. Reus-Smit argues that Wendt's focus on the systemic level, his treatment of the state as a unitary actor, and his adoption of a scientific realist position separates him clearly from other constructivists such as Friedrich Kratochwil, Nicholas Onuf, and Karin Fierke.³⁷ Fierke for example, by pointing to the indebtedness of constructivism to the linguistic turn, argues that Wendt's positivistic epistemology is at odds with core constructivist assumptions.³⁸

Nevertheless, Reus-Smit argues that Wendt's importance for the discipline should not be underestimated and that it lies in the fact that *Social Theory* "is the most sustained elaboration of constructivist theory".³⁹ However, given disagreements about what it means to be a constructivist, the arguments put forward in *Social Theory* are highly contested which in turn makes it "one of the principal axes of tension within constructivism".⁴⁰ Wendt serves a similar function in the context of the thesis. The engagement with Wendt's work on the state-as-person serves to outline the broad lines of the debate. What it means to be a constructivist and where to locate this thesis within a spectrum of various constructivist approaches are two of the points that need to be addressed.

³⁷ For a similar critique of the incompatibility of Wendt's adoption of scientific realism with constructivist assumptions see Kratochwil, 'Constructing a New Orthodoxy? Wendt's Social Theory of International Politics and the Constructivist Challenge', 38.

³⁸ Fierke, 'Constructivism', 173-174. Compare also Karin M. Fierke, 'Wittgenstein and International Relations Theory', in *International Relations Theory and Philosophy: Interpretive Dialogues*, ed. Cerwyn Moore and Farrands Chris (London and New York: Routledge, 2010). And Friedrich Kratochwil, 'Constructivism: What It Is (Not) and How It Matters', in *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences. A Pluralist Perspective*, ed. Donatella Della Porta and Michael Keating (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). It is also worth pointing out that the label positivism does not actually go hand in hand with Wendt's scientific realist approach. Compare Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 17. See the following section for further elaboration on this point.

³⁹ Reus-Smit, 'Constructivism', 226. It is worth stressing that in the same passage Reus-Smit argues that "constructivists repeatedly insist that constructivism is not a theory, but rather an analytical framework."

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 227.

Scientific realist commitments

In order to better understand Wendt's stance on state personhood, a careful look at his philosophy of science commitments is necessary. In "The state as person" Wendt stresses very strongly that the state and the state-as-person are real. In fact, this is the main point that Wendt uses to delineate himself from mainstream approaches in IR theory. He claims that most theories look at state personhood only in an *as-if* fashion, treating it as "a useful fiction, analogy, metaphor, or shorthand for something else".⁴¹ In these cases, the state is in some way described *as-if* it were a person, but ultimately, the state is something else. Wendt argues that an *as-if* treatment of the state is indeed very compelling "to the modern scientific mind" given that "most of us at least tacitly accept an ontology of physicalism, or materialism, which is the view that, ultimately, reality is made up of purely physical stuff (matter)."⁴²

This lack of commitment to the "reality" of the state *and* state personhood is Wendt's starting point. Wendt then faces a problem: how to argue that the state is real despite the fact that it is not purely matter and not directly observable?⁴³ He finds an answer by turning to scientific realist principles.

It has to be stressed that scientific realism is not a theory of IR itself. Rather, it is best understood in terms of making "second-order, conceptual or meta-theoretical claims".⁴⁴ In *Social Theory*, Wendt outlines three main principles of scientific realism:

- 1 the world is independent of the mind and language of individual observers;
- 2 mature scientific theories typically refer to this world,
- 3 even when it is not directly observable.⁴⁵

We can note that scientific realism is first and foremost concerned with the ontological status of things: objects, ideas, relations, structures are all considered to be real.⁴⁶ The strong

⁴¹ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 289.

⁴² Ibid., 290.

⁴³ Two things should be pointed out explicitly in this context. First, although physicalism and materialism are sometimes used interchangeably, the two terms should not be conflated. Second, it is worth stressing that some "things" of a psychological, moral or social nature are said to exist on the basis that they supervene on the physical. This is different from saying that "reality is made up of purely physical stuff." Ibid.

⁴⁴ Jonathan Joseph, 'Philosophy in International Relations. A Scientific Realist Approach', *Millennium* 35, 2 (2007), 346.

⁴⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 51.

differentiation between the ideational and the material breaks down in scientific realism. “Thus ideational things as much as material things can be said to have a real existence independent of particular conceptions and understandings we may have of them.”⁴⁷ This is how the state, though not directly observable, can be said to be real; it exists independent of our particular conception of it.

There are several further assumptions. First, a scientific realist perspective stresses that various interpretations of the world are possible, yet not every interpretation is permissible; the world “resists” certain interpretations.⁴⁸ Especially in the social sciences, all observation is theory-laden; yet, observation is not theory-determined as in post-modern or radical constructivist approaches.⁴⁹ This is what Wendt calls “rump materialism”. This “rump materialism” limits the interpretations that can be made and restricts an idealist world-view.⁵⁰ From this perspective, post-modern scholars and radical constructivists who focus on the level of discourse do not bring their theories into a dialogue with the world. Hence, they ignore what *is* and ignore deeper levels of reality.

Second, scientific realism posits that there is a world “out there”, that, though it is often not directly observable, has causal effects. “What scientific realists claim is that the behavior of things is influenced by self-organizing, mind-independent structures that constitute those things with certain intrinsic powers and dispositions.”⁵¹ For Wendt, the state is such an entity.⁵²

There are several important aims that Wendt follows by resorting to scientific realism for theorising the state and states’ systemic interactions. First, Wendt argues that scientific realism offers a way to reconcile his ontological idealism with his epistemological positivism.⁵³ In that sense, scientific realism allows Wendt to build what he calls a *via media* constructivism.⁵⁴ It allows him to keep a distinction between subject and object and to retain what he calls a

⁴⁶ Joseph, 'Philosophy in International Relations. A Scientific Realist Approach', 354.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 57.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 63.

⁵⁰ See for example *ibid.*, 96.

⁵¹ Ibid., 64.

⁵² Wendt argues that “[a] state’s ability to organize itself as a state creates resistance to those who would deny its existence, manifested when, for example, governments arrest illegal aliens or take military action against invasion.” *Ibid.*, 73.

⁵³ Ibid., 39.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 47 and 91.

“commitment to science” while at the same time giving ideational factors their due.⁵⁵ However, Wendt’s description of his epistemology as positivistic is to be understood as a concession to an IR mainstream wedded to the idea that positivism is synonymous with science.⁵⁶ In fact, Wendt’s turn to scientific realism with the emphasis on unobservables and a stratified view of reality needs to be understood as a critique of positivism. And it is precisely this critique that allows him to argue that the state really exists. In that sense, Wendt’s *via media* constructivism does not represent a middle-ground between idealism and positivism. Rather, it is a constructivism that, in contrast to more radical constructivists who operate on the level of discourse alone, stresses the existence of a deeper reality “behind” discourse.⁵⁷

Second, Wendt utilises the scientific realist position to assert the reality of the state. The state is not directly observable and for Wendt it is scientific realism which helps him to engage with the state in the absence of direct empirical access to it. Wendt argues that empiricists and postmodernists, albeit from fundamentally different perspectives, doubt the existence of unobservables and “reject the realist claim that IR theory can know the deep structure of international reality”.⁵⁸ For both empiricists and postmodernists the state does not really exist and therefore, they are unable to engage the state as a real causal structure that makes certain actions possible while constraining others. This is a problem for a discipline whose self-understanding is so fundamentally dependent on the state. Yet, it needs to be pointed out that for those interested in aspects of the social world, the view that unobservables do not exist is virtually impossible to hold.⁵⁹ Existence in the first place is not confined to things that are observable or directly measurable. Suganami convincingly argues that “reducing the criterion of existence solely to direct observability is silly.”⁶⁰ Such a view would unduly narrow the range of

⁵⁵ Ibid., 39 and 47.

⁵⁶ Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*.

⁵⁷ For an overview of scientific realist principles and its position *vis à vis* positivism and radical constructivist approaches see also Heikki Patomäki and Colin Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism', *International Studies Quarterly* 44, 2 (2000).

⁵⁸ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 49.

⁵⁹ Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity', 271.

⁶⁰ Hidemi Suganami, 'Wendt, IR, and Philosophy', in *Constructivism and International Relations. Alexander Wendt and His Critics*, ed. Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 61.

things than can legitimately be said to *exist*.⁶¹ Hence, an acceptance of unobservables, Suganami argues, is also possible without necessarily subscribing to scientific realism.

The third reason for Wendt's commitment to scientific realism is tied up with what he refers to as the ultimate argument or miracle argument.⁶² Wendt argues that the state (and the state-as-person) must be real because the theories that invoke the state and the personhood of the state work well in explaining the world. If they would not refer to something real, their success would be a miracle. This has to be understood before the background of a specific conception of science and scientific progress. Wendt asks: "If [the state and state personhood] were merely fiction, then one might expect a more precise, realistic concept of state to have emerged over time."⁶³ In other words, Wendt asks if the state-as-person is only a useful fiction, why does this fiction work so well in explaining the world of states and why has not a more "realistic" explanations of the state emerged over time?⁶⁴ The task of science is to get closer to the "deep structure of the world out there".⁶⁵ From a scientific realist perspective, the purpose of science is to bring our theories of the world in ever closer alignment with the actual world "out there" and its structures. Wendt argues that only scientific realism does not turn the success of science into a miracle.⁶⁶ According to Wendt, from this, and only from this, perspective do we have good grounds to argue that the state (and the state-as-person) is indeed real.

Fourth, as we have already seen, scientific realism allows Wendt to defend a certain view of science and scientific progress. It allows Wendt to argue that there is a "world out there" which theories of IR try to approximate. Scientific progress is seen as the ever closer approximation between the theories and the world. Progress is the increase in explanatory or predictive power of our theories.⁶⁷ Thus, he argues that "[w]hat makes a theory true is the extent to which it reflects the causal structure of the world."⁶⁸ What lies behind this is a correspondence theory of truth. In other words, the terms used do need to correspond to an extra-discursive reality. This

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 64.

⁶³ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 290.

⁶⁴ See also Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 216.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 65.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 64. He quotes Hilary Putnam, *Mind, Language, and Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 73. And also refers to Richard Boyd, 'The Current Status of Scientific Realism', in *Scientific Realism*, ed. Jarrett Leplin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

⁶⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 58.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

is different from a relational theory of reference held by post-modernists and more radical constructivist. Wendt criticises them for not being able to explain the “resistance of the world to certain representations, and thus for representational failures or *misrepresentations*”.⁶⁹ However, Wendt cautions that this is not to be mistaken for a foundationalist epistemology because from within his philosophy of science “[t]heories are always tested against theories”⁷⁰ and not directly against the real world. Even with so-called mature theories, theories that have been quite successful over time, there is only ever approximation and not truth, Wendt argues.⁷¹

Kratochwil, unsurprisingly given his strong constructivist stance, critically questions Wendt’s position and argues that Wendt does not succeed in being a constructivist and a scientific realist at the same time. For Kratochwil, scientific realism and constructivism are a “failed marriage” in Wendt’s case.⁷² Wendt starts his theorising about the state from the basis of some essential features of the world. In other words, he starts from ontology. This is in line with a key assumption of scientific realism that the “world is independent of the mind and language of individual observers.”⁷³ However, from a more radical constructivist perspective, essential features of any entity are highly dependent on one’s point of view and therefore a matter of social construction, convention, and rules rather than part of the intrinsic properties of the “thing” under scrutiny.⁷⁴ While essentialism must hold that there is one true essence of a “thing”, a more radical constructivism holds that this essence is socially constructed and therefore not intrinsic to the “thing”.⁷⁵ From a more radical constructivist perspective, “things” are not independent from our frame of reference. What constructivism debates, according to

⁶⁹ Ibid., 56.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 59.

⁷¹ Ibid., 68-69. It needs to be added though, that Wendt does not regard theories of international relations to be mature theories. Further, Kratochwil disputes this point and argues that Wendt is indeed foundationalist. Wendt, 'Social Theory as Cartesian Science: An Auto-Critique from a Quantum Perspective', 23.

⁷² Kratochwil, 'Constructing a New Orthodoxy? Wendt's Social Theory of International Politics and the Constructivist Challenge', 41.

⁷³ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 51.

⁷⁴ For a similar argument that focuses on a critique of Wendt’s essentialism and also concludes that this is at odds with constructivist commitments, see Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too'', 283.

⁷⁵ Kratochwil, 'Constructing a New Orthodoxy? Wendt's Social Theory of International Politics and the Constructivist Challenge', 41. I use the word “thing” here in line with Kratochwil’s usage of the word when he argues against Wendt’s essentialism.

Kratochwil, “is *not* the [question] of *existence* but of recognising *what* the existing thing is”.⁷⁶ Kratochwil argues that Wendt’s scientific realist account tends to overly emphasise the question of existence to the detriment of the “what” question.

Keeping these basic scientific realist premises in mind, a careful look at Wendt’s states systemic project and his conception of the state-as-person needs to be taken. In a further step, the claim that the state and the state-as-person are real and that we can ascribe “rump materialism” to them will be addressed.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 42, emphasis in original.

The state as an agent, the state as a person

In *Social Theory*, Wendt proclaims “states are people too”.⁷⁷ In a first step, it is important to be clear about what kind of person it is that we encounter in Wendt’s work. As pointed out in Chapter 1, in Wendt’s framework the state is a given. The state is ontologically prior to the state system and pre-social.⁷⁸ Moreover, the state is a unitary actor; it is purposive and has a sense of self.⁷⁹

Wendt goes on to argue that we can legitimately attribute human qualities like desires, beliefs, and intentionality to the state.⁸⁰ He rests his model of the state-as-person on five essential properties of the state that he derives from Weberian, Marxist, and Pluralist conceptions.⁸¹ The five properties of the essential state are “(1) an institutional-legal order, (2) an organization claiming a monopoly on the legitimate use of organized violence, (3) an organization with sovereignty, (4) a society, and (5) territory”.⁸² These essential properties form the basis of Wendt’s idea of the state-as-person. It is crucial to note these five properties as they already define the possibilities of the state-as-person in important ways. Wendt points out that “the details of our understanding of state persons may be sensitive to different definitions of the state (Liberal, Weberian, Marxist, and so on).”⁸³

Building on these five essential properties, Wendt argues that identities and interests can legitimately be attributed to the state and, therefore, the state can be said to be a person.⁸⁴ Here, Wendt makes two moves. First, he attempts “to give [his] model of the state a ‘body’ by

⁷⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Wendt stresses that being an actor already implies being unitary and that therefore the phrase “unitary actor” is actually an unnecessary doubling in efforts. See *ibid.*, 195.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 197.

⁸¹ Ibid., 198-214.

⁸² Ibid., 202.

⁸³ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 291, fn11.

⁸⁴ Wendt distinguishes between four different types of identity that open up a spectrum between an identity that is defined solely by the individual and an identity that is dominated by the social context in which the individual operates. He distinguishes between: “(1) personal or corporate, (2) type, (3) role, and (4) collective” identity. Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 224.

showing that it is an actor which cannot be reduced to its parts”.⁸⁵ Secondly, he aims to give the state “life” by identifying “its intrinsic motivational dispositions or ‘national interest’”.⁸⁶

Thus, the state is a corporate agent which is described by Wendt as “a structure of shared knowledge or discourse that enables individuals to engage in institutionalized collective action”.⁸⁷ True to his constructivist roots, Wendt argues that it is individuals’ shared knowledge that produces and reproduces the state as a corporate person.⁸⁸ These points are important to note. While essential qualities of the state can be identified, the state-as-person is a structure based on shared knowledge. Hence, the state-as-person is not material, apart from the rump material basis outlined by Wendt. Yet, as a structure it is real and cannot be reduced to individuals while nevertheless depending on them for its continuation.⁸⁹

As mentioned before, the second important point of reference for Wendt’s work regarding the state-as-person is the 2004 article “The state as person in international theory”. While *Social Theory* ultimately aims at constructing a systemic view of international politics in which state identity is shaped by systemic interaction, “The state as person” is concerned with what Wendt calls the “inside constitution” of the state-as-person.

As we have seen in Chapter 1, Wendt, by drawing on Andrew Vincent’s “Can groups be persons”, distinguishes three kinds of persons.⁹⁰ A distinction needs to be made between moral, legal, and psychological personhood. Wendt argues that moral personhood and legal personhood are based on social conventions.⁹¹ In other words, to be a moral or legal person is to be recognised as such by others.⁹² It is social recognition not capabilities or internal structures that are crucial for moral or legal personhood. For him, it is only psychological persons that

⁸⁵ Ibid., 197.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 215.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 218.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 215.

⁹⁰ Vincent, 'Can Groups Be Persons?'

⁹¹ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 294.

⁹² With regard to legal personhood of the state, Kustermans’ approach follows this argument. See Kustermans, 'The State as Citizen: State Personhood and Ideology'. With regard to moral personhood, many would disagree with reducing it to a question of social recognition. Compare for example Erskine, 'Assigning Responsibilities to Institutional Moral Agents: The Case of States and Quasi-States'. And Erskine, 'Kicking Bodies and Damning Souls: The Danger of Harming "Innocent" Individuals While Punishing "Delinquent" States'.

“cannot be reduced to their social context”.⁹³ Hence, it is only psychological persons that are constituted from the inside. This makes psychological personhood the ideal test case for Wendt’s realist stance on the state-as-person. Inside constitution, in scientific realist fashion, refers to a self-organising quality that is independent from interaction and context.⁹⁴

Similar to *Social Theory*, in his 2004 article Wendt offers an essential definition of psychological persons as a starting point. It is a definition based on a rationalist model which forms his “baseline for thinking about the psychological personhood of states”.⁹⁵ Wendt defends this choice by pointing out that this is the most familiar point of view in IR scholarship.⁹⁶ Rational actors, according to the definition Wendt utilises, are characterised by four main properties. They have “(1) a unitary identity that persists over time; (2) beliefs about their environment; (3) transitive desires that motivate them to move; and (4) the ability to make choices on a rational basis, usually defined as expected-utility maximization”.⁹⁷

Building on these choices Wendt outlines “three inside tests for full-fledged psychological personhood”.⁹⁸ These are being an intentional action, being an organism, and possessing consciousness.⁹⁹ Wendt goes on to define these three areas by resorting mainly to the philosophical, biological, and psychological literatures. All three aspects are then explored with regard to the state. Intentionality is the least problematic of the three for Wendt as, he argues, it is already widely accepted in IR scholarship. To make his model work with regard to the other two aspects, Wendt uses the concepts of superorganisms and collective consciousness.¹⁰⁰

There is common ground between Wendt’s conception of the state-as-person in *Social Theory* and in “The state as person”. In both cases, he argues against what he calls a metaphorical or *as-if* treatment of the state-as-person. In both cases, he searches for essential features of states and state-persons that are valid across time and cultural context.

⁹³ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 295.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 296.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 309-314.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the forum discussion in *Review of International Studies* that focused on Wendt's idea of the state-as-person illustrates several avenues of critique of Wendt's idea of the state-as-person.¹⁰¹ One of the major lines of discontent is the question of whether or not the state is real. This aspect and other aspects of Wendt's theoretical positioning warrant a closer attention.

¹⁰¹ Jackson, 'Forum Introduction: Is the State a Person? Why Should We Care?', 255-258.

Real states and real states-as-persons

Having examined Wendt's scientific realism, in the following the focus shifts towards the understanding of the state from a scientific realist perspective. What does a scientific realist approach mean for our understanding of the state and the state-as-person?

One of the most important points of discussion is the question of whether or not the state is real. As pointed out earlier, a commitment to scientific realism allows Wendt to argue that the state, despite not being directly observable, is nevertheless real. Looking at the debates that ensued on the basis of *Social Theory* as well as "The state as a person", it is this aspect that is most widely discussed.¹⁰² In *Social Theory*, Wendt argues that the state has ideational as well as material features. He argues that there is a rump materialism that constrains the possibilities for social construction. Nevertheless, for him the important basis for the state is the fact that it is ideational. Neumann, in his response to Wendt's *Social Theory* understands Wendt's state as a narrative structure. He describes Wendt's argument as "the philosophical realist claim that narratives of state Selves, and therefore states themselves, are *real*."¹⁰³ This is an interesting perspective held by others, but it is not Wendt's take.¹⁰⁴ While rump materialism does not deny the existence of narratives of the state, Wendt's view of the state as a partly material structure and his essentialising view of the state, meaning the belief that there are certain intrinsic characteristics of the state, lead him to argue that the state must be more than a narrative structure. The structure of the state is, in Wendt's words, one of the deep structures underlying social life. The state is both material and ideational; it is both physical and a distribution of knowledge.¹⁰⁵

However, once Wendt's conceptualisation of the state in "The state as person" is brought into view, the picture gets more complex. As we have seen, in "The state as person" he is focused on

¹⁰² See for example Schiff, 'Real'? As If! Critical Reflections on State Personhood'.

¹⁰³ Neumann, 'Beware of Organicism: The Narrative Self of the State', 259.

¹⁰⁴ On the state as a narrative structure see for example Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State'. and Neumann, 'Beware of Organicism: The Narrative Self of the State'.

¹⁰⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 189-190.

the inside constitution of the state as a *person*. This leads him to define three inside tests for state-personhood: being an intentional actor, being a superorganism, and being conscious.¹⁰⁶

First, and this point is based on Suganami's critique, the ultimate or miracle argument does not seem to be a good basis for arguing that the state is real. Simply because the best current scientific explanation invokes an entity, does not mean that this entity is indeed real. He argues that while science is about an improved understanding of the world, the entities invoked in these explanations do not need to be real. This is because we have to bear in mind that the entities invoked in the currently best explanation might be rejected at some later stage of the scientific process.¹⁰⁷ Even a "hard science" such as physics offers ample examples of this process of invoking and later rejecting the existence of certain entities. So, if scientific realism is used to argue that because a theory invokes an entity such as the state-as-person and because that theory works well in reflecting the world and is the best current explanation, this entity must be real, it is of questionable usefulness.

Secondly, there is a problematic conflation of two different arguments to be found in Wendt's state-person. One argument is to say that the state is real. The other one is to say that the state as an intentional agent, or even as a person, is real. These are two very different points that seem to be merged in Wendt.¹⁰⁸ A distinction made by Wight identifies this as a problem that cannot be neglected in Wendt's work on the state-as-person. Wendt seems to brush over the distinction between, on the one hand, the state being real and, on the other the state-as-person being real.¹⁰⁹ The argument here is that we need to distinguish between philosophical ontology on the one hand and scientific ontology on the other hand. In a response to Wendt, Wight points to the importance of distinguishing between the two. Philosophical ontology addresses the question of whether or not the state really exists. The question of what it is, is then a matter

¹⁰⁶ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 296.

¹⁰⁷ Wendt also points out that theories can be successful (e.g. helpful in understanding the world, especially in predicting things) even though they are "wrong". In this case, "wrong" means "not referring to anything real or true". Therefore, "[s]uccessful reference is ... not necessary for empirical success." Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 65. However, Wendt still maintains that progress in science is the ever closer approximation to reality which builds on early theories "having gotten something right" *ibid.*, 66.

¹⁰⁸ For this critique see for example Suganami, 'Wendt, IR, and Philosophy', 63. Also Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity'.

¹⁰⁹ Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity', 269. Suganami identifies the same problem and speaks a conflation of two separate questions. Suganami, 'Wendt, IR, and Philosophy', 63.

scientific ontology.¹¹⁰ With Wendt, Wight argues that the metaphorical or “*as if*” treatment of the state is to be questioned for to continue with this treatment of the state “is to conduct business as usual”.¹¹¹ However, building on the above distinction the suggestion is that while we can assert the reality of the state, we can, at the same time, remain critical regarding the question of whether or not the state is a person.

In addition, there is a second problematic blurring of concepts that Wight identifies: equating agency with personhood. Nowhere in *Social Theory* or in “The state as person” does Wendt make an explicit distinction between agency and personhood. He seems to suggest that “agency is a category that applies only to persons.”¹¹² This is problematic. It can be conceded that some of the properties we attribute to people are an important part of any understanding of agency. However, we might also be able argue that the state has agency without also making it a person.¹¹³ Making sense of agency through the idea of the person, understood in a broad sense, is only one option. On the basis of how we encounter ourselves and others as agents, it seems a self-evident and familiar option but by far not the only one. Wendt’s argument is that he “take[s] ‘actor’ and ‘person’ to be synonymous, since the attributes routinely applied in IR to state actors are those of persons” and further he argues that “person” is the term more commonly used in philosophical discourses.¹¹⁴ However, this reference to the common practices does not address Wight’s criticism sufficiently. We are still left with the gap between philosophical and scientific ontology. From the perspective of the former, the state can be said to exist. However, the question what the state is belongs to the realm of scientific ontology. I argue that it is here that the role of devices such as metaphors comes in. From this perspective, treating the state as a person is a useful metaphor to make sense of the “what is it” question which cannot simply answered by “looking” at aspects of the world, especially when it comes to the unobservables of the social world such as the state.¹¹⁵ This point will be developed further in Chapter 3.

¹¹⁰ Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity', 269-270.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 271.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 273.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 273-275.

¹¹⁴ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 289, fn 1.

¹¹⁵ For the role of metaphors, compare also Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism'.

The essential state-as-person

As we have seen, with regard to the state and the state-as-person, Wendt searches for essential features that serve to describe the entity or phenomenon as such. This search for an ontological starting point builds on the scientific realist assumption that the entities we study (even in the social sciences) exist independently of our knowledge of or discourses about them. “In the realist view, the theorist baptizes an unobservable phenomenon by proposing a description of its properties and some hypotheses about how these relate to observable effects.”¹¹⁶

Additionally, Wendt believes that in order to be able to answer the question that drives him in *Social Theory*, the states systemic project, an essentialised state and state-as-person are necessary. He argues that “we can theorize about processes of social construction *at the level of the state system* only if such processes have exogenously given, relatively stable platforms.”¹¹⁷ This means that the state has to be understood as a given for his research purposes and its features need to be defined beyond discourse. Further, he points out that the theorist is in need of finding a common ground in order to make sense of the state; defining essential features offers such a common ground.¹¹⁸

Wendt accepts the label “essentialist” for himself. But he cautions that he only accepts “this label as long as it is properly understood” and is not taken to mean “appealing to an unanalyzed or occult essence”.¹¹⁹ Rather, he argues in favour of a weak essentialism which is defined as the claim “that the behavior of things is influenced by self-organizing, mind-independent structures that constitute those things with certain intrinsic powers and dispositions”.¹²⁰ The scientific process works towards discovering these structures.

As pointed out earlier, the five essential features of the state that Wendt proposes are having an institutional-legal order, a legitimate monopoly on the use of violence, sovereignty, society, and territory.¹²¹ These criteria are meant to describe what all states have in common, in all times

¹¹⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 63.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 198, emphasis in original.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 201.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 63.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 202.

and all places. On the basis of these criteria, Wendt argues, we encounter the “state as such”.¹²² With his thin essentialism, Wendt tries to find a middle ground, similar to his commitment to a thin constructivism. He delineates himself from anti-essentialists, such as postmodernists. However, he also delineates himself from what he calls “thicker essentialists” like neorealists and neoliberals. Wendt wishes to maintain a “minimalist version” of an essential platform of the state, arguing that such a minimal essentialism is necessary for structural theorising but also arguing that many of the characteristics that “thicker essentialists” would describe as inherent to the state, such as egoism and power-seeking behaviour, are in fact “contingent, constructed by the international system”.¹²³ This middle ground allows him to treat some features of the state as intrinsic and given while others are treated as socially constructed at the system level.

In *Social Theory*, Wendt is very explicit about his essential state. While less explicit in “The state as person”, there are good reasons to ascribe the same idea of a thin or middle ground essentialism to his later work as well. As we have seen, in “The state as person” he uses a four-point description of persons as rational actors as a starting point¹²⁴ and based on that he defines his three inside-test-criteria for psychological state-personhood.¹²⁵ In the following, I would like to offer three points of critique of Wendt’s thin essentialism and its consequences.

Wendt starts from a thin essentialist definition of the state to have a stable and among theorists inter-subjectively agreed upon platform for further theorising about processes at the systemic level. Implicit in this is the assumption that there is a thin essence of the state that does not change. This part of the concept of the state is assumed to be timeless and, in the basic form presented by Wendt, is meant to be applicable across cultures. Wendt’s essential state aims at “transhistorical generalizations about the essential state”.¹²⁶ And while Wendt acknowledges some of the dangers of such a project, he argues that “such generalizations are not ruled out altogether”¹²⁷ by these points of caution. A thin essential state is necessary for his theorising.

¹²² Ibid., 201-202.

¹²³ Ibid., 202.

¹²⁴ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 295.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 296.

¹²⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 214.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

However, for others constructivists the state cannot be treated as a given. They argue that its conception changes over time and across cultures. Talking about the state today is not the same as talking about the state as it existed 400 years ago, at the time of the Peace of Westphalia. States, too, are the product of constant cultural production and reproduction and thus subject to change. Wendt allows for some construction and change at the systems level but starts from a basic essentialist notion of the state. As with a critique of Wendt's scientific realist commitment, one of the questions raised again is whether or not this notion can be reconciled with constructivist commitments.

For a critical perspective, we can once again turn to Kratochwil who argues that "there are no simple givens for constructivist, such as 'structures' or 'forces' that are not again results of particular action and 'constructions' that require further explanations."¹²⁸ Against this we have Wendt's point that for his state systemic project, the state has to be viewed as a given in order for him to explore the interaction at the systems level. It is true that not everything can be problematised at once. And while constructions are going on at various "levels", not all levels can be taken into view at once. Yet, Wendt's essential state should come with a strong disclaimer pointing out that even his essential state is already a particular construction of the state, rooted in a particular time and theoretical context. For example, by referring to Weberian notions of the state he defines an essential state based on the monopoly of violence that is not uncontested and not applicable across time.¹²⁹ Similar points can be made with his Marxist and Pluralist analysis of the state that feed into his conceptualisation. Yet, he argues he is "interested only in what all states in all times and places have in common, in the 'essential state' or 'state-as-such'".¹³⁰ Especially before the background of his constructivist commitments, the idea of a "state-as-such" has to be viewed critically.

Changing perspective slightly from the essential features of the state to the construction of the state as an agent, Smith offers a similar critique. Smith reads Wendt as "unconcerned with the

¹²⁸ Kratochwil, 'Constructing a New Orthodoxy? Wendt's Social Theory of International Politics and the Constructivist Challenge', 30.

¹²⁹ Wendt takes these two points explicitly from Weber. The state is "an organization claiming a monopoly on the legitimate use of organized violence" and "an organization with sovereignty". Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 202.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 201.

construction of agents, subjectivity and identity".¹³¹ Wendt argues that, here too, we encounter stable platforms that form the basic blocs for further systemic theorising. Identities are to a large extent viewed as given before interaction and the formation of self and other remains unproblematised. However, other constructivists would argue that subjectivity and identity are only the outcomes of discourse and can therefore not exist before exchange and without a notion of other. Further the boundaries of self and other with regard to the state should be seen as more fluid than Wendt's account would allow for, as he needs to start from an already established self and an already established other. In this instance, Wendt is clearly at odds with constructivists such as Onuf or Kratochwil and adds a givenness that seems necessary but constrains and pre-determines his account of the establishment of systemic cultures fundamentally and unhelpfully.

To draw these critiques together and focus again on the idea of the state-as-person, a reminder of Jackson's answer to Wendt's state-as-person is useful. Jackson provides a strong argument against Wendt's essentialism that combines some of the above points. Instead of searching for intrinsic features of states or states-as-person, he argues, we need to focus on the processes that make these entities what they are. Criticising Wendt's scientific realist commitment, he argues that in the case of the state-as-person it is the process of personation that scholars need to be concerned with. Searching for what the state is in itself is useless; it is the processes that shape the state and constantly re-shape it that matter. For Jackson, actors in the social sphere "should be regarded as the product of ongoing constitutive *practices*".¹³² The state, its identity and its boundaries, are, in Jackson's view, the product of everyday practices and political struggles. Constructing states and persons is about producing and reproducing social conventions.¹³³ Social actors, whether individuals or collectives, instead of being ascribed an essence, "should be regarded as the product of ongoing constitutive *practices*".¹³⁴ This orientation towards process allows for understanding change and acknowledges that there is very little about social facts that could be seen as a given. With regard to the state we might ask: what constitutes the state in its current forms? And further, what in our everyday practices and

¹³¹ Smith, 'Wendt's World', 160.

¹³² Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too'', 285.

¹³³ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 286-287.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 285, emphasis in original.

political struggles constitutes the state as a person.¹³⁵ Why is it that talking about states in terms of person is possible, although of course not uncontested, at this current point in time? An answer to this last question will entail looking at the practices that constitute the state in its current form such as sovereignty and territorial integrity.

¹³⁵ As we have seen in chapter one, Jackson gives a slightly different twist to the idea of the state-as-person as understood by Wendt. He derives the idea of personation from Hobbes and his ideas of representation and the process by which an individual or group is authorized to speak on behalf of a person, group, or inanimate object. Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too'', 286.

Conclusion

Four main points of critique emerge out of the discussion of Chapter 2. First, we need to question what it means to say that the state *is* a person.

A first helpful distinction, based on Wight's critique of Wendt, between philosophical ontology and scientific ontology is introduced. Philosophical ontology asks whether the state is real, whereas scientific ontology is concerned with the question of what the state is, in other words whether it really is a person. With Wight we can observe that Wendt's state-as-person shows a tendency to conflate the two.¹³⁶ In a similar vein, Wendt's miracle argument regarding the state-as-person is addressed and critiqued. Put simply, Wendt argues that the state-as-person must be real because the theories that invoke the state work well in making sense of the world. Following philosophical realist premises, he stresses the idea that scientific progress occurs in the form of an ever closer approximation between our theories and the real causal structure of the world. Hence, if IR theories that build on the concept of the state-as-person have not been rejected in the course of testing theories against other theories, it must be a very likely candidate for reflecting the real, causal structures of the world. Here, the critique of Suganami is helpful; he points out that the fact that a theory that works well posits an entity cannot be taken to mean that this entity indeed really exists. "Hard sciences" such as physics can serve as a great example of this, he argues.¹³⁷ In contrast, the point of view developed as part of a critique of Wendt in the thesis is that the state is best seen as a real structure and that the notion of the state-as-person is a prevalent way in which the discipline of IR renders it intelligible. But most importantly, it is this process of sense-making that we need to pay attention to.

Second, drawing on critics such as Kratochwil, a nascent essentialism with regard to both the state and the state-as-person can be identified in Wendt's work. This tendency is most pronounced in *Social Theory*. Here, Wendt defines "rump materialism" for the person and for the state.¹³⁸ While Wendt's rump materialist theory of human nature is commonsensical, it cannot be taken as a base for thinking of the state-as-person. Kratochwil argues that the rump

¹³⁶ Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity'.

¹³⁷ Suganami, 'Wendt, IR, and Philosophy'.

¹³⁸ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 131.

materialism we encounter in Wendt runs against core constructivist principles.¹³⁹ In a first instance, this critique needs to be understood as a result of fundamentally different constructivist positions. However, Kratochwil's critique also opens up a fruitful avenue for developing the idea of the state-as-person by precisely taking the construction of states and persons even further than Wendt does.

Third, Wendt, in *Social Theory* but more pronounced in "The state as person in international theory", rejects what he calls an *as-if* or metaphorical conception of the state and the state-as-person. This is in line with the first principle of scientific realism which states that "the world is independent of the mind and language of individual observers", and forms the starting point for Wendt's argument that IR needs to take the possibility that the state-as-person is real seriously instead of evading it through skilful language-use.¹⁴⁰ However, we need to wonder whether or not this rejection is helpful for understanding the state-as-person. Wendt relegates metaphors to a role as figures of speech; the contention in this thesis is that they play a much wider role through their ability to be constitutive of the social world and their role in the scientific process.

Fourth, in a response to Wendt, Jackson suggests that the focus might be shifted from the question of whether or not the state is a person to a focus on the process of becoming a person, what Jackson calls the process of personation.¹⁴¹ Hence, the thesis takes the suggestion on board that understanding how this process works with regard to individual human beings yields important insights for the state-as-person. Instead of suggesting essential features of the person, we need to look at the processes through which individuals constitute their sense of self. The preliminary assumption here is that this process of establishing a self should be located more towards the "ideas all the way down end" end of the spectrum than Wendt allows for with his conceptualisation of systemic interaction.

The second part of the thesis, consisting of Chapters 3 and 4, aims at addressing these four points of critique by drawing on conceptual metaphor theory and constructionist psychology respectively. Chapter 3, on metaphors, sets out to address the first and third point of critique outlined. Chapter 4, which looks at the so-called emotional turn in the discipline and makes a

¹³⁹ Kratochwil, 'Constructing a New Orthodoxy? Wendt's Social Theory of International Politics and the Constructivist Challenge'.

¹⁴⁰ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 51.

¹⁴¹ Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too''.

case for the usefulness of constructionist psychology, addresses the second and the fourth point of critique of Wendt's concept of the state-as-person. Taken together they will form the basis for making the case of the *constructed state-as-person* developed in the thesis.

Chapter 3: The state-as-person as a metaphor

Wanting to engage with the concept of the state-as-person and taking my starting point from Alexander Wendt, there are several points that need to be questioned and elaborated. One of the questions raised in the previous chapter is whether the state *really* is a person or whether the idea of the state-as-person is a *mere* metaphor. Further, we need to ask whether or not we have to accept this dichotomous view. These two questions motivate the chapter.

Wendt, positioning himself as a scientific realist, argues that the state is real. Moreover, he argues that the state-as-person is real. This point, which forms a key part of his argument, needs to be put in the context of Wendt's philosophy of science commitments.¹ As we have seen, he takes a scientific realist stance, a position most prominently elaborated on in *Social Theory*. Following in that direction but focusing on the state itself rather than systemic interactions of states, he aims at establishing the state as a psychological person in his 2004 article "The state as person in international relations theory". Here, the key point for Wendt is to find possibilities that enable us to argue that the state is real and that it *really* is a person. By doing so, he aims to distinguish himself from mainstream approaches to the state that are, in his view, guilty of treating the state *as-if* it were a person but that, and this is Wendt's criticism, never engage the hard ontological question of what the state *really* is. Hence, Wendt is critical of what he calls *as-if stories* and metaphorical treatments of the state-as-person.

As pointed out in the previous chapter, in order to start addressing Wendt's criticism, it is important to keep the distinction between scientific and philosophical ontology in mind.² The present engagement with metaphors aims at contributing to an elaboration on how scientific

¹ For the term "on the ontological status of the state" see Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215. It is borrowed from Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State'.

² Compare also Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 28.

ontology can be engaged with from a strong constructivist perspective. For the most part, I ask the question *what* the state is, not whether or not we can say *that* it is. As I have pointed out in Chapter 1, there is a prevalence in IR to think about states in terms of persons. However, this should not be taken as an indication that the state *is* a person. Rather, I argue that there is a need to *imagine* the state and its scientific ontology is determined by the kinds of images we use to make it more tangible.³ As we have seen, the image of the person provides one possibility to conceptualise the state.

This chapter illustrates that at the core of the concept of the state-as-person lies a metaphorical process. The assumption is that most concepts that social scientists operate with are “unalterably metaphoric”.⁴ It is argued that this has consequences beyond the level of language. By drawing on insights regarding the role of metaphors in the scientific process, this chapter argues that metaphors cannot be dismissed as mere figures of speech. More specifically, the point pursued here is that we cannot make sense of the state in IR without recourse to metaphors. Following from this, the larger question about the role of metaphors in IR scholarship can be engaged.

In very general terms, a suspicion towards metaphors as being *unscientific* can be identified in mainstream IR scholarship. In the seminal *Diplomatic Investigations*, Hedley Bull for example makes the strong statement that metaphors are to be regarded “as a sign of infancy in a subject”.⁵

A general suspicion towards metaphors in science is linked with the assumption that metaphors are only rhetorical devices. From this perspective, metaphors are said to lack the precision of formal definitions and hence are unsuitable to establish clear references between objects. Critiques of this kind usually view metaphors as a figure of speech that is replaceable, and indeed should be replaced, by a literal expression or explication. An underlying aim of this chapter is to show how this view of metaphors is unhelpful and indeed neglects the point that new knowledge is constructed and the crucial role played by language in this process.

³ For the term scientific ontology in the context of the state-as-person debate compare Wight, 2004.

⁴ Robert A. Nisbet, 'Genealogy, Growth, and Other Metaphors', *New Literary History* 1, 3 (1970).

⁵ Hedley Bull, 'Society and Anarchy in International Relations', in *Diplomatic Investigations*, ed. Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (London: Allen & Unwin, 1966), 45.

Responding to the suspicion towards metaphors, this chapter, first, aims to develop a perspective on metaphors that allows me to treat them as an integral part of IR theory. Secondly, it will be argued that metaphors should not be seen as a weakness of the subject, but rather as an element of studying international relations that cannot be escaped. Ultimately, I argue that the dichotomy that Wendt opens up between either interpreting the state-as-person as a *mere* metaphor or treating it as *real* is a false one. This position is developed through recourse to conceptual metaphor theory. Wendt is adamant in trying to overcome notions of metaphorical thinking in IR scholarship. However, it will be maintained that it is precisely an acceptance of metaphorical thinking that is needed to understand *what* the state in IR is. Conceptual metaphor theory focuses on how one subject, system of ideas, or concept can usefully be understood in terms of another subject, system of ideas, or concept.

This chapter aims to show how an argument about the state-as-person needs to be developed through acknowledging that when we speak about the state-as-person, we utilise a conceptual metaphor. The argument is that on the one hand, the state is a really existing structure.⁶ On the other hand, however, ways of making sense of this structure in IR, ways of imagining the state, cannot avoid an engagement with metaphorical thinking. Moreover, rather than viewing this metaphorical perspective as a weakness of the subject, it is seen as the only way of making sense of the state among other states. Maybe it is indeed the case that there is “no real knowing apart from metaphor”.⁷

Keeping these points in mind this chapter proceeds in four main steps. In a first instance I enter a philosophy of science discussion on metaphors. Here, I aim to show how the conception of what a metaphor is and what it does has fundamentally shifted away from a perspective that confines metaphors to a role as figures of speech. Related to this, I outline a three-part typology of what I call – borrowing from I. A. Richards – *modes of metaphors*, which aims to clarify that while metaphors can act as figures of speech, they can also shape the ways in which we think about the world in more fundamental ways. While IR scholarship can study the state-as-person

⁶ Compare for example Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity'. Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*. As well as Kurki, *Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis*.

⁷ Paul Cantor, 'Friedrich Nietzsche: The Use and Abuse of Metaphor', in *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives*, ed. David S. Miall (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1982), 71-72. As cited in Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 30.

as a figure of speech, it also needs to acknowledge that the idea of the state-as-person serves as a so-called theory constitutive metaphor. Second, I aim to highlight the few instances in which IR scholarship explicitly acknowledges the constitutive role of metaphors in the subject. I also show how, despite Wendt's commitment to argue against what he calls *as-if* thinking, his ideas on states-as-persons as well as later ideas on the so-called quantum social science do not escape metaphorical thinking entirely. Indeed, both concepts can be understood as based on metaphors. Third, a further aim of this chapter is to illustrate how a metaphor is established through a process of so-called structural mapping. This process will serve as the basis for developing the idea of the state-as-person further in Chapter 6. The last part of this chapter elaborates on the different roles that metaphors play depending on the relationship between mind and world that the researcher subscribes to. I will highlight how this has important implications for how we can make sense of the state in IR scholarship and especially the possibilities of developing the idea of the state-as-person further.

Understanding metaphors – interaction view and theory constitutive metaphors

A useful starting point is to give a basic definition of what I mean when I speak about metaphors, in other words to give a definition that represents a lowest common denominator regarding various understandings of metaphors. From the perspective of a lowest common denominator, to use a metaphor is to “talk and, potentially, think about something in terms of something else”.⁸ Or, to put it another way, the “essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another”.⁹ This definition is useful for it does not foreclose various interpretations of metaphors. Based on this definition, an engagement with metaphors that is located in fields as varied as literature studies, cognitive psychology, political philosophy, or quantum physics is conceivable.¹⁰ This lowest-common denominator definition also allows us to remain agnostic, for the moment, regarding the question of how we relate our concepts and the world to each other.¹¹

It is important to acknowledge that there is not one single perspective to understand metaphors, nor is it the case that any one perspective is superior. However, for analytical purposes, a first useful distinction is to be made based on the functions of metaphors in the scientific process. The following categories, what I call, borrowing from Richards, *modes of metaphors*, seem most useful as a first point of departure: metaphors as figures of speech and

⁸ Semino, *Metaphor in Discourse*, 1.

⁹ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003 [1980]), 5.

¹⁰ Some of the standard definitions found in lexica and encyclopaedia are less useful in this regard. The great majority of them start by defining metaphors as a figure of speech. This immediately forecloses other approaches to metaphors. This “standard definition” also emphasises that metaphors are a form of comparison. As we will see in the following, this is at odds with an understanding of metaphors now accepted as the mainstream position in the philosophy of science. For definitions of “metaphor” that are problematic from the perspective developed in the course of this chapter see for example Catherine Soanes and Angus Stenson, eds., *Oxford Dictionary of English*, 2 ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1103. And Michael Agnes and Andrew N. Sparks, eds., *Webster's New World Large Print Dictionary*, 4 ed. (Indianapolis, IN: Wiley Publishing, 2001), 661.

¹¹ What I am referring to here is the difference between what Jackson termed a mind-world dualist and a mind-world monist perspective. Compare Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 37. It is also useful to compare Rom Harré, 'When the Knower Is Also the Known', in *Knowing the Social World*, ed. Tim May and Malcolm Williams (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1998c).

tools for persuasion, metaphors as tools for orienting ourselves in the world and providing a framework for action, and metaphors as tools for constructing knowledge.¹²

A first intuition is often to define metaphors as figures of speech and to confine them to this role. From this perspective, metaphors are seen as an ornament of language that is different from and added to the standard mode of expressing ourselves.¹³ They are seen as an embellishment of the way we speak that could be dispensed with, and indeed should be dispensed with if we aim for clarity of expression. Metaphors are regarded with suspicion because they potentially challenge the idea that there should be a clear correspondence between our concepts and the world.¹⁴ From this point of view metaphors belong to the realm of literature and rhetoric; they are used instead of a literal expression for their aesthetic appeal or persuasive power; they are meant to engage the senses and trigger emotions. Hence, their role in scientific pursuits is viewed with suspicion. Those critical of the usefulness of metaphors as part of “science” argue that metaphors lack economy of expression, invite multiple interpretations, conceal meaning and can become tools of subtle influence and power.¹⁵

However, it is important to declare from the start that, when it comes to the idea of the state-as-person, I am predominantly interested in the third *mode of metaphor* outlined: metaphors as tools for constructing knowledge. I refer to metaphors in this context as theory-constitutive metaphors.¹⁶ This poses a challenge for the traditional view of the role of metaphors in the social sciences outlined above as well as for Wendt’s conception of the state-as-person.

¹² A similar distinction is introduced by Sabine Maasen and Peter Weingart who differentiate between metaphors as a figure of speech, a heuristic, or as a scientific model. Sabine Maasen and Peter Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 2000), 3. The term is taken from Richards account. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 94.

¹³ It is interesting to note that this relationship could also be turned around and that there is no immediate reason why metaphors should be seen as the exception to the “rule” of literal expression. Peter Mühlhäusler helpfully suggests that “[m]ost investigators of metaphor have asked how metaphorical meaning is derived from literal meaning, ignoring ... the problem of delimiting literal meaning and the fact.” He goes on to suggest that a more helpful question might be the following. “How is literal meaning derived from metaphor? or How does literal meaning emerge from metaphor?” Peter Mühlhäusler, 'Toward an Explanatory Theory of Metaphor', in *The Ubiquity of Metaphor: Metaphor in Language and Thought*, ed. Wolf Paprotté and René Dirven (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1985), 57.

¹⁴ Compare Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models*, 26.

¹⁵ Compare for example Maasen and Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge*, 24-28.

¹⁶ The term theory-constitutive metaphor is borrowed from Richard Boyd whose perspective on metaphors will be elaborated in more detail below. Boyd, 'Metaphor and Theory Change: What Is "Metaphor" a Metaphor For?'

In each of the three *modes of metaphors* outlined, metaphors play a cognitive role; although this role is associated with different aims. In each case, metaphors influence how we see the world. In some cases they can be seen as an appeal to affects and emotions. In other cases, they are the tools that make a certain world view possible in the first place. In the seminal *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson show how metaphors are not simply a way of talking about things but how they also profoundly influence how we think.¹⁷ Yet, especially for a project situated in the area of IR, it is useful to also keep the intentions behind the use of metaphors in mind. Metaphors can be (scientific) thinking tools as well as tools for persuasion and propaganda. The dividing line between the two is not always clear. While this is an important point of caution, in the following I will engage in a philosophy of science discussion regarding the role of metaphors in science that brackets this problem for the moment.

¹⁷ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*.

An interaction view of metaphor

I am first and foremost interested in metaphors as thinking tools, as a way of making the world more intelligible and highlighting aspects of the world hitherto unseen. As outlined in the previous chapter, this interest in the role of metaphors in science is the outcome of my engagement with Wendt's idea of the state-as-person and a question that was raised when reading Wendt's particular view on the role of metaphors. Wendt opens up a dichotomy between, on the one hand, the state-as-person being *real* and, on the other hand, the state-as-person being a *mere* metaphor, a useful fiction.¹⁸ In his 2004 article "The state as person", Wendt describes a common position in IR that treats the state-as-person in metaphorical terms. This is ultimately a position that, in Wendt's view, needs to be overcome.

Despite our state-centric world, however, if pressed on whether state persons are 'real', in my experience most IR scholars will back away. States are not *really* persons, only '*as if*' ones. State personhood is a useful fiction, analogy, metaphor, or shorthand for something else.¹⁹

In *Social Theory*, Wendt briefly runs through a list of disparate scholarly perspectives that share as their common ground a suspicion towards the idea of the state as an actor.²⁰ Wendt identifies their common ground, as well as their common problem, as their refusal to accept the reality of the state as an actor and their insistence on an *as-if* treatment. He argues that

What unites these otherwise disparate views is the proposition that state actorhood is just a 'useful fiction' or 'metaphor' for what is 'really' something else. The state is not really an actor at all, but merely a 'theoretical construct'.²¹

¹⁸ Compare for example Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 10.

¹⁹ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 289, emphasis in original.

²⁰ I am using the term actor here as this is the term that Wendt uses in the particular passage of *Social Theory*. But moreover, for Wendt, the terms person and actor are closely related. In a subsequent passage he introduces the move from "actor" to "person". In his conceptualisation, the state-as-actor becomes a person by showing "that such talk [of the state-as-actor] refers to a real corporate being to which we can properly attribute human qualities like identities, interests, and intentionality". Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215. Further, the perspectives he outlines are liberalism, the study of foreign policy decision-making, individualism and post-structuralism. This is quite problematic as the categories are not free from overlap.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 196.

With regard to the idea of the state-as-person, he summarises these approaches as nominalist, instrumentalist, or sceptical and locates them and his own approach at opposite ends of a spectrum. Thus, opening up a dichotomy between his approach and so-called *as-if* approaches. He argues that

[n]ominalists, who seem lately to hold the upper hand in IR scholarship, believe that corporate agency is just a useful fiction or metaphor to describe what is 'really' the actions of individuals. Scientific realists believe it refers to a real, emergent phenomenon which cannot be reduced to individuals.²²

Leaving the question of different philosophy of science commitments of what Wendt calls nominalists and scientific realists aside for now, we can observe here how a dichotomy is opened up here between *as-if* and metaphorical thinking on the one hand and accepting the reality of the state on the other hand. This is problematic. Arguing that something is *only* a metaphor fails to acknowledge the various roles that metaphors can play. While they might serve as figures of speech in a particular instance, they might also shape the ways in which we make sense of the world in more fundamental ways and contribute to creating what *really* is. This is the point I am trying to get at with what I call *modes of metaphors*.

Hence, the key question that follows from this starting point is: What role can metaphors play in science? Keeping this in mind, in the following engagement with the role of metaphors I focus on scholars that explicitly engage with the above question and who argue, contra Wendt, that metaphors can be more than figures of speech.

Among those who study the role of metaphors in science, there seems to be a fundamental agreement that they play a crucial role. Although, as we shall see, what kind of role a metaphor is said to play differs depending on the specific philosophy of science commitments made.

The starting point taken here is to assume that metaphors matter and that they can play a crucial role in constructing knowledge. The basic premise is that "[m]etaphor is needed because we can conceive more than we say. Metaphor is needed to communicate about new concepts or experiences. Metaphor is needed in order to conceive and recognize similarities, and for that

²² Ibid., 215.

reason may be the only way we *can* talk about new conceptions.”²³ Or as Andrew Ortony puts it, “metaphors are necessary and not just nice.”²⁴

I am going to start by introducing two key distinctions regarding how metaphors can be approached. The first one is the distinction between a comparison and an interaction view of metaphors. The second distinction is made between pedagogical metaphors and theory-constitutive ones. The key figures for the following insights regarding the philosophy of metaphor are I. A. Richards, Max Black and Richard Boyd.²⁵

Black is usually the first to be cited as an early proponent of a fundamental re-thinking of the role of metaphors in science. His ideas have to be understood as part of a larger paradigm shift that included the linguistic turn and a shift towards anti-positivism in the social sciences, starting in the 1960s.²⁶ Black argues against viewing metaphors as forms of comparison and instead develops what he calls interaction view of metaphor.²⁷ This move is a crucial one because as long as metaphors are seen as a form of comparison, they can easily be replaced, and maybe

²³ Robert R. Hoffman, 'Some Implications of Metaphor for Philosophy and Psychology of Science', in *The Ubiquity of Metaphor: Metaphor in Language and Thought*, ed. Wolf Paprotté and René Dirven (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1985), 338.

However, it is important to note that while this quotation works well in conveying a general enthusiasm regarding metaphors, some of the assumptions expressed implicitly need further questioning. The first sentence points to the relation between thought and language which needs further, explicit discussion. Further, Hoffman argues that “[m]etaphor is needed in order to conceive and recognize similarities”. However, some scholars who engage with the role of metaphor in scientific processes would argue that similarity between subjects is not a necessary condition for a metaphor to be used or to be created. For the view that metaphors must be based on a pre-existing similarity compare Eleonora Montuschi, 'Metaphors in Science', in *A Companion to the Philosophy of Science*, ed. W. H. Newton-Smith, 280. For the contrary position, which argues that a pre-existing similarity is not necessary and that it is rather the metaphor itself that *creates* similarities between the two subjects compare Paul Patton's chapter “Mobile concepts, metaphor, and the problem of referentiality”. Paul Patton, *Deleuzian Concepts. Philosophy, Colonialization, Politics* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010).

²⁴ Andrew Ortony, 'Why Metaphors Are Necessary and Not Just Nice', *Educational Theory* 25 (1975), 45.

²⁵ Sabine Maasen and Peter Weingart for example point to Max Black as the key proponent of an anti-positivist shift regarding metaphors in the 1960s with Richards being cited as an early forerunner. Maasen and Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge*, 25. Compare also Véronique Mottier, 'Metaphors, Mini-Narratives and Foucauldian Discourse Theory', in *Political Language and Metaphor: Interpreting and Changing the World*, ed. Terrell Carver and Jernej Pikalo (New York: Routledge, 2008), 184. For an example of metaphorical approaches in IR that start from Black's insight compare Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models*, 29-36. As well as Michael P. Marks, *Metaphors in International Relations Theory* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 23-36.

²⁶ Maasen and Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge*, 25.

²⁷ To be precise it is worth pointing out that the comparison view is a special case of what Black calls substitution view. The substitution view of metaphors holds that they can always be replaced by a literal statement. Black, *Models and Metaphors. Studies in Language and Philosophy*, 35.

should even be replaced, by a literal expression or an explication of that comparison. They would be of little value in the scientific process apart from maybe serving as a shorthand expression or a placeholder phrase. Ultimately, the comparison view confines metaphors to their role as a figure of speech. Following the comparison view, the argument is that metaphors need to be replaced by literal expressions for clarity and precision of scientific communication. But with the shift to an interaction view of metaphors, Black counters the argument that metaphors are nothing more than a figure of speech that might only be valued for aesthetic reasons.

By emphasising that a metaphor entails an interaction of two thoughts that cannot be “translated” into a literal expression. He argues that a “[m]etaphorical statement is not a substitute for a formal comparison or any other kind of literal statement, but has its own distinctive capacities and achievements”.²⁸ The interaction view posits that a metaphor brings two different subjects together, a principle and a subsidiary subject. The principal subject acquires new meaning by being brought into context with the subsidiary one; and the subsidiary subject helps to organise or structure thoughts about the principle one.²⁹ Applying this terminology to the concept of states-as-persons, the subsidiary subject is constituted by ideas about persons and the principle subject is constituted by ideas about the state. By bringing these two concepts in contact with each other, the concept of the state acquires new meaning; thoughts about the state in IR can then be structured along the lines of concepts of persons.

Black stresses that the “subjects” are best described as systems of things – in this case systems of ideas about states on the one hand and systems of ideas about persons on the other. In a later article, Black points out that every metaphor involves a process of mapping. Metaphors, understood in this way, are “an instrument for drawing implications grounded in perceived analogies of structure between two subjects belonging to different domains”.³⁰ I find this point especially valuable as the reference to the process of mapping highlights a way of specifying and explicating the workings of a metaphor.³¹ Another point to be taken from Black is the emphasis

²⁸ Ibid., 37.

²⁹ Compare for example Rom Harré and Janet Martin, 'Metaphor in Science', in *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives*, ed. David S. Miall (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1982), 91.

³⁰ Black, 'More About Metaphor', 31.

³¹ Black himself does not use the term structural mapping which will be introduced later in the chapter, although he comes close when he speaks about “analogies of structure between two subjects”. Ibid. We can

that “metaphor selects, emphasizes, suppresses, and organizes features of the principle subject by implying statements about it that normally apply to the subsidiary subject”.³² This gives metaphors a “cognitively irreplaceable status”.³³ Metaphors are useful in changing and re-organising meaning, hence in constructing new knowledge.³⁴

However, it is really the English philosopher Richards who has to be credited with doing pioneering work in the study of metaphors thirty years prior to Black.³⁵ The terms he introduced are still influential today. Richards, in a series of lectures given in 1936, describes metaphors as “an intercourse of *thoughts*”.³⁶ For him metaphors are a process whereby “two thoughts of different things [are] active together and supported by a single word or phrase”.³⁷ Ultimately, he aims to argue that metaphors are more than a rhetorical device and thus, aims to distinguish himself from traditional, comparison theories of metaphors. He argues that

[t]he traditional theory noticed only a few of the modes of metaphor;
and limited its application of the term *metaphor* to a few of them only.
And thereby it made metaphor seem to be a verbal matter, a shifting

find the term structural mapping for example in Dedre Gentner’s work. Dedre Gentner, 'Are Scientific Analogies Metaphors?', in *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives*, ed. David S. Miall (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1982). Dedre Gentner and Jonathan Grudin, 'The Evolution of Mental Metaphors in Psychology: A 90-Year Retrospective', *American Psychologist* 40, 2 (1985). Dedre Gentner, 'Metaphor as Structure Mapping: The Relational Shift', *Child Development* 59, 1 (1988). Dedre Gentner, 'Structure-Mapping: A Theoretical Framework for Analogy', *Cognitive Science* 7, 2 (1983). Dedre Gentner and Arthur B. Markman, 'Structure Mapping in Analogy and Similarity', *American Psychologist* 52, 1 (1997). Dedre Gentner and Brian F. Bowdle, 'The Career of Metaphor', *Psychological Review* 112, 1 (2005). Dedre Gentner and Brian F. Bowdle, 'Metaphor as Structure-Mapping', in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, ed. Jr. Raymond W. Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

³² Black, *Models and Metaphors. Studies in Language and Philosophy*, 44-45.

³³ Harré and Martin, 'Metaphor in Science', 91.

³⁴ For this point compare Jernej Pikalo, 'Mechanical Metaphors in Politics', in *Political Language and Metaphor: Interpreting and Changing the World*, ed. Terrell Carver and Jernej Pikalo (New York: Routledge, 2008), 44.

³⁵ David Miall, and Rom Harré and Janet Martin make this point about Richards quite strongly. David S. Miall, 'Introduction', in *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives*, ed. David S. Miall (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1982). Harré and Martin, 'Metaphor in Science', 92-93. Although Black is “the main philosophical exponent of Richards’ ideas,” Harré and Martin feel that Black’s description of the interaction view is not as insightful as the one provided by Richards almost three decades earlier.

³⁶ Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 94 (emphasis in original). For an overview of what this term entails see Miall, 'Introduction', xii. As well as Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 47-66.

³⁷ Harré and Martin, 'Metaphor in Science', 93.

and displacement of words, whereas fundamentally it is a borrowing between and intercourse of *thoughts*, a transaction between contexts.³⁸

In other words, Richards argues that two thoughts are active together in a metaphor, supported by a single word or expression.³⁹ In Richards' view the two thoughts are co-present.⁴⁰ Here, Richards provides a shift from a semantic perspective on metaphors to an interest in cognitive processes.⁴¹ Metaphors are now no longer seen as a matter of mere words but also a matter of thought. Richards is the one who has to be credited with advancing this shift in the way metaphors are viewed within the philosophy of science.

There are differences in terminology that are worth noting. Black calls the element that one aims to understand the *principal subject*; in Richards' terminology it is the *tenor*. The element that provides structure and insights is called the *subsidiary subject* by Black while Richards refers to it as the *vehicle*.⁴² The terms generally accepted now, which are used in conceptual metaphor theory, are *target domain* and *source domain*. Applying this terminology to the case of the state-as-person states are seen as the target domain and concepts of persons serve as the source domain.

However, in addition to the differences in terminology there is another important difference between Black and Richards that is important to pay attention to. In a critical engagement with both, Rom Harré and Janet Martin note how there are passages in Black where he appears to be closer to a comparison view than to an interaction view.⁴³ This of course is problematic if one is interested in arguing in favour of the value of metaphors beyond their role as a figure of speech. Harré and Martin point out that Black's insistence on keeping the two subjects of a metaphor

³⁸ Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 94 (emphasis in original). Here, the term "traditional theory" refers to an Aristotelian conception of metaphor as well as eighteenth century understandings of metaphor. Compare also the following for an explicit argument against the comparison view *ibid.*, 120ff.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁴⁰ Harré and Martin, 'Metaphor in Science', 94.

⁴¹ Miall, 'Introduction', xiii.

⁴² For the terms tenor and vehicle and an explanation of their relation compare Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 100-101. For Black compare Black, *Models and Metaphors. Studies in Language and Philosophy*, 39. However, it is worth noting that Black's and Richards' terms are not directly comparable. Following Harré and Martin, Richards' view can be seen as the subtler one as it does not necessarily rest on the need to interpret tenor and vehicle as two distinct subjects represented by two distinct nouns. Compare Harré and Martin, 'Metaphor in Science', 94.

⁴³ Harré and Martin, 'Metaphor in Science', 92.

completely separate and in applying his theory primarily to metaphors that involve two nouns moves him closer to a comparison view.⁴⁴ Further, when Black describes a metaphor as a filter, he implies a one-directional relationship between the two subjects of a metaphor.⁴⁵ However, a fuller interaction view of metaphor will recognise that while the source domain can be seen to be structuring the perception of the target domain, the elements selected from the source domain are in part already determined by the target domain. For example to highlight how a metaphor works, Black uses the example of “man is wolf”.⁴⁶ He outlines how the concept of “wolf” is used to structure an understanding of “man”. However, he does not emphasise that the selection of elements from the concept of wolf is already guided by an understanding of the concept of “man”. Hence, he does not recognise that this process is not a one-directional application of wolf-associations to people but an interaction between the two concepts designed to generate new insights of “man”.⁴⁷ It needs to be emphasised that a metaphorical process is more than a filtering process. Hence, emphasising a fuller interaction view of metaphor, as Richards does, is a first important step in recognising their potential value for producing new knowledge.

Building on this position of defining a metaphor as an interaction of thoughts, a second distinction can be introduced. More specific to the scientific process is the second distinction mentioned earlier between theory-constitutive and pedagogical metaphors which will be elaborated on in the following.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 92-94.

⁴⁵ Black uses a metaphor to explain the idea of a process of filtering. The process is likened to looking “at the night sky through a piece of heavily smoked glass on which certain lines have been left clear” whereby we “shall see only the stars that can be made to lie on the lines previously prepared upon the screen”. Black, *Models and Metaphors. Studies in Language and Philosophy*, 41.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 39-41.

⁴⁷ However, it is worth noting that the terminology of source and target domain that is prominent in conceptual metaphor theory today perpetuates this problematic view of a one-directional relationship.

Metaphors to build theories and metaphors to explain theories

Starting from Wendt's critical stance regarding the role of metaphors, I think it is important to further clarify their role in the scientific process. Boyd introduces the useful distinction between two basic types of roles, theory-constitutive and pedagogical, that metaphors can play in the scientific process.⁴⁸ This distinction adds a helpful perspective to the debate between Wendt and his critiques. The idea of the state-as-person, understood as a metaphor, can take on either role. Following Wendt's observations and applying Boyd's terminology, it can be argued that those studying the state in IR are likely to be happy to accept the state-as-person as a useful pedagogical metaphor while the idea of the state-as-person as a theory-constitutive metaphor represents a highly contested case.

According to Boyd, a pedagogical metaphor "play[s] a role in the teaching or explication of theories"⁴⁹ whereas theory-constitutive metaphors "constitute at least for a time, an irreplaceable part of the linguistic machinery of a scientific theory".⁵⁰ In that sense the latter can contribute to theory-change by introducing new concepts whereas the former helps in explaining a theory and making it more tangible for pedagogical purposes. The pedagogical metaphor is replaceable whereas the theory-constitutive one is the source of key assumptions and hypothesis about its subject.

The most important difference between pedagogical metaphors and theory-constitutive ones is that the former is, according to Boyd, conceptually open-ended whereas the latter is inductively open-ended.⁵¹ Conceptual open-endedness of the pedagogical metaphor means that associations are made and implications are drawn based on common knowledge. When a pedagogical metaphor is used some shared knowledge is presupposed and some variability for interpretation is left open. Hence, the pedagogical metaphor is aimed at explaining not at inviting further research. In contrast, while also building on a common basis of knowledge, a theory-constitutive metaphor invites the recipient to further explore aspects that are not yet

⁴⁸ For the following see also Semino for an overview and various examples. Semino, *Metaphor in Discourse*, 130-148.

⁴⁹ Boyd, 'Metaphor and Theory Change: What Is "Metaphor" a Metaphor For?', 485.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 486.

⁵¹ For this and the following explanation of the difference see *ibid.*, 488-490.

discovered or not yet understood. Potentially, a theory-constitutive metaphor invites further research and the formation of a whole new research programme. Boyd's theory-constitutive metaphor is based on the assumption that there is a similarity of some kind between source and target domain which, upon further exploration, might lead to new insights. A scientific metaphor, a term used by Boyd that I will also utilise as part of this chapter, invites this process of exploring the metaphor further. Indeed, Boyd argues that a successful research programme will invite further and further exploration. From this perspective, metaphors are a tool for further scientific exploration based on the intuition of resemblance between two entities.⁵²

⁵² It is important to stress though that Boyd's theory-constitutive metaphors are part of a process of explication that eventually leads to the metaphor being replaced by a "literal" expression. Indeed, he argues that "there seems to be no reason to doubt that such explication is possible in the case of some theory-constitutive metaphors, nor is there any reason to doubt that complete explications are often the eventual result of the attempts at explication which are central to scientific inquiry." *Ibid.*, 488.

Other perspectives on metaphor

In the following, I point to other possible approaches to metaphors that also share an interest in how a metaphor constructs knowledge. A distinction made by Sabine Maasen and Peter Weingart proves most useful for the summary I attempt in the following. They distinguish between three levels at which research about metaphors as tools for knowledge construction can be undertaken. This is particularly helpful in pointing out where the approach regarding the state-as-person developed in subsequent chapters is to be located. Maasen and Weingart are interested in analysing metaphors at what they identify as the level of discourse and delineate this perspective from a sub-discursive and supra-discursive view. It is the latter two perspectives that provide an interesting addition but also contrast to what has been said so far.

The sub-discursive perspective is best described as a bottom-up approach; metaphors are analysed at the cognitive level.⁵³ The most prominent exponents of the sub-discursive view and widely cited in general are George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. With regard to this cognitive perspective on metaphors, Lakoff and Johnson are interesting because they take a very strong position when they argue that “human *thought processes* are largely metaphorical.”⁵⁴ They take this claim furthest when they aim at analysing the metaphorical basis of major works of philosophy in their *Philosophy in the Flesh*. However, it is crucial to note that this cognitive perspective on metaphors is not a recent phenomenon. We can go back to Richards once more who, as early as 1936, pointed out that “[t]hought is metaphoric, and proceeds by comparison, and the metaphors of language derive therefrom.”⁵⁵

In the seminal *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson argue that metaphors are both cultural and embodied phenomena. The authors point to an “experiential basis” for metaphor but take that to mean “physical and cultural experience”.⁵⁶ As the title already suggests, in *Philosophy in the Flesh*, published 20 years later, they argue that all metaphors are based on embodied experience and that “our bodily experience is the primal basis for everything we can

⁵³ Maasen and Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge*, 27-33.

⁵⁴ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 6 (emphasis in original).

⁵⁵ Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 94, emphasis in original.

⁵⁶ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 19.

mean, think, know, and communicate.”⁵⁷ In that sense, Lakoff and Johnson are taking Richards perspective further by linking thought processes to embodiment.

However, against their second, stronger claim I argue that while ideas such as states-as-persons might be influenced by our experience of ourselves as (embodied) beings and (acting) subjects, concepts such as personhood, and hence states-as-persons, are more influenced by cultural ideas of what it means to be a person. For example, the conception of humans as socially atomised, selfish, and above all gain-seeking is a cultural phenomenon linked to the emergence of modern capitalism rather than a perspective that is determined by human embodiment or “human nature”.⁵⁸ Hence, conceptions of what it means to be a person or to possess personhood cannot be narrowed down to bodily experience but always have to be understood before the background of culture. I find Lakoff and Johnson’s points extremely interesting but from an ethico-political perspective they are not compatible with a project that is interested in the idea of the state-as-person in IR. Relating key concepts back to bodily experience in the way they do, an approach that can best be termed “essentialist cognitivism”, does not sit well with the idea of concepts being discursively structured and contested.⁵⁹ Lakoff and Johnson’s assumption is that there is basically no reasoning without recourse to (embodied) metaphors. While I can follow Lakoff and Johnson’s general observations, their stronger claim regarding the embodied nature of metaphors is rejected for the concept of the state-as-person. It is worth pointing out that this is not a general rejection but certainly a rejection of their emphasis on embodiment for the concept of the state-as-person developed subsequently.

The supra-discursive approach, as outlined by Maasen and Weingart, on the other hand, is a top-down approach that is interested in how metaphors can operate above the level of discourse as “cultural cosmologies” and transmitters of ideologies entering various discourses at

⁵⁷George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh. The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), xi.

⁵⁸Heikki Patomäki, *After International Relations. Critical Realism and the (Re)Construction of World Politics* (London: Routledge, 2002), 24-26.

⁵⁹As pointed out in Charlotte Fridolfsson, 'Political Protest and Metaphor', in *Politics, Language and Metaphor*, ed. Terrell Carver and Jernej Pikalo (London: Routledge, 2007), 133. In a similar way, Maasen and Weingarten also disagree with Lakoff and Johnson’s view that sees bodily experience as the only source domain for metaphors. They argue against “giving ontological, epistemological, and analytical priority to bodily experience”. Maasen and Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge*, 33.

the same time.⁶⁰ This approach is interesting because of its emphasis on how metaphorical structurings are incorporated into various discourses at the same time and can thus become powerful independent forces that operate across discourses. Maasen and Weingart maintain that in order to assume this ideological function, metaphors need to play “various roles (heuristic, epistemic, rhetorical) in various discourses”.⁶¹

Related to the Maasen and Weingart’s supra-discursive perspective is the idea of metaphor themes. “[M]etaphor themes can be central to a world view or paradigm, almost a part of metaphysics.”⁶² They can also be described, using Stephen C. Pepper’s famous term, as a “world hypotheses”. Pepper identifies four world hypotheses: formism, mechanism, contextualism, and organicism. Each of those world hypotheses is based on a root metaphor and represents a complete conceptual system from within which to interpret the world.⁶³ The root metaphor shapes how the world is perceived and what counts as scientific evidence. Every observation and every inference about the world is shaped by the root metaphor. “Each world hypothesis is autonomous. As an attempt to provide a complete view of the world, each world hypothesis creates its own field of play. Within that field of play ‘competing’ world views can be interpreted but cannot compete directly.”⁶⁴

The mechanistic world-view for example is based on the root metaphor of the machine. From the perspective of a mechanistic world hypothesis, the world consists of various parts which exist prior to and independent of the structured relations in which they are embedded. The whole is reducible to its parts and force or energy is channelled through the system. Relations are

⁶⁰ Maasen and Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge*, 27-30. The term “cultural cosmologies” is borrowed from Anne Harrington, ‘Metaphoric Connections: Holistic Science in the Shadow of the Third Reich’, *Social Research* 62, 2 (1995), 359.

⁶¹ Maasen and Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge*, 30.

⁶² Robert R. Hoffman, ‘Metaphor in Science’, in *Cognition and Figurative Language*, ed. R. P. Honeck and Robert R. Hoffman (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1980), 405.

⁶³ For a suggestion to introduce Pepper’s idea of root metaphor into IR scholarship compare Richard Little, ‘A Balance of Power’, in *Contending Images of World Politics*, ed. Greg Fry and Jacinta O’Hagan (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 50. As well as Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models*, 58. Little notes how there is an overlap between Pepper’s idea of root metaphor and Friedrich Nietzsche’s master metaphors.

⁶⁴ Steven C. Hayes, Linda J. Hayes, and Hayne W. Reese, ‘Finding the Philosophical Core: A Review of Stephen C. Pepper’s World Hypotheses: A Study in Evidence’, *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior* 50, 1 (1988), 98.

stable and outcomes are predictable.⁶⁵ In the same way, an organicist world-hypothesis will fundamentally shape ways of making sense of the world in biological terms. For the purpose of making sense of the state in international relations we can easily see how both, the mechanistic as well as the organicist framework can be utilised to create knowledge. However, the concept of the state-as-person, as it will be understood here, is based on a different world hypothesis. Following Wendt's initial suggestion that "states are people too", we are entering a world of people in interaction with other people.⁶⁶ The question then becomes not one of investigating mechanisms or biological processes but one of investigating how we as people make sense of ourselves. In this context we also need to note Pepper's insistence that

world views are orthogonal to each other and therefore cannot conflict. Apparent conflicts are really pseudo-conflicts, wherein criticisms of one world view are made in terms of the categorical concepts of another. These kinds of conflicts are illegitimate and cannot be resolved; they can only be recognized.⁶⁷

Hence, a mechanistic world view, an organicist one and a person-oriented one do not compete directly with each other but are seen as operating each from within their own conceptual system.

The two perspectives briefly outlined in this section, the sub-discursive as well as the supra-discursive view, represent two potentially valuable alternative approaches to the concept of the state-as-person. The embodied approach by Lakoff and Johnson leads to the question to what extent some form of anthropomorphisation of in-animate objects is a "human" tendency, a cognitive inevitability that is clearest in folk psychology and indirectly influences lay persons and scholars alike. The supra-discursive view when linked to the idea of world hypotheses and root metaphors entails the question whether metaphorical conceptualisations of states should be regarded as linked to a variety of discourses and wider cultural phenomena. Root metaphors can be made useful to compare theories and understand their difference, for example, in the

⁶⁵ For an overview of the argument presented here compare *ibid.*

⁶⁶ The key points in this regard are his utilisation of symbolic interactionist accounts in *Social Theory* and his emphasis on psychological personhood in "The state as person in international theory".

⁶⁷ Hayes, Hayes, and Reese, 'Finding the Philosophical Core: A Review of Stephen C. Pepper's World Hypotheses: A Study in Evidence', 105.

following I will argue how Kenneth N. Waltz and Wendt differ with regard to their world hypothesis when it comes to systemic interactions.

Both of these perspectives are extremely interesting questions but neither is the one pursued here. What I am mainly interested in here with regard to the state-as-person is located at the same level as Maasen and Weingart's discursive view. While a link between ideas of states-as-persons and cognitive tendencies on the one hand as well as culture-specific metaphor themes on the other are interesting to explore, here I aim to develop the metaphor the state-as-person with a focus on utilising concepts of states and concepts of persons to select elements for the source and target domain of the metaphor and exploring the consequences of this interanimation of thoughts.

A definition and two distinctions

While I have given an overview of how metaphors can be approached and the specific interest in what is called, borrowing Boyd's term, a scientific metaphor, in the following I aim at bringing the aspects outlined above together by providing a working-definition for the remainder of this thesis. It is important to note that the term scientific metaphor is not meant to imply a specific commitment to a particular philosophy of science perspective. Rather, the term is meant to emphasise an interest in the role played by metaphors as part of knowledge production in IR and specifically as part of theory-building. Based on what I described above, the working-definition employed here is the following.

A scientific metaphor is a process whereby one concept is thought of in terms of another. This process is to be understood as an interanimation of thoughts and is potentially open-ended. Based on this interanimation of thoughts, a scientific metaphor invites further research and exploration of connections between concepts. The connections established between the two elements of a metaphor highlight or create similarities while hiding differences. A scientific metaphor constitutes the assumptions made within a theoretical framework in important ways. The nature of this process allows for exchanges between two different discourses or disciplines. In that sense, a scientific metaphor can serve as an interdisciplinary bridge-builder and a tool for incorporating concepts from other disciplines by making them useful for the realm under investigation.

The emphasis on process in this working definition is worth noting. It aims at pointing to the fluidity inherent in a metaphor and its role in the scientific process. There are three points worth stressing related to metaphors as a process. First, a scientific metaphor involves a process of discovery whereby new relations between source and target domain are made explicit. Secondly, under a general metaphor theme, there is a variety of different metaphors to be explored and developed.⁶⁸ Thirdly, metaphors have the potential to bring two different subjects or disciplines together or of informing various discourses at the same time. In this sense, they foster interdisciplinary and the incorporation of new concepts into IR. All three processes are never complete.

⁶⁸ Hoffman, 'Metaphor in Science', 406.

Having suggested a tentative definition, it is equally important to point to differences between metaphors as they are understood here and other terms that are sometimes used interchangeably. For example, a number of different conceptualisations of the relationship between analogy and metaphor exist and there seems to be a tendency to use the terms metaphor and analogy interchangeably.

When the terms analogy and metaphor are used interchangeably, they are cast in the same category because they both establish a relation between two different entities, concepts or realms. Wendt, for example, uses these terms interchangeably; when describing a tendency of mainstream IR he argues “[s]tate personhood is a useful fiction, analogy, metaphor, or shorthand for something else.”⁶⁹ Similarly, in Dedre Gentner’s terminology, analogy is used as a neutral term for “any non-literal similarity comparison”.⁷⁰ For her, metaphors are a special case of analogy.

However, we can contrast this with a narrower definition of analogy that draws on its usage in logic. In this narrower sense analogy is taken to describe “a process of arguing from similarity in known respects to similarity in other respects”.⁷¹ This is usually taken to mean that if two things are similar in some respects they *will* also be similar in other respects. When analysing the *domestic analogy*, Hidemi Suganami introduces and stresses this point.⁷² In this narrower sense, an analogy has to be sharply distinguished from a metaphor.⁷³ In Boyd’s conception for example, the similarities established between the two domains of a metaphor invite us to search for further commonalities. However, similarities in some respects cannot be taken to infer similarities in other respects. To the contrary, metaphors highlight commonality while hiding differences and can operate in the face of the tension between the similarities that are highlighted and the differences that are hidden.

⁶⁹ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 289.

⁷⁰ Gentner, 'Are Scientific Analogies Metaphors?', 108.

⁷¹ Soanes and Stenson, eds., *Oxford Dictionary of English*, 55.

⁷² Hidemi Suganami, *The Domestic Analogy and World Order Proposals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 24-27.

⁷³ Similarly, in her *Men and States* Chiara Bottici points to the usage of the term in Aristotle and Plato and introduces the distinction between mathematical and geometrical analogy. Both instances represent a much stricter understanding of analogy than what is commonly in use today. Bottici, *Men and States. Rethinking the Domestic Analogy in a Global Age*, 19-20.

But even when we use the wider definition of analogy advanced by Gentner, analogy and metaphor should only be used interchangeably when one point of caution is acknowledged. Gentner's definition of analogy implies a comparison. But as we have seen, there is more going on in a metaphor than a simple comparison. Indeed, it was argued that the rejection of the comparison view of metaphors is a key element for taking them more seriously as a theory-constitutive element. This can be contrasted with Elliot Zashin and Phillip C. Chapman's description of the difference between analogies and metaphors. For them, analogies and metaphors become prevalent at different stages of the thought process. Whereas a metaphor brings about associations of ideas based on images, feelings, and connotations, an analogy is more abstract, operates through explicit comparison, and is utilised at a later, more deliberate stage of the thought process.⁷⁴ In contrast, from the perspective taken here which will be outlined in more detail in the last section of this chapter the goal is not to eventually replace the "vagueness" of the metaphor with an explicit comparison. Rather, it is precisely the quality of the metaphor as an interanimation of thoughts, irreducible to a direct comparison, that creates its value as a knowledge creating tool.

A last distinction needs to be made based on the type of inference that is implied when utilising metaphors as tools for theory-building. Metaphors establish a relation between two distinct realms as part of which elements from one realm (source domain) are carried over and made to fit the other realm (target domain) so that the latter can be seen and investigated from a new perspective. This needs to be clearly distinguished from processes of deduction. Deduction as a type of inference is the application of a general principle to a specific case; it can be described as a top-down approach that moves from the general principle to the specific case. Further, a deductive conclusion necessarily follows and must be true when the premises of the argument are true.

The idea of the state-as-person could be approached from a deductive as well as from a metaphorical perspective. From the deductive perspective, we would argue that elements of a

⁷⁴ Compare Elliot Zashin and Phillip C. Chapman, 'The Uses of Metaphor and Analogy: Toward a Renewal of Political Language', *The Journal of Politics* 36, 2 (1974), 310-311. Zashin and Chapman's view is categorized as a positivist perspective on metaphors by Richard Little. For an overview of the "positivist view" on metaphors see Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models*, 56-57.

general definition of what it entails to be a person are applicable to people and states alike.⁷⁵ In that sense, “states are people too” because they share general characteristics with people. States and people are essentially of the same kind.

In contrast to a deductive approach, metaphorical reasoning operates not hierarchically but horizontally. The argument here is that parts of a concept of person can be used to generate new knowledge about the seemingly more abstract concept of the state. In the case of an argument from metaphor, the state is seen as a person in certain respects not because states and people are of the same kind but because concepts of states are brought into contact with concepts of persons to generate new insights about the former. However, it needs to be stressed again that this is different from reasoning by analogy, understood in the narrower sense, which states that similarities in some aspects necessarily imply similarities in other aspects. In fact, while a metaphor highlights and creates commonalities between subjects, at the same time, it can hide differences.

⁷⁵ Compare for example the notion of moral agency of the state developed by Toni Erskine. Erskine, 'Assigning Responsibilities to Institutional Moral Agents: The Case of States and Quasi-States'.

Metaphors in IR theory

Although an increasing interest in metaphors can clearly be identified since the linguistic and post-modern turn in the social sciences, with few exceptions there is still no significant or structured engagement with metaphors in IR scholarship and especially with the question of how to utilise them in IR theorising.⁷⁶ Maasen and Weingart, for example, point out that while an increasing number of social scientists take metaphors more seriously and allow for them to take on functions beyond a role as figure of speech, studies on metaphors in the social sciences are still a “minority issue” and lack a “common approach”.⁷⁷ In IR scholarship, the constitutive, as opposed to mere descriptive or rhetorical, role of language has gained some currency as a potential aspect of study.⁷⁸ Yet, even where these approaches occupy a more central position in the discipline, theoretical work on metaphors is still largely missing.⁷⁹ Richard Little, for example, remarks critically that “[t]oo little attention has been paid in the analysis of IR to the metaphorical dimension of the subject.”⁸⁰

What Little criticises as a lacuna in IR scholarship here has to be understood, at least in part, before the background of the subject’s understanding of what it means to work scientifically. Large parts of IR scholarship, especially in the mainstream, share Wendt’s unease about metaphors, at least when it comes to their role as part of the “scientific process”. Drawing on Colin Wight we can observe how “contemporary disciplinary practice equates science with positivism”.⁸¹ Keeping this in mind, the mainstream critique of metaphors that sees them as lacking the precision of literal statements and thus being unsuitable for scientific purposes is unsurprising.

⁷⁶ Maasen and Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge*, 27.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Compare the constructivism of Karin Fierke and Nicholas Onuf for example. Fierke, 'Wittgenstein and International Relations Theory'. Nicholas Onuf, *World of Our Making. Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1989).

⁷⁹ This is a critique issued by Rainer Hülse for example. Rainer Hülse, 'Sprache Ist Mehr Als Argumentation. Zur Wirklichkonstituierenden Rolle Von Metaphern', *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen* 10, 2 (2003).

⁸⁰ Little makes these remarks with the concept of balance of power in mind. Little, 'A 'Balance of Power'', 60.

⁸¹ Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 17. Compare also Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 3-10.

Yet, it is worth reminding ourselves that “science means different things to different people” and each account is built on certain metaphysical assumptions.⁸² The critique of metaphors as unscientific is mostly voiced by scholars with an expressed commitment to positivism. However, if we take the idea that science means different things to different people seriously, this “suspicion” towards metaphors does not preclude scholars holding other metaphysical assumptions from valuing metaphors as a key part of *their* scientific process.

With Jackson we can also argue that this drive for scientificness, and hence the denouncement of metaphors as unscientific, is linked to the cultural prestige that comes with the label. Jackson points out how “scientificness” can serve as a “very appealing rhetorical weapon” against approaches that lie outside of what is deemed acceptable.⁸³ Hence, I argue that in a first instance, describing a metaphor as unscientific, as a mere figure of speech, is in itself a rhetorical move. Whether or not metaphors can serve as what I call scientific metaphors is a question that can only be answered by looking at the specific philosophy of science commitments made.⁸⁴

Apart from the cultural prestige associated with the label “scientific” and its specific understanding in mainstream IR, there is at least one other reason to be taken into account when it comes to understanding the resistance against metaphors taking on a role other than being a figure of speech. The need to establish the relatively young discipline of IR has led to further suspicions with regard to metaphorical reasoning which “is thought not to have the certainty of logical deduction or the firmness of scientific induction” and appears “to be less than fully satisfactory”.⁸⁵ In addition, there seems to be a tendency to emphasise the unique character of IR and to regard the incorporation of findings from other disciplines with suspicion.

⁸² Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 17.

⁸³ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 17.

⁸⁴ This move, of linking an understanding of metaphors as an interanimation of thoughts with different philosophy of science commitments regarding the relation between mind and world, will be introduced in the last section of this chapter. The distinction between different philosophy of science commitments with regard to how mind and world are said to relate to each other will be based on Jackson’s distinction between mind-world monism and mind-world dualism. Compare *ibid.*, 37.

⁸⁵ Hidemi Suganami, 'Reflections on the Domestic Analogy: The Case of Bull, Beitz and Linklater', *Review of International Studies* 12, 2 (1986), 146. Here Suganami summarizes the critique of “contemporary students of international relations” regarding the domestic analogy.

To illustrate this observation, it is worth taking a closer look at Hedley Bull's rejection of the domestic analogy that was alluded to in the introduction to this chapter.⁸⁶ In the essay "Society and Anarchy in International Relations" published in the seminal *Diplomatic Investigations*, Bull discusses the anarchical character of IR, possibilities for the formation of a society of states, and the role of the domestic analogy. Bull's aim is, first, to show that anarchy is *not* incompatible with the formation of an international society. Secondly, he aims to argue against the so-called *domestic* analogy, the "argument from the experience of individual men in domestic society to the experience of states".⁸⁷ Undoubtedly, it is important for analytical purposes to point to the differences between the domestic and the international realm. However, drawing this clear dividing line between on the one hand the domestic realm and on the other hand the international realm serves an important function here as a means of delineating discipline. For Bull, "to determine the limits of the domestic analogy" is to "establish the autonomy of international relations".⁸⁸ And while he recognises a partial usefulness of the domestic analogy he insists that

[w]e must, however, at some point abandon the domestic analogy altogether. Not only is this because the attempt to understand something by means of analogies with something else is a sign of infancy in a subject, an indication of lack of familiarity with our own subject-matter. But also because international society is unique, and owes its character to qualities that are peculiar to the situation of sovereign states, as well as to those it has in common with the lives of individuals in domestic society.⁸⁹

In the passage following this quotation, Bull points out how the international realm differs from the domestic and how the state differs from the person. I agree that it is indeed important to point to these differences and, by the same token, point to the limits of the analogy by shedding

⁸⁶ Other English School thinkers who reject the domestic analogy are Charles Manning and James Mayall. Compare *ibid.*, 146 as well as 157, fn 12. Manning, much like Bull, insists on the separateness of international relations. However, his critique of the domestic analogy does not go hand in hand with a general critique of metaphors in the scientific process. Compare Charles A. W. Manning, *The Nature of International Society* (New York: Wiley, 1962).

⁸⁷ Bull, 'Society and Anarchy in International Relations', 35. Compare also Suganami, 'Reflections on the Domestic Analogy: The Case of Bull, Beitz and Linklater'.

⁸⁸ Bull, 'Society and Anarchy in International Relations', 35-36.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 45.

light on the differences that remain hidden.⁹⁰ However, given the approach towards scientific metaphors that forms the basis of this project, the claim that a subject could be studied in isolation is unconvincing.

Further, Bull suggests that a greater familiarity with our subject will allow us to eventually overcome any kind of metaphorical thinking. This suggests that we can make progress to a point where we can shed metaphorical reasoning and are able to make sense of things in themselves.⁹¹ In contrast, the argument pursued here is that while it is important to acknowledge that the international realm is unique, the point worth emphasising is that it can neither be conceived nor studied without being first imagined. Before we can study IR, a decision needs to be made with regard to what the key elements of the discipline are. Metaphors play a key role in this process. Rather than seeing metaphors as a sign of infancy of the subject, a careful analysis and selection of key metaphors of the discipline, be it the idea of the state-as-person or the balance of power, is a sign of maturity that acknowledges how knowledge production often proceeds via a metaphorical process.

Starting from this premise, I pursue two aims in the following. In the remainder of this section, I aim to outline two approaches in IR theory that explicitly recognise the role of metaphors. Most notably are the contributions by Michael Marks as well as Richard Little.⁹² In these two cases, metaphors are not seen as a sign of infancy of the subject but as an indispensable part of how the discipline makes sense of its subject matter. Secondly, in the following section it will be important to go back to Wendt's idea of the state-as-person. The question raised here is

⁹⁰ As elaborated in the previous section, analogy in a very broad sense can, to a certain extent, be used synonymously with metaphor. I am using the term analogy in this sense here and understand Bull to also use the term in such a broader sense.

⁹¹ It is worth noting that work by Richard Boyd would indeed suggest a process that, while it acknowledges that metaphors are indispensable in theory building, ultimately aims at explication of the metaphors and hence their abandonment. Boyd, 'Metaphor and Theory Change: What Is "Metaphor" a Metaphor For?', 489. This perspective has to be understood as being related to Boyd's commitment to philosophical realism which becomes evident when he, for example, argues that "the use of metaphor is one of many devices available to the scientific community to accomplish the task of *accommodation of language to the causal structure of the world.*" Ibid., 483. The view on metaphor taken here is a different one. Following a strong constructivism, the metaphor is given a constitutive function. For this kind of constructivism compare Fierke, 'Wittgenstein and International Relations Theory'. And for similar suggestions regarding the role of metaphors, see Hülse, 'Sprache Ist Mehr Als Argumentation. Zur Wirklichkonstituierenden Rolle Von Metaphern '. The last section of this chapter will deal with this argument in more detail.

⁹² Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models*. Marks, *Metaphors in International Relations Theory*. And Michael P. Marks, *The Prison as Metaphor. Re-Imagining International Relations* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004).

whether or not we can interpret Wendt's work as being reliant on some form of metaphorical reasoning despite his overt rejection of what he calls *as-if* approaches.⁹³ I will argue that his state-as-person and his concept of a quantum social science are reliant on a metaphorical process. The quantum social science and the state-as-person have theory constitutive metaphors at their heart. This is an important point because this interpretation of Wendt, if accepted, highlights how metaphorical processes cannot be escaped in knowledge production entirely.

However, first, some recent engagements with metaphors that encourage the use of metaphors as tools of knowledge construction in IR are worth noting. In *The prison as metaphor* Marks is interested in developing a metaphor for states and inter-state relations based on the experiential context of the prison. After having analysed dynamics in prisons from a sociological perspective he transfers these findings to the international realm and aims at drawing lessons for IR. The first three chapters on metaphors in general and metaphors in IR are noteworthy for they make a strong plea for greater acceptance of metaphors in IR theorising and knowledge-construction. Marks takes this aim a step further in his 2011 book *Metaphors in International Relations Theory*, where he analyses metaphors of power and international security as well as game theory metaphors in greater detail. In this context, metaphors are not seen as a weakness of the subject but as an indispensable part of its analytic machinery.

Richard Little's focus on the role that metaphors can potentially play in IR stems from his interest in the concept of the balance of power. In his 2006 book, *The Balance of Power in International Relations*, Little introduces two key moves with regard to metaphors. The first move is to identify the balance of power as "a simple but extremely effective and universally applicable metaphor".⁹⁴ For Little this goes hand in hand with also acknowledging that a metaphor has "the capacity to transform the established meaning of a concept".⁹⁵ And in a second step he aims to "associate the concept with a model" and to "suggest that attempts to model the balance of power directly or indirectly draw on its metaphorical and mythical status".⁹⁶ Little analyses four key IR scholars – Hans Morgenthau, Hedley Bull, Kenneth N. Waltz,

⁹³ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 289.

⁹⁴ Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models*, 13.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

and John Mearsheimer – with regard to their usage of balance of power concepts. He suggests that we can start from the balance of power as a root metaphor, to use Stephen C. Peppers' term introduced in the previous section again.⁹⁷ Taking the balance of power as a root metaphor, Little outlines two possible interpretations. On the one hand, we encounter the image of weighing scales that brings about the idea of an *adversarial* political equilibrium and conflictual behaviour. On the other hand, the balance of power can be imagined as an arch or a body which is linked with an *associational* political equilibrium and the corresponding more cooperative behaviour.⁹⁸

These two examples can serve as a first indication of a change of perspective from a suspicion towards metaphors to an acceptance of their potential role in theorising and knowledge production. As we have seen in the previous chapter, it is crucial for Wendt to emphasise that the state-as-person is not simply a metaphor but also engages the hard ontological question of what the state really is. However, this makes asking the question of whether or not a metaphorical process can be ascribed to his idea of the state-as-person all the more crucial. In a similar vein, a look at the later developed concept of a quantum social science is also instructive.

⁹⁷ Little introduces Pepper specifically for this purpose. Compare *ibid.*

⁹⁸ For an overview compare *ibid.*, 86.

Metaphors in Wendt's work

As argued in the previous chapter, Wendt's concept of the state-as-person is an important starting point for this project. His insistence on the state-as-person being real stems from his commitment to scientific realism which in turn is his solution to finding a *via media* for combining a positivistic epistemology with an idealistic ontology.⁹⁹ Similarly, his sceptical position towards and criticism of what he calls *as-if* or metaphorical approaches that runs through his most recent works on the state-as-person comes from this commitment.¹⁰⁰

To begin with, it is interesting to note that the same firm rejection of metaphorical approaches cannot be found in Wendt's work prior to *Social Theory*. In his 1992 article, "Anarchy is what states make of it", Wendt does not reject terms such as analogy or metaphor. On the contrary, he is happy to admit that anthropomorphic conceptions of the state are a form of analogy. He "assume[s] that a theoretical productive analogy can be made between individuals and states".¹⁰¹ In the same article, Wendt outlines the idea of a first contact between two actors in IR. And he describes this first contact as a metaphorical situation.¹⁰² He then goes on to use the metaphor of a first contact as the basis for a thought experiment that illustrates how the process of signalling, interpreting, and responding that takes place during the first encounter creates social meaning and ultimately identities and interest.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ For a critical discussion of interpreting scientific realism as a *via media* position between these two poles compare Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 17-18.

¹⁰⁰ Compare Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory'.

¹⁰¹ Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics', 397, fn 21. For another example of the term analogy being employed in a positive context by Wendt see also *ibid.*, 422-423.

¹⁰² He adds in a footnote that "[t]his situation is not entirely metaphorical in world politics". Here, he aims at pointing out that historically, first contacts have been taking place and that it is worth studying these as historical case studies. However, this qualification does not take away from the point that the idea of a first contact is taken to be metaphor which forms the basis of a useful thought experiment. *Ibid.*, 404, fn 47.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 404-406. For a similar account compare Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 328-329. It is very interesting to note that in *Social Theory*, Wendt avoids the terms analogy and metaphor in connection with what he now calls First Encounter. He uses the term "base model" (p. 328) with regards to the First Encounter and also distinguishes it from "real life situations" (p. 329). Both phrases underline that the First Encounter is an abstraction from reality. Yet, the absence of the term metaphor or analogy, which is unsurprising given Wendt's strong commitment made in the first half of the book, is worth noting – especially when seen in contrast to his 1992 article "Anarchy is what state make of it". The argumentative and theoretical move made, namely employing a thought experiment, is similar. It seems that only the terminology used to describe what this move is, is different.

Secondly, it is also important to note that at times, as will be argued below, Wendt's outright rejection of a metaphorical treatment of the state does seem to be at odds with how he then actually proceeds to argue that the state *is* a person. This forms the question that will be pursued in the following: can we identify a metaphorical process in Wendt's work despite his explicit rejection of metaphors?

In *Social Theory*, Wendt is critical of *as-if* thinking with regard to the state-as-person. There are a number of passages in the text that can be used to exemplify this position. For example, at the beginning of his chapter on "The state and the problem of corporate agency" he argues "that states are real actors to which we can legitimately attribute anthropomorphic qualities like desires, beliefs and intentionality".¹⁰⁴ This, for Wendt, establishes the state as a person. However, far from establishing the state-as-person in a self-evident way, this and similar quotations, in my opinion, raise the question of what it entails to attribute qualities to an entity. *To attribute* qualities to an entity seems to be different from saying that an entity *has* these qualities. The choice of words in the quotation seems to indicate that there is something more going on than simply observing that the state is a person. It seems that an additional step, an additional process is needed that the term "attribution" points to. Likewise, the criteria for what counts as a "legitimate" attribution would need further elaboration. In line with the argument advanced in the previous section, we can ask whether this attribution is part of a deductive or a metaphorical process. In other words, can these qualities be attributed because states and persons are of the same kind or because ideas of states and ideas of persons are brought into an interanimation of thoughts, to use Richards' term, that enables us to perceive states as persons?¹⁰⁵

In *Social Theory*, Wendt allows for metaphors to play a very confined role as sources of inspiration and providers of ideas. This is linked to his philosophical realist commitments. He points out that while metaphors can be sources of inspiration, beyond the stage of early research they are to be replaced by non-metaphorical concepts. It is worth looking at the precise role that Wendt assigns to metaphors from this point of view. He argues that

¹⁰⁴ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 197.

¹⁰⁵ Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*.

[i]n the realist view, the theorist baptizes an unobservable phenomenon by proposing a description of its properties and some hypotheses about how these relate to observable effects. Essentially when dealing with unobservables the realist – in natural as much as social science – is combining a causal with a description theory of reference. This baptizing often occurs *through metaphors*.¹⁰⁶

As an example of this baptising function, Wendt points to Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*. He points out how "[i]n good realist fashion, Waltz baptized the structure of the states system with a three-part definition (description), and a market metaphor for thinking about its effects."¹⁰⁷ This, utilising a market metaphor and thereby drawing on the concept of the *homo economicus* that is prevalent in micro-economics, has profound consequences for how Waltz conceptualises the interactions between states.¹⁰⁸ As we have seen in the previous chapter, Waltz allows only for the behaviour of states to be influenced at the systemic level which is a perspective in line with the micro-economic conception of the market.¹⁰⁹ This is precisely what Wendt argues against in his *Social Theory* by allowing systemic interactions to not only influence behaviour but also identities and interests.

¹⁰⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 63, emphasis added.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 63. In addition, it is worth debating whether Waltz's approaches is indeed a scientific realist one, as Wendt suggests. Jackson, for example, cites Waltz as a key example of what he calls the analyticist tradition. According to Jackson, the analyticist differs from the philosophical realist in two key ways. Focusing on one of these dimensions, the question of philosophical ontology, we can say that the analyticist subscribes to a mind-world monist view whereas the critical realist is a mind-world dualist. This is a key important difference. Waltz as an analyticist is not interested in comparing theories with an independently existing world. Rather, Waltz points out that theories "construct a reality, but no one can ever say that it is *the* reality". This is fundamentally different from a philosophical realist perspective and from Wendt's approach. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Relations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), 9. As quoted in Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 113 compare also 37 as well as 112-155.

¹⁰⁸ Compare for example Wendt, 'Constructing International Politics', 72. The other metaphor that Wendt identifies in Waltz draws on sociobiology and introduces the concept of natural selection to international relations. Compare Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 100.

¹⁰⁹ Wendt interprets Waltz's metaphor as bringing together the concept of the state in international relations on the one hand and the idea of companies in a free market on the other hand. He argues that "just as what matters in assessing the structure of a market is only the number and size of firms, so in international politics what matters is only the number and power of states". Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 99. For the concept of *homo economicus* in Waltz see also *ibid.*, 321. For other analyses of Waltz's use of micro-economics as a source domain for the metaphor of the international system compare Anna Wieslander, 'Metaphors, Thought and Theory: The Case of Neorealism and Bipolarity', *Statsvetenskaplig Tidskrift* 98, 2 (1995), 134.

Having established the idea that metaphors are relevant for knowledge construction, this difference can now be interpreted as resulting from two different root metaphors underlying Wendt's and Waltz's work. On the one hand, systemic interactions between states are conceptualised through recourse to the metaphor of the market and the person as a utility maximiser as developed in micro-economics. On the other hand, systemic interactions are captured through the concept of a first encounter between people and symbolic exchanges that create a common culture. Expressing this difference in a very oversimplified way, we can say that on the one hand, in Waltz, we encounter *homo economicus* and on the other hand, in Wendt, we encounter *homo sociologicus*.¹¹⁰ Pointing to this difference in root metaphors is also another way of highlighting the move away from a materialist conception of systemic interactions in Waltz to an "ideas almost all the way down" conception of systemic interactions in Wendt.

Interestingly, while Wendt points to the important role that the metaphor of the market inspired by micro-economics plays in Waltz's structural account, his own conception of the state-as-person and systemic interactions conceived of as symbolic interactions is not portrayed in similar terms.¹¹¹ As we have seen, Wendt reserves a limited role for metaphors to play as part of a scientific realist perspective and uses Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* as an example. However, what Wendt calls their baptising function is not taken up with regard to his own concept of the state-as-person. Wendt identifies a market metaphor in the case of Waltz and building on that we should also ask what baptising metaphor was utilised by Wendt himself.

The state already seems to be a person without a metaphorical baptising of the concept of the state-as-person being needed. Wendt's miracle argument, the notion that it would be a miracle if the concept of the state-as-person had survived for so long in IR without the state *really* being

¹¹⁰ For this distinction compare for example Kai Alderson. Alderson uses it to contrast two extreme positions on conceptions of human beings. These are also reflected in IR and the conceptualisation of the state and the potentials for socialisation of states. Interestingly, he describes the *homo economicus* position as the dominant one in IR and associates *homo sociologicus* with constructivism (more precisely with those constructivist that are specifically interested in norms such as Finnemore and Sikkink). Kai Alderson, 'Making Sense of State Socialization', *Review of International Studies* 27, 3 (2001), 420-422.

¹¹¹ When referring to Waltz's conception of systemic interaction, Wendt uses mostly the term analogy, not metaphor, throughout *Social Theory*. However, as outlined in the previous section, the two terms can be understood synonymously in this case. For references to Waltz's usage of an analogy with micro-economics compare Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 15-16, 19, 40, 99, 285.

a person, seems to provide the short-cut from the metaphorical baptising of a concept to the “reality” of the concept.¹¹²

This is problematic. As we saw in the previous chapter, Wendt follows the scientific realist idea of progress in science that holds that “the best explanation for the success of science is that we are getting closer to the structure of reality”.¹¹³ However, while, as Wendt argues, the state-as-person might be seen as the current best explanation, it does not follow that the current best explanation also represents how things *really* are. While scientific realists would argue that metaphors play an important role in the scientific process, they also argue that part of that process is ultimately to explicate these metaphors.¹¹⁴ Yet, this does not mean that the current best explanation, from Wendt’s perspective the concept of the state-as-person, could not (still) be metaphorical in nature.

In the following, I introduce a few observations that support the belief that we do actually encounter a metaphorical process in Wendt’s state-as-person. To begin with, I maintain that in *Social Theory* as well as in “The state as person” we can observe how aspects of two different concepts are thought of at the same time and how they are brought into contact with each other: the person on the one hand and the state on the other. There is clearly a process of transference of ideas taking place as part of which knowledge about individual human beings is used to make sense of the state.

In his 2004 article, “The state as person in international theory”, Wendt begins with a critique of what he calls treatments of state personhood as a “useful fiction, analogy, [or] metaphor”.¹¹⁵ However, his starting point to argue that the state *is* a person is the individual human being. Wendt asks, “What is a person?”¹¹⁶ He then argues that “[a]s a baseline for thinking about the psychological personhood of states we first need to define it at the individual level”.¹¹⁷ This indicates that in this case we do not encounter a deductive argument proceeding from a general definition of what it means to be a person that is applicable to both, individuals and states.

¹¹² For an elaboration of Wendt’s miracle argument see *ibid.*, 64-67.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹¹⁴ Compare Boyd, 'Metaphor and Theory Change: What Is "Metaphor" a Metaphor For?'

¹¹⁵ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 291.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 292.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 295.

Rather, Wendt proceeds from concepts associated with individual human beings to the concept of the state.

As outlined in the previous chapter, based on insights from the analysis of individual human beings, Wendt identifies three requirements for personhood: intentionality, being an organism, and possessing consciousness.¹¹⁸ In further fleshing out these three criteria, we can see how elements identified with regard to the individual human being in mind are utilised to structure an understanding of the state. This underlines the impression that we encounter a process of transference of ideas in this case and hence a case of metaphorical thinking. To utilise a metaphor is to think of one thing in terms of another and to have these two thoughts present at the same time.

Taking the criteria of “being an organism” as an example is instructive in this regard. Wendt outlines in what ways criteria found at the individual level can be adopted to describe states. Conceptually, we can see a subtle shift away from the person and towards a general notion of organism taking place. Wendt concludes that “[i]n sum, with organisms states share substantial individuality, organisation, homeostasis and autonomy, but they are also different in two key aspects: states are composed of autonomous individuals, and they do not engage in genetic reproduction.”¹¹⁹ The solution Wendt offers, by drawing on the study of insect colonies, is to conceive of states as “superorganisms”.¹²⁰

From the perspective of scientific metaphors three points can be offered in response to Wendt. First, we need to pay attention to the conceptual shift that is taking place here from the person to the organism. Being an organism is one of the three criteria Wendt outlines with the individual human being in mind. However, when outlining the idea of a state as an organism, he draws on general definitions of life as put forward from within a philosophy of biology framework.¹²¹ While a general definition of life applies, of course, to the person as well, this is nevertheless a subtle shift in the source domain of the metaphor which in turn leads to a

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 296.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 309.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 309-311.

¹²¹ Wendt references for example Pier. L. Luisi, 'About Various Definitions of Life', *Origins of life and evolution of the biosphere* 28, 4-6 (1998). Kim Sterelny and Paul Griffiths, *Sex and Death. An Introduction to Philosophy of Biology* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999). And Carol E. Cleland and Christopher F. Chyba, 'Defining "Life"', *Origins of life and evolution of the biosphere* 32, 4 (2002).

fundamental shift regarding what aspects of states are highlighted and what aspects are hidden and which ones are emphasised as being integral to a theory of the state in IR.

Second, Wendt then moves from the concept of the organism which according to him is not applicable to the state to the concept of a superorganism. The first point of caution to be noted here is that the concept of a superorganism as utilised in biology is itself best understood as a metaphor. In this case, the individual organism serves as a source domain to provide a conceptual understanding of insect colonies. Here, I follow the argument that the conceptualisation of a beehive as a single organism, a superorganism, is best understood as a scientific metaphor.¹²² Wendt on the other hand describes this perspective as “a more sceptical view” and focuses on scholars who argue that superorganisms in biology actually *exist*.¹²³ However, even if we accepted that the concept of a superorganism in biology is not a metaphor, it still remains to be argued why the state could also be conceived of as a superorganism in a non-metaphorical way. Drawing on findings from biology, the concept cannot self-evidently be applied to states. It is this “application”, taking the form of a deduction or metaphorical process that deserves further questioning. From the perspective of scientific metaphors, to employ a concept developed within the domain of biology to the social world has to be understood, at least in a first instance, as a metaphorical process.¹²⁴

Interestingly, the claim that Wendt is essentially engaging in metaphorical thinking with regard to his state-as-person has not been brought up by his critics with the exception of Iver B. Neumann who focuses on organic metaphors in Wendt and, based on that, marks him as a dated Durkheimian.¹²⁵

¹²² Sandra D. Mitchell, 'The Superorganism Metaphor: Then and Now', in *Biology as Society, Society as Biology: Metaphors. Yearbook in the Sociology of Science*, ed. Sabine Maasen, Everett Mendelsohn, and Peter Weingart (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1995).

¹²³ Wendt draws on David S. Wilson and Elliott Sober who argue that “superorganisms are more than just a theoretical possibility; they actually exist in nature.” David S. Wilson and Elliott Sober, 'Reviving the Superorganism', *Journal of Theoretical Biology* 136, 3 (1989), 338. Compare also Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 310, fn 398.

¹²⁴ For an explicit acknowledgement of the usage of the beehive as a metaphor to understand human sociality compare Selin Kesebir, 'The Superorganism Account of Human Sociality: How and When Human Groups Are Like Beehives', *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 16, 3 (2012).

¹²⁵ Neumann, 'Beware of Organicism: The Narrative Self of the State'. For the term “dated Durkheimian” compare Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 306.

There is one additional example that can be mentioned in support of the claim that Wendt might be engaging in metaphorical thinking despite openly shunning metaphors. His book chapter “*Social Theory as Cartesian science*” is especially interesting in this regard. Wendt again argues explicitly against a metaphorical approach, yet an argument can be made that he is actually engaging in a metaphorical process. Indeed, this argument may even be preferable to an insistence on the reality of a quantum *social* world. Wendt starts by pointing out how a Cartesian worldview is influencing much of the social sciences, including his own argument in *Social Theory*. He then points out that such a worldview is unsuitable to explain consciousness. Wendt associates the Cartesian world view with classical physics. Hence, he suggests replicating the move from classical physics to a quantum approach for the social sciences. From the perspective of scientific metaphors this can be interpreted as a suggestion to change the world hypothesis, the root metaphor, of social science in general and IR in particular.

After having outlined some of the basic assumptions of quantum theory and how they work in overturning the classical worldview, Wendt turns to developing the “quantum consciousness hypothesis” that, in his own words enables a “quantum explanation of human consciousness”.¹²⁶ After having gone through these steps, Wendt introduces three hypotheses that flow from his consideration and are meant to guide the way towards a quantum model of men and society. “1) social systems have wave functions that constitute a collective unconscious; 2) these wave functions collapse by a process of ‘intra-action’ described by quantum game theory; and, most speculatively, 3) social systems are superorganisms with collective consciousness”.¹²⁷

Focusing on the first two points, I argue that this is another instance in which we encounter the workings of a metaphor. Similar to saying that the state *is* a person, a suggestion that social systems *have* wave functions is not self-evident. A wave function is defined and works in the realm of quantum physics in what ways it also applies to social systems is something that needs to be established first.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Wendt, 'Social Theory as Cartesian Science: An Auto-Critique from a Quantum Perspective', 190.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 197.

¹²⁸ This process is in part reflected in Wendt’s cautious emphasis that what he aims at is a “weak version” of quantum theory. This weak version shares an isomorphic structure with the original but is modified to take the macro-world into account. Ibid., 196-197, fn 132.

Similar to *Social Theory* and “The states as person in international theory”, Wendt explicitly cautions against the use of metaphor. He argues: “[i]f the quantum consciousness hypothesis is true then the elementary units of social life, human subjects, are quantum systems – not just metaphorically or by analogy, but really.”¹²⁹ He goes on to explain why this “stronger” claim is necessary for him. When guarding against a metaphorical perspective, Wendt cites Akrivoulis, who develops a quantum reading of world politics by using a metaphorical approach to quantum theory. Wendt answers: “I admire [Akrivoulis’s] work, but believe it would be more compelling still with a naturalistic foundation. Metaphors are optional and may be contested, whereas if the quantum consciousness hypothesis is true then we really have no choice but to go quantum if we want to fully explain human behavior.”¹³⁰

To summarise, there are three insights to be drawn from this engagement with the role of metaphors in Wendt’s work. First, in *Social Theory* and subsequent publications we can find a very adamant and explicit rejection of metaphors. To interpret the state-as-person as a metaphor is seen as a weakness from Wendt’s scientific realist perspective. It misses to engage the hard ontological question of what the state really is and it is less convincing because as a figure of speech, a metaphor is vague, “optional and may be contested”.¹³¹ Second, we have also seen how metaphors do have a, albeit limited, function in the scientific process as baptisers of new concepts. Wendt for example emphasises the role of the market metaphor in Waltz’s structural account. Yet, for the concept of the state-as-person such a baptising function of an anthropomorphic metaphor is not acknowledged. The argument made here is that it should be.

Second, by interpreting Wendt’s work from the perspective of scientific metaphors developed in the first part of this chapter, I was able to highlight various aspects of Wendt’s work that remained invisible before. The concept of the so-called root metaphor as well as the distinction between source and target domain in a metaphor are of particular importance here. With regard to root metaphors, I suggested that the difference between Waltz’s and Wendt’s structural accounts of the international system can be interpreted as a difference between two root metaphors. In one case we encounter *homo economicus* in the other case we encounter *homo sociologicus*. Further, Wendt’s work towards a quantum social science, it is argued, should

¹²⁹ Ibid., 196.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 197.

¹³¹ Ibid.

best be understood as a suggestion for changing IR's root metaphor and for using thought experiments and concepts from quantum theory to initiate such a process, instead of being interpreted as a call for arguing that the social world really has a wave function.

And lastly, through recourse to the idea of a scientific metaphor and especially the key distinction between a metaphorical source and target domain, I was able to point out that the source domain for Wendt's state-as-person changes from being based on an understanding of how we define psychological personhood at the individual level to a focus on the organism and eventually the so-called superorganism. This is particularly problematic as each source domain leads to a fundamentally different metaphor of the state-as-person and hence to a very different conceptualisation of the state in IR. Dis-entangling various root metaphors and source domains is an important exercise to create clarity of what we mean when speak about the state-as-person and to achieve clarity with regards to the implications of Wendt's concept. At the same time, it also creates impetus to carefully flesh out the source domain of the concept of the state-as-person which will be further developed in the following chapters.

However, in addition to these three lessons, there are two further tensions in this analysis that have yet to be addressed. I pointed out how Wendt argues that we "can legitimately attribute anthropomorphic qualities like desires, beliefs and intentionality" to the state.¹³² It was argued that the meaning of "legitimate attribution" needs further investigation. Hence, in the following section, I aim at illustrating how "legitimate attribution" can be understood from the perspective of scientific metaphors by elaborating on what Gentner describes as structural mapping between the source and target domain of a metaphor.

Further, as elaborated above it with regard to Wendt's concept of the state as a psychological person we encounter a number of changes in the metaphorical source domain. Engaging in a process of structural mapping of a metaphor can be helpful in unambiguously identifying the source domain of a metaphor and in establishing a clear relationship between elements of source and target domain.

Lastly, underlying most of what has been said in this section is the by now familiar question regarding the reality of the state and the state-as-person. From the perspective of scientific

¹³² Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 197.

metaphors, this is a question regarding the conceptualisation of the relation between the metaphorical concept on the one hand and the world “out there” on the other. At the beginning of this chapter, I pointed out that there is a particular interest taken here in the role of metaphors as tools for creating new knowledge. However, I have shied away from engaging the harder question of how knowledge and world are related. This question becomes especially pertinent with regard to Wendt’s position as a scientific realist. Hence, in the last part of this chapter, I aim at addressing this question by utilising Jackson’s distinction between mind-world dualism and mind-world monism.¹³³

¹³³ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*.

Constructing a metaphor: source domain selection and structural mapping

One of the main reasons why metaphors are viewed with suspicion is to be found in their polysemous character, their ability to take on multiple meanings. The same metaphor can be interpreted in multiple ways and used to multiple ends. Maasen and Weingartner for example stress that “the use of metaphor calls for ongoing vigilance.”¹³⁴ The interanimation of thoughts inherent in a metaphor is potentially an open-ended process with multiple possible interpretations and multiple ways of connecting various discourses. This indeterminacy and openness is precisely what makes metaphors powerful tools for persuasion as well as powerful tools for creative thought and inspiration. References between concepts and objects in a metaphor are only temporarily fixed. From a positivistic point of view, this potential conceptual openness of metaphors is the main argument for confining them to a role as a figure of speech and, at the most, a creative tool in the early stages of the scientific process.

For example, we have seen that with regard to Richard Little’s analysis of the balance of power, the idea of a balance provides a very generic conceptualisation of relations between states. It is generic because it can be “applied across a wide spectrum of relationships”.¹³⁵ How this generic idea of a balance is conceived, whether as a set of weighing scales or rather as a body in harmony, has profound implications for whether a balance of power between states is pursued in a conflictual or cooperative way. The same can be said about general anthropomorphic metaphors. They are applicable across a wide range of contexts, entities and relationships and can take on diverse meanings depending on what elements of the individual human being, broadly understood, are singled out as the source domain.¹³⁶ These observations pose a significant challenge for the position taken here which stresses that metaphors are useful

¹³⁴ Maasen and Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge*, 20.

¹³⁵ Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models*, 40.

¹³⁶ For an example of anthropomorphic metaphors being utilized in other contexts, compare for example the work by Gareth Morgan who analyses the utility of metaphors in making sense of organisations. He, for example, looks at the organisation as an organism as well as a brain; both of these can broadly be understood as anthropomorphic metaphors. Gareth Morgan, *Images of Organization* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1986). Mark Neocleous for example points out how Hobbes’ account of persons was focused on the specific etymological background of “person” understood as “mask” being linked to the idea of being on stage. Compare Neocleous, *Imagining the State*, 78.

beyond the early stages of theory-building and are powerful tools for creating new knowledge. The position taken here does not deny the polysemous character of metaphors. Metaphors are nomadic between discourses and malleable according to contexts, in order to use them in a theory-constitutive manner, we need to find a way to, figuratively speaking, catch them and fix them temporarily. The solution that is suggested here is that metaphors can be conceived of as part of a process that allows for fixing their meaning temporarily. To this end, I utilise the process of structural mapping suggested by Gentner. I argue that this is where the difference between a metaphor functioning as a figure of speech and one that works as a framework for orientation and tool for the construction of scientific knowledge is to be located.¹³⁷

We have seen that to use a metaphor is to speak and think of one thing in terms of another, to explain something unfamiliar or complex through reference to something that is or appears to be more familiar. In this sense, metaphors can link two hitherto unrelated terms or can connect different discourses by using a term familiar in one discourse in the context of another. Examples from IR scholarship include the balance of power, anarchy, the domestic analogy, and the state-as-person. In most of these cases, the process of transference and interaction between source and target domain is implied, in some cases, such as Little's analysis of the balance of power, this relationship is made explicit.

Indeed, given the definition of scientific metaphor outlined above, the process of making this relationship explicit is crucial. I argue that it is only then that we can transform the metaphor into a useful tool for theory-building. The process of what Gentner calls structural mapping between source and target domain is the clearest conceptualisation of this relationship.

A lot can be gained from putting structural mapping at the core of the development and analysis of scientific metaphors. Engaging in structural mapping forces us to make elements of the metaphor explicit that would otherwise remain vague or only implied. The source domain, from which the elements of the metaphor are drawn and which is generally said to be the domain about which we have greater knowledge, as well as the target domain, which is the domain of

¹³⁷ Indeed, as will be pointed, Gentner utilises the process of structural mapping to pin-point the difference between a literary metaphor on the one hand and what I would call a scientific metaphor on the other.

inquiry about which we have comparatively less knowledge, have to be identified and explicated in great detail for structural mapping to take place.¹³⁸

Further, structural mapping as described by Gentner introduces a useful distinction between *attributes of* and *relations between* the elements of the metaphor. Looking at what aspects of the source domain are not mapped (since there inevitably is a process of selection involved) and what aspects of the target domain are left out because they do not fit the structure map can give valuable insights into the scope of the metaphor. Further, structural mapping lays bare what the metaphor cannot explain and what it potentially hides.

In the following, I will mainly rely on Gentner's "Are scientific analogies metaphors?" which appeared in the seminal *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives*.¹³⁹ Gentner aims to provide a structural characterisation of analogies, here broadly understood to also include metaphors, in order to contrast them with *literal* expression and *literary* metaphors and to, eventually, argue how to distinguish between good and bad explanatory analogies.¹⁴⁰ Using Gentner's definition, a metaphor is a structure map that "asserts that identical operations and relationships hold among non-identical objects".¹⁴¹ The structural mapping that emerges is a representation of the metaphor through object nodes, attributes of these nodes, and the relations between these nodes. A strong distinction between the objects of the metaphor and their *characteristics* on the one hand and the *relationships* between these objects on the other hand is vital. For the mapping, many of the relational predicates that hold for the source domain are carried over and must hold for the target domain. However, attributes and characteristics of the source domain do not necessarily need to be carried over into the target domain. Indeed, in case of a metaphor, in contrast to a literal similarity, very few *attributes* that are true for the source domain will also hold for the target domain. In summary one can say that while the two objects of a scientific metaphor are dissimilar, their structural relations are similar in substantial parts.

¹³⁸ Gentner, 'Are Scientific Analogies Metaphors?', 108-109.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 107.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 108.

To use a scientific metaphor is to “apply the same relations to *dissimilar* objects”.¹⁴² Therefore, a scientific metaphor establishes a connection between systems and not between objects.¹⁴³

To illustrate this, it is helpful to refer to Gentner’s usage of Rutherford’s model of the atom as an example for structural mapping.¹⁴⁴ In the terminology introduced in this chapter, Rutherford’s model of the hydrogen atom is an example of a scientific metaphor. For a time, it represented the best possible understanding of sub-atomic processes. The model is developed based on an interanimation of thoughts between the atom on the one hand and the solar system on the other hand. At the time, a lot more was known about the structure of the universe than about the world of atoms and in the construction of the metaphor knowledge from the well-researched domain was utilised to gain an understanding of the subject that was less well known.

When engaging in structural mapping, in a first instance, object nodes are identified in the source domain that can usefully be mapped onto the target domain. As a basic structure of the map, the sun and planets are selected as nodes of the source domain and the nucleus and electrons are nodal points on the side of the target domain. By mapping the nodes from the source domain, the sun and planets, onto the target domain, the nucleus and electrons, it is assumed that relationships similar to those between sun and planets are also present between nucleus and electrons. The following relationships are mapped: a centre object around which a peripheral object revolves, an attraction between the two objects, and a substantial difference in mass between the centre and peripheral object.

However, it is important to note that while these relationships between the two objects are mapped, the specific characteristics of sun and planets are not mapped. For example, the mass, radius, and temperature of the sun and planets are not mapped onto the nucleus and electrons of the atom. In terms of these characteristics, the two objects differ fundamentally. Yet, this

¹⁴² “... since object attributes are imported only to the degree that the objects themselves, as opposed to their roles in their systems, are similar”. Ibid., 109, emphasis in original.

¹⁴³ Gentner illustrates this point by comparing analogy and similarity. In her case, a literal similarity comparison is characterised by overlap in object attributes as well as object relations between source and target domain. In case of analogy, of which scientific metaphor is a sub-set in her terminology, there is overlap in the relational structures between objects of source and target domain but no or little overlap in object characteristics. Ibid., 110. Given the insistence, following Max Black, on an interaction as opposed to a comparison view of metaphors, the word comparison is used in quotation marks here.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 111-113.

difference does not affect the utility of the metaphor. This is a key observation to make and reminds us that, going back to Black's notion of the interaction view of metaphor, a metaphor is not a comparison but rather entails a process of carefully selecting elements from source and target domain in order to create an interanimation of thoughts.

While the process of selecting a suitable source domain for the metaphor of the state-as-person as well as the process of structural mapping will be undertaken in subsequent chapters, a few observations based on the above insights can already be made. First, the source domain needs to be carefully selected while keeping the target domain in mind. The specific conception of the person drawn upon for the metaphor of the state-as-person is in part determined by how the state in IR is conceptualised. To give a simple example, whether we emphasise external or internal sovereignty in our understanding of the state in IR influences our choice of a conception of persons that is to be utilised as the source domain. Wendt for example uses the distinction between external and internal sovereignty to point out how moral as well as legal personhood are social conventions and best associated with external sovereignty, whereas psychological personhood is more than a social convention because it also requires a "suitable inside".¹⁴⁵ As will become clear in the following chapters, I do not agree with Wendt's view on psychological personhood. However, this example is useful in showing how source and target domain are selected keeping both in mind at the same time. As expressed in the notion of the metaphor as an interanimation of thoughts, this process is best imagined as a back-and-forth movement between concepts, rather than a one-directional application of elements from one concept to another.

In addition, meta-theoretical assumptions and ethico-political commitments need to be taken into account when choosing a suitable source domain. For example, in *Social Theory*, Wendt aims to give a fuller picture of systemic interactions between states by emphasising that ideational aspects matter and that identities and interests are constructed through systemic interactions. Hence, in contrast to Waltz's *homo economicus*, in *Social Theory* Wendt draws, broadly speaking, on the notion of *homo sociologicus* to conceptualise systemic interactions between states. As we have seen, in "The state as person", Wendt takes his starting from the rational actor model, which he argues is "is the most familiar model of persons in IR scholarship

¹⁴⁵ For this overview compare Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 294-295.

today”.¹⁴⁶ Defining the source domain of his state-as-person in these terms is a choice with far-reaching consequences for the potential of understanding IR and this choice is justified by arguing that it is the most familiar model in IR. Rather, these choices represent a certain perspective on persons that is linked to larger meta-theoretical and even ethical commitments.

Further, whether or not the human body is emphasised when selecting elements of the source has important consequences for how the state-as-person is conceptualised. Historic examples of conceptions of the so-called body politic as well as a conceptualisations of society based on analogies with the (human) body proposed by early sociologists come to mind. These choices have theoretical as well as ethico-political consequences and it is therefore problematic to treat a definition of person as self-evidently given.

In addition to these points, which will be further developed in subsequent chapters, we also need to ask in what ways this structural map plays a role in making sense of the world – as opposed to merely being an interaction between concepts. Having established the usefulness of structural mapping with regard to the metaphor of the state-as-person, we need to ask how this mapping relates to the world. This will be the task of the final section.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 295.

Relating mind and world: is the (metaphorical) state-as-person real?

I argue that affirming the theory-constitutive role of metaphors is compatible with most philosophy of science positions. Here, I am focusing on metaphors and questions of philosophical ontology and the implicit assumptions regarding the relationship between mind and world that are made as part of taking an ontological position. Following Jackson's proposition of a key philosophical wager with regard to philosophical ontology, we can identify two distinct positions.¹⁴⁷ A mind-world dualist position argues that there is a world out there that exists independently of whether or not we perceive it and of how we describe it; the scientific process is directed towards finding ways of bridging the gap between the researcher's mind and the world "out there".¹⁴⁸ In principle, from this perspective, our theories can be evaluated in terms of whether or not they "resemble" the world.¹⁴⁹ In contrast, mind-world monism rejects this distinction between the knower and the known and "maintains that the researcher is a part of the world in such a way that speaking of 'the world' as divorced from the activities of making sense of the world is literally nonsensical."¹⁵⁰ Drawing on Suganami's critique of Jackson, we might, more usefully, describe these two perspectives as, on the one hand, a belief in a mind-independent world and, on the other hand, a belief in the mind-dependence of the world.¹⁵¹ It is important to note that, for Jackson, this philosophical wager cannot be defended on logical or empirical grounds. It is best understood as an act of faith in

¹⁴⁷ Regarding philosophical wagers see Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 34-35.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 30-31.

¹⁴⁹ "Resemble" is put in quotation marks here as it should not be taken to mean that the concepts used in a scientific theory simply mirror reality. A mind-world dualist subscribes to a correspondence theory of truth which means that "theories are true or false in virtue of their relationship to states of the world." However, as Wendt for example stresses in *Social Theory*, making scientific progress does not entail a process whereby the concepts we hold of the world and the world are simply compared with each other. Wendt points out that theories are always tested against other theories. Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 58-59.

¹⁵⁰ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 35-36.

¹⁵¹ Hidemi Suganami, 'Meta-Jackson: Rethinking Patrick Thaddeus Jackson's *Conduct of Inquiry*', *Millennium* 41, 2 (2013), 253.

support of a particular stance of the researcher towards the world that happens before research has even begun.¹⁵²

These two perspectives, paired with a position on whether or not knowledge is possible “beyond the phenomenal realm which humans can in principle experience or observe”, are assembled into a two-by-two table of ideal-typical representations of philosophy of science positions by Jackson.¹⁵³ The resulting four categories are neopositivism, analyticism, critical realism, and reflexivity.¹⁵⁴ Neopositivism and critical realism are categorised as mind-world dualist approaches, and analyticism and reflexivity represent mind-world monism.

Looking at these four categories, it is only one of them that is ruled out *a priori* by a commitment to the theory-constitutive role of metaphors. From the neopositivistic position, metaphors are confined to a role as figures of speech. This emerges out of a combination of the stance that the world is mind-independent and that knowledge is confined to the phenomenal realm. The suspicion, alluded to in the introduction of the chapter, that metaphors are unscientific is driven by the neopositivistic “fear that our elaborate intellectual constructs might be, in whole or in part, nothing more than the fanciful products of our own imaginations”.¹⁵⁵ From the neopositivistic perspective, knowledge is based on what can be experienced as concrete phenomena. It claims that we have unmediated access to the world. From this perspective, metaphors are not needed as mediators between what exists and our experience and knowledge of it. At most, metaphors are tools for rhetorical embellishment of a description of this experience, but because of their polysemy they are seen as doing more harm than good. Hence, they add to the neopositivistic fear of failing to refer to something real with our theoretical concepts.

The perspective taken in this chapter is that metaphors need to be taken seriously as a means of mediating access to the world or as a means of constructing the world. Metaphors as mediators of access to the world play a role for critical realists in investigating the transfactual realm of the

¹⁵² For this compare *ibid.*, 251.

¹⁵³ The quotation is taken from *ibid.*, 252. For an overview of the two-by-two matrix, see Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 37.

¹⁵⁴ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 37.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.

world.¹⁵⁶ Analyticists and reflectionists can rely on metaphors as means for constructing the world by putting together its pieces in meaningful ways.¹⁵⁷ It is only the neopositivists who can argue that metaphors only belong to the realm of rhetoric. All other approaches have to take the potential of a metaphor playing a theory-constitutive role seriously. This is not to say that metaphors always take on this mode for scholars of these three philosophy of science positions. However, this is to say that metaphors cannot be dismissed a priori from the critical realist, analyticist, and reflectionist perspective.

Hence, the state-as-person understood as a metaphor can potentially feature in projects that belong to any of the three positions. Ultimately, how the metaphor and the world relate to each other – the functions assigned to a metaphor in the scientific process – is shaped by the specific philosophy of science position taken. If we treat the state-as-person as a metaphor, we could still, potentially, hold a critical realist view – that is as long as the metaphor points to something real. Hence, Wendt's dichotomy, described in Chapter 1, between either treating the state metaphorically or accepting its reality, is a false one. An interest in metaphors in science does not foreclose a particular answer to the question of how mind and world are related.

However, one question that has to be asked is whether or not ideas about states-as-persons and critical realism can be usefully combined. In other words, are we gaining access to the real, underlying structures of the world by thinking about states in terms of persons? Or, conversely, are ideas about states-as-persons one way of telling a useful story about IR that does not refer to a deeper reality? These questions become all the more important when one realises that ideas about states as actors, let alone as persons, are viewed with suspicion by many critical realists. For the following, I will mainly draw on Milja Kurki, Colin Wight, and Heikki Patomäki, who are among the most prominent proponents of a critical realist perspective in the discipline.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism', 223-224.

¹⁵⁷ In using the term construction in this context, I rely on Suganami's critique of Jackson. He suggests that the two mind-world monist approaches are best described as constructionists. For a summary see Suganami, 'Meta-Jackson: Rethinking Patrick Thaddeus Jackson's *Conduct of Inquiry*', 263.

¹⁵⁸ The key publications in this context are Patomäki, *After International Relations. Critical Realism and the (Re)Construction of World Politics*. Colin Wight, 'A Manifesto for Scientific Realism in IR: Assuming the Can-Opener Won't Work!', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 35, 2 (2007). Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*. Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of

The previous chapter outlined how Wendt uses scientific realism as his starting point in *Social Theory* in order to argue that the state and the state-as-person are real. In his 2004 article, he argues that the question of whether or not we are able to treat the state and the state-as-person in realist terms is crucial to the progress of the discipline.¹⁵⁹ However, other scientific realists argue that the concept of the state-as-person is unhelpful when the aim is to get closer to the intransitive structures of the world. Their critique will be outlined in the following.

A critical realist account needs to be distinguished from positivism on the one hand and narrativism on the other.¹⁶⁰ Positivism is criticised for remaining on the surface level of the social world and for resorting to an *as-if* treatment of those aspects of social reality that are not directly observable. Narrativism is criticised for remaining at the level of language and shying away from ontological questions. In both accounts, albeit from fundamentally different positions regarding how mind and world are related, the state does not really exist. For the critical realist, it is this “anti-realism” that these otherwise disparate approaches share.¹⁶¹ Proponents of critical realism argue that this is where the value of their position is to be located. It enables us to address deeper ontological questions instead of circumventing them and to give a more nuanced account of social structure at deeper levels of reality.

Critical realism starts from ontology. Kurki, for example, argues in favour of the need to reconceptualise social ontology in IR. She argues that this does not necessarily mean to overcome concepts such as the state or the international system; but rather that their radical reconceptualisation is needed.¹⁶² The state is seen as real in the sense that it is a causal social structure, not an agent. She points out that critical realism “directs us to recognize that the state

Critical Realism'. And Kurki, *Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis*. Another prominent proponent of critical realism in the discipline is Jonathan Joseph. Compare for example Joseph, 'Philosophy in International Relations. A Scientific Realist Approach'.

¹⁵⁹ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory'.

¹⁶⁰ As a note on terminology it should be pointed out that I use the terms positivism and narrativism in line with Wight's account. Kurki prefers the terms positivism and reflectivism. In their 2000 article on the possibilities of realism in IR, Wight and Patomäki use the terms positivism and postpositivism. Compare Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity', 271. Kurki, *Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis*, 252. Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism', 216.

¹⁶¹ Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism', 216.

¹⁶² Kurki, *Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis*, 255. Kurki argues that “It is perhaps preferable to avoid simplifying the nature of states and explicitly recognise the deep structural conditioning of all social agency, individuals and states, within the world system.”

is not *just* a useful abstraction, nor a metaphor, but that the concept has a referent: a real and causal social structure".¹⁶³ There are two aspects to be derived from this quotation and to be further discussed. First, the way the term metaphor is used in this instance needs further explanation. Second, the question of what it entails to explore real and causal structures of IR needs to be clarified.

As we have seen in the previous chapter when discussing Wendt's position as a scientific realist, one of the main assumptions is that a world exists independently of our observation. Some phenomena might be unobservable, yet they are still real which is taken to mean that they are independent of individual agents and have causal impact in the world. Further, critical realists distinguish between two kinds of truths, transitive and intransitive ones. The aim of the scientific process is to get closer to intransitive truths. However, lacking direct insight into these, transitive truths have to be used in a process of approximation which aims at getting ever closer to the real underlying structures of the world. In that sense, the world is more than metaphor. However, since we lack the ability to have direct insight into the intransitive structures of the world, metaphors are one way of gaining epistemic access to intransitive truths.¹⁶⁴

In this context, we need to ask whether or not the metaphor of the state-as-person is useful in the process of getting closer to intransitive truths about international relations. Generally, ideas about states as agents or persons are rejected by critical realists such as Kurki or Wight. Specifically, anthropomorphisation of social structures is rejected as too simplistic.¹⁶⁵ Kurki, for example, points out that "[t]o reify the state as a unitary actor at a 'convenient' level of analysis is to refuse to move to deeper levels of social explanation."¹⁶⁶ She goes on to argue that conceptualising states as agents represents an "individualistic, flat ontology" which critical realists seek to overcome.¹⁶⁷ Thinking of states in terms of persons, Kurki argues, leaves us at the superficial level of appearances and does not lead to uncovering deeper structures that constitute and constrain behaviour. Keeping this in mind, it becomes clear why the state-as-person metaphor is regarded as unhelpful from the critical realist perspective. The argument is

¹⁶³ Ibid., 252.

¹⁶⁴ Compare also Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism', 224.

¹⁶⁵ Kurki, *Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis*, 255.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. See also Patomäki, *After International Relations. Critical Realism and the (Re)Construction of World Politics*, 87.

¹⁶⁷ Kurki, *Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis*, 248 and 255.

that it does not allow us to access a deeper level of social structure. Rather than revealing intransitive truth, it obscures.

Similarly, Wight maintains that corporate entities are not individual agents, only individual human beings are agents who can think and act.¹⁶⁸ There is an “ontological wall” that states do not cross and that distinguishes individual agents from corporate entities.¹⁶⁹ Further, he warns against treating the state instrumentally.¹⁷⁰ Giving an account in which the state is seen as a person might be helpful in organising experience. However, the warning issued by Wight is that such an instrumental account is to “conduct ‘business as usual’” by shying away from harder ontological questions.¹⁷¹

Further, keeping with the *critical* aspiration in critical realism as outlined prominently by Patomäki, it is also important to reflect on the normative implications of thinking about states in terms of persons. Patomäki argues that the task of critical realism is an emancipatory one; emancipation is furthered by enabling the refutation of false understandings and related structures; in doing so, new room for social action is opened up.¹⁷² Does treating states as persons present such an argument? Kurki, for example, emphasises that we have to keep in mind that the state-as-person discourse serves the purpose of certain agents and structures. It is not a neutral discourse but rather one that reifies statism.¹⁷³ She argues that “for ethico-political as well as explanatory reasons, it might be important to avoid treating social structures simplistically as anthropomorphic agents.”¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁸ Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, compare chapter five.

¹⁶⁹ Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity', 279. And Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 188.

¹⁷⁰ Wendt, outlining scientific realist premises in the first part of *Social Theory*, also points to the dangers of an instrumental account of IR's most important “entities”. He argues that “[i]f theories are merely instruments for organizing experience, then it does not matter whether their assumptions are realistic.” This poses a problem for scientific progress. Hence, Wendt argues, in contrast to the realist thinkers outlined in this section, that the state-as-person is real and not merely an instrument for organising our knowledge of international relations. Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 61.

¹⁷¹ Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity', 271.

¹⁷² Patomäki, *After International Relations. Critical Realism and the (Re)Construction of World Politics*, 10. Heikki Patomäki and Colin Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promise of Critical Realism', *International Studies Quarterly* 44 (2000), 235.

¹⁷³ Kurki, *Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis*, 250.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 255.

As we have seen, exploring the reality of the state-as-person has been linked to disciplinary progress by Wendt. Yet, other critical realists such as Kurki and Wight reject the idea that treating states as persons is helpful in getting closer at deeper levels of reality and, consequently, in making disciplinary progress. Hence, the treatment of states in terms of persons would have to be given up. However, this discourse can be slightly re-framed when we ask, what kind of realist we can and should be with regard to the state-as-person. Wight and Patomäki introduce the idea of three kinds of realism to IR debates: empirical realism, linguistic realism, and critical realism.¹⁷⁵ They argue that the researcher always has to presuppose that he or she is engaging reality, otherwise, research would not be possible. Linguistic realism locates its reality in discourse; empirical realism builds on the reality of what can be perceived.¹⁷⁶ The researcher, taking the position of empirical realism, will have to treat the state as if it existed and then look for phenomenal aspects that can be researched empirically, at the level of what can be perceived. Robert G. Gilpin's position that IR scholars work with the concept of the state but of course know that "the state does not really exist" is an example of this position.¹⁷⁷ Linguistic realism, in contrast, is able to treat the state and the state-as-person as objects of discourse and can assert their reality *within* discourse. As we have seen, Jackson and Neumann's contributions to the 2004 state-as-person debate belong to this category. From the critical realist perspective neither locating the reality of the state and the state-as-person in empirical phenomena nor locating it in discourse is quite enough.

It is worth stressing that the critical realist position is not that empirical and linguistic realism are necessarily wrong. Rather, the argument is that they do not go far enough. By not exploring "a deeper realism", they miss out on the potential for getting closer at intransitive truth and hence for furthering the scientific process.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, the argument of critical realists is that the emancipatory potential that comes from opening up new avenues for social action by exploring deeper levels of social reality.

The position taken in this thesis is that the critical realist argument with regard to the state-as-person is important. Acknowledging a deeper level of social reality which enables and

¹⁷⁵ Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism', 223.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 218.

¹⁷⁷ Gilpin, 'The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism', 318.

¹⁷⁸ For the phrase "deeper realism" compare Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism', 223.

constraints possibilities for social action is crucial. Yet, for the purposes of this thesis, the state-as-person is approached at the level of linguistic realism. And, as will be argued below, this – despite not getting at the deeper levels of social reality – has value for furthering the discipline and opening up the potential for change of current practices of international relations.

I argue that engaging with the idea of the state-as-person is important as it is a prevalent assumption in the discipline. The state as an intentional actor forms part of intersubjectively agreed upon disciplinary knowledge. As argued in Chapter 1, this point alone makes an investigation into the concept valuable. From the critical realist perspective, the argument that it is common practice to treat the state as a person is not enough to justify an acceptance of its reality. A critical realist would argue that the state cannot be solely understood by exploring the intersubjective understandings we have of it. These intersubjective understandings of the social world still matter a great deal but for a scientific realist they “do not exhaust the social world”.¹⁷⁹ This is an important point, yet this should not prevent us from working with and improving upon our most important concepts without necessarily always also engaging the question of their relation with a deeper social reality.

By slightly altering and extending Wendt’s miracle argument, as elaborated in the previous chapter, another argument for remaining at the level of linguistic realism when it comes to the idea of the state-as-person can be added. Wendt argues that, given the prevalence of the idea of the state-as-person in the discipline, it would be a miracle if the concept would not also refer to something “real”, understood in the scientific realist sense of the term. He argues that the concept allows us to successfully explain and even predict IR.¹⁸⁰ Hence, it would be a miracle if it would not also refer to some deeper level of social reality. The following is a slightly re-focused and extended version of the miracle argument: the prevalence of the concept of the state-as-person in IR indicates that it is a useful concept because if it were not useful the discipline would have replaced it with a more suitable one. Hence, as long as it is not shown that there are better concepts of the state, we can accept the idea of the state-as-person as our current best explanation and, therefore, can justify doing further conceptual work with regard to the state-

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 225.

¹⁸⁰ Wendt, 1999, 64–65

as-person.¹⁸¹ This position allows for remaining agnostic with regard to the deeper reality of the concept of the state-as-person. Its value is, in a first instance, not located in its reality but in its disciplinary position and its intersubjective acceptance which are taken as an indication that we have “gotten *something* right”.¹⁸²

This argument can be developed further. The critical realist perspective stresses that the deeper social structure enables and constrains social action. “[E]very social act, event, or phenomenon is only possible insofar as the conditions for action exist as well as the agents which act; conditions which [...] are real and not reducible the discourses and/or experiences of the agents.”¹⁸³ In other words, conditions of the deeper reality of the social realm of international relations enable and constrain our discourses and experiences. If the concept of the state-as-person has survived for so long in the discipline as well as in lay discourses, as Wendt points out, it is reasonable to assume that it somehow works in line with at least part of these structures. Therefore, we can again argue that we must have gotten something right.

Most importantly, what kind of level of reality – empirical, linguistic, or deeper structural – a given research project is engaging depends on the kinds of question that the researcher is asking. I argue that there is a plurality here that can be justified on grounds of appropriateness. We need to ask whether or not a commitment to a certain level of reality is justified given a specific research interest. For certain purposes it seems entirely justified to remain at the level of discourse and hence to work at the level of linguistic realism. The critique and development of Wendt’s state-as-person position undertaken here is primarily interested in developing the concept further by looking at how people make sense of themselves and utilising this to create an understanding of the state-a-person. Building on that, the motivation behind this project is to modify IR’s understanding of what it means to be a person in order to open up new avenues for understanding international relations, especially with regard to the role of emotions, and to

¹⁸¹ Judging whether or not a concept is useful or better than another concept means different things to proponents of different approaches. I deliberately leave its meaning open in this context. Nevertheless, I am mindful of the fact that in the mind-world monist traditions “useful” is taken to mean that a concept is valuable in organizing appearances and experiences. Concepts are intersubjectively agreed upon. In the mind-world dualist traditions, a useful concept always needs to be judged on the basis of its reference to the world.

¹⁸² I am quoting Wendt here and put his description of the scientific realist idea of progressive approximation to reality as the central indication of scientific process in the context of my own argument. Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 66, emphasis in original.

¹⁸³ Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism', 230.

open up potential for change. However, this also means that the present thesis is not able to engage with arguments regarding the question of the deeper social realities of the state-as-person and the critique of critical realists. Hence, the charge of treating the state instrumentally cannot be entirely escaped.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed at arguing that metaphors cannot be dismissed as mere figures of speech. As a first step, the chapter builds on a three-part taxonomy of metaphors to facilitate the argument that follows. What I call modes of metaphor describes three ideal typical functions of metaphors. They can be rhetorical devices for persuasion; they can serve as heuristic devices and offer orientation in a complex and sometimes not directly observable world; and last but not least, they can serve as world-making devices in the sense that a metaphor can either facilitate the exploration of underlying structures, a critical realist stance, or become constitutive of the (social) world, a constructivist stance in the tradition of Nicholas Onuf. It needs to be stressed that these are not clear-cut distinctions. But more interestingly, it is the ability of a metaphor to serve in all three functions simultaneously and across various discourses that makes it such a powerful tool.

While the literature on metaphors has enormously multiplied since the linguistic turn in the social sciences, the selection of key authors used to support the argument in this chapter, among them Black, Richards, Hoffman, Boyd, and Gentner, is driven by the need to answer Wendt's critical position towards what he calls *as-if* approaches and, therefore, is driven by a focus on the potential role of metaphors in science. Lakoff and Johnson's seminal *Metaphors We Live By* is, of course, present throughout the chapter.

The first part of the chapter introduces a number of crucial distinctions. In this context, Black and Richards are drawn upon as they are generally credited with being the originators of a shift away from the traditional view of metaphor, often and wrongly attributed to Aristotle, as a mere rhetorical device that can and should be replaced by a more accurate, literal expression. Richards poignantly describes a metaphor as an "intercourse of thoughts" and Black introduces the key distinction between the comparison view of metaphors, which he rejects, and the interaction view of metaphors. Both works are important if we want to highlight that a metaphor brings two different objects or ideas in contact and that in the interaction of the two something new, irreducible to either, is created. Following arguments by Robert Hoffmann, this is seen as the basis for scientific discovery and theory building across disciplines.

Further, Boyd draws another helpful distinction between two different roles of metaphors in the scientific process that needs to be maintained. On the one hand, he identifies what he calls *pedagogical metaphors* that function as tools to explain and communicate a theory but do not form part of its theory itself. On the other hand, there are so-called theory constitutive metaphors that form the core of a theory. It is easy to see how the idea of the state-as-person can and does fulfil both functions. However, this thesis insists that its potential role as a theory constitutive metaphor needs to be taken seriously.

Drawing on more recent work in conceptual metaphor theory, the seminal *Metaphors We Live By* for instance, the interaction view can be described in the form of a relation between the so-called target and source domains. In the case of the state-as-person, the source domain is, broadly speaking, formed by concepts of persons and the target domain consists of concepts of the state.

Keeping these initial distinctions in mind, the chapter, in a second step, suggests a working definition for what can now be called a scientific metaphor. A scientific metaphor is described as potentially open-ended interanimation of thoughts that invites further research and exploration. It determines assumptions within a theoretical framework in important ways and can facilitate exchange between different discourses and disciplines. To further illustrate the relation between source and target domain and to find a way of making the process of exchange between the two domains useful for the idea of the state-as-person, structural mapping is introduced. Building on Gentner, it is described as a process whereby *relational* aspects found among the elements of the source domain are mapped onto the target domain. The emphasis on relational aspects is important to note. In the context of the mapping between persons and states, this means that it is not characteristics of people, such as specific physical attributes, that are mapped. It is also important to note that this is not a one-directional process. Rather, the selection of elements of the source domain is done with the target domain in mind. This process will form part of later arguments regarding the *constructed state-as-person* developed in this thesis.

Lastly, and especially in the context of the theoretical perspective underlying Wendt's state-as-person, the crucial question of the relation between our concepts and the world is addressed in this chapter. Jackson's distinction between mind-world monism and mind-world dualism is

taken as a useful starting point. It is argued that in both cases metaphors can play a crucial role. From a mind-world dualist assumption, in contrast to Wendt's rejection of metaphors as mere figures of speech, we can indeed identify a very specific role for metaphors within a scientific realist paradigm. From a scientific realist perspective, metaphors are tools to reveal and understand deeper structures, powers and tendencies that are neither directly observable nor to be located in discourse alone. From a mind-world monist perspective, metaphors are constitutive of the social world by shaping how we speak about the world and hence moulding our most important concepts and our ability to make the world intelligible. This thesis explores the state-as-person as a metaphor in the latter context. However, this is not to deny the usefulness and necessity of asking mind-world dualist questions with regard to the idea of the state-as-person in a later research step.

Going back to the distinction between scientific and philosophical ontology introduced in the previous chapter, this thesis is ultimately interested in asking questions of scientific ontology while remaining agnostic about the philosophical ontology of the state-as-person. In other words, the question of whether or not the state-as-person exists – a question of philosophical ontology – is not engaged. Rather, the focus will be on contributing to the scientific ontology of the state, in the form of the idea of the state-as-person, addressed at the level of linguistic realism. The question asked is how we can develop a better understanding of persons and, by metaphoric extension, a better understanding of the state. In a first instance, this is done on the level of linguistic realism while remaining agnostic regarding the question of whether or not the state-as-person allows us to get at the deeper levels of the social world. Having made this decision, the suggested *constructed state-as-person* will not entirely escape the critique of an instrumentalist treatment, issued by Wendt and Wight, of the most important concept in the discipline.

Chapter 4: A psychological and emotional turn in IR

Building on some of Alexander Wendt's ideas about psychological state personhood and aiming at formulating an alternative concept of the state-as-person, this chapter draws on the so-called emotional turn in IR. As outlined in the first chapter, the notion of the state-as-agent is crucial for IR as a discipline. In line with one of the key insights of the emotional turn, it is important to recognise that the state-as-person should not be conceptualised in purely rational terms. This observation mirrors Wendt's point that systemic interactions of states do not only influence behaviour but also identities and interests of states.

However, the challenge here is to theorise about states-as-persons and to bring in emotions at the level of the state and the state system. This proposed focus on the state-as-person, however, is only mentioned in passing, if at all, in the literature that can be subsumed under the recent emotional turn in IR. Neta C. Crawford, one of the key proponents, for example supposes that "research on emotions may lead to a fundamental reconceptualization of agents and agency in world politics."¹ And with regard to agents she has both, individuals and groups in mind. Richard Ned Lebow and Jonathan Mercer are two other proponents of the emotional turn whose theories operate at the "level" of the state.²

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the argument of this thesis is that the idea of the state-as-person is a valuable one as long as it is understood as a metaphor. States are people too, but they are so only metaphorically. Starting from the idea that we encounter a metaphor

¹ Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', 156.

² Jonathan Mercer draws on social identity theory to show that states are inevitably self-interested. Mercer, 'Anarchy and Identity'. In one of his most recent works, Lebow is interested in the role of passions, drawing on ancient Greek insights, in understanding state behaviour. Richard Ned Lebow, *A Cultural Theory of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). For the link between Lebow's 2008 book and the discipline's renewed interest in psychology compare Jacques E. C. Hymans, 'The Arrival of Psychological Constructivism', *International Theory* 2, 3 (2010).

in this instance, an investigation into the so-called source domain of the metaphor becomes necessary. In other words, we need to ask how to conceptualise what it means to be a person and what knowledge to draw from in this pursuit.

Hence, conceptualising the state as a person presupposes an understanding of what a person is or what it is like to be a person. An answer to such a question can draw on a wide range of disciplines and approaches. I remain sceptical whether it is at all possible to define what a person is in the abstract and tend to point to the process of personation, how we become a person, as a more relevant re-formulation of the question whether or not the state is a person.³ However, as argued in Chapter 2, the idea of psychological state personhood as put forward by Wendt in 2004 suggests a turn to psychology. For Wendt, psychological personhood is, in contrast to moral or legal personhood, marked by the ability to subjectively experience the world. Further, it is important to stress that a subjective perspective is also closely linked with emotions. Indeed, psychology understood “as the science of thinking, feeling, acting and perceiving”⁴ seems like an ideal place to search for conceptualisations of subjective experience and emotions.

Further, IR as a subject has been marked by occasional attempts to “bring psychology in”. Most recently, the so-called emotional turn represents renewed efforts in this regard. This, I believe, makes the question of how to make findings from psychology useful for IR well worth exploring. In this chapter, I aim to show how such a step could be taken with regard to the idea of the state-as-person. In this sense, the chapter brings together the recent emotional turn in IR with the concept of the state-as-person. In the following, I point to two additional examples and three questions that underscore the rationale behind this chapter.

With regard to “bringing psychology in”, the chapter takes its starting point from two preliminary observations. First, IR scholarship often draws upon psychology to support the argument in places where assumptions about human nature or human cognition need further substantiation. Wendt, for example, while drawing on structuration theory and symbolic interactionism inspired by George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer in his *Social Theory*, also

³ This is, as mentioned in chapter two, of course based on Patrick T. Jackson’s critique of Wendt’s 2004 article. Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too'.

⁴ Rom Harré, *Key Thinkers in Psychology* (London: Sage, 2006), 225.

includes the occasional insight from (social) psychology to support his argument. He mainly draws on Henri Tajfel's social identity theory and the concepts of in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination to illustrate how the distinction between self and other, which is, for him, crucial to states' corporate identity, can be "shown experimentally".⁵ Second, the attempt to incorporate findings from psychology into IR is not a recent phenomenon. In line with the behaviourist turn of the 1960s, early attempts by J. David Singer and others can be identified.⁶ Similarly, with regard to the study of the causes of war (as far as they are located at the level of what Kenneth N. Waltz would call the first image), we can identify several early attempts to utilise insights from psychology for the benefit of IR scholarship.⁷

One key observation that will guide the chapter can be drawn from these preliminary observations. One underlying assumption is the idea that IR is lacking something that could be added by drawing on psychology. Singer, being part of what can be called "the behavioural revolt" in IR, can easily be read as an unveiled attempt to put some of IR's assumption on a more rigorous scientific – understood as meaning neopositivistic – footing.⁸ Interestingly, a similar sense can be gained from Wendt who stresses that the insights he takes from social identity theory are based on experimentation and hence conform to the rules of a positivistic science. This observation seems to act as a validation. What can be identified in the case of Singer and others is a tendency to draw on psychology for "scientific" findings in order to supplement the study of IR. In these cases, IR is often conceived of as lacking scientific rigor with regard to assumptions about people or groups and psychology is seen as being able to fill this

⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 241f, 356. Henri Tajfel, ed., *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). Here, Wendt also refers to Jonathan Mercer who criticised the idea of "anarchy is what states make of it" utilising social identity theory. With regard to the influence of Mead and Blumer on Wendt's *Social Theory* compare Maja Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations. The Politics of Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 12.

⁶ J. David Singer, 'Psychological Research and the Study of World Politics', *Background in World Politics* 4, 2 (1960).

⁷ Compare Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001 [1954]), 43ff.

⁸ Colin Wight, 'Philosophy of Social Science and International Relations', in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse-Kappen, and Beth A. Simmons (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002), 28-32. Wight attributes the term "behavioural revolt" to John Vasquez. Compare John A. Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: From Classical Realism to Neotraditionalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 39. For the usage of the term neopositivism, compare Jackson's analysis. Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*.

gap.⁹ At the very least, the role that is given to psychology here needs to be questioned and especially the concept of “science” that is underlying some of these accounts deserves our scrutiny.

Given these examples, three further questions that guide the following investigation emerge. First, it becomes important to ask what findings from psychology should be utilised and how and with what intentions they should be incorporated into IR. Secondly, we also need to wonder about the level at which we bring in findings from psychology. Using the language introduced by Waltz as a means of orientation, are we operating at the first, second or third image? And thirdly, we also need to question the ontological and epistemological premises of the particular insights that we incorporate from psychology into IR.

⁹ As discussed in the previous chapter with regard to metaphors, this use of the term “science” is to be understood before the background of a disciplinary mainstream wedded to neopositivism.

Psychology, emotions, and the discipline

Suggestions that IR as a discipline can benefit from drawing on psychology are not new. As mentioned in the introduction, Singer was one of the earliest and strongest proponents of the incorporation of findings from psychology. Singer was an American political scientist and founder of the Correlates of War Project. In 1960 he pointed out that “it may safely be predicted that when the important contributions to the theory of international relations of the coming decades are weighed and appraised, they will turn out to have drawn heavily upon the methods, findings, and concepts of the behavioural sciences.”¹⁰ With behaviourism in mind, Singer predicted three broad areas in which IR could benefit from the input of findings from psychology: “techniques and methods, data and findings, and concepts and models”.¹¹ Writing at the same time, the psychologist Herbert C. Kelman is another early proponent who investigated possibilities of bringing findings from psychology to bear on the study of IR.¹² Interestingly, more than 50 years after the publication of Singer’s article and Kelman’s contribution, the discipline still confronts suggestions like these as potentialities, not as works in progress. The absence of a specific research programme with regard to “bringing psychology in”, is partly to blame. This absence, it is suggested here, derives from the fact that there is no agreement with regard to the goal that is furthered by “bringing psychology in”. As alluded to in the introduction, Singer is a behaviouralist and for him bringing psychology in serves the distinct purpose of uncovering regularities in human behaviour that IR has missed so far but that are crucial for its goals of study. As we will see when looking at the exponents of the recent emotional turn in IR in more detail, the reasons for the turn to psychology are varied and some of them are clearly opposed to Singer’s position.¹³

More recent engagements with this question include the argument that many theories of IR build on some implicit assumptions about human nature or human cognition that could be deepened by explicitly applying concepts or methods from psychology to IR theory. James

¹⁰ Singer, 'Psychological Research and the Study of World Politics', 89.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹² Herbert C. Kelman, 'Social Psychological Approaches to the Study of International Relations', in *International Behaviour*, ed. Herbert C. Kelman (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965).

¹³ The work by Emma Hutchison and Roland Bleiker clearly belongs to the opposing camp. Bleiker and Hutchison, 'Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics'.

Goldgeier and Philip Tetlock, for example, point out how various IR theories – they look at realism, institutionalism (liberalism), and constructivism – can benefit from acknowledging and incorporating findings from psychology.¹⁴ “[P]sychological explanations”, they argue, “fill logical holes in existing theoretical coverage.”¹⁵

Generally, it is especially IR’s political realism that is often taken as an example of how psychology and the study of emotions can contribute by filling gaps in the theories especially with regard to assumptions about human nature. The argument is that IR already makes a number of implicit assumptions about emotions that need further substantiation by drawing on other disciplines.¹⁶ Recently, Robert Schuett, for example, pointed out how Hans Morgenthau might have been more influenced by Sigmund Freud than by Reinhold Niebuhr.¹⁷ While that conclusion is of course contested, it is at least interesting to note that it is possible to point to psychological assumptions in the work of a key thinker of classical realism and link them to a specific psychologist.

More specifically, many scholars of the recent emotional turn in IR call for the need to explicitly acknowledge emotions’ role in international relations. Roland Bleiker and Emma Hutchison, for example, argue that “emotions should be placed at the centre of disciplinary debates.”¹⁸ Similarly, Crawford points out that the “[s]ystematic analysis of emotions may have important implications for international relations theory.”¹⁹ They and others to whom the label “emotional turn in IR” can be applied also share a criticism of the conventional conception of rationalisms in the discipline. Mercer devoted several articles to arguing that rationality and emotions are not distinct or mutually exclusive and that acknowledging the role of emotions in rational decision-making is key for better understanding international relations.²⁰ Being interested in cooperation

¹⁴ Here, the term “theory” is applied to constructivism with caution – acknowledging, as it is done explicitly in chapter two, that constructivism is to be seen as a broad approach and does not fit in a list that also includes realism and liberalism.

¹⁵ James Goldgeier and Philip Tetlock, 'Psychological Approaches', in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Chris Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 476.

¹⁶ See for example Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', 121.

¹⁷ Robert Schuett, *Political Realism, Freud, and Human Nature in International Relations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). Robert Schuett, 'Freudian Roots of Political Realism: The Importance of Sigmund Freud to Hans J. Morgenthau's Theory of International Power Politics', *History of the Human Sciences* 20, 4 (2007).

¹⁸ Bleiker and Hutchison, 'Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics', 118.

¹⁹ Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', 116.

²⁰ Mercer, 'Anarchy and Identity'.

in international relations, Lebow argues that “we must look at the ways in which reason and emotions interact to create and sustain common identities.”²¹ According to him, the dividing line drawn between rationality and emotions is an artificial one and a product of the Enlightenment.²² Similar points can be found in Crawford and Bleiker and Hutchison and many others that have developed an interest in the role of emotions.²³

Crawford and Bleiker and Hutchison point out how there is no systematic overview of emotions in IR and call for the need to think about appropriate methods to incorporate them.²⁴ Approaches that form part of the emotional turn can be categorised by their aims: an improved meta-theoretical understanding of IR theories,²⁵ a better understanding of key concepts,²⁶ building better theories,²⁷ or a contribution to understanding ethics in IR.²⁸ While these categories are by no means mutually exclusive, they work well in giving a broad overview of what is studied and argued under the label “emotional turn”. Further, we need to distinguish between those approaches that suggest that the discipline incorporates findings from psychology more explicitly, on the one hand, and those approaches that acknowledge the importance of emotions but seek to make a contribution by looking towards “alternative forms of insight, most notably those stemming from aesthetic sources” for an answer.²⁹

²¹ Richard Ned Lebow, 'Reason, Emotion and Cooperation', *International Politics* 42, 3 (2005), 283.

²² For a historical perspective regarding the separation of rationality and emotions compare also Jon Elster, *Alchemies of the Mind. Rationality and the Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

²³ The most common point of reference for them is Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Putnam, 1996).

²⁴ Bleiker and Hutchison, 'Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics', 115. And Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', 119-120 and 155.

²⁵ This aim is shared by most scholars of the emotional turn.

²⁶ Brian C. Rathbun is, for example, interested in trust. Similarly, Jonathan Mercer argues that purely rational approaches to trust, identity, justice, and reputation are incomplete. Brian C. Rathbun, 'It Takes All Types: Social Psychology, Trust, and the International Relations Paradigm in Our Minds', *International Theory* 3, 1 (2009). Mercer, 'Rationality and Psychology in International Politics'.

²⁷ For example Goldgeier and Tetlock, 'Psychological Approaches', 476.

²⁸ Andrew Linklater points to the role of emotional identification and sympathy in establishing cosmopolitan harm conventions. Andrew Linklater, *The Problem of Harm in World Politics. Theoretical Investigations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), see especially chapter five. Similarly, Richard Ned Lebow and Toni Erskine emphasize the role of emotions in cooperation and building empathy. And moreover, they highlight the danger of “instrumental reason divorced from emotional commitments”. Toni Erskine and Richard Ned Lebow, 'Learning from Tragedy and Refocusing International Relations', in *Tragedy and International Relations*, ed. Toni Erskine and Richard Ned Lebow (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 209.

²⁹ For this quotation compare Bleiker and Hutchison, 'Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics', 115, *ibid*.

It is important to note that scholars of the emotional turn do not touch upon ideas of states-as-persons. Already in 1960, Singer warned against the simplification that would see individual behaviour applied to group and then to state behaviour.³⁰ Similarly, there is a scepticism towards theorising about emotions at the systemic level. Nevertheless, Crawford points, with caution, to this possibility. She highlights that there is a

wariness about generalizing from individual to group behaviour and the attributes of organizations, including states. These are formidable concerns but not necessarily fatal to theorizing and empirical research.³¹

More encouragingly, she suggests a possible avenue for further research at the systemic level of IR:

What of the problem of generalization from individual attributes to the behaviour of groups? The link maybe that fear and other emotions not only are attributes of agents, but are institutionalised in the structure and processes of world politics.³²

Having outlined in very broad terms where those who are interested in psychology and emotions in IR see potential areas of contribution for psychology in general and emotions specifically, the question as to how psychology and the state-as-person assumption can be brought together remains.

For the purposes of this project, I see three key contributions. The first contribution is related to the meta-theoretical questions described. If we accept the assumption that some aspects of IR theory are built on implicit psychological assumptions and that some key IR concepts could be improved by recourse to psychology, the questions remains: what about *the* key concept of IR, what about the state? In the first instance, I argue that we have to acknowledge a potential cognitive bias of IR researchers that results in treating the state as a unitary actor and, potentially, in anthropomorphising or personifying the state. Secondly, while having

³⁰ Singer, 'Psychological Research and the Study of World Politics', 88. Waltz, for example, joins this scepticism and argues that "[t]o attempt to explain social forms on the basis of psychological data is to commit the error of psychologism: the analysis of individual behaviour used uncritically to explain group phenomena". Waltz, *Man, the State and War*, 28.

³¹ Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', 118-119.

³² *Ibid.*, 155.

acknowledged the state as an abstract concept that might have characteristics of individual human beings, the referent object of this concept needs to be put into focus as well. Having rejected a reductionist account of the state-as-person, contributions such as Brent Sasley's "Theorizing states' emotions" in which he argues that the state is best conceptualised as a group are important here.³³ However, we need to question the underlying assumption that would allow us to define the state as a group. From the perspective outlined in Chapter 1 which, drawing on Thomas Hobbes, sees the state as distinct from the ruler and the ruled, any such equation remains doubtful. Thirdly, state-as-person assumptions, understood as a metaphor, blend two distinct realms: the realm of the individual human being and the realm of the state. Drawing on psychology for an understanding of individual human beings can help to conceptualise the state-as-person. This acknowledges the tendency to personify the state but, at the same time, draws explicitly rather than implicitly on findings from psychology to do so and thus potentially results in a concept of the person that is preferable to rational actor assumptions and hence takes calls from scholars of the emotional turn seriously. These three aspects will structure the remainder of the chapter. While the first two will be rejected for the project of the *constructed state-as-person*, the third will form the background before which the potential of psychology for generating an understanding of the process of personation will be further elaborated.

³³ Brent E. Sasley, 'Theorizing States' Emotions', *International Studies Review* 13 (2011).

Possibilities for utilising psychology: the cognitive bias of the researcher

Within the literature that is part of the recent emotional turn, we can find several suggestions for greater reflexivity of the discipline. Making the discipline and the researchers themselves an object of inquiry, some proponents of the emotional turn suggest that (implicit) assumptions about emotions, for example in both the realist and idealist camps, have shaped the discipline in important ways.³⁴ However, this can be taken further than looking into what has been said about love, hate, fear, cooperation, trust, and empathy in various schools of IR. In addition, maybe the most important aspect of the discipline, the state, has been shaped by cognitive biases.

Bleiker and Hutchison argue that it is important to examine “processes of representation, such as visual depictions of emotions and the manner in which they shape political *perceptions*”.³⁵ There is yet an additional process that should be put into focus: the level of the researcher and the cognitive processes [processes of simplification and abstraction for instance] that are taking place as part of the research. Partially related to that, Crawford, like many others with an interest in psychology and IR, points to cognitive biases of decision-makers in IR as a typical example for the importance of emotions in the discipline.³⁶

However, the focus on emotion and cognition is not a recent phenomenon. Robert Jervis’s *Perception and Misperception* is the most prominent example and one of the earliest comprehensive contributions in this area.³⁷ What should be added here is a self-reflexive perspective. Hence, we need to, at least tentatively, ask what these insights lead to when applied to IR scholars themselves. It is worth pointing out that with this, the focus is shifted from ontology, the question of the reality of the state-as-person, to epistemology, the question of how we get to know the state-as-person. This has overtones of the more radical suggestion

³⁴ This is also one of the suggestions made by Crawford regarding the study of emotions can further the discipline. Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', 155-156.

³⁵ Bleiker and Hutchison, 'Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics', 118, my emphasis.

³⁶ Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', 137.

³⁷ Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NY: Princeton University Press, 1976).

that, at bottom, epistemology is about cognitive psychology.³⁸ Three findings from cognitive psychology seem most relevant for a discussion of ideas related to states-as-persons. They will be briefly discussed in turn: the organisational analogue of the fundamental attribution error, anthropomorphisation and personification, and metaphorical reasoning.

The fundamental attribution error describes the tendency to attribute the behaviour of others to their decisions and personal dispositions rather than to the situational circumstances, even though the circumstances offer a much better explanation. For example, the hostility of an actor is ascribed to certain decisions and characteristics that are assumed to be intrinsic, rather than taking the environment and specific circumstances into account that offer a better explanation of the hostile behaviour. Tetlock points out how the fundamental attribution error might lead to another misperception which he calls the organisational analogue of the fundamental attribution error: “the tendency to perceive governments as unitary causal agents rather than as complex amalgams of bureaucratic and political subsystems, each pursuing its own missions and goals”.³⁹ Similarly, already in 1976 Jervis pointed out that “alliances usually appear more durable [...] from the outside than from the inside.”⁴⁰ He later identified the same tendency among domestic groups in conflict and it is not difficult to see how the same reasoning can be applied to states. For both Jervis and Tetlock the danger lies in overemphasising the coherence and unity of a group or state, when seen from the outside. While the discussion of the fundamental attribution error focuses on foreign policy decision-makers, it seems just as applicable to scholars of international relations. By acknowledging that this is a cognitive bias, and maybe one that is unavoidable or even necessary to cope with the complexities of international relations, new avenues for analysing and improving the perspective on one of the most important concepts in IR, the state, open up.

³⁸ Compare Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 239. Here, Wight quotes W. V. Quine, *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays* (London: Columbia University Press, 1969), 75.

³⁹ Philip Tetlock, 'Social Psychology and World Politics', in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, ed. Daniel Gilbert, Susan T. Fiske, and Gardner Lindzey (New York: McGraw Hill, 1998).

⁴⁰ Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 326 ff.

The second cognitive bias worth mentioning is anthropomorphisation and personification.⁴¹ Voices from within psychology call for research into how humans understand not just other humans, but other agents. The tendency for anthropomorphisation is a key object of interest. It describes the tendency to attribute “characteristics that people intuitively perceive to be uniquely human to nonhuman agents or events”⁴² which includes physical characteristics and/or mental capacities. Further,

Anthropomorphism involves using existing knowledge about the self or the concept ‘human’ to make an inference about a relatively unknown nonhuman agent, and factors that increase the accessibility and applicability of this knowledge therefore increase anthropomorphism.⁴³

Whether scholars of international relations who talk about states as thinking, acting, feeling, or as having rights and responsibilities are “guilty” of anthropomorphisation is a question that can only be answered by analysing each work individually. However, this cognitive tendency might be part of the explanation as to why the state-as-person metaphor was so successful for centuries and is still prevalent in general, non-academic discourses.⁴⁴ It might even be an important element in how the state is constructed as a person. Wendt for example points out how the *idea* of the state as a person is a key point that transforms the state from a structure into an agent.⁴⁵ He argues that “[t]he first requirement is that individuals’ shared knowledge reproduces an Idea of the state as a corporate ‘person’ or ‘group Self.’”⁴⁶ Whether it concerns the scholar or of the “lay” person, anthropomorphisation as a cognitive bias is something to be recognised and investigated when talking about states-as-persons.

⁴¹ I introduced a distinction between the two in chapter one, for the purposes of this section, however, they can be treated synonymously. Further, in this passage I follow the linguistic conventions found in the relevant psychological literature.

For an explicit treatment of anthropomorphic perceptions of the state compare Faizullaev, 'Individual Experiencing of States'.

⁴² Adam Waytz, Nicholas Epley, and John T. Cacioppo, 'Social Cognition Unbound: Insights into Anthropomorphism and Dehumanization', *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 19, 1 (2010), 58.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁴⁴ In “A cognitive theory of religion”, Stewart Guthrie, for example, points out that anthropomorphisation is “common in the cognition of daily life and universal in religion”. As outlined in chapter one, Mika Luoma-Aho uses observations by Guthrie to argue that IR, based on the prevalence of anthropomorphising the state, is a form of religion. Stewart Guthrie, 'A Cognitive Theory of Religion', *Current Anthropology* 21, 2 (2008), 181. Luoma-Aho, 'Political Theology, Anthropomorphism, and the Person-Hood of the State: The Religion of IR'.

⁴⁵ For a discussion see Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 183.

⁴⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 218.

The last cognitive bias relevant here is the tendency for analogical or metaphorical reasoning.⁴⁷ This type of reasoning tries to understand a new situation, object or idea through reference to a more familiar one. Many scholars interested in psychology and IR point towards the use of analogies and metaphors in foreign policy decision-making; most commonly they point to the danger posed by using metaphors and analogies that are inadequate for the situation, leading to erroneous judgements and decisions. The domino theory as a basis for US involvement in Vietnam is one example commonly cited.⁴⁸ As argued in Chapter 3, while metaphors can mislead, it is also important to acknowledge that they play an important part in making sense of the world. Similar to my argument pursued in Chapter 3, I think the answer cannot lie in attempting to avoid metaphors.

Going back to the starting point for this chapter, scholars of the emotional turn argue that “rational” decision-making is always tied up with emotions. They argue against the strict dichotomy of emotions on the one hand and rationality on the other hand. Pure rationality, they argue, is a myth.⁴⁹ A similar point can and should be made with regard to the cognitive biases outlined above. The conclusion, therefore, cannot be to try harder to purge decision-making and our understanding of IR of cognitive biases and emotions; rather, we need to accept that we are “creatures of bounded rationality”.⁵⁰

None of the above is to say that those thinking about states in terms of persons are *necessarily* subject to one or all of these tendencies. However, being aware of the work these cognitive tendencies are potentially doing in developing an understanding of IR helps in approaching IR’s most important concepts critically. Taken together, these cognitive biases provide a powerful reason for entering the debate on states-as-persons from the perspective of the psychological and emotional turn in IR. What I have outlined are reasons for greater self-reflexivity of IR as a subject when it comes to theorising about its most important unit, the state. And in line with the emotional turn, I argue that the conclusion from confronting these potential biases cannot be to strive to eliminate them. I argue that they are an inevitable occurrence of our “bounded

⁴⁷ Compare Richard P. Honeck and Clare T. Kibler, 'Representation in Cognitive Psychological Theories of Figurative Language', in *The Ubiquity of Metaphor: Metaphor in Language and Thought*, ed. Wolf Paprotté and René Dirven (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1985).

⁴⁸ For an overview see Tetlock, 'Social Psychology and World Politics'.

⁴⁹ Most eloquently done by Mercer, 'Rationality and Psychology in International Politics'.

⁵⁰ Tetlock, 'Social Psychology and World Politics'.

rationality". What we should strive for is to continue searching for useful or best-possible explanations while accepting that as researchers we will be susceptible to cognitive biases. However, acceptance of cognitive biases is not the same as saying that "any story goes". With regard to states-as-persons, it might be useful to entertain the thought that the development of state-as-person ideas in IR were subject to the cognitive biases outlined above. In a first instance, this should not be seen as an incentive to rid IR of these "false assumptions". Rather, it is an invitation to questioning the meta-theoretical assumptions of the discipline from this point view. It is also important to note that what has been outlined above is compatible with a mind-world dualist as well as with a mind-world monist perspective. In other words, the cognitive biases are relevant regardless of whether the researcher predominantly sees their role as one of discovering the world or of constructing the world.

This is potentially an important contribution to the state-as-person debate as well as the question of state agency in general.⁵¹ However, this project, taking its starting point from Wendt's work, focuses on questions of ontology. It asks the question of "what is" rather than "how do we know". Hence, while these cognitive biases are interesting from an epistemological perspective, they tell us little about what kind of person the state is.

⁵¹ Compare Faizullaev, 'Individual Experiencing of States'.

Possibilities for utilising psychology: the state-as-individuals and the state-as-group

In Chapter 1, Hobbes's key contribution to the modern idea of the state has been outlined. It was argued that Hobbes is the first modern thinker of the state and that his conceptualisation of the relation between ruler, ruled and state still matters for today's IR. The key innovation introduced by Hobbes is what Quentin Skinner described as the "doubly abstract notion of [the] state".⁵² Hobbes is the first thinker to establish the state as an independent institution. In Hobbes's account, the state becomes a person through the process of agreeing upon transference of authority and a system of representation.⁵³ The resulting person of the state is separate from both the ruler and the ruled.

Before this background, this section will outline and ultimately reject two additional ways of how the discipline aims at making psychology useful for the understanding of the state in international relations: focusing on the psychology of individual leaders and representatives on the one hand and treating the state as a group on the other hand. It is not denied that the focus on individuals in international relations can generate important insight. However, it is argued that these insights are not furthering an understanding of the state. In line with arguments presented in Chapter 1, a reductionist view of the state that would see it reduced to the actions of individuals is rejected. Further, it is argued that the state is also not a group and, consequently, findings of social psychology are not applicable. Drawing on findings from social psychology in order to understand the state is to suggest a unity and coherence of the state that has no basis in empirical reality and is also problematic for its ethico-political implications. Hence, it is argued that neither the state-as-individuals nor the state-as-group approach can be used as the basis for arguing about states' emotions.

Looking at the state-as-individuals approach, we can point to a number of scholars who aim at bringing psychology into the discipline by focusing on individual leaders, decision-makers and representatives. One of the earliest and most prominent accounts is Jervis's *Perception and*

⁵² Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues*, 394.

⁵³ Skinner, 'Hobbes and the Purely Artificial Person of the State', Runciman, 'What Kind of Person Is Hobbes's State? A Reply to Skinner'. David Runciman, 'The Concept of the State: The Sovereignty of a Fiction', in *States and Citizens. History, Theory, Prospects*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Bo Stråth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003a).

Misperception. Approaches that fall into this category focus on studying decision-makers personalities and cognitive biases, explore the boundaries of rational decision-making, the role of emotions in decision-making, and explore the inter-personal relationships between key decision-makers.⁵⁴ I argue that these approaches add value to our understanding of how IR is practised. However, they tell us very little about the state. With Bleiker and Hutchison we can observe that studying emotions at the level of decision-makers “fall[s] short of explaining how emotions are enmeshed in larger socio-political dynamics”.⁵⁵ Further, the whole state-as-person debate, as outlined in Chapter 1, presents powerful arguments as to why a reductionist account of the state, in the form of the state-as-individuals, is to be rejected.

Treating the state as a group seems more promising as it represents a non-reductionist account that, depending on the definition utilised, sees the state as more than an aggregation of individuals. However, in the following, I argue that equating the state in IR with a group understood in social psychological terms is highly problematic. In a first step, we can pin-point a few suggestions in Wendt’s *Social Theory* towards treating the state as a group.⁵⁶ Two aspects are important to note: the motivation behind this borrowing from psychology and the rhetorical moves performed in order to bridge the evident gap between the laboratories of the social psychologist on the one hand and the system of states on the other. In a number of parts of *Social Theory*, Wendt draws on the early social psychologist Tajfel. For example, with regard to intergroup processes, Wendt points out that

[a] substantial body of scholarship in social psychology, known as ‘social identity theory,’ has shown experimentally that the process of making [...] cognitive differentiations [between ‘self’ and ‘other’] is routinely accompanied by discrimination against the members of out-groups in

⁵⁴ For an overview compare George E. Marcus, ‘Emotions in Politics’, *Annual Review of Political Science* 3 (2000). Examples include Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, *Psychology and Deterrence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985). Alexander L. George and Juliette L. George, *Presidential Personality and Performance* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998).

⁵⁵ Bleiker and Hutchison, ‘Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics’, 117.

⁵⁶ In his “Anarchy is what states make of it”, Wendt makes tentative suggestions towards the inclusion of findings from social psychology in constructivist IR. He argues that “[a] full theory of state identity- and interest-formation would nevertheless need to draw insights from the social psychology of groups and organizational theory”. Wendt, ‘Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics’, 397, fn 21.

favour of the in-group. This tendency is clearly manifested in the case of the state.⁵⁷

In this passage, Wendt also points to Mercer who, in a reply to Wendt's "Anarchy is what states make of it", uses social psychology to argue that states can only ever be self-interested and therefore do not have a choice to create a different kind of anarchical system, contrary to what Wendt suggests.⁵⁸ A similar emphasis can be found in another passage of *Social Theory*, Wendt stresses that

[t]he experimental findings supporting [social identity theory] strongly suggest that states may indeed have a predisposition to be self-interested, since the members of a human group almost always show favoritism toward each other in dealing with the members of out-groups.⁵⁹

Using the idea of group identification taken from Tajfel's social identity theory and specifically referencing Mercer again, Wendt tentatively suggests that a process similar to the relationships between smaller groups might be at play at the level of the state. However, in contrast to Mercer's argument, Wendt also adds a point of caution that while the experimental results of social identity theory might explain certain tendencies towards self-interest and prejudices against out-groups, they should not be used to argue that anarchy *necessarily* brings forth selfish behaviour and a systemic self-help culture. In this context, Wendt adds a further step to his argument and thereby moves from the state understood as a group to the system of states. He argues that "[c]ollective identification *among* states is simply one more level of group organisation to which selection processes might be applied".⁶⁰ It is important to note that there are several moves, several leaps between "levels", that are being made here. A first move is made from the group, the realm of social identity theory, to the state. A second move is then made from the state to the "group of states". The last move also represents a shift in focus from the individual human being as an actor to the state as an actor.

⁵⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 241.

⁵⁸ For Wendt's comments compare *ibid.* Also see Mercer, 'Anarchy and Identity'. And Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics'.

⁵⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 322.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 351, emphasis added.

Ultimately, what we find here is an argument that takes findings from the experimental laboratory of social psychologists and suggests, if only tentatively, how these findings can be relevant for understanding IR. We need to wonder what the experimental findings of social psychology, often based on laboratory tests with college students, can really tell us about states. Kelman was highly critically of attempts of interdisciplinary collaboration between psychology and IR that would proceed in this fashion. He argued that even when these tests directly simulate foreign policy decision-making in group situations, we still need to wonder what “one can learn ... from observing the simulation of these processes in a group of college students”.⁶¹ The findings Wendt and Mercer utilise essentially stem from Tajfel’s famous experiment with school children which were randomly assigned to two groups. In the experiment their behaviour towards “their” group in comparison to the behaviour towards “the other” group was recorded.⁶² It showed that it takes very little to create out-group bias.⁶³ This is not to say that the findings might not also be relevant for IR. After all, in order to suggest the relevance of his approach, Tajfel begins his seminal article with an example that belongs to the world of international relations. However, a lot more would need to be done if we were to show how the same tendencies are indeed relevant for the relations between states.

Further, with regard to the quotations from Wendt’s *Social Theory*, it is also important to note the term “experimentally” and its connotation. In this context, it seems that it is used to add value and convey authority. If one adopts a neopositivistic stance, a view of science that defines scientific value through empirical tests and the Popperian criteria of falsifiability, this is of course unsurprising. However, it is important to question whether neopositivistic criteria of science are of any relevance for the idea of the state-as-person.

These two aspects, the move from the level of the social group to the state and the implicit acceptance of a neopositivistic understanding of science, need to be scrutinised further. This can be done with the help of a more recent approach to the state that treats the state as a group in order to argue the case for state emotions. In his “Theorizing states’ emotions”, Sasley suggests a way of “understanding the state as a group and following the internal process by which group

⁶¹ Kelman, 'Social Psychological Approaches to the Study of International Relations', compare 579 for the quotation and 579f for additional points.

⁶² Henri Tajfel, 'Experiments in Intergroup Discrimination', *Scientific American* 223, 5 (1970), 99.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 102.

members' (state decision makers') cognitive and emotional practices represent, comprise, and reflect that of the group (state) and so determine how the state will act".⁶⁴ Sasley's article aims at suggesting a way forward for research into states' emotions based on defining the state as a group and applying findings from social psychology, starting with social identity theory, to it. The group (state) is understood "not just as a corporate entity, but as a psychological process".⁶⁵ This psychological process is to be found in the link between the individual and the group and also in the way how people experience emotions not as individuals but as members of a group.⁶⁶ Group emotions are defined as "emotions that arise when people identify with a social group and respond emotionally to events or objects that impinge on the group".⁶⁷ Hence, based on group membership and depending on levels of identification, individuals experience group emotions. Sasley is particularly interested in decision-makers and shows how their group membership leads them to take decisions not as individuals but as members of a group.⁶⁸ Group emotions are not simply an aggregation of individuals' emotions but are seen as a "process by which the group becomes part of the individual self and the convergence of emotions within the group to a prototypical emotion".⁶⁹ Sasley's approach is valuable in that he is able to speak about states' emotions but, at the same time, is still able to leave agency with individual human beings. He locates the experience of emotions with the individuals, while conceptualising group emotions as more than an aggregation of individual emotions.⁷⁰

However, everything hinges on accepting the idea of the state as a group which is an assumption that needs to be questioned. Sasley points out that ultimately whether the state is a group is "open to empirical verification".⁷¹ He suggests, first, that all citizens of a state need to be defined as group members.⁷² And second, he argues that a group depends on its members perceiving themselves as members and on a certain amount of interaction between them.⁷³ He

⁶⁴ Sasley, 'Theorizing States' Emotions', 454.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 459.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 465.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ In this sense Sasley provides a useful answer to Wendt's critique of locating states emotions with individual persons that according to Wendt would give states only an "ersatz subjectivity". Compare Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 314.

⁷¹ Sasley, 'Theorizing States' Emotions', 470.

⁷² Ibid., 469.

⁷³ Ibid.

uses the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as an example and focuses on moments of increased violence.⁷⁴ Given the above definition of group, it seems that the chosen example indeed offers opportunities for treating states as groups and for utilising insights from social psychology. However, it seems problematic to extend this to a general theory of the state in IR. My objection is that the circumstances in which the state can be treated as a group are incredibly limited.

A number of scholars argue that a transformation away from traditional concepts of the state, such as the nineteenth-century ideal of a nation state, towards what can be called a post-modern state is underway.⁷⁵ As the relationship between citizens and the state – the basis for the “community of citizens” – changes so does, in George Sørensen’s terms, the “emotional attachment to the nation”. He argues that “the ‘national community of sentiment’ must also be expected to change in the new context of more intense transnational relations”.⁷⁶ This, I argue, has profound consequences for the possibilities of incorporating findings from social psychology into IR and making them useful for theorising the state. Any theory that builds on assumptions about a community of citizens or the identity-building function of the (nation-)state faces profound challenges in light of these transformations of the relationship between citizens and the state.

Already in the 1960s, Kelman argued that while in times of crisis “the national role becomes paramount in the citizen’s hierarchy of roles”, in modern pluralistic societies we find a variety of group memberships that compete for dominance and hence a “multiplicity of conflicts crisscrossing society”.⁷⁷

Further, it might be useful to remind ourselves of the distinction between society and state in this context. In his *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*, Lebow offers an interesting answer. Drawing on Emile Durkheim he argues that “the state is too remote from individuals, its connections with them too superficial and irregular, to be able to penetrate the depths of their

⁷⁴ Ibid., 466.

⁷⁵ For this term compare Georg Sørensen, 'The Transformation of the State', in *The State. Theories and Issues*, ed. Colin Hay, Michael Lister, and David Marsh (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 191, *ibid.* However, it is also worth questioning if the state ever produced a kind of social interaction that would allow us to treat it as a group. For example, Benedict Anderson famously argues that it is precisely the lack of face-to-face contact is the reason why the nation is only an imagined community. Their community is an image of the mind. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 6.

⁷⁶ Sørensen, 'The Transformation of the State', 197.

⁷⁷ Kelman, 'Social Psychological Approaches to the Study of International Relations', 575 and 577.

consciousness and socialise them from within” and, therefore, rejects drawing on social psychology for his theory which aims at exploring the role of emotions, in his words “passions”, at the level of the state.⁷⁸

Lastly, it is useful to look at how social identity theory defines a social group for its purposes. As we have seen, Wendt points to experimental findings regarding in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination to support his case of state identity formation. Similarly, Sasley draws on social identity theory as the basis for his state-as-group assumption. In both cases, the fact that these theories are built upon findings from the laboratory of the psychologist is seen as an advantage. Central to the findings of Tajfel and others is a definition of group that builds on the following criteria. Tajfel argues that

[t]he two necessary components [of group identification] are: a cognitive one, in the sense of awareness of membership and an evaluative one, in the sense that this awareness is related to some value connotations. The third component consists of an emotional investment in the awareness and evaluations. The empirical reality of [these] criteria is a necessary condition for the existence of a group in the psychological sense of the term.⁷⁹

This constrains any direct application of these findings to the state fundamentally, especially before the background of the transformation of the state towards what Sørensen calls a post-modern state. I agree with Sasley that whether or not the state can be treated as a social group has to be shown empirically. Yet, given the above brief discussion, the chances of its usefulness beyond a very limited number of cases, such as the one selected by him, seems unlikely.

⁷⁸ Émile Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1984), liv. As quoted in Lebow, *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*, 114. It has to be noted that this observation is the reason why Durkheim saw the necessity for a number other groups, “secondary groups”, existing between the state and individuals, with which association and identification was said to be possible. In this context, he was primarily concerned with the role of professional groups and their role in “fulfilling the social organisation of peoples”. For this point compare Engin F. Isin, *Being Political. Genealogies of Citizenship* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 232. Also Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society*, preface to the 2nd edition, p. xxxi.

⁷⁹ Henri Tajfel, 'Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations', *Annual Review of Psychology* 33 (1982), 2. Compare also the following definition by John Turner. “At a minimum, a group has been defined as two or more persons who are in some way socially or psychologically interdependent: for the satisfaction of needs, attainment of goals or consensual validation of attitudes and values”. John C. Turner, 'Towards a Cognitive Redefinition of the Social Group', in *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations*, ed. Henri Tajfel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 15.

Therefore, it can be argued that the state-as-group does not offer any ground on which to build a general concept of the state as a psychological person.

In conclusion of this section, I reject the idea of the state-as-individuals and the idea of the state-as-group. Neither of them is useful for a reformulation of state psychological personhood. Based on this, I argue that what we are left with is a concept – Hobbes's fictitious person of the state – that is given life through the personal and emotional stories we tell about it. These, however, are given meaning through the ways people make sense of themselves. In this regard, psychology can be instructive.

The state-as-person: yet, which psychology?

Having located this project within the emotional turn in IR as well as within a strong constructivist approach and aiming to comment on Wendt's idea of the psychological personhood of states, we need to ask: "Which psychology?"⁸⁰ As we have seen, from the perspective of some of the scholars that can be located as part of the emotional turn in IR, it is generally assumed that incorporating findings from psychology into IR can be a useful endeavour.

However, those that can be classified as being part of the emotional turn and that draw on psychology often neglect a detailed engagement with the ontological and epistemological commitments that go hand in hand with such a "borrowing". Findings from psychology, a discipline which is often portrayed as having a firm *scientific* basis, are seldom problematised with regard to their fundamental assumptions about the world and how we come to know it. As argued above, some accounts of those who argue that incorporating findings from psychology has great value for IR do seem to implicitly suggest that IR's findings and theories can be made *more scientific* with regard to understanding cognitive processes and behaviour. This needs to be thoroughly questioned with regard to the epistemological and ontological commitments that are thereby incorporated into IR as well with regard to the compatibility of these commitments with the ontological and epistemological positions taken as part of a specific research project.

This thesis is interested in developing the concept of the psychological state-as-person further, however, as we have seen, this should neither result in interpreting the state as a group nor in focusing on those individuals who represent the state. Further, as outlined, this is also not a look towards psychology in order to investigate, in a self-reflexive and meta-theoretical manner, the cognitive biases of the researcher and the discipline. Keeping this in mind, the psychology that is drawn upon in the following needs to fulfil specific requirements. The assumption is that how we make sense of ourselves is also how we make sense of the state. In looking towards psychology, I am, hence, looking for an answer to the question of how we make sense of

⁸⁰ This is also the title of one of the chapters in Rom Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood* (London: Sage, 1998a), 21ff.

ourselves as people among other people. Keeping the critique of Wendt's approach issued in Chapter 2 in mind, this is done from a strong constructivist position.

In the following, I aim to argue in favour of the usefulness of so-called *constructionist psychology* for working on the concept of the states-as-persons. In addition to providing a useful answer with regard to how people make sense of themselves in a world of people, constructionist psychology allows me to question assumptions about persons, minds, selves, and emotions made in mainstream psychology as well as in Wendt's account of persons and states-as-persons. Further, building on the linguistic turn in psychology, discursive psychology offers a useful anchorage point with the more radical constructivist stance taken here. In contrast to Wendt and mainstream psychology, the perspective on the state-as-person taken here emphasises discourse and cultural practices and de-emphasises essentialism and materialism in order to generate an understanding of people in a world of people.⁸¹

Introductory textbooks on psychology stress that psychology is a *science* and are quick to point out that the discipline is committed to *scientific methods* such as naturalistic and clinical observations, correlational studies, and experiments.⁸² The goals of psychology are described as description, understanding (in the sense of being able to "state the cause of a behavior"), prediction, and control.⁸³ Choices for book sub-titles such as "Psychology the Science of Behaviour" and chapter titles such as "The Science of Psychology" are instructive in this regard and seem to point to the need of the discipline to define itself as scientific.⁸⁴ Being scientific in

⁸¹ I use the phrase "people in a world of people" by drawing on Rom Harré's distinction between two different ontologies: a world-seen-as-molecular-clusters and a world-seen-as-people. A more detailed elaboration of this key distinction follows in chapter five. Compare Rom Harré, 'Discourse and the Embodied Person', in *Social Constructionist Psychology. A Critical Analysis of Theory and Practice*, ed. David J. Nightingale and John Cromby (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999), 107.

⁸² See for example Neil R. Carlson et al., *Psychology: The Science of Behaviour*, 6th ed. (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 29. See also Dennis Coon, *Psychology: A Modular Approach to Mind and Behavior* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2006), 31-48. This emphasis on the scientific method can be used as a divisive rhetorical instrument that aims at devaluing approaches that do not fulfil the scientific standard (however defined). For this point see Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 1-23.

⁸³ Coon, *Psychology: A Modular Approach to Mind and Behavior*, 17.

⁸⁴ For the book sub-title compare Carlson et al., *Psychology: The Science of Behaviour*, 1. With regard to the reference to scientificity, virtually any introductory textbook on psychology could serve as an example. Here, see for example Miles Hewstone, Frank D. Fincham, and Jonathan Foster, *Psychology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2005), 2-23. For a discussion of psychology as a science see Carlson et al., *Psychology: The Science of Behaviour*, 11.

this context is often taken to mean being materialist and empiricist.⁸⁵ Psychology as a discipline can be divided into various approaches, larger historical phases, and great debates. Looking at the twentieth century, one can, for example, distinguish between three key schools of thought that shaped the discipline and can be understood as contributing to the “great debates” of psychology.⁸⁶ Psychoanalysis of the nineteenth and early twentieth century was soon to be replaced by behaviourism in the 1950s which in turn was replaced by cognitive psychology emerging in the 1960s. Behaviourism rejected the unobservables postulated by psychoanalysis and emphasised empirical data and overt behaviour. Cognitive psychology, being heavily influenced by the emergence of information-processing theory and computer science, argued against behaviourism and its exclusive focus on overt behaviour and direct observation by postulating covert processes of the mind. This debate between behaviourist on the one hand and cognitive psychologists on the other hand is also known as the (first) cognitive revolution in psychology.⁸⁷ In this regard, a parallel between psychology and a larger development in the natural sciences as part of which the positivistic framework was questioned by an emerging scientific realist one can be drawn.⁸⁸

Generally speaking though, psychology has a strong focus on materialism and empiricism and this is already reflected in its founding myth. Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920) is usually portrayed as the founding father of modern psychology. Most text books emphasise his laboratory work and hence confirm the roots of the discipline in empiricism.⁸⁹ Wundt’s usage of empirical and

⁸⁵ For another overview of basic psychology textbooks that confirm the “Psychology-as-One-of-the-Sciences” story see also Rom Harré, ‘The Relevance of Philosophy for the Study of Psychology’, in *The Mind as a Scientific Object: Between Brain and Culture*, ed. Christina E. Erneling and David M. Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁸⁶ Obviously, any such post-factum narrative can only serve as a general orientation for those outside the discipline or new to it. The notion of great debates, in IR as in psychology, is of course a useful narrative that very often loses its power as soon as a closer look is taken at the work of those scholars said to represent a certain school of thought that is portrayed in opposition to another one. I think it is safe to assume that a critique similar to the one levelled against IR’s various great debates can be applied to portraying psychology as a succession of great debates. However, for an overview of psychology like this, aimed at an audience outside the discipline, it will suffice as a tool for orientation. For a discussion of the great debates in IR see for example Brian C. Schmidt, ‘On the History and Historiography of International Relations’, in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse-Kappen, and Beth A. Simmons (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002). The following overview of psychology as a series of debates is based on Don Baucum, *Psychology* (Hauppauge, N.Y.: Barron’s Educational Series, 1999), 2-10.

⁸⁷ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 31.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ See for example Carlson et al., *Psychology: The Science of Behaviour*, 10-11.

laboratory methods is seen as the key turning point in establishing psychology as an independent discipline by developing a distinct identity separate from philosophy.⁹⁰ Yet, Wundt himself appears to have seen his experimental work more as a useful addition to philosophy rather than as the attempt to establish a discipline in its own right.⁹¹ Indeed, most textbooks acknowledge certain philosophical foundations of psychology, pointing out that the discipline “began long ago as part of philosophy, the study of knowledge, reality, and human nature”.⁹² Usually, a lineage of philosophers from Descartes, representing dualism and sometimes referred to as the father of modern psychology, to Berkeley and Locke (empiricism) and James Mill (materialism) is cited as being among some of the key foundational premises of psychology.⁹³ Empiricism and materialism are described as the principles that make the scientific study of the mind and human behaviour possible. This is an interesting point to note for two reasons. First, IR as a discipline, in contrast to psychology, debates questions of ontology and epistemology more openly and regards these questions as far from settled.⁹⁴ Given the variety of approaches in IR, there might not necessarily be a good fit between certain positions in IR and the philosophy of science commitments of mainstream psychology. Secondly, as we will see in the following, constructionist psychology thoroughly questions the philosophy of science basis of mainstream psychology and takes a very different position. In textbooks and mainstream approaches, the debates about the philosophical foundations of psychology often appear as already decided.⁹⁵ Yet, a turn to constructionist psychology reveals how these foundations are far from permanently settled and how the different sides in such debates offer fundamentally different perspectives on the self, mind, and emotions. Rom Harré, a key proponent of

⁹⁰ Rom Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002), 15. Also Coon, *Psychology: A Modular Approach to Mind and Behavior*, 19.

⁹¹ Compare Robert M. Farr, 'Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920) and the Origins of Psychology as an Experimental and Social Science', *British Journal of Social Psychology* 22, 4 (1983). Kurt Danziger, 'Wundt's Psychological Experiment in the Light of His Philosophy of Science', *Psychological Research* 42, 1-2 (1980). And Emily D. Cahan and Sheldon H. White, 'Proposals for a Second Psychology', *American Psychologist* 47, 2 (1992).

⁹² Coon, *Psychology: A Modular Approach to Mind and Behavior*, 19.

⁹³ For the overview given here, see Carlson et al., *Psychology: The Science of Behaviour*, 10-12. Other accounts point to David Hume in stead of Mill. See for example Hewstone, Fincham, and Foster, *Psychology*, 10.

⁹⁴ Compare for example Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*.

⁹⁵ However, there is a multitude of debates on the philosophical foundation of psychology now which is not yet reflected in textbooks on psychology or mainstream approaches. An early debate was channelled in the edited collection of A. Phillips Griffiths. A. Phillips Griffiths, ed., *Philosophy, Psychology and Psychiatry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Journals such as the *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, as well as *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology* have started picking up this debate.

constructionist psychology, calls for a (new) philosophy of psychology because psychology “has been in thrall to unexamined and highly unsatisfactory conceptual presuppositions”.⁹⁶ He labels the critique levelled by constructionist psychology the *second cognitive revolution* in psychology. The premises of this second cognitive revolution will be looked at in more detail in the following.

As already mentioned, I suggest that constructionist psychology is the most fruitful approach from within psychology to make sense of states-as-persons conceptually. Two reasons need to be stressed. Constructionist psychology allows me to criticise taken for granted assumptions of mainstream psychology that often find their way into IR via interdisciplinary approaches. Harré, being located on a middle ground between philosophy and psychology and sharing some scientific realist commitments, offers a useful starting point for further reflections. He, for example, offers a very different reading of Wundt’s contribution and the founding of psychology.⁹⁷ Harré argues that in the Wundtian conception psychology is a “metaphysical and methodological double science”.⁹⁸ Hence, building on Wundt, Harré argues that “psychologists must accept [...] that their ‘science’ is built on a dual ontology, molecules on the one hand and persons on the other”,⁹⁹ and this ultimately requires two “radically different methodologies”.¹⁰⁰ Generally speaking, we can compare Harré’s reading of psychology as a dual science to debates in IR, especially among constructivists, regarding the relation between material and ideational factors and the role of language. It needs to be noted that Harré argues for keeping the dual character of psychology. On the one hand, it consists of the study of human bodies organised into a hierarchy of organs and functions. On the other hand, psychology, he argues, should be interested in the conversational world of people. Neither of the two ontologies and the resulting

⁹⁶ Harré, 'The Relevance of Philosophy for the Study of Psychology'.

⁹⁷ With regard to Harré’s scientific realist commitments compare Rom Harré and Roy Bhaskar, 'How to Change Reality: Story Vs. Structure - a Debate between Rom Harré and Roy Bhaskar', in *After Postmodernism. An Introduction to Critical Realism*, ed. José López and Gary Potter (London: Athlone Press, 2001). As well as the critique offered by Margaret Archer Margaret S. Archer, 'Being Human: The Problem of Agency', Cambridge University Press. For Harré’s position between philosophy and psychology compare Harré, 'The Relevance of Philosophy for the Study of Psychology'. Harré, *Key Thinkers in Psychology*. And Rom Harré and Michael Tisaw, *Wittgenstein and Psychology. A Practical Guide* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

⁹⁸ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 30.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, ix.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

methods are privileged. Rather, they exist side-by-side and the choice of one or the other depends on the kinds of questions that are of interest for a particular research programme.¹⁰¹

Generally, constructionist psychology can be seen as being part of a linguistic turn in psychology as part of which new developments in social theory have been utilised to bear on psychology. Harré outlines two general constructionist assumptions. First, there is the assumption that “[h]uman beings acquire their typical human psychological characteristics, powers and tendencies in ‘symbiotic’ interaction with other human beings”.¹⁰² This first basic premise points to how only a small part of what constitutes the mental life of human beings is based in biology and therefore how only a small part can be seen as a given prior to social interaction. Second, following from that, Harré and others stress the role of language and interaction in constituting human beings understood as part of a world-seen-as-people. Harré argues that “[t]he psychological process of mature human beings are essentially collective, and contingently privatised and individualised”.¹⁰³

Constructionist psychology started to emerge as a distinct perspective in the 1980s. It rejects both behaviourism and cognitivism. From the discursive perspective in psychology, language is not seen as transporting an underlying thought or emotion, as the cognitive perspective would maintain. Selves and emotions are not seen as being behind talk but as being brought about only in discourse. Inner experience, cognitive states, and mental events – all of which are ideas relevant for cognitivism – are rejected. This means that, despite sharing an interest in language, constructionist psychology is fundamentally different from “psycholinguistics” which is interested in “a cognitivist and information processing view of the human actor and attempts to explicate the cognitive machinery that is taken to underlie and generate talk”.¹⁰⁴ In contrast, constructionist psychology does not posit mental processes, attributions, or emotions as being behind discourse or underlying it. Harré summarises this point by arguing “that what we are studying when we are ‘doing psychology’ are discursive practices of various kinds, some of

¹⁰¹ For an explanation of these two ontologies in reference to Wundt compare *ibid.*, 176. For Harré’s reconceptualisation of psychology that embodies this dual character more fully compare Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*.

¹⁰² Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 18. For a critique compare Archer, ‘Being Human: The Problem of Agency’.

¹⁰³ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 18.

¹⁰⁴ Jonathan Potter, ‘Editor’s Introduction. Volume 1: Theory and Method’, in *Discourse and Psychology. Volume 1*, ed. Jonathan Potter (London: Sage, 2007a).

which could exist only in actual or potential interpersonal interactions”.¹⁰⁵ Emphasising the role of language, he further argues that

both [...] social habits and [...] conscious social manipulations as patterned according to rules. In the former case these are like the rules of language, a system of norms whose expression in explicit statements awaits the grammarian of the social world, the new-style social psychologist.¹⁰⁶

Key proponents of what I broadly call constructionist psychology are the aforementioned Harré as well as John Schotter, both being strongly influenced by Wittgenstinian philosophy of language as well as Vygotskyian insights regarding early childhood development.¹⁰⁷ Jonathan Potter and Derek Edwards, who label their approach discursive psychology, can also be mentioned as being part of a general constructionist movement in psychology.¹⁰⁸ For the approach taken in this thesis, the constructionist perspective in (social) psychology represented by Kenneth J. Gergen also deserves to be mentioned.¹⁰⁹ In terms of a research agenda and practical guidelines for further research, Potter and Edwards have developed constructionist psychology furthest.¹¹⁰ Describing what they call discursive psychology as applying “theory and

¹⁰⁵ Rom Harré, 'The Epistemology of Social Representations', in *The Psychology of the Social*, ed. Uwe Flick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998b).

¹⁰⁶ Rom Harré, 'Blueprint for a New Science', in *Reconstructing Social Psychology*, ed. N. Armistead (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1974), 248-249.

¹⁰⁷ With regard to this terminology, compare for example the following edited volumes Peter Stearns and Rom Harré, *Discursive Psychology in Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995). Also Rom Harré and Grant Gillett, *The Discursive Mind* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994). As well as the following essay Rom Harré, 'Discursive Psychology', in *Rethinking Psychology*, ed. Jonathan A. Smith, Rom Harré, and Van Langenhove Luk (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995b). But compare also the following edited volumes Rom Harré, ed., *The Social Construction of Emotions* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986). David J. Nightingale and John Cromby, eds., *Social Constructionist Psychology. A Critical Analysis of Theory and Practice* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999).

¹⁰⁸ In addition to Vygotsky and Wittgenstein, for Schotter a key influence is M. Bakhtin. Compare for example M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogical Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981 [1941]). Michael Billig is another key influence for Schotter but especially for Edwards and Potter. With regard to Billig compare for example Michael Billig, *Arguing and Thinking. A Rhetorical Approach to Social Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). And Michael Billig, *Ideology and Opinions. Studies in Rhetorical Psychology* (London: Sage, 1991).

¹⁰⁹ Kenneth J. Gergen, 'The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology', *American Psychologist* 40, 3 (1985b).

¹¹⁰ Their development of DAM, a Discursive Action Model, in 1992 is such an early example. See Derek Edwards and Jonathan Potter, *Discursive Psychology* (London: Sage, 1992), 154ff.

methods of discourse analysis to psychological topics”,¹¹¹ they are also the most specific in terms of defining how research in this new field should or could be carried out. Interestingly, Edwards and Potter, at the end of a passage analysing the First Gulf War with tools from discourse analysis, mention how they “hope that these developments will, for example, provide a distinctive input into post-structuralist debates about politics and international relations”.¹¹²

However, beyond these methodological considerations, constructionist psychology enters a meta-theoretical debate on some of the basic premises of psychology. It is this aspect that makes it most valuable for developing ideas about states-as-persons and for making a useful contribution to IR theory. Given the project of the *constructed state-as-person*, the focus will be on the reconceptualisation of the person, self, mind, and emotions that is provided via the meta-theoretical discussion introduced by constructionist psychology. Further, it is in constructionist psychology that we find an explicit engagement with emotions that is highly critical of the cognitivist perspective, which, does not easily, if at all, combine with a constructivism in IR that emphasises the role of language. If we are to take the emotional turn in IR seriously and find the incorporation of findings from psychology into IR useful, these are questions that deserve explicit treatment. In order to engage with Wendt’s idea of state psychological personhood and to ultimately formulate an alternative, the detailed and critical engagement with traditional conceptualisations of persons offered by constructionist psychology is an ideal starting point.

¹¹¹ Derek Edwards, 'Emotion Discourse', in *Discourse and Psychology. Volume 3*, ed. Jonathan Potter (London: Sage, 2007 [1999]).

¹¹² They specifically point to Der Derian, Michael Shapiro, and R. J. B. Walker. See Edwards and Potter, *Discursive Psychology*, 175.

Conclusion

The chapter starts from the assumption that how we make sense of ourselves is also how we make sense of the state and it turns to psychology to find an answer to the question of what it is like to be person.¹¹³ Going back to the ideas on metaphors introduced in the previous chapter, this represents an investigation into the source domain of the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person*. In addition, this chapter is also to be understood as a commentary on IR's previous and current attempts to "bring psychology in" and the more recent emotional turn in the discipline. One key general insight for the *constructed state-as-person* is taken from the scholars of the emotional turn in IR. Generally speaking, they are critical of the fact that the discipline remains wedded to a rationalist account of the person. The aim of the emotional turn, as for example outlined in a key article by Crawford, is to argue against dichotomising rationality and emotions, and to acknowledge the important role played by emotions in IR. The chapter begins with a critique of attempts to incorporate findings from psychology into IR in order to put IR's assumption about people and groups on a more *scientific* footing. Such approaches are often driven by the conviction that psychology is valuable for its adherence to a positivistic framework and specifically its strict empirical methods. First, this raises a philosophy of science question about how to best generate an understanding of people. Secondly, and more importantly, this view of psychology is at odds with the critique of Wendt's state-as-person, especially the call for exploring a more radical constructivism with regard to people and states, put forward in Chapter 2. After giving a brief overview of recent efforts in IR that can be interpreted as being part of the emotional turn, the chapter turns to highlighting three possible ways in which psychology can be brought to bear on the idea of the state-as-person. In the first instance psychology, more precisely cognitive psychology, can point to cognitive biases of the researcher that can help explain IR's prevalence towards treating states as persons. The three tendencies that are highlighted are the fundamental attribution error, anthropomorphisation, and metaphorical reasoning. In this sense, drawing on psychology can contribute to greater self-reflexivity of the discipline. This, for instance, is a key aim of some scholars of the emotional turn. However, this is largely a question of epistemology whereas this thesis is focused on

¹¹³ Compare Thomas Nagel, 'What Is It Like to Be a Bat?', *The Philosophical Review* 83, 4 (1974). For the connection with Wendt see Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 296. Compare also *ibid.*

questions of (scientific) ontology. A second potential contribution is what I call the state-as-individuals approach which is rejected based on the commitment to a non-reductionist approach to the state. The third important potential contribution of psychology comes from treating the state as a social group and thereby making social psychology applicable to it. A number of scholars of the emotional turn, such as Mercer and Sasley, do so and utilise social identity theory to find ways of theorising emotions at the level of the state. Approaches like these raise the question whether the state can be treated as a group. Ultimately, it is argued that the instances in which the state can be said to fulfil the criteria of a social group, as put forward by social identity theorists such as Tajfel, are rare. While it is acknowledged that there might be instances where social identity theory can be made useful, this is ultimately an empirical question that has to be solved on a case-by-case basis. Further, keeping the discussion of the “opaque state” of Chapter 1 in mind, and especially the argument that the state is not easily identifiable with a territory or a group of people, it is argued that the idea of the state-as-person needs to be addressed on a conceptual level first. Utilising social identity theory in IR can make an important contribution to the discipline with regard to studying the behaviour of relevant groups. However, it is of little utility for theorising the state or the state-as-person.

Keeping with the perspective that there is a metaphorical link between how we make sense of ourselves and how we make sense of the state, the last part of the chapter asks ‘which psychology?’ After a discussion of key philosophy of science commitments of mainstream psychology, so-called constructionist psychology, especially the work of Harré, is suggested as a good fit. A key assumption of the constructionist approach, in line with broader constructivist commitments, is that psychological characteristics are acquired through social interaction. Further, and in contrast to cognitive psychology, self and emotions are not seen as being located inside the mind. Hypothesis about inner experiences, cognitive states, and mental process – all rooted in cognitive science – are rejected. From the constructionist perspective, selves and emotions are not located behind talk, and only *expressed* through language; they are created through discourse. Ultimately, the argument subscribed to is that psychologists study discursive practices which exist only by virtue of human interactions. While we can remain agnostic with regard to whether we acknowledge this perspective as the best possible approach to understanding individual human beings, it is certainly the most fruitful perspective to draw on with regard to the idea of the state-as-person.

Chapter 5: Person, self, and emotions from the perspective of constructionist psychology

In this chapter, I aim to present the elements of an alternative conception of the state-as-person. In doing so, this chapter builds on the arguments presented previously – the critique of Alexander Wendt’s “states are people too”, the defense of metaphorical thinking, the key insights of the emotional turn in IR, and the potential contribution of constructionist psychology.

As we have seen in previous chapters, thinking of states as if they were persons is still prevalent in IR. This alone makes the following account a worthwhile inquiry. Further, as pointed out in Chapter 3, I argue that the state-as-person is best understood as a metaphor. Although the state-as-structure is real, the state-as-person is not. Conceptualising the state as a person is an inherently metaphorical endeavour. The world of *as-if* thinking seems safe because, at first, it appears to have no ontological implications. However, my argument is that even though the state is not *really* a person, thinking about states in terms of persons helps instantiate and perpetuate the current structure of the state and the system of states.¹

Wendt argues that “[o]ur answer to the question of whether the state is a person will depend first on how we conceptualise persons, which is equally contested.”² This is indeed an important question and my answer differs fundamentally from Wendt’s. When looking for a definition of what a person is, the first problem encountered is the question of what framework to draw on. For example, why would we privilege a psychological account over a sociological or anthropological one? Why wouldn’t we draw on folk psychology or fictional accounts? And even

¹ Compare for example Charles Beitz critique that today’s international system builds on a nineteenth-century version of liberalism and the rights and duties it ascribed to persons. Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations*, esp. 66.

² Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 292.

after we have decided to give an account informed by psychology, it would still remain unclear which psychological account to draw on.

In trying to approach Wendt's question, I start from the following assumption: the way we make sense of ourselves as people in a world of people is also the way we make sense of the state in IR and ultimately come to think of it as a person.³ This has important consequences for our starting point in the search for an answer. My contention, as outlined in the previous chapter, is that constructionist psychology, taking its starting point from emphasising the role of language in the construction of the self and emotions, can provide key insights in this regard.

By drawing on constructionist psychology, the answer given as part of this account is one that de-emphasises materialism and supposed essential qualities and looks to language for an answer. It is also an account that starts from the everyday experiences of people. This particular starting point distinguishes this project at the outset from Wendt's conceptualisation of the state-as-person. The emphasis will be on the stories we tell about people, selves, and emotions. Searching for the essence of a person or locating emotions and consciousness somehow "inside" the person is rejected for the project of the *constructed state-as-person*.

Further, the move towards constructionist psychology also connects with the importance that was given to the role that metaphors play in making the world intelligible and in creating the social world in the first place in Chapter 3. I agree with Erik Ringmar who, outlining a narrative account of self, remarks that "[w]hat we take ourselves to be is not a question of what essences constitute us, but instead a questions of what metaphors we apply to ourselves."⁴

This chapter illustrates what the state-as-person project looks like from the perspective of constructionist psychology. I argue that self and emotions are, for the purpose of understanding people in a world of people, best described as discursively established. Insights are drawn from Rom Harré's work and his *The Singular Self* in particular. Following his position and applying it to the context of the state, it is argued that the state is constructed as a person by applying to it the same language games that we use to make sense of ourselves and other people.

³ Compare Patrick T. Jackson for the suggestion to focus on the *process of personation* as a response to Wendt's state-as-person argument. Compare also the corresponding section in Chapter 1. Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too'.

⁴ Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action. A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War*, 75.

I proceed in five main steps. First, I outline a fundamental distinction between two different ontologies that Harré introduces. He argues that depending on choices about ontology we, on the one hand, encounter a world-seen-as-people and, on the other hand, encounter a world-seen-as-molecular-clusters.⁵ The choice of ontology, or grammar as Harré calls it, has fundamental consequences for how we create an understanding of individual human beings. I argue that the state-as-person can only be usefully looked at from the perspective of the world-seen-as-people grammar.

Second, I outline Harré's concepts of person and self and contrast it with Wendt's approach. Here, the emphasis will be on discursive construction of the self and its social and intersubjective character. Third, I specifically look at Harré's ideas about the self and how it is discursively constructed. These insights will be used in the following chapter to work towards showing what the *constructed state-as-person* looks like and to point to its implications for systemic IR theorising about the state.

In a fourth step, the specific perspective of constructionist psychology on emotions is introduced. In the context of this thesis, with its focus on psychological state-personhood, this is an important step to fill what has been perceived as a gap in the state-as-person literature. Further, in light of the emotional turn in IR and the association of this thesis with this movement, constructionist psychology presents an important addition to an emerging scholarship.

In the final part, I show that even from the perspective of constructionist psychology with its emphasis on discourse, the body does matter after all. I take this point to further the argument that the state is only ever a *second-order person*. Even from the perspective of scholars like Harré with accounts that are strongly influenced by late Wittgenstinian insights, the state never becomes a "real" person.

⁵ Compare for example Harré, 'Discourse and the Embodied Person'.

A world-seen-as-people and a world-seen-as-molecules

Central to this chapter is the assumption that how we make sense of ourselves is also how we make sense of the state. To put this into the terminology that will be explained below one could say that we can and do apply the same language game that we use to make sense of other people and ourselves to make sense of states. In that limited sense, states are people, too. Or rather, in that sense they are made into people, too.

Taking this as a starting point, it becomes important to ask how people make sense of themselves. The previous chapter suggested a turn to psychology in order to answer this question. However, as Chapter 4 illustrated, it is by no means clear what field of psychology to draw on. I argued that the source domain for the metaphorical construction of the state-as-person cannot be found in the entities and mechanisms postulated by a psychology rooted in a materialist ontology and the epistemology and methods of the physical sciences. Rather, the focus should be on the person being among other persons and not on hypothetical mechanisms in the mind.

This chapter is best introduced by distinguishing between different ways of making sense of people. I take this distinction from Harré who introduces two different approaches to studying people by asking: “What if the nouns ‘body’, ‘mind’, ‘spirit’ did not refer to parts of the person, one visible and two invisible, but to ways of talking about people?”⁶ He argues that body, mind, and spirit are not entities we find in the world out there but represent different ways of making sense of people. From these commonly encountered nouns Harré abstracts two different “grammars of discourses on human life”.⁷ On the one hand, we can speak about human beings from the perspective of a “world-seen-as-people” and on the other hand they can be approached from the perspective of a “world-seen-as-molecular-clusters”.⁸ The term grammar,

⁶ Ibid., 99.

⁷ Ibid., 102. It is worth noting here that in *Cognitive Science*, Harré distinguishes between four kinds of grammars used to describe human beings. He sees three of them as valuable for developing psychology further. These are the person grammar, the organism grammar, and the molecule grammar. See Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 147-166.

⁸ Harré, 'Discourse and the Embodied Person', 100. See page 102 for a schematic overview and page 107 for this exact terminology.

building on Wittgenstinian insights and being consciously employed as a metaphor by Harré, points to “a set of rules for the use of a symbolic system”.⁹

What does it mean then to look at states with the help of the person grammar? In the person grammar, the focus is on “rule-governed sequences of meanings”, rather than on a causal picture.¹⁰ Meanings and rules, in contrast to causal mechanism, are the preferred explanatory mode. Further, the person grammar does not suppose any *hidden* thought processes, feelings, and perceptions.¹¹ Rather, “it can be used to express what is presupposed when we treat embodied persons as *the basic particulars* and originating sources of activity. It is expressed in ways of doing things that we see everywhere in everyday life.”¹² The person grammar also includes the rules for assigning responsibility and using moral concepts.¹³

Both grammars are drawn upon when we talk about human beings and each makes different aspects visible. However, the *constructed state-as-person* is firmly positioned in the “world-seen-as-people” grammar, the same grammar that is central to Harré’s research on persons, selves, and emotions. This choice of grammar has far-reaching implications for how we “see” people and how we “see” states.

Ultimately, however, this is more than a decision on the kinds of words we use to describe people or states. It is important to stress that deciding between these two grammars is a decision on ontology. The “two worlds” each represent a fundamentally different ontology.¹⁴ According to Harré, the key question to ask for developing any kind of ontology is: What is the source of the activity that we are interested in understanding?¹⁵ Each of the grammars he outlines is based on that question. From the perspective of the person grammar, the source of activity is the person.¹⁶ Intentions, actions, and emotions originate from the person and cannot

⁹ Ibid. Harré describes “grammar” as “one of the great metaphors of the age”. The “grammar” metaphor serves as a useful description and orientation of his research focus. For the view of the grammar as a metaphor see *ibid.* For explicit references to Wittgenstein see Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 145, 148 and 165.

¹⁰ Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 152.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 163.

¹² *Ibid.*, 148, emphasis added.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 148 and 165.

¹⁴ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 103 and 176.

¹⁵ Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 162.

¹⁶ This has to be understood in connection with the argument that persons are the basic particulars of the person grammar. For the terminology “basic particular” compare also P. F. Strawson who connects “basic

be ascribed to the world of molecules. Activities like reasoning, acting, and feeling cannot have any other source but the person. Hence, the *basic particular* of this world is the person. I agree with Harré and follow him in this important distinction. However, with regard to the state-as-person, an important difference needs to be emphasised. People are the basic particulars in the ontology of the world-seen-as-people. In IR, many believe, and I join them in this belief, that states are the basic particulars. However, it needs to be stressed that states are the basic particulars only notionally.¹⁷ The idea that the state is the source of activity in IR is based on the assumption that states are the agents of IR. It is important to keep in mind that individual human beings are the *actual* source of activity in IR.

I also follow Harré in arguing that the two ontologies cannot be separated completely.¹⁸ Harré argues that, roughly speaking, one ontology can be associated with materialism and the other with constructivism. In Harré's understanding, both are defined by what the other is not. Hence, each perspective implies and depends on the existence of its opposite.¹⁹ Harré argues that we need to realise that the world of psychology is both: "It is molecular, though not constituted wholly of molecules. It is a storied world, though it is not wholly constituted of narratives."²⁰ Yet, we usually only tell one of these stories at a time. This is not a case of one story mattering more than the other; they are both valid for their respective purposes. To illustrate this point, Harré uses the analogy of staining bacteria with a dye to render them visible under a microscope.²¹ A certain dye will only make certain bacteria visible. Choosing another dye will make other bacteria visible. Broadly speaking we can tell two different stories about the human

particulars" with "being ontologically prior". P. F. Strawson, *Individuals. An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics* (London: Methuen, 1959), 59.

¹⁷ For the term notionally and its usage compare C. A. W. Manning, *The Nature of International Society* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1975 [1962]), most explicitly 27.

¹⁸ In the introduction to *The Singular Self*, Harré refers to the pioneer psychologist Wilhelm Wundt and the Wundtian understanding of psychology as a dual science. In the course of the book, Harré chooses to only focus on one aspect of this dual science, namely the world-seen-as-people shaped by discursive interactions. In *Cognitive Science*, on the other hand, Harré is interested in conceptualising psychology as a "hybrid discipline" that incorporates both aspects while keeping them distinct. See Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, ix. See also Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 165.

¹⁹ This is Harré's argument in Harré, 'Discourse and the Embodied Person', 98.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 101.

world. In one case the world is seen as people and how they relate to things and other people, and in the other case the world is seen as clusters of molecules.²²

I argue that both of these stories can be told about people but only one of these stories can be told about states-as-persons. From the perspective of the molecule ontology, the basic particulars are molecules and the main mode of investigation is causation.²³ A molecule ontology is not useful and not desirable when it comes to the state-as-person. We have seen that in *Social Theory* Wendt aims to strike a middle ground between a materialist and an idealist ontology by postulating rump materialism and by arguing that it is not “ideas all the way down.” However, the key move in *Social Theory* is to introduce states’ identities and interests to systemic theorising. This, at least from the perspective of Harré’s dual ontology, positions Wendt’s states systemic project firmly in the person grammar where the basic particulars are persons and not molecules. We need to firmly reject the molecular grammar for the state-as-person because none of the issues that matter – such as identities, interests, emotions, and moral judgements – would be in focus. Harré cautions that “[h]uman beings in the molecular ontology are machines with no moral attributes.”²⁴ Such a view is neither the aim of Wendt’s state systemic project nor of the concept of the *constructed state-as-person* suggested here.

With regard to the state-as-person, there is an even stronger reason for operating within the person grammar. While both grammars are applicable to individual human beings, only the person grammar can be used to understand the state. To illustrate this, another distinction made by Harré needs to be introduced. Like the concept of grammar, it is also Wittgenstinian in origin and also metaphorical in nature.

According to Harré, it is useful to distinguish between the task on the one hand and the tool on the other.²⁵ Tasks are set discursively and belong to the person grammar. Tools are material and belong to the molecular grammar. Similar to what has already been said about the relation between the two grammars, tasks and tools cannot be separated completely and depend on each other. Neural mechanisms that belong to the material world of the molecule grammar are tools that can be used for accomplishing tasks rooted in the person grammar. How the tools

²² For an overview see *ibid.*, 102.

²³ Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 163.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ For this and the following compare *ibid.*

work is described and explained within the grammar of molecules. However, the role and meaning of these tools, how they are used and why, can only be understood from the perspective of the person grammar.

This means that from the perspective of the person ontology, the world of molecules matters in so far as it provides the tools that enable the fulfilment of discursively set tasks. It is clear that it is useful for analytical purposes to separate the two while they are intertwined in practice. However, beyond analytical convenience and the difficulties involved in attempting to tell both stories at the same time, there are strong philosophical reasons to make and maintain the task/tool division. Harré argues that “[t]here is a persistent and malign tendency in philosophy of psychology, no less than in psychology itself, to assimilate the task to the tool.”²⁶ He warns against establishing causation between material states and peoples’ perceptions.²⁷ Reducing the singular perceptual point of view of people to its material basis “would be like saying that in a tennis match the racquets have scored 40/30”.²⁸ To keep with the tennis image, racquets are material tools that are used to accomplish the discursively established task of playing a game of tennis. The rules of the game are not determined by the tools in any way. Further, the task is only accomplished by virtue of a person connecting task and tool to play the game and achieve a certain score. And both the game and the score only have meaning when looked at from the person ontology.

With regard to individual human beings, the task/ tool metaphor serves as an analytical distinction but also as a warning against reducing the world of people to the world of molecules. However, with regard to states-as-persons, the task/ tool metaphor does more. It provides another reason why states can only be persons notionally. Simply put, despite acknowledging that tasks cannot be reduced to tools, we still need to face the fact that states-as-persons have the tasks but they do not have the tools. This means that states can only accomplish tasks on the backs of individual human beings because “tools” are only available to embodied human beings. Hence, I caution that the grammar of molecules is not applicable to state-as-persons.

²⁶ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 103.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 100.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

Starting from the person grammar of constructionist psychology, in the following sections the concepts of person and self as well as the role of emotions will be the focus. For the concept of person and self, I will rely heavily on the conceptual framework developed by Harré in *The Singular Self*. With regard to emotions, I will be looking at the wider literature on constructionist psychology. A number of theories about emotions emphasise their bodily, neurological, or biochemical basis.²⁹ While the explanatory value of these processes for certain purposes is not denied, from the constructionist perspective, molecules are not part of the ontology. Hence, what I will be emphasising in the following account is the discursive establishment of emotions as well as their social role.

What follows from all of this is that we can argue that states are people too, but only in the sense that the same language game that applies to people, their selves, and their emotions can also be applied to states. On the level of language, states are people too, when the same discourses applied to people are also applied to states. Ultimately, states are people too, as long as we continue to play the language game of states-as-people.

²⁹ For an overview see for example Hewstone, Fincham, and Foster, *Psychology*, 118-119.

Person and self in Harré's account

People are an inevitable feature of how we experience the world. They form an inescapable, fundamental aspect of our daily experience.³⁰ Given this centrality, it is un-surprising that the concept also features heavily, albeit most often in the more abstract sense of the state-as-person, in IR. Related to this is the notion of “self”. Both are closely linked in everyday discourse. For example, Wendt’s statement that “states are people too” goes hand in hand with asserting that states have selves. For Wendt, to be a person also means to *have* a self. For example, in *Social Theory* he aims to show that “the state has a ‘Self,’ as suggested, for example by the realist assumption that states are ‘self’-interested.”³¹ Indeed, the notion of self-interest is one that features prominently in IR and especially among political realists. It is therefore paramount to be precise regarding the idea of the “self” from a constructionist perspective and especially how this idea works when used in connection with the state.

When speaking about individual human beings, the terms person and self seem to have a clear location and meaning. The discursive conventions of everyday life allow for them to be used intuitively without necessarily reflecting on them from a psychological or philosophical perspective. When it comes to the state the same vocabulary is often used in a similarly intuitive way. However, when speaking about the state-as-person, terms such as person and self demand further reflection.

³⁰ This observation, which I make with Harré and his world-seen-as-people in mind, should not be seen as an unmovable certainty from which to start but rather as a culturally and historically specific conceptualisation of persons. In his seminal essay “The category of the human mind” Marcel Mauss points to out how the ideas of person has substantially changed. Our current focus on persons as the basic particulars of our world can be seen as resulting from this development, but this connection of the concept of the person with thought, action, and moral values has to be understood as a fairly recent phenomena. “From a simple masquerade to the mask, from a ‘role’ (personnage) to a ‘person’ (personne), to a name, to an individual; from the latter to a being possessing metaphysical and moral value; from a moral consciousness to a sacred being; from the latter to a fundamental form of thought and action – the course is accomplished.” Marcel Mauss, 'A Category of the Human Mind: The Notion of Person; the Notion of Self', in *The Category of the Person. Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985 [1938]), 22. For a useful critique of Mauss see Stanley Rudman, *Concepts of Person and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See also Michael Carrithers, 'An Alternative Social History of the Self', in *The Category of the Person. Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

³¹ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215.

Here, I aim at providing an alternative conception of persons and selves from the perspective of constructionist psychology. The key point underlying this alternative is the assumption that persons, selves, and emotions are socially constructed. With regard to persons and selves, Marcel Mauss remarks that “[f]ar from existing as the primordial innate idea, clearly engraved since Adam in the innermost depths of our being, it continues ... to be built upon, to be made clearer and more specific, becoming identified with self-knowledge and the psychological consciousness.”³² Linked to that is the contention that a project like the one undertaken here cannot operate with definitions of persons and selves that are removed from how the terms are used in social interaction.

Hence, I argue that understanding the state-as-person necessitates an understanding of what it means to be a person with regard to individual human beings.³³ This brings the question of a definition of “person” into our focus which is, even when “only” concerned with individual human beings, a highly contested one. Drawing on different disciplines will bring out dramatically different results and it remains unclear how privileging one over the other could be justified.³⁴ Further, as Amélie O. Rorty reminds us “[t]he class of persons and the criteria for their identity are defined by reference to a range of activities that are regarded, often unselfconsciously, as centrally and normatively important to a culture, a historical period, or an

³² Mauss, 'A Category of the Human Mind: The Notion of Person; the Notion of Self', 20.

³³ This point is in line with the idea that our understanding of the state-as-person is metaphorical, an understanding according to which the individual human being serves as the source domain for understanding the state. There is, in addition, also a philosophical argument to be made. In his famous essay “Freedom of the Will and the concept of a person” Harry Frankfurt argues that the term person should only apply to human beings and that its extension (to other species) “diminishes our philosophical vocabulary”. Most suggestions for a definition of the concept are not actually about persons and lead to “the misappropriation of a valuable philosophical term”. The terms person and people are designed “to capture those attributes which are the subject of our most humane concern with ourselves and the source of what we regard as most important and most problematical in our lives”. By utilising the metaphor of the state-as-person, aspects that are “the subject of our most humane concern” become applicable to the state and IR. Harry G. Frankfurt, 'Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person', *The Journal of Philosophy* 68, 1 (1971), 5 and 6.

³⁴ For two key philosophical works on the person see for example A. J. Ayer, *The Concept of a Person and Other Essays* (London, New York: Macmillan, St. Martin's Press, 1963). And Strawson, *Individuals. An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics*. It is worth noting that both are criticised by Frankfurt for being concerned with “the problem of understanding the relation between mind and body, rather than the quite different problem of understanding what it is to be a creature that not only has a mind and a body but is also a person.” This is just one example that highlights how highly contested the concept of “person” is in philosophy. Frankfurt, 'Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person', 5 fn. 1. For an overview of various approaches claiming to identify necessary conditions of personhood see also Daniel Dennett, 'Conditions of Personhood', in *The Identities of Persons*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1976).

investigative context.”³⁵ Hence, a search for a timeless and cultureless definition misses those aspects of the concept of person and self that are made and not given and that take on a normative form.

In addition, making sense of psychological personhood, and related to that the self as well as subjective experience expressed through emotions, poses particular challenges. As we have seen, Harré argues that persons are the basic particulars of *our world*. In addition, we are fundamentally bound up with our own, first-person perspective of the world; we start from a specific vantage point and cannot escape it. Harré argues that “[e]ach person experiences the environment and his/her own body as centered on a vantage point ... from which each person perceives the world. For each person there is just one such field of objects and events perceived, with just one center.”³⁶ Similarly, the philosopher Thomas Nagel in “What is it like to be a bat?” points to the subjective character of our experience that is linked to a single point of view. This particular view point is linked with consciousness as the expression of what “it is like to *be* that organism – something it is like *for* the organism”.³⁷ We know what it is like to be a person because we *are* psychological persons. This provides us with an inescapable point of view from which we perceive the world. For example, the so-called other minds problem points to the challenge of knowing whether or not other people are psychologically complex and have an inner life. We usually tend to assume that this is the case but can only do so based on the overt behaviour that is perceivable and by analogy to our own experience.³⁸

Before working towards an alternative conception of person and self, two points of caution need to be expressed. First, while the political dimension of the status of personhood is not to be underestimated, the pertinent question of who is allowed to enjoy the rights that come with being recognised as a person socially and politically and who is denied these cannot be

³⁵ Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, *Mind in Action. Essays in the Philosophy of Mind* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1988), 6 see also 27ff.

³⁶ Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 155.

³⁷ Ultimately though – and in contrast to the perspective of constructionist psychology pursued here – Nagel writes to disentangle subjective and objective perspectives and to salvage a physicalist idea of mental states.) Nagel, 'What Is It Like to Be a Bat?', 436.

³⁸ Compare Ayer but also note that he goes on to problematise this view. Ayer, *The Concept of a Person and Other Essays*, 86-87.

addressed from within this framework.³⁹ Secondly, I also differ from Wendt who, given his alignment with philosophical realism and his emphasis on physicalism, searches for the “inside constitution” of persons which presents the “hard case” for state personhood from his perspective.⁴⁰ One of the key factors in his framework is a “self-organising quality” which provides for a “suitable inside” for persons and states-as-persons.⁴¹ He argues that “[p]sychological persons possess certain mental or cognitive attributes.”⁴² This is fundamentally different from the constructionist approach proposed here.

The starting point taken here is the question how individual human beings come to see themselves and others as persons. Drawing on Harré, this is best accomplished by an investigation into how the word “person” is used in everyday discourse and how it is a necessary requirement for person-oriented discourses to function. This also pays respect “to the intellectual capacities of ordinary human beings as managers and interpreters of the social world”.⁴³ Taking this point further, Harré argues that “[e]veryone is, in a certain sense, a fairly competent social scientist, *and we must not treat his (or he) theory about the social world and his place in it with contempt.*”⁴⁴

As we have seen, to accomplish this we need to operate from within what Harré calls the person grammar.

A Person or P grammar can be used to express what is presupposed when we treat embodied persons as the basic particulars and originating sources of activity. It is expressed in ways of doing things

³⁹ A helpful distinction is the one introduced by Wendt regarding moral, legal, and psychological personhood. Here, the focus will only be on psychological personhood. Wendt takes this distinction from Vincent, 'Can Groups Be Persons?'. The political dimension of personhood is also expressed in what Wendt calls “social constitution” of persons. What comes into focus from this perspective are social conventions through which personhood is bestowed onto some but not onto others. The status of personhood, being linked to rights and obligations has far-reaching consequences. From this perspective personhood is highly political. Compare Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 293. For the argument to interpret state personhood as personhood qua status see Kustermans, 'The State as Citizen: State Personhood and Ideology'.

⁴⁰ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 295. For physicalism and persons see also A. J. Ayer's *The concept of a person*. Ayer describes the physicalist point of view as having no other way to identify persons than to identify their body. Experiences from the physicalist point of view are the same as statements about conditions or movements of a body. Ayer, *The Concept of a Person and Other Essays*, 90.

⁴¹ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 295.

⁴² Ibid., 294.

⁴³ Harré, 'Blueprint for a New Science', 244.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 244, emphasis in original.

that we see everywhere in everyday life. It is widely used to comment on the actions of oneself and others.⁴⁵

For the following discussion of persons and selves, I will heavily draw on Harré and especially his *The Singular Self*. In *The Singular Self* he is mainly interested in “how people appear to themselves and others as singular, individual and even unique beings”,⁴⁶ which brings the “personal psychological attributes [that] are generated in the flow of talk and other forms of action”⁴⁷ into the focus of his study. A key point for him is to argue against the Cartesian idea of the self as an entity.⁴⁸ From the Cartesian perspective “there must be a substantive mind in association with the body for there to be any person at all.”⁴⁹ For Harré the self is discursively constructed and can only be “found” in the flow of interactions between people and not somehow inside the person.

This leads to the thesis that persons are real, but selves are fictions. He explains that the self as a fiction is taken to mean “that certain features of the flow of activity produced by persons in interaction with one another are picked out in our ways of speaking and writing as entities, as if they had an existence of their own”.⁵⁰ The self is a fiction that is necessary for person-oriented ways of thinking and speaking. He argues that the fiction of the self is necessary for us to be able to orient ourselves in a world of people.

From this perspective, the self is a narrative. The key point is to acknowledge that the self cannot be located inside the person or inside the mind. For Harré, building on Wittgensteinian insights, “there is no epistemological gap between a sense of self and the expression of that sense in one’s use of pronouns and other indexical devices.”⁵¹ In other words, there is no sense of self “inside” us that, after it is felt, is then expressed.⁵² The sense of self comes about only in the utterance; it is a pre-requisite for us to function in a social world populated by people. The idea of self is also bound up with the conventions of language. The person is seen to be a really

⁴⁵ Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 148.

⁴⁶ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 126.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 127.

⁴⁸ See for example *ibid.*, 4.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, ix.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 45..

⁵² This, of course, builds on “Wittgenstein’s thesis of the holism of expression and experience”. *Ibid.*, 178.

existing entity and provides a location for the self. The sense of self does not, however, exist prior to its expression. Selves are fictions created as part of discourse rather than being an entity alluded to or expressed through discourse.⁵³

This marks a first important distinction with regard to states-as-person. While the person is said to be a location in time and space, existing prior to discourse and making discourse possible in the first place, the self is established only through discourse. Following Harré's account, there is a physical component that marks people as persons, but their identity, interests and characteristics are established discursively. This physical component, providing an identifiable, continuous location in time and space, is the minimum criterion for the application of person-oriented discourses. Going back to Patrick T. Jackson's critique of Wendt, we can call this the minimal criteria for the process of personation.⁵⁴

Keeping these points in mind, we can argue that the *constructed state-as-person* needs to have a location in space and time that enables us to unmistakably identify it and thus enables us to utilise person-oriented ways of speaking with regard to it. Further, the state's characteristics, interests, and identity are only established and maintained in dialogue. However, I do not wish to argue that the state as such is a participant in this a dialogue. Rather, I argue that by applying the conventions of person-orientated talk to the state, the state is established as a person with a sense of self.

In some ways, this sounds similar to Wendt's contention that "we can properly attribute human qualities like identities, interests, and intentionality" to the state.⁵⁵ There are a number of similar passages in Wendt's *Social Theory* that stress that human qualities are *attributed* to the state which is different from saying that the state *has* these attributes. If only these kinds of statements about "anthropomorphic talk about corporate agents" were taken into account, one could almost be led to think that Wendt's project is a metaphorical one, too.⁵⁶ However, this needs to be contrasted with the Wendt who, given his philosophy of science view, has to

⁵³ It is worth emphasising how this runs counter to a Cartesian conception of the self (the ego) as an entity. This serves as another reminder that the approach taken here differs from mainstream conceptions in psychology. For a more detailed discussion of this, see Chapter 4. Compare *ibid.*, 4.

⁵⁴ Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too''.

⁵⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215. On *attributing* human-like qualities to states, see also the introduction to Wendt's 2004 article. Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 289.

⁵⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215.

ultimately insist that the state really is a person qua its internal self-organising structure. Further, it is this view and the desire to establish a via media constructivism that leads Wendt to search for essential characteristics of the state and to postulate a minimal rump materialism.⁵⁷ In his 2004 essay, Wendt emphasises physicalism as the starting point for discussing whether the state is a person, thus ruling out a discursive grounding for self and emotions.⁵⁸ Ultimately, for him the state *is* a person and *has* a sense of self.⁵⁹ This is a key difference in the ontological assumptions underlying Wendt's project and the account of the *constructed state-as-person* given here.

The important difference is that by drawing on constructionist psychology and by treating the idea of the state-as-person as a conceptual metaphor, a search for the essence of the state-as-person, for its mind or body is no longer necessary. In *Social Theory*, Wendt proposes that not just behaviour but also states' identities and interests are shaped through interaction. The idea of the state-as-person presented follows a similar line and takes this constructedness further. Drawing on constructionist psychology allows me to argue that the very *self* of the person is shaped *entirely* through interaction.⁶⁰ There is no *self* without and before the *other*. Hence, I argue that the account developed here sees states-as-persons as more fundamentally constructed than Wendt would allow for.

⁵⁷ This rump materialism is linked to his commitment to scientific realism. Wendt further points to two kinds of rump materialism. For the state it is given by the brute material factors that have influence on international life and in the case of individual human beings it is given by human nature that creates fundamental human needs. *Ibid.*, 96, 110-111, as well as 130-132.

⁵⁸ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 290. For physicalism and the concept of the person also compare Ayer, *The Concept of a Person and Other Essays*, 90.

⁵⁹ Compare for example, Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215.

⁶⁰ Note however, how, in contrast to Wendt, in this account it is not the state that participates in the discourses that shape states' selves but individual human beings.

One person, three selves

Harré criticises that person and self are often used interchangeably. As we have seen, person is taken to denote a location in time and space that allows us to identify and distinguish one person from the other. In his account, the term self does “duty for the many aspects of personal being that appear in personal and private regard”.⁶¹ Based on this, he further distinguishes between three kinds of self. Each of them is useful in further clarifying what is included in the narrative of the self and what aspects might be relevant for the *constructed state-as-person*.

To summarise, we can say that Self 1 is the sense of oneself, the idea of being separate from others, and possessing a unique point of view. Self 2 describes the self-concepts we hold about personal characteristics as well as strengths and weaknesses. Self 3 is the presented self. On the one hand it includes the picture we try to portray in interaction; on the other it includes the impressions other people have of us.⁶² Harré points out that it is highly problematic when the “self’ in any of these senses is ... treated as if it were an entity”.⁶³ This idea of entativity of the self is, according to him, deeply misleading.⁶⁴ What matters to understand the self in any of these senses is its narrative construction.

Self 1 is “a sense of one’s own point of view, at any moment a location in space from which one perceives and acts upon the world, including that part that lies within one’s own skin”.⁶⁵ This first self expresses the distinctiveness from other beings; and through the use of personal pronouns indicates a distinctive location.⁶⁶ It describes the person as actor and perceiver. It alludes to having a specific point of view from which to perceive the world and from which to act.⁶⁷ Perception and agency are key features of Self 1. Perception is based on the location of the body and its perceptual field.⁶⁸ Agency, Harré argues, can be no further grounded than in

⁶¹ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 73.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 137.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* Compare also Kenneth J. Gergen, *The Concept of Self* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), 14.

⁶⁵ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 4.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 95. Harré takes this from Michael J. Apter’s definition of consciousness. He refers to Michael J. Apter, 'Negativism and the Sense of Identity', in *Threatened Identities*, ed. Glynis M. Breakwell (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1983), 76.

⁶⁷ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 123 and 126, compare also 177.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 95.

the person.⁶⁹ Agency, when discursively accounted for as it is done in the framework of Self 1, is “a social construction created in the course of telling the story of an action”.⁷⁰ This is also linked to taking responsibility in the sense that “the first person [pronoun] is used not only to index a statement with the location of the embodied speaker in space but also as a means by which responsibility is taken.”⁷¹

Self 2 points to the set of attributes that are unique to a person and distinguish that person from others.⁷² This includes dispositions and powers as well as public and private thoughts and feelings.⁷³ Self 2 is expressed when the person takes on the role of the narrator and gives an autobiographical account. For example, replies to a questionnaire about self-esteem give insight into Self 2. However, in that sense, the answers to such a questionnaire do not allude to hidden causal attributes. Rather, they present a summary of what characteristics a person believes themselves to have.⁷⁴ Moreover, in reporting about these, we “must draw on certain implicit conventions for talking or writing about oneself to others, such as when it is proper to give a catalogue of one's achievements, whether self-deprecation is in order and so on”.⁷⁵ It is in that sense that Self 2 already involves other people and the wider social and cultural context.

Self 3 refers to the “totalities of personal impressions” made on others.⁷⁶ What a person believes the Self 2 to be about is expressed in Self 3. It describes how we present ourselves and involves choices about this presentation. Self 3 then involves two aspects: what the person intends to project on the one hand and the impressions made on others through their interpretation of actions and speech on the other.⁷⁷ Self 3 is very much guided by social expectations and norms of behaviour and rules for appropriateness.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 116.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 123.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid., 4.

⁷³ Ibid., 126.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 132.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 131.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 5.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 177.

Taking these points together, it becomes clear how important narrative is for the self to be established.⁷⁸ It is realised through narrative conventions, which matter more than logically coherent accounts. In trying to understand the self, storytelling conventions need to be emphasised rather than hypothetico-deductive methods.⁷⁹ In this sense, we can say that “[l]ives are lived according to the same conventions in accordance with which lives are told.”⁸⁰ Here, Harré points to similarities between the stories of our own lives, Greek mythology, classical dramas, as well as soap operas. From this it is not a big step to also argue that the stories about the state and the self of the state can be said to follow along similar patterns of storytelling conventions.

However, it is important to note that these narrative conventions are culturally specific.⁸¹ For example with regard to agency and responsibility, we can note some prominent cultural differences. According to modern Western language conventions, in line with an individualistic culture, the phrase “I did this” is a means of ascribing agency and taking responsibility (Self 1). In contrast, Harré points out how in Japanese “first person expressions ... are used to diffuse rather than to take responsibilities”.⁸² Further, more fundamental for and indicative of the relation between language and possible concepts of self is the observation made by Richard Ned Lebow who points out that “[t]he Japanese word for self-esteem – serufu esutimo – comes from English as there is no indigenous term that captures the concept of feeling good about oneself.”⁸³

Having introduced Harré’s three senses of self, there are some interesting parallels to be drawn with regard to Wendt’s conception of the state-as-person. For Wendt, it is a sense of “I” that distinguishes humans (agents) from non-humans (non-agents).⁸⁴ If we follow Harré, this sense of

⁷⁸ From within IR, compare for example Erik Ringmar for a similar point Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action. A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War*, 75-78. He references among others David Carr, *Time, Narrative and History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986). As well as Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (London: Duckworth, 1985).

⁷⁹ Compare Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 141 and 178.

⁸⁰ J. S. Bruner, 'The Narrative Construction of Reality', *Critical Inquiry*, Autumn (1991). Cited in Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 142.

⁸¹ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 123 as well as 141.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 123.

⁸³ Lebow, *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*, 129. For this observation Lebow relies on Richard E. Nisbett, *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently ... And Why* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 54.

⁸⁴ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 225.

“I” (Harré’s Self 1) is established discursively and cannot be searched for inside the mind. Despite Wendt’s insistence on materialism and his argument in favour of essential characteristics of persons and states-as-persons, we do find a similar account in his *Social Theory*. Here, Wendt also describes this sense of “I” as a narrative. He adds that “[t]his is still more true of states, which do not even have ‘bodies’ if their members have no joint narrative of themselves as a corporate actor.”⁸⁵ We can conclude that Wendt also describes the self in the three senses introduced above as, at least in part, established by narrative. His assumption, underlying *Social Theory*, that identities and interests are established in symbolic exchanges paves the way for this point. What is interesting to note though is that narrative seems to play an even more important role when it comes to the state. The statement implies that narrative stands in for the body that a corporate actor such as the state lacks. In this passage, Wendt is closer to Harré’s position on the person and self than the rump materialism and essential characteristics of the state-as-person introduced in earlier parts of *Social Theory* seem to suggest. Yet, in his 2004 article, Wendt emphasises physicalism, which ultimately prevents him from allowing for the constitution of the state-as-person entirely “by thought”.⁸⁶

However, Harré’s conception is still more radical in the sense that it allows us to question the constitution of the person more fundamentally and brings us almost “all the way down” in an idealist ontology. The person is described as little more than a location in time and space; and the self is conceived of as a narrative which gives individual characteristics and a sense of “I” to the person. This conception frees us from having to make assumptions about fundamental biological drives that often go hand in hand with speaking about persons. It is grounded in Harré’s clear distinction between the two kinds of ontology: a world-seen-as-molecules on the one hand and a world-seen-as-people on the other. In a world-seen-as-people, the person’s body provides a location in time and space that is a requisite for a people-orientated discourse to take place. However, everything that matters with regard to people in a social context is not seen as being given to them by “molecules” but only through discursive interaction.

In his 2004 article, “The state as person in international theory”, after having addressed the intentionality of states-as-persons, Wendt aims at walking the reader through possibilities for

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 302.

“thicker ways in which states might be persons”⁸⁷ and therefore addresses the state as an organism as well as possibilities for state consciousness. While rejecting the idea that states might be organisms, he argues that they might be superorganisms “whose identity is constituted not physically but by thought”.⁸⁸ In Wendt’s conception, much like in Harré’s, being a person is linked to having a spatio-temporal identity.⁸⁹ He further argues that this identity is given in physical terms for humans; it is their skin that creates spatio-temporal identity. But since states can at most be superorganisms, their spatio-temporal identity cannot be given in physical terms. However,

instead of a physical criterion we might use *thought* to define superorganism identity ... The idea here is that it is the participation of individuals in a collective thought process (in this case, in a ‘narrative of state’), whose boundaries are instantiated by the practices that produce and reproduce that process, which enables superorganisms to survive.⁹⁰

Again, we find similarities between Wendt’s conception of the state-as-person and Harré’s ideas on persons and selves. As already mentioned, this is surprising given Wendt’s physicalism with regard to persons and his materialist and essentialist leanings that are evident in other passages of *Social Theory* and the “The state as person”.

However, the difference between person and self teased out by Harré is key. To clearly differentiate the two, as in Harré’s account, seems to be an important first step. On the one hand, there is a spatio-temporal existence which is addressed as “person”. On the other hand, there is the self that is created in interaction with others. In this account of human beings, which belongs to the world-seen-as-people ontology, the physical (the person) is a mere location for the narrated (the self).

Wendt suggests that the state, understood as a superorganism, is instantiated by thought. He argues that while the state cannot be said to be an organism because it is composed of autonomous individuals and does not engage in genetic reproduction, we can conceptualise it as a superorganism. However, this intertwines the two worlds that Harré proposes to keep

⁸⁷ Ibid., 305.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 302.

⁸⁹ For this point and the following argument on the state as a superorganism see *ibid.*, 311.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 311, emphasis in original.

distinct, the world of people and the world of molecules. From the perspective of this project, this is an unhelpful union. While, as we have seen in Chapter 1, it is possible yet questionable to utilise organismic metaphors for the state, this is irrelevant for the constitution of the state as a person in the sense of constructionist psychology.

Some of Wendt's suggestions do fit very well with the view of people from the perspective of constructionist psychology introduced here through a focus on Harré's account. However, ultimately, Wendt arrives at a different conclusion regarding the state-as-person because the material world still matters substantially in his account and he proposes essential characteristics of the state-as-person.

In this context, it is also worth looking at Wendt's discussion of the idea of consciousness of states-as-persons. In his account, consciousness is strongly linked to the ability for subjective experience and emotions are taken to be an important instance of subjective experience.⁹¹ Regarding the possibility of consciousness he argues that it might be narratives that give states their subjective, emotional perspective.⁹² Again, this suggestion is similar to the perspective of constructionist psychology. However, Wendt stresses that subjectivity is also the *experience* of a narrative; hence narratives in themselves are not enough to constitute consciousness.⁹³ He discusses the possibility that the state might hold "an *ersatz* subjectivity", which describes a situation where individual human beings experience emotions on behalf of the state.⁹⁴

Yet, Wendt stresses that this is not sufficient to argue that states have consciousness from a philosophical realist view. While he argues that "[t]here is certainly much interesting work to be done even with this distributed approach to state emotions", given his philosophy of science commitments, he rejects a view of states-as-persons that describes individual human beings as experiencing emotions on behalf of states.⁹⁵ In contrast to that, approaching persons from the perspective of constructionist psychology allows for not placing the emphasis on the experience of an emotion; what matters is the expression of an emotion through language and interaction.

⁹¹ Note how there is a marked difference between Wendt's and Harré's accounts from the beginning. Harré argues that the study of consciousness is exhausted by the study of perception which is part of his first sense of self. Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 95.

⁹² Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 313-314.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 314.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 314, emphasis in original.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 314.

Constructionist psychology refuses to speculate about or attempt to investigate what is going on *inside* the mind. It rejects the idea that we can understand or explain what the “actual” emotions behind actions are. All we should focus on, from the perspective of constructionist psychology, and all we actually can focus on is the expression of the self and of emotions in interaction.

What can be noted from this is that, at least with regard to the state-as-person, Wendt is relatively close to a position taken in constructionist psychology. However, this closeness comes in the form of concessions that are made because the state is a corporate actor. This is a heavy qualification to the statement that “states are people too”. Hence, for Wendt, states-as-persons seem to be part of a more radical process of construction than he would be happy to admit with regard to individual human beings.

It also becomes clearer how the conception of states-as-persons developed here differs from Wendt’s. To mark this difference, the distinction between person and self made by Harré is of importance. The (individual) self is established as part of a narrative. And I argue that the same language game used by individual human beings to make sense of themselves and others can be applied to states. The person from this perspective is first and foremost a location in space and time necessary to engage in the narrative of the self. Wendt stresses that engaging in a narrative of emotions is not the same as experiencing these emotions. For Wendt, this point poses a problem for the state-as-person from a philosophical realist perspective. For my account, being based in constructionist psychology, it does not. The two positions reflect different views on human embodiment and its role in establishing persons, selves, and emotions. These two positions also reflect different epistemological and ontological commitments: Wendt’s position is grounded in scientific realism combined with an emphasis on material factors whereas the position taken here is grounded in a strong version of constructivism which gives primacy to ideational factors and argues for the primacy of language.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ This is not to say that scientific realism and constructivism, understood broadly, are incompatible. Jackson elaborates on this point very clearly and in fact convincingly shows how constructivism can be seen as compatible with all four scientific stances (including critical realism and empiricism) that he outlines. The key distinction made here, rather than being between scientific realism and constructivism, focuses on possible

One last point that matters in this context is the question of where the elements for the story of the self come from. As can be expected from the account presented so far, *essential* qualities of persons and especially those that are elements of the world of molecules do not matter. Selves are not given; they are neither given to us through our biochemistry nor our neuro-physiology. The elements of the story of the self are fundamentally social: they are shared and they are acquired. Harré points out that “‘selves’ are, by and large, produced discursively, that is in dialogue and other forms of joint action with real and imagined others. Selves are not entities, but evanescent properties of the flow of public and private action.”⁹⁷

The perspective taken here denies the essential qualities of persons outlined by Wendt. There is nothing essential about persons that, given an interest in states-as-persons, we could try to identify and then use to make sense of the state. What matters are the stories we tell about persons and the applicability of these stories to the state.

This also means that while the stories of the self might share some similarities across cultures, they are fundamentally intertwined with culture and local practices.⁹⁸ Any story of the state-as-person will therefore be culturally specific. Both self and emotions are socially constructed. But Harré stresses that the self is more fundamentally constructed “all the way down”.⁹⁹ Taking these observations into account, it is safe to say that the current story of IR is one dominated by a Western conception of persons and the self.

positions in the relation between material and ideational factors in making the world. Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 206.

⁹⁷ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 68.

⁹⁸ Compare for example Godfrey Lienhardt who writes on the self representation of an African tribe, the Dinka, and notes how in their conceptualisation the self is much more intertwined with the body and how the self is interpreted much less individualistic than in a Western context. Godfrey Lienhardt, 'Self: Public, Private. Some African Representations', in *The Category of the Person. Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985 [1980]). Compare also Mauss' seminal text on person and self. Mauss, 'A Category of the Human Mind: The Notion of Person; the Notion of Self'.

⁹⁹ He argues that “[w]hile there is an ethology of feeling there is no ethology of the expression of selfhood.” Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 128. Though, it is important to stress that in this quotation, Harré refers explicitly to *expressions* of selfhood. He does acknowledge a general foundation for the self, found in the conditions that make human language itself possible such as natural expressions of feelings and the human perceptual point of view “without which no symbolic system of any degree of sophistication could even begin.” *Ibid.*, 19. For a more detailed discussion, see the section on “Yet, the body matters after all” in this chapter.

With the interest in psychological personhood of states-as-persons, the hard question of emotions is still left to be addressed. As we have seen, for Wendt, a crucial part of psychological personhood is a subjective point of view and this is linked strongly with emotions. I agree. For Wendt, this is the hard test of state personhood and the one where he sees his realist framework reaching its limits. Unsurprisingly, the question of emotions with regard to the state-as-person will be answered in a different way given the perspective taken here.

In the following look at emotions from the perspective of constructionist psychology, by now familiar themes will be re-examined: the key distinction between two ontologies (one rooted in the world of molecules, the other rooted in the world of people), the primacy of language, and the social constitution of aspects of human life that often *appear* as given qua biology.

Constructing emotions

Psychological personhood, Wendt argues, includes an interest in the question of consciousness, which is taken to mean having a “first-person perspective”, “subjective experience”, and emotions.¹⁰⁰

[I]n both academic and lay discourse we often refer casually to states ‘as if’ they have emotions and are therefore conscious. States are routinely characterised as angry, greedy, guilty, humiliated, and so on – all conditions that, in individuals at least, are associated with subjective experience.¹⁰¹

As illustrated in the previous chapter, IR’s interest in emotions is usually not located at the level of the state. At best, the possibility of locating emotions at this level is hinted at.¹⁰² This represents a first challenge and here it is proposed that we start with the individual level to clarify various possibilities of theorising emotions and that it is indeed this individual level from which psychological state personhood flows.¹⁰³ A second challenge is presented by the more general problem that if IR is interested in incorporating emotions in its theorising, it needs to face the fact that they are incredibly difficult to theorise. There is no agreement in psychology on how to approach emotions; there is also little agreement on a definition of emotion. And many psychological theories on the emotions, as we shall see, are incredibly reliant on folk wisdom. Hence, any project interested in bringing emotions into IR theorising needs to grapple with the fact that psychology does not offer timeless and ultimate insights into emotions. Neither does it offer a singular perspective from which to approach emotions. Each approach

¹⁰⁰ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 311-312. For consciousness and first-person perspective also compare Nagel, 'What Is It Like to Be a Bat?'

¹⁰¹ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 313.

¹⁰² Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships'.

¹⁰³ Wendt for example argues that at the individual level we know intuitively that we possess consciousness because we know what it is like to be a person. However, he does not argue that individual consciousness can serve as the framework for state consciousness. Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 312. But since individual consciousness, at least with regard to ourselves, is something we can be sure of, it is worth starting here. In this context, it is important to note though that from the perspective of constructionist psychology taken here, the person is not constituted from the inside. Persons do not carry an essence that could be discovered by looking “inside”. The person is constituted discursively in interaction – a social and cultural (group) perspective is implied in this.

brings with it a set of epistemological and ontological assumptions that need to be carefully scrutinised.

Keeping this in mind, it is worth pointing out that this section on emotions will reflect the by-now-familiar theme of the two stories to tell: one story of the world-seen-as-molecules and one in which the world is seen as a world of people in interaction. Further, when engaging with psychological approaches to emotions, a second, albeit related, theme also comes into focus more clearly. This second theme reflects a question that any constructivist approach has to grapple with: Where do we draw the line between nature and nurture; is it ideas all the way down?¹⁰⁴ Unsurprisingly, neither philosophy nor psychology have found a clear position on this question and we can find a huge variety of positions among the current approaches, reflecting a broad spectrum of possible stances between two possible extremes. This question of finding a position between the extremes of pure idealism and pure materialism is also prominently addressed in Wendt's *Social Theory* and his approach to states-as-persons. Wendt's stance, a constructivism with a strong emphasis on philosophical realism, is one that stresses the importance of material factors and does not see room for "ideas all the way down". This is also reflected in Wendt's remarks on state consciousness, elaborated above, as part of which he argues that the constitution of a state-person's consciousness by thought alone is ultimately not enough.¹⁰⁵ In contrast, the constructionist psychology favoured here is to be located towards the extreme end of "nurture", where what matters is the socially constructed nature of the self and emotions and where the emphasis lies on social interaction.

The difference in philosophy of science positions between Wendt's stance and the one taken here has profound consequences for the way the state as a psychological person is constituted. In order to tease out this difference and ultimately develop a different stance on psychological state personhood, a look into the variety of psychological approaches on emotions and their underlying assumptions is needed. In the following, it will be illustrated how, from the position

¹⁰⁴ I take this expression from P. N. Johnson-Laird and Keith Oatley who call the variety of approaches and the heated debates between them a "special case of the nature-nurture puzzle". Johnson-Laird and Oatley also offer a useful overview of the two perspectives. P. N. Johnson-Laird and Keith Oatley, 'Cognitive and Social Construction in Emotions', in *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones (New York and London: The Guilford Press, 2000), 459-461. For a similar overview and distinction compare also Peter N. Stearns, 'Emotion', in *Discursive Psychology in Practice*, ed. Peter Stearns and Rom Harré (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995).

¹⁰⁵ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 314.

of constructionist psychology, the body and the bodily constitution of the person and emotions can be neglected for understanding human emotions.

In the following, I aim to give a brief overview of various accounts of emotions to illustrate how the constructionist psychology utilised here represents a fundamental point of departure with regard to epistemological and ontological assumptions. In mainstream accounts, the two stories to be told about emotions are usually intertwined and each account differs only in the way in which the two stories are assembled and a causal chain is postulated.¹⁰⁶ However, psychological theories on emotions differ widely on the questions of what triggers the feeling of an emotion and the sequential order in which cognition, feeling, expression, and behaviour occur.¹⁰⁷

One, by now outdated, approach for example postulates a causal chain that sees *bodily* arousal as the first response to an emotional stimulus which then triggers action; the “feeling” and cognitive appraisal of an emotion only occur after that (James-Lange Theory).¹⁰⁸ Another, by now also dated, approach sees bodily arousal and emotional feeling as occurring simultaneously and action following from that (Cannon-Bard Theory). Again, the conscious evaluation of the stimulus, becoming aware of the emotion and being able to label it appropriately only occur after that. In contrast, a more recent theory that emerged in connection with the cognitive turn in psychology argues that an emotional feeling and the resulting behaviour only occur after a stimulus *and* the bodily arousal have been interpreted and judged cognitively (Schachter’s

¹⁰⁶ Here, “mainstream approach” refers to the perspective presented in standard introductory textbooks on psychology which do not include references to constructionist psychology (see for example those cited in Chapter 4 under in “Which psychology?”). Much like in IR textbooks, these, unsurprisingly, reflect a simplified perspective that by its very nature can only point to a very limited number of approaches and scholars. Yet, for simplicity it is still useful to maintain this distinction between the mainstream and non-mainstream in the psychology of self and emotions. Moreover, it illustrates how the mainstream of psychology is firmly wedded to a positivist framework.

¹⁰⁷ See Coon, *Psychology: A Modular Approach to Mind and Behavior*, 402-405.

¹⁰⁸ See *ibid.*, 402-5. It is important to note that some of these theories have found their way into engagements with the state. For example, in his seminal “The myth of the state”, Ernst Cassirer draws on William James and Carl Georg Lang for a theory of emotions. He starts from asking the question why people “prefer to live in a world of illusions” instead of approaching “the reality of things and see it face to face”. By drawing on James and Lang, the prevalent theory of emotions at the time, Cassirer can argue that the “emotional” is prior to the “rational” which in turn allows him to show how “mythical representations”, that engage the emotions survive despite being part of a “world of illusions”. Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, ed. Birgit Recki, vol. 25, Ernst Cassirer. Gesammelte Werke Hamburger Ausgabe (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2007 [1946]), for the quotation see 27, see also 27-32.

cognitive theory of emotion). It is argued that a situation has to be labelled with an emotion such as “anger”, fear”, or “happiness” before action can follow.¹⁰⁹

According to the cognitive theory of emotion, the act of labelling and judging is important because the same stimulus and bodily feeling could be implicated in a variety of emotions; a situation could be either frightening or exciting depending on circumstances and individual experience; physiological arousal on its own does not constitute emotions.¹¹⁰ This cognitive approach to emotions in which the cognitive appraisal of a stimulus comes before expression and behaviour appears to be the most widely accepted contemporary mainstream model.

What is noteworthy is that all these theories rely on a variety of assumptions about how body, mind, and action relate to each other. While the *body* as a source of emotions remains important, the “story” presented in textbooks also shows a progression towards theories that stress the *meaning* that an emotion is given. We are told for example that current theories start with cognitive appraisal, which is to a large part governed by the “personal meaning of a stimulus” and that “emotion is greatly influenced by how you think about an event.”¹¹¹ Stanley Schachter’s cognitive theory of emotions represents a middle ground position between the extremes of nature and nurture. Many newer theories follow in these footsteps.¹¹² However, it is important to note that, for Schachter, external stimulus and physical arousal still represent the first link in a *causal* chain.

Following in these footsteps, a number of recent approaches to emotions are interested in finding a middle ground between the poles of nature and nurture. Often, we find that they postulate a number of basic emotions that are said to be instinctive and natural and a number of more complex emotions that are said to be shaped by culture.¹¹³ Basic emotions are thought of as natural and being similar across cultures and historical periods. Complex emotions are said to be built on the more basic ones and are deemed to be more abstract and further removed

¹⁰⁹ For the above see Coon, *Psychology: A Modular Approach to Mind and Behavior*, 402-405.

¹¹⁰ The experiments underlying this were conducted by Stanley Schachter and J. Singer. For a brief overview see Jeff Coulter, 'Affect and Social Context: Emotional Definition as a Social Task', in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 125.

¹¹¹ Coon, *Psychology: A Modular Approach to Mind and Behavior*, 405.

¹¹² For an overview see for example Johnson-Laird and Oatley, 'Cognitive and Social Construction in Emotions'.

¹¹³ See, for example, *ibid.*, 461-462.

from nature. The more complex emotions are symbolic and reflect a conscious evaluation based on cultural norms.

Yet, once we accept that an emotion is the result of both nature and nurture and that it is in part created by how we think of an event, the question of how the appraisal of a certain situation comes about is put into clearer focus and we can begin to question the primacy of the physical more fundamentally. In turn, the role of society in shaping these kinds of judgements and the role of concepts as carriers of these judgements become relevant. From there, the turn to constructionist psychology can take place.

James Russell and Ghyslaine Lemay for example propose to study emotions as concepts rather than biological facts and argue that by focusing on emotions as concepts we can more clearly see how emotions can serve as filters for what is perceived and how a perception is judged.¹¹⁴ In addition, this conceptualisation reminds us that concepts are made and not found; thus the role of culture in shaping a concept as well as the role of language in shaping and conveying concepts also become important. While this approach, as Russell and Lemay readily admit, does not exhaust the study of emotions, their perspective offers some interesting additional insights. And while they also admit that some reactions might be determined by nature, they stress that the concepts of emotions that developed in a certain culture will at least act as a kind of lens through which the world is perceived. This makes ideational or nurtured aspects in the understanding of emotions relevant. Further, approaching emotions as a concept allows them to argue that there is a close connection between everyday experience, folk theories of emotions, as well as scientific theories. For them, scientific theories of emotions are not neutral and are not free from everyday conceptions. They point out that

[h]uman beings are amateur scientists; scientists are human beings. Here we suggest a deep continuity from a child's cognitive development to the folk psychology of everyday thinking to the working models and successful theories of advanced science.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ James A. Russell and Ghyslaine Lemay, 'Emotion Concepts', in *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones (New York and London: The Guilford Press, 2000), 491.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 492.

They argue that given the ways emotions can be studied, the researcher never escapes the everyday conceptions present in both the people studied and the researcher studying them. If we consider the tools available to study emotions, such as self reports, psychometric tests (e.g. personality questionnaires) or laboratory observations, in each case the result is always inevitably intertwined with everyday conceptions of emotions and with lay theories about them. The result is always relative, always situated in a certain culture and a certain time.¹¹⁶

This is an important insight for a project interested in psychological state personhood that locates itself within the emotional turn in IR, for it becomes clear that any kind of borrowing from psychology cannot be treated as a borrowing of cultureless and timeless insights. When it comes to emotions, the clear dividing line between nature and nurture breaks down.

It is also worth pointing out how these theories are intertwined with folk wisdom. It seems that formal scientific theories of emotions cannot entirely do away with everyday concepts. Indeed, it seems that emotion researchers have been “highly conservative” in the concepts they proposed in the sense that they have remained close to received wisdom.¹¹⁷ This seems to apply to the conceptualisation of the mind as a “container” for thoughts and feelings that cognitive psychology makes use of as well as to concepts of emotions.¹¹⁸ It seems that an emotion such as anger cannot be studied without an understanding of what is generally referred to as anger. Separating the study of emotions from their cultural component, how they are conceived of in folk wisdom and everyday conversations, is difficult if not impossible. This is an important insight and provides another link with the starting point for this account of the *constructed state-as-person*; namely, the idea that how we make sense of ourselves is also how we make sense of the state.

Ultimately, we have to ask the question whether or not emotions can be seen as distinct from biological aspects for our purposes. Hence, the approaches located towards the extreme end of nurture, constructionist psychology, should be put into clearer focus. A weak constructionist stance on emotions and self would see some aspects as given by nature: some emotions are

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 496.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 499 and 501.

¹¹⁸ For the relation between lay theories of emotions and scientific theories see Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion. Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 18-19 as well as Chapter 7.

natural and a sense of self is already implanted inside us independent of social interaction or cultural influences. In contrast to that, the approaches by Rom Harré, John Schotter, Kenneth J. Gergen, and Jonathan Potter – to name a few of those introduced in the previous chapter – take a strong constructivist stance according to which emotions are social products that are “shaped by language, and derived from culture”.¹¹⁹ The bodily dimension of emotions becomes irrelevant for attempts to understand them. Gergen for example argues that “physiological indicators do not reflect many of the differences in what people say they experience. People are quite capable of distinguishing between resentment, self-hatred, homicidal impulses, and jealousy, and yet the observable physiology is roughly similar for all.”¹²⁰

Further, the constructionist perspective points out how the self as well as emotions are made to seem natural, yet they thoroughly “depend on social experience and the cultivation of an individual’s sensibilities”.¹²¹ It comes down to the question of whether culture creates emotions or whether it only shapes what is already there qua nature. For the authors mentioned, it is culture that creates emotions and they thoroughly deny the idea that emotions are something inside the mind that is prior to social interaction. Harré, for example, argues that “[p]sychologists have always had to struggle against a persistent illusion that in such studies as those of the emotions there is something *there*, the emotion, of which the vocabulary we have for emotions are a mere representation.”¹²² His point is that to abstract an entity from emotions such as anger or love is a persistent ontological illusion.¹²³ As mentioned in Chapter 4, this is precisely what sets him apart from cognitive psychology and what marks him as a proponent of what he calls the second cognitive revolution. And this is also the general position taken here.

According to Harré, an emotion is not the state an individual is in and not primarily a physiological reaction to external stimuli.¹²⁴ As we have seen the theories of emotions briefly introduced above always put the physical reaction at the beginning of their (causal) analysis.

¹¹⁹ Johnson-Laird and Oatley, 'Cognitive and Social Construction in Emotions', 459.

¹²⁰ Gergen, *The Concept of Self*, 16-17.

¹²¹ Johnson-Laird and Oatley, 'Cognitive and Social Construction in Emotions', 460.

¹²² Rom Harré, 'An Outline of the Social Constructionist Viewpoint', in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 4. Also quoted in Johnson-Laird and Oatley, 'Cognitive and Social Construction in Emotions', 460. Compare also Jeff Coulter's view who argues that conceptualising emotions as feelings or sensations is “a pervasive mistake in the history of philosophical and psychological reflection”. Coulter, 'Affect and Social Context: Emotional Definition as a Social Task', 121.

¹²³ Harré, 'An Outline of the Social Constructionist Viewpoint', 4.

¹²⁴ Harré and Gillett, *The Discursive Mind*, 145.

Similarly, Harré argues that in most cases the first step to correctly identifying an emotion will be the identification of a “felt bodily disturbance”; however, while the presence of a bodily reaction is acknowledged, ultimately, this is for the neurophysiologist to study.¹²⁵ It is part of the world-seen-as-molecules ontology and hence not relevant for a world-seen-as-people research interest. Harré points out how the “felt physical state” associated with an emotion is diffuse and indeterminate; it is only through the display of the emotion, which is entirely guided by culture, that the emotion becomes precise and determinate.¹²⁶

Once we accept this, the discursive aspects of the emotion become dominant. There are some similarities to Schachter’s cognitive theory here. However, Harré takes it further in that he shows how the physical aspects of an emotion ultimately become irrelevant for this kind of analysis. He suggests starting the actual analysis of emotions with how words for emotions and other discursive displays of emotions are used in everyday discourse. This is necessary because emotions cannot be understood in an abstract sense, removed from social order, culture and time of their utterance; it is also necessary because it highlights how in some cases lay theories of emotions have made their way into scientific emotional theories.¹²⁷ What is to be studied in the first instance is “the ways the people in a particular local culture identify, classify, and recognise emotions [...] one must try to discover the rules of use of the local vocabulary of emotion words.”¹²⁸ From that a “theory of emotion” might be “abstracted”. But this theory will only ever be one of a particular culture and a particular time.¹²⁹

If the biological “basis” of emotions is questioned and hence we accept that they are not entirely “given”, we are in a better position to look at how we “acquire” emotions. In studying emotions, Harré, for example, suggests starting by looking at everyday discourses and James and Lemay point out that a close relationship between lay conceptions of emotions and scientific theories can be identified. Further, Ronald de Sousa argues that “emotions have a semantics that derives from ‘paradigm scenarios,’ in terms of which our emotional repertoire is

¹²⁵ Ibid., 149.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 150.

¹²⁷ Harré, 'An Outline of the Social Constructionist Viewpoint', 4-5.

¹²⁸ Harré and Gillett, *The Discursive Mind*, 148. The result of such a study is an “emotionology”, a term coined in Carol Zisowitz Stearns and Peter N. Stearns, *Emotion and Social Change: Toward a New Psychohistory* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1988).

¹²⁹ Harré, 'An Outline of the Social Constructionist Viewpoint', 148.

learned and the formal objects of our emotions fixed.”¹³⁰ These paradigm scenarios specify appropriate emotional objects, expressions and responses. The scenarios “are drawn first from our daily life as small children and later reinforced by the stories ... and culture to which we are exposed. Later still, in literate cultures, they are supplemented and refined by literature”.¹³¹ Hence, we are socialised into emotions and the emotional repertoire available to us can become more complex and refined over time.¹³²

From this perspective, we can also inquire about the function of emotions. Those who stress the biological basis of emotions emphasise survival and see emotions as the product of an evolutionary process.¹³³ This view can be said to originate with Charles Darwin who described emotions such as fear as an automatic response to circumstances that cannot be altered by reason and are shared across humanity. Building on this, evolutionary psychologists explain emotions as the result of adaptations to the environment of our ancestors. For them, emotions “have their origins in the adaptations of our forebears to meet the exigencies of their lives: individuals who developed emotions had a greater chance to survive and to reproduce”.¹³⁴ These views represent one extreme end of the nature-nurture divide with regard to emotions. The approach taken here is located on the other end. On the one hand, we can see emotions as the result of biological adaptation. On the other hand, they can be seen as the outcome not of evolutionary biological processes but as part of a process where emotions are “shaped by language and derived from culture”.¹³⁵ If we accept that emotions are acquired through socialisation, then emotions are no longer seen as spontaneous biologically determined

¹³⁰ Ronald de Sousa, *The Rationality of Emotion* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1987), 171.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 182.

¹³² For an overview compare Russell and Lemay, 'Emotion Concepts', 498. For an explicit Vygotskian explanation see Rom Harré, 'Subjectivity and the Possibility of Psychiatry', in *Nature and Narrative: An Introduction to the New Philosophy of Psychiatry*, ed. Bill Fulford, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 131-132. Also Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 11-14. For an overview on acquiring emotions and further development of an emotional repertoire see also James R. Averill, 'The Acquisition of Emotions During Adulthood', in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. Rom Harré, ed. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986). Averill also points to Elias' argument on civilising emotions in this context. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process. Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*, revised ed. (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000 [1936]).

¹³³ For an overview see Johnson-Laird and Oatley, 'Cognitive and Social Construction in Emotions', 460-461.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 461.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 459. They call this position strong constructivism.

reactions but reflect commonly held beliefs about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour as well as appropriate reactions.¹³⁶

Taking these points into account, emotions are best described as a kind of knowledge. They are information about the world, about the behaviour of others and one's own behaviour. "Indeed all feelings ... seem to be information, or knowledge. They are distinguished from what we ordinarily think of as knowledge only by our inability to experience directly the sources of that knowledge."¹³⁷ This also means that emotions are implicit moral judgements. The emotions displayed in a certain situation reflect beliefs about what is right and wrong. The question of whether or not an emotion is appropriate for a certain situation is then not so much a question of the factual features of a situation but of cultural beliefs.¹³⁸ An emotion, unlike a sensation, may be described as reasonable or unreasonable, appropriate or inappropriate.¹³⁹ To have an emotion in that sense is to make a judgement. "[T]o feel some emotion is to feel in some way *about* someone or something."¹⁴⁰ Hence, we can argue that certain emotions help sustain moral rules in a society. While these rules can also be upheld by other means, and emotions are not a necessary condition for upholding societal moral rules, the relation between moral rules and emotions is not arbitrary and emotions can be seen as one way of conveying these rules with greater immediacy and impact.¹⁴¹ It is worth pointing out that this stance is not new; we find similar positions in Aristotle and in David Hume, for example, both of whom included emotions in their ideas of morality.¹⁴² Recent scholarship from within constructionist psychology makes this claim even stronger. From this perspective, we can see how the emotional repertoire of a society reflects the values and moral concepts held in that society. The logic implied here is the following: "Emotions, such as pride, ambition, guilt and remorse, imply a certain view of

¹³⁶ Compare for example Stearns, 'Emotion', 37.

¹³⁷ James D. Laird and Nicholas H. Apostoleris, 'Emotional Self-Control and Self-Perception: Feelings Are the Solution, Not the Problem', in *The Emotions. Social, Cultural and Biological Dimensions*, ed. Rom Harré and W. Gerrod Parrott (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996), 290.

¹³⁸ Claire Armon-Jones, 'The Social Functions of Emotion', in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 67.

¹³⁹ Coulter, 'Affect and Social Context: Emotional Definition as a Social Task', 123.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹⁴¹ Armon-Jones, 'The Social Functions of Emotion', 58-59.

¹⁴² Sousa, *The Rationality of Emotion*, 305.

ourselves. They are probably not felt in cultures in which little importance is attached to individual effort and responsibility.”¹⁴³

The example of anger can be used to illustrate these points. James Averill argues that “the development of anger – or of any other emotion – involves the acquisition of many components and the rules (of appraisal, behaviour, prognosis and attribution) that govern their organization and interpretation.”¹⁴⁴ In Western societies, anger can be used to re-adjust the terms of a relationship.¹⁴⁵ It can be used as an expression of judgements, to assign responsibility or to add justification. Being angry is a way of communicating to ourselves and others. It focuses attention and prepares for action. Like other emotions it can be used to bring about “changes in the modes of our interactions, from cooperation, to withdrawal, to conflict, to deference”.¹⁴⁶

With regard to state-as-person accounts, approaching emotions from the perspective of constructionist psychology seems to present itself as an ideal solution. States don’t have human bodies and hence cannot be said to be subject to the same instinctive reactions that form part of mainstream approaches to emotions. If, however, emotions are seen as socially shared ideas that are transported by ideal-type scenarios, the state could be seen as being the narrative object of these same scenarios and being describable using the same emotion-vocabulary and paradigm scenarios that are used to make sense of people. This would constitute the state-as-person in the sense that the same language game used with regard to people can be applied to the state. However, this does not mean that the state *really* becomes a person because, even from the perspective of constructionist psychology, the body matters after all.

¹⁴³ R. Peters, 'Psychology and Ethical Development', (London: Allan and Unwin, 1974), 402. As quoted in Paul Heelas, 'Emotion Talk across Cultures', in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 236.

¹⁴⁴ Averill, 'The Acquisition of Emotions During Adulthood', 113.

¹⁴⁵ Keith Oatley, 'Emotions: Communications to the Self and Others', in *The Emotions. Social, Cultural and Biological Dimensions*, ed. Rom Harré and W. Gerrod Parrott (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996), 314. Oatley cites Averill for this insight James R. Averill, *Anger and Aggression: An Essay on Emotion* (New York: Springer, 1982). The fact that what is presented here is a Western conception of anger cannot be stressed enough. For this point Catherine Lutz’s ethographical study of the Ifaluk, a group of people living on an atoll in the Western Pacific, is useful. In their society, anger is socially taboo and could never be used to adjust the terms of a relationship. Catherine A. Lutz, 'The Domain of Emotion Words on Ifakuk', in *The Social Construction of Emotion*, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 268.

¹⁴⁶ Oatley, 'Emotions: Communications to the Self and Others', 312.

Yet, the body matters after all

I remain agnostic as to whether or not constructionist psychology should be the dominant framework used to make sense of the psychology of individual human beings. Here, we might need an investigation, maybe in a supplementary form, into the material world.¹⁴⁷ However, it is clear that constructionist psychology with its emphasis on the discursive construction of persons offers key insights for the project of the *constructed state-as-person*.

It is important to stress that even from the perspective of the *constructed state-as-person*, the state is not *really* a person. “States are people too” only in the sense that the same language games used for making sense of people and their interactions are applied to the state. There is a line that the state does not cross – even in a framework that locates persons, selves, and emotions in discourse. Even from the perspective of constructionist psychology we can say that “the body matters after all” and this is where the state cannot follow. As pointed out when the distinction between a world-of-molecules and a world-of-people was introduced in the first part of this chapter, the state only ever becomes a person notionally. In the following, I aim to elaborate this further while keeping the above points regarding the construction of selves and emotions in mind.

The perspective taken here argues that what is relevant for understanding people’s selves and emotions is not to be found in molecules and biology. The argument by Harré that the two worlds – the world-seen-as-molecules and the world-seen-as-people – should be kept separate for analytical purposes is followed.¹⁴⁸ Yet, despite the argument in favour of a constructionist psychology, it seems that we cannot escape the body entirely. First, the person understood as a location in space and time in Harré’s framework is bound up with human embodiment. Secondly, the metaphor of the task/ tool division used by Harré to demarcate the world-seen-as-people from the world-seen-as-molecules reminds us that while “tasks” are established discursively, “tools” are part of the material world.

¹⁴⁷ After all, this is what Harré’s more recent *Cognitive Science* focuses on. Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*.

¹⁴⁸ Margaret Archer for example criticises this dichotomy and the lack of a connection between the two-worlds. Archer, 'Being Human: The Problem of Agency'.

We have seen how in Harré's framework the embodiment of the person provides a sense of location in time and space. To identify a person is to identify the person's body.¹⁴⁹ Further, the body is crucial as a tool. Harré stresses that "bodies and their organs serve the people not only necessarily, as sustainers of their identity and singularity, but also contingently, in that they serve as a set of tools and instruments for the performance of all sorts of tasks."¹⁵⁰ This quotation stresses the task/tool division utilised by Harré's framework once again. But since tasks and tools are each assigned to a different ontology, the body does not seem to enter a constructionist framework. We can use an analogy to make this point clearer: if we wanted to understand the content and intent of a public speech, what aspects would have to feature in our analysis? Harré argues that to understand a public speech, we do not need to understand the biological processes that enable the formation of sounds. The ability to form sounds enables us to give a speech in the first place. However, this ability is irrelevant for understanding and interpreting the content of the speech. Similarly, while there are often physical events involved in "having" emotions, these events are irrelevant for formulating an understanding of emotions. Rather, "[a]n emotional feeling, and the correlated display, is to be understood as a discursive phenomenon, an expression of judgment and the performance of a social act."¹⁵¹

However, the material world *does* enter in at least two key aspects. Firstly, the weaker argument for "why the body matters after all" is that we cannot absolutely deny that bodily reactions influence perception and, hence, can enter the world of discourse at least to a limited extent. The argument pursued by constructionist psychologists is that the world of the body can be disregarded for a project that aims at making sense of people in a world of people. However, the body remains relevant to a limited extent. Harré, for example, admits that physical elements can influence the perception of a situation. The physicality of the body does enter the world-seen-as-people after all. A raised heart rate would be an example of a bodily influence on perception. Yet, he continues to argue that for our understanding of emotions, these aspects can ultimately be neglected. He sees physical effects of the body as

¹⁴⁹ Compare also Strawson, *Individuals. An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics*, 15-58. As well as Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 8.

¹⁵⁰ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 73.

¹⁵¹ Harré and Gillett, *The Discursive Mind*, 147.

incidental to what it is to be in this or that emotional state. It turns out that the dominant contribution to the way that aspect of our lives unfolds comes from the local social world, by way of its linguistic practices and the moral judgments in the course of which the emotional quality of encounters is defined.¹⁵²

Secondly, and this is the more important argument, constructionist psychology focuses on the use of signs and symbolic meanings and their role in constructing the world of people. Yet, even constructionist psychologists concede that the kinds of sign forms that can be used and their shape is in part dependent on the body.¹⁵³ In a sense, the argument is that if individual human beings had a different ethology and physical constitution their sign system would be a different one.¹⁵⁴ Harré points out that “[p]rimitive biological reactions to situations provide the basis of a kind of ‘vocabulary’ of sign forms, in much the same way that our nervous system and musculature offer us the wherewithal for making articulated sounds.”¹⁵⁵ While this relationship can again be interpreted through the metaphor of the task/ tool division, it also points to the more fundamental, Wittgenstinian, point: a symbolic system would not be possible without “natural regularities and natural expressions which the culture could seize and build upon.”¹⁵⁶ This is the crucial reason for why the (individual human) body matters after all for the metaphor of the constructed state-as-person.¹⁵⁷ While the question of the body as a tool and the question of the biological basis for the development of a sign system do not enter the discussions of

¹⁵² Harré, 'An Outline of the Social Constructionist Viewpoint', 5.

¹⁵³ Harré for example, when outlining his “social constructionist” stance, points out how “human ethology” is a necessary condition for human beings to interact. Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 18.

¹⁵⁴ This is based, as Harré argues, on Wittgenstein’s point that “a grammar of expressive devices could be established only on the basis of a root ethology”. Ibid., 140. For arguments that also stress the importance of the body for developing a sign system or even philosophical framework compare Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion. Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling*. And Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh. The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought*.

¹⁵⁵ Harré and Gillett, *The Discursive Mind*, 146.

¹⁵⁶ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 29.

¹⁵⁷ From the perspective of philosophical realism, it matters to specify this relationship. Wendt for example argues how the mind supervenes on the brain and uses supervenience in a similar manner to describe the relationship between agents and structure. Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 156. Similarly, Margaret Archer conceptualises human beings as consisting of emergent strata. “Each stratum is emergent from, but irreducible to, lower levels because all strata possess their own sui generis properties and powers. Thus, schematically, mind is emergent from neurological matter, consciousness from mind, selfhood from consciousness, personal identity from selfhood, and social agency from personal identity.” Archer, 'Being Human: The Problem of Agency'. For the concepts of supervenience and emergence with regard to the state-as-person see also Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 300-305.

constructionist psychologists, they are both presumed to be present. This is a crucial point for the project of the *constructed state-as-person*.

Accepting these points, it becomes clear that the body matters as a demarcation line between people on the one hand and states on the other hand. It follows that the state can only ever be what I call – taking inspiration from Harry G. Frankfurt – a *second-order person*.¹⁵⁸ Harré’s point about “[p]rimitive biological reactions to situations provid[ing] the basis of a kind of ‘vocabulary’ of sign forms”¹⁵⁹ can be extended to mean that if we had different primitive biological reactions, our sign systems, and based on that our conceptualisation of ourselves and our emotions, would look different. It is important to note that this line of argument is different from the one pursued by Wendt who argues that an actor’s identity “always has a material base, the body in the case of people, many bodies and territory for states”.¹⁶⁰ The “biological basis”, understood as human ethology here, matters not because understanding it helps us understand persons, selves, and emotions. Rather, it matters in the sense that human biology enables and constrains possibilities of a sign system and serves as a tool for expressing and acting upon this sign system. Accordingly, an accumulation of individual human bodies and a territory are not appropriate substitutes for the states’ missing “biological basis”. Further, the state, missing any such physical attributes that would enable the generation of a sign system, can, therefore, only ever be a person by virtue of human beings bringing about a sign-system based on their primitive biological reactions and functions. It is worth reminding ourselves of a parallel between Harré’s point and the one made by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson introduced in Chapter 3 who argue that part of the basis for metaphors is provided by physical experiences.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ The term second-order person is used in loose analogy to Harry G. Frankfurt’s concept of second-order desire from the essay “Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person”. A second-order desire is a desire about a desire. Similarly, the state-as-person is not a person but a reflection about persons. For Frankfurt the ability to have second-order desires is what sets humans apart from other species and is crucially linked to free will. Similarly, the ability to create second-order persons through metaphors is a uniquely human ability linked to the capacity for abstract thought. Compare Frankfurt, ‘Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person’, 6-7.

¹⁵⁹ Harré and Gillett, *The Discursive Mind*, 146.

¹⁶⁰ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 225.

¹⁶¹ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 19-21 as well as 56-60. However, in *Metaphors we live by* Lakoff and Johnson are quick to point out that there is no such thing as direct, unmediated experience. For a stronger claim regarding the role of the “body” for the development of conceptual systems, see George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 16-44. It is also worth noting how Harré references Lakoff in the context of the

To summarise, the idea of selves and emotions is at the very basic level bound-up with human physiology. Human physiology matters for enabling us to take part in discourse about persons, selves and emotions in the first place. It does this in two key ways: firstly by serving as the basis for a system of signs; and secondly by serving as the tool for expressing these signs and acting upon them. Even a conceptualisation of the state as a superorganism in Wendt's sense would not solve this problem to the extent that the state would actually *be* a person.¹⁶² Further, when considering state consciousness, Wendt discusses the possibility of an “*ersatz* subjectivity” for the state, “in which individuals experience a state's emotions on its behalf”.¹⁶³ This suggestion is similar to what is proposed here and what is meant by saying that the *constructed state-as-person* is a *second-order person*. Wendt rejects the idea of “*ersatz* subjectivity” because it is “not likely to justify a realist view of state consciousness”.¹⁶⁴ I agree with him but also find it worth stressing that while the state-as-structure is taken to be real in the account of the *constructed state-as-person*, the personhood of the state is argued to be theory-constitutive metaphor.

This underlines the point made by Colin Wight in response to Wendt's *Social Theory* that there is an ontological firewall that the state does not cross.¹⁶⁵ In my account, this firewall is the lack of a biological “basis” that allows for the development of a sign system and that provides tools for the usage of this sign system. Hence, the state can only be made into a person by speaking about it as a person. Yet, while this represents an ontological firewall for the state-as-person, it does not complicate a metaphorical conceptualisation of the state-as-person. States are and can be imagined as persons, with important consequences for the study of international relations.

question of how language constraints possibilities of thought. Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 144. As well as Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 24.

¹⁶² Wendt's state as a superorganism is instantiated by thought. “[I]t is the participation of individuals in a collective thought process (in this case, in a ‘narrative of state’), whose boundaries are instantiated by the practices that produce and reproduce that process, which enables superorganisms to survive.” Wendt, ‘The State as Person in International Theory’, 311. From the perspective taken here, this makes the state dependent on the conceptual and symbolic system originating from individual human beings. It is precisely on this basis that I argue that the state can only ever be a *second-order person*.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 314.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 188.

Conclusion

This chapter outlines the position that constructionist psychology takes with regard to the person, the self, and emotions. Drawing on Harré, a first key distinction is introduced between two different ontologies: a world-seen-as-people and a world-seen-as-molecules. It is argued that the state-as-person can only be understood from within the first framework. From the world-seen-as-people grammar, the focus rests on the person being among other persons, not on causal mechanisms or supposed entities *inside* the mind. Of primary interest are “rule-governed sequences of meanings” as opposed to causal mechanisms and material factors.¹⁶⁶ This sets the *constructed state-as-person* building on constructionists insights apart from Wendt’s rump materialist and essentialist conception.

In line with the distinction between two ontologies, a second, Wittgenstinian distinction between tasks and tools is introduced. Following Harré, tasks are described as entirely discursively structured and tools as part of the material world – one corresponds to the world-seen-as-people and the other corresponds to the world-seen-as-molecules. The two cannot be separated completely, but the argument is that we can only focus on one of these worlds at a time. For the world-seen-as-people and for the state-as-person, it is clear, however, that tasks take primacy. When playing a game of tennis, for example, the racquets, the tools, do not influence how and why the game is played and have no bearing on the establishment and acceptance of rules.

Taking these observations as a starting point, I introduce Harré’s distinction between person and self. In his framework, the person is an indication of a specific place in time and space that allows for person-orientated ways of speaking to take place. It is embodiment that allows us to distinguish one person from the other and perceive each person as a singularity and speak about them using personal pronouns. However, the self – understood as comprising a singular point of view from which to perceive and act upon the world, a collection of interests and characteristics, and a part that is represented in interaction – is discursively constructed and can only be found in interaction between persons. The self does not exist prior to discourse and cannot somehow be located as an entity inside the person.

¹⁶⁶ Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 152.

Further, a constructionist perspective on emotions is introduced which allows me to argue that what matters for our understanding of emotions is to be located in discourse. Emotions are socially acquired rather than biological given and, based on this view, it is argued that they reflect commonly held beliefs about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour as well as appropriate reactions. They are seen as a form of knowledge, their expression is a form of judgement and they are used to address and re-dress relationships.

These observations have far-reaching consequences for the state-as-person. I argue that based on these criteria, person-oriented discourses become applicable to the state. An inside test for the state-as-person, like the one proposed by Wendt, is not required as psychological personhood is to be found within discourse, not inside the mind. Further, utilising Wittgenstinian insights, it is argued that there is no gap between the “feeling” of an emotion and its expression. From this perspective, the questions of how the state can be said to feel an emotion or who is experiencing the emotion on behalf of the state become irrelevant. Further, if self and emotions are seen as fundamentally constructed, there is nothing essential about persons and we cannot presuppose a rump materialism that constrains possibilities of construction as it is done in Wendt’s account.

However, despite this emphasis on discourse, the state only ever becomes what I call a *second-order person*. Despite the emphasis on the constructed nature of person, self, and emotions, the state-as-person faces one important limitation to its constitution. It is argued that the development of any symbolic system is bound up with human embodiment in the sense that basic biological functions enable the creation of a sign system by, for example, supporting the ability to speak and by determining certain ways of experiencing the world and abilities to interact with it. Further, drawing on Harré’s point regarding the task/tool division, it is argued that tasks, the aspects that matter in the social world, are set discursively, while tools, the ability to accomplish these tasks, depend on physical embodiment. The tools as well as the ability to bring about a specific sign system rest with human beings. This is why the state as a *second-order person* depends on individual human beings who think, feel, speak and act on its behalf. Yet, despite this constraint with regard to the state-as-person, I argue that constructionist psychology offers a useful way to develop the idea of the state-as-person further.

Chapter 6: Developing the *constructed state-as-person*

This chapter develops the idea of the *constructed state-as-person*. It builds on the critique of the state-as-person debate outlined in Chapter 1 as well as the critique of Alexander Wendt's approach outlined in Chapter 2. Further, the position regarding the role of metaphors developed in Chapter 3, the suggestions of scholars of the emotional turn outlined in Chapter 4, and the specific elements of Rom Harré's constructionist psychology elaborated in the previous chapter, are now built upon in order to develop an alternative conception.

As a starting point, it is worth highlighting the key positions developed in the earlier chapters. First, I argue that the debate so far was built on a problematic dichotomy between, on the one hand, the argument that the state really exists and really is a person and, on the other hand, the argument that it is *only* a metaphor. Second, I am critical of Wendt's approach and his search for a suitable inside constitution of the person and his "rump materialist" commitments with regard to the person and the state-as-person.¹ Third, I argue that the role of metaphors as theory-constitutive elements needs to be taken seriously. Fourth, while the state is seen as a real structure, I argue that the state-as-person can only be addressed on the level of linguistic realism. Fifth, in line with scholars of the so-called emotional turn, I maintain that for creating a better understanding of people in a world of people, the strict dichotomy between emotions on the one hand and what is often referred to as rationality or rational decision-making on the other needs to be overcome. Sixth, I take the position that the state is not a good candidate for group emotions. "State emotions" have to be addressed on a conceptual level via the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person*. This is in line with the metaphorical approach to the state-as-person and the commitment to linguistic realism with regard to the concept. Lastly, drawing on Harré's constructionist psychology, I am able to locate self and emotions in discourse and I

¹ For Wendt's "rump materialism" compare Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 109-113 and 130-135.

am in a position to argue against “rump materialism” and the need for a suitable inside constitution of the person. As suggested in the previous chapter, the state-as-person is best conceived of as what I call, drawing on Harry G. Frankfurt, a *second-order person*.² The task of this chapter is to draw these points closer together in suggesting the *constructed state-as-person* as an alternative for the discipline.

By building on these points in developing an alternative conception of the state-as-person in the discipline, I am able to make a contribution that avoids the search for a suitable inside of the person on the one hand and condemnations of state-as-person ideas as ‘mere metaphors’ on the other. With this aim in mind, the first part of this chapter highlights how the *constructed state-as-person* suggested here differs from Wendt’s approach and how my suggestion to treat the state-as-person as a metaphor also differs from disciplinary mainstream approaches that are quick to admit that the state is not really a person and that state personhood and state agency are really shorthand expressions for something else. Further, by highlighting how discourses regarding persons become useful for making the state intelligible in the second part of this chapter, I enter into a dialogue with current disciplinary debates regarding state identities and state emotions. However, a more detailed engagement with disciplinary debates and larger philosophy of social science questions and the contribution that the *constructed state-as-person* makes regarding these debates is reserved for Chapter 7 of this thesis.

To address these points, this chapter makes five key moves. The first section takes the process of metaphorical mapping as outlined in Chapter 3 and makes it useful for the idea of the state-as-person by drawing on Harré’s constructionist psychology. Harré outlines what he calls minimal criteria that allow for person-oriented discourse to take place in everyday conversation.³ The task is to enter into a dialogue between what is called the source domain of the metaphor, ideas about the person, and the target domain of the metaphor, ideas about the state. Resulting from this is the state-as-person as an imagined entity that builds on everyday discursive practices on the one hand and accepted international practices of external sovereignty, stressing territorial integrity and representation, on the other hand. The conceptual metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person* emerges from this analysis. Based on this

² Frankfurt, 'Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person'.

³ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 73.

perspective, the second section addresses the crucial questions of suitable inside constitution, embodiment and “rump materialism” with regard to the person and the state-as-person. These are important considerations given the particular theoretical position I wish to take within the state-as-person debate and the critique issued with regard to Wendt’s approach. The final three sections flesh out the conceptual metaphor of the state-as-person. I argue that on the basis of the metaphorical mapping of Harré’s minimal criteria for person-orientated discourse, language games regarding individual human beings used in everyday discourse can be utilised to make the state intelligible and to put us into a position from which judgements about appropriate state-behaviour become possible. The metaphorical nature of the *constructed state-as-person* is important to stress here. In order to make sense of the state in IR, it allows for the utilisation of the conventions developed in the particular circumstances of individual human beings in everyday discourse. Three are especially relevant: language games regarding the construction of the self, emotions, and concepts of enmity and friendship. The last three sections address these language games in turn and bring them into dialogue with relevant IR debates. In sum, this chapter makes a suggestion that takes the idea of the state-as-person seriously while avoiding what has been outlined in previous chapters as some of the pitfalls of previous debates in the discipline.

Mapping the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person*

I start from the position that that the prevalence of the discipline to see the state as a person or agent is a useful assumption. However, based on a critique of the disciplinary debate and Wendt's specific contribution, I am offering an alternative conception that avoids some of the pitfalls identified.

To begin with, it is important to stress that taking a metaphor approach means to engage in a dialogue between insights of two different realms of knowledge that facilitates the creation of new knowledge. However, while this exchange between two distinct realms is common to all metaphors, they fulfil a variety of functions. In Chapter 3 I started from a basic categorisation of metaphors that, drawing on I. A. Richards, I called *modes of metaphors*.⁴ I distinguish between three modes of metaphors. They can function as figures of speech and tools for persuasion, as heuristic tools that offer orientation in a complex world, and as elements in the construction of knowledge. It is important to emphasise again that the *constructed state-as-person* as I wish to address it here is located in the third *mode of metaphor*. In this sense, the *constructed state-as-person* is, to borrow a term used by Richard Boyd, a *theory-constitutive metaphor*.⁵ According to Boyd, theory-constitutive metaphors are “metaphorical expressions [that], at least for a time, [constitute] an irreplaceable part of the linguistic machinery of a scientific theory.”⁶ In Chapter 3 I also outlined the process of structural mapping, drawing on Dedre Gentner's work, to illustrate the inner workings of such a metaphor.⁷ Two key aspects of this process of metaphor-mapping are worth recalling here. First, following Gentner, it needs to be stressed that the process

⁴ Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 94. For a similar categorisation compare Maasen and Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge*, 3.

⁵ Boyd, 'Metaphor and Theory Change: What Is "Metaphor" a Metaphor For?', 486. For an overview also compare Semino, *Metaphor in Discourse*, 130-148. It is important to note that Boyd, in line with his scientific realist commitments, argues in favour of a process that would see a theory-constitutive metaphor eventually replaced by a more literal explication. For him, this is part of the scientific process and he argues that “complete explications are often the eventual result of the attempts at explication which are central to scientific inquiry.” Boyd, 'Metaphor and Theory Change: What Is "Metaphor" a Metaphor For?', 488. Further, theory-constitutive metaphors are involved in the process of “the accommodation of language to as yet undiscovered causal features of the world”. Ibid., 490. Note how Boyd speaks about “the accommodation of language”. In contrast, the position taken here, following a stronger constructivism, attributes a creative function to metaphors. A metaphor, especially when the social realm is concerned, does more than accommodate. It creates.

⁶ Boyd, 'Metaphor and Theory Change: What Is "Metaphor" a Metaphor For?', 486.

⁷ Gentner, 'Are Scientific Analogies Metaphors?'

identifies key nodal points within the source and target domains of the metaphor and maps their relationships, not their characteristics. In Gentner's words, structural mapping "asserts that identical operations and relationships hold among non-identical objects".⁸ Second, drawing on the seminal work of Max Black, it is important to stress that this is not a one-directional process of applying conceptual relationship found in the target domain to the source domain. On the contrary, Black, following Richards, makes an important contribution by stressing that metaphors do not involve a comparison between two domains, but an interaction between them.⁹ As we have seen, through a metaphor, two different realms are brought in contact with each other. The one that is more familiar, less abstract and closer to direct everyday experiences is utilised to make sense of the realm that is less familiar, more abstract, and further removed from everyday experiences. It is worth pointing out again that this is not a one-directional process. While, as we have seen in Chapter 3, some of the terminology related to conceptual metaphors such as source and target domain and the description of the metaphor as a "lens" through which we perceive reality make it seem as if this process works in one direction only, this is not the case. After all, it is important to remember that the concept of the state-as-person works well and is still prevalent in IR theory because, as we have seen in Chapter 1, concepts of states and concepts of persons grew up together and the relationship between the two was by no means a one-directional application of person-related ideas to the realm of the international.¹⁰

Therefore, in a first step, source and target domain and their key elements need to be identified. Two things are important to stress in this regard. First, it has been argued that, in contrast to the state, the state-as-person can only be addressed on the level of linguistic realism. This means that the following mapping process is not a process that looks for underlying, unobservable structures and structural relationships to be mapped across contexts. Rather, I am operating at the discursive level and looking at conditions for the realisation of certain discursive conventions. Second, taking an interaction view of metaphors means that the construction of the metaphor itself is a creative process that creates similarities hitherto not

⁸ Ibid., 108.

⁹ Black, *Models and Metaphors. Studies in Language and Philosophy*, 35.

¹⁰ Compare Erik Ringmar for example and his point about the concept of interest being first only attached to the state and only later becoming applicable to groups and individuals. Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action. A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War*, 56.

realised. To think of the state as a person or agent is a common thread in parts of the discipline of IR. Hence, I do not claim to be inventing the metaphor. Rather, by going back to the process of metaphor construction in the form of structural mapping, I aim to stress the key moves in establishing the metaphor. This builds on a critique of earlier disciplinary debates and aims to show that the state-as-person can be maintained but is better based on a different process with different outcomes than previously suggested.

The mapping process for the metaphor or the *constructed state-as-person* is best begun with a closer look at the source domain. In Chapters 4 and 5 I gave reasons for a commitment to constructionist psychology with regard to the person and the state-as-person and outlined key points of this perspective by drawing on Harré's work. According to Harré's minimal criteria, a person is a location in time and space that is clearly identifiable and shows continuity over time. This is the starting point for the *constructed state-as-person* and is a first step in identifying the source domain.

Based on this, I argue that we can identify the equivalent of Harré's minimal criteria in the state. The modern state fulfils the minimal criteria of being identifiable as a location in time and space that shows continuity over time. The key principle here is external sovereignty linked with an emphasis on territorial integrity.¹¹ These two principles allow for the application of person-oriented discourses to the state. It is important to note however, that I am not arguing that based on the principle of external sovereignty the state is indeed a person. Rather, the principle of external sovereignty is important in giving the state a location in time and space with continuity. It is these elements that then allow for person-oriented discourses to function with regard to the state. Further, it is also important to note that in the case of individual human beings, our key reference point for understanding what it means to be a person, these principles are closely linked with human embodiment. This, as argued in more detail in the previous chapter, is why the state is only ever a *second-order person* and why it is dependent on

¹¹ I take the principle of (external) sovereignty as a given here and build on its basic form as enshrined in international law (compare UN Charter, Article 2, numbers 1, 4, and 7 for example). In this way, I pretend, for the moment, that it can be treated as a permanent, uncontested concept. For an insightful critical engagement compare R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 159-183. For the evolution of the concept compare Robert H. Jackson, *Sovereignty: Evolution of an Idea* (Cambridge and Malden, MA: polity, 2007).

individual human beings acting on its behalf. Nevertheless, by mapping these minimal criteria, person-oriented discourses can be made useful with regard to the state.

In addition to the minimal criteria, Harré's work also implicitly suggests that for everyday person-oriented discourse to function, we need to be able to attribute a flow of utterances and actions to the person. Hence, we need to wonder whether this flow of utterances and actions can reasonably be attributed to the state. Further and closely related to this first point, we need to be able to interpret the state as a participant in discourse. As argued in the previous chapter with regard to individual human beings, these elements are linked to the body which mainly serves as a *tool* for producing the flow of utterances but which also circumscribes the possibilities for the development of a symbolic system. I argue that the system of representation associated with the modern state potentially allows for the attribution of actions and utterances to the state and for it to be seen as a participant in such a discourse. However, this also means that the state ultimately depends on individual human beings, acting alone or in groups from their particular places in society, to speak and act on its behalf.

Having identified the state as a location in time and space with continuity over time to which utterances and actions can be attributed and which therefore can be seen as a participant in discourse, constructionist psychology can enter the conceptualisation of the state-as-person more fully. The flow of these actions and utterances can now be assembled into the narratives found in person-oriented discourses of the "world-seen-as-people", including narratives of self and narratives of emotions.

I call selves, emotions, and friendship and enmity language games in line with a Wittgenstinian understanding of the role of language. There are several ways in which Wittgenstein employs the term. In *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein initially points to three ways in which he uses the term language game: the learning of a language, a primitive language, and also "the whole" understood as the language and the activities with which it is intertwined.¹² Further examples of language games include giving orders and acting on them, reporting an event, guessing riddles, cracking jokes, and solving problems in applied arithmetic.¹³ Some

¹² Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigation. The German Text, with English Translation by G. E. Anscombe, P.M.S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte*, revised 4th ed. (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 8, PI 7.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 15, PI 23.

interpretations understand Wittgenstinian language games as models, tools, or heuristic devices that illustrate and persuade, respectively.¹⁴ However, this view can be broadened by drawing, for example, on Robert Hanna's interpretation who argues that "meaningful language is essentially embedded in basic human linguistic practices called *language-games*, and second, that language-games in turn are essentially embedded in actual historical networks of human activity and human culture called *forms of life*."¹⁵ Hence, using this very broad interpretation of a Wittgenstinian perspective on language games, I argue that expressions of the self, emotions, and specific conceptions of the relations between self and other are language games. On the basis of the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person*, the language games familiar to us from the realm of the "world-seen-as-people", become useful for the state by being utilised in making sense of IR and in making judgements of appropriateness.¹⁶ The framework I suggest makes the state-as-person intelligible based on the forms of life developed with regard to individual human beings "embedded in actual historical networks of human activity and human culture".¹⁷ The metaphorical mapping of the state-as-person allows for the application of these language games, which are in themselves invitations for further exploration regarding the possibilities of the metaphor of the state-as-person.

It is important to stress though that while the *constructed state-as-person* is a metaphor is it not what Wendt would call a mere metaphor. As outlined in Chapter 1, Wendt's approach offers a critique of an alternative to what he perceives as the tendency of the mainstream of the discipline to see state personhood as "a useful fiction, analogy, metaphor, or shorthand for something else".¹⁸ On the one hand, in contrast to Wendt, the approach taken here does agree with the view that the state-as-person is a metaphor. However, on the other hand, based on a discussion of conceptual metaphor theory, it is argued that we cannot escape metaphors in making sense of the world. Metaphors can be constitutive of a worldview or body of knowledge with important real-world implications. Being critical of the comparison view of metaphors and,

¹⁴ Beth Savickey, *Wittgenstein's Art of Investigation* (London: Routledge, 1999), 152-153.

¹⁵ Robert Hanna, 'From Referentialism to Human Action: The Augustinian Theory of Language', in *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations. A Critical Guide* ed. Ahmed. Arif (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 14-15, emphasis in original.

¹⁶ For the term "world-seen-as-people" compare Harré, 'Discourse and the Embodied Person', 107.

¹⁷ Hanna, 'From Referentialism to Human Action: The Augustinian Theory of Language', 14-15.

¹⁸ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 289.

more broadly speaking of a pure reference theory allows me to go beyond the view that metaphors are only figures of speech that point to something that could be expressed literally.

In this regard, it is also crucial to stress that the state is not a metaphor. The state is a structure.¹⁹ The metaphor of the state-as-person is one way of making this structure intelligible by emphasising certain aspects while hiding others. However, because the metaphor of the state-as-person is prevalent in parts of the discipline and in lay discourses, it has important consequences for enabling certain ideas and actions while discouraging others. In this sense, the metaphor, while only being able to make parts of the state-as-structure intelligible, has consequences for the production and reproduction of this very structure. This is also the point at which the theory-constitutive metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person* blurs the lines between epistemology and ontology. While being a device that makes underlying, unobservable structures partly intelligible, its very prominence in the discourses of scholars, practitioners, and laypersons has consequences for the reproduction of the structure and hence becomes ontologically relevant. This last point is crucial and offers an alternative to the disciplinary mainstream. It will be taken up in more detail in the final chapter of this thesis.

¹⁹ Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, compare chapter four on a discussion of structure and 224 especially on the state as structure.

Creating a second-order person: material and embodied implications

In this section, I would like to address three aspects of the *constructed state-as-person* that highlight how my approach is different from Wendt's and emerges out of critique of his conception of the state-as-person: the question of a suitable inside of the person and the state-as-person, the question of a 'rump materialism' of the person and the state-as-person, and the question of embodiment. In the previous section, I have argued that Harré's minimal criteria which are, in the case of the individual human being, intertwined with embodiment are crucial for the possibilities of using person-oriented discourses with regard to the state. Further, we can attribute utterances to the state based on a system of representation. However, the state lacks the human embodiment that would allow us to ultimately identify it as the source of these utterances. It can hence only ever be what I call a second-order person. It is this conundrum that needs further elaboration.

Against Wendt, I am arguing that the state-as-person does not require a suitable inside constitution. This follows from my commitment to Harré's constructionist psychology. It is an approach that questions and turns away from mainstream psychology's tendency to search for qualities of the person and emotions *inside* the mind. The argument is made that these aspects of persons only develop discursively and are only expressed discursively. Part of the argument pursued by Harré makes use of the other minds problem. In order for everyday discourse to function, we do not require proof of a suitable psychological inner life of our interlocutors. We do not require and cannot gain certainty about whether an expressed emotion is really felt. These points have important implications for an engagement with and critique of Wendt's state-as-person.

It is important to note that with this construction of the psychology of the state, a search for its inside constitution becomes irrelevant. As we have seen, constructionist psychology is sceptical of proposing entities inside the mind that could serve as the location of the self or the source of emotions. From this perspective, emotions for example are not first felt and then expressed. The expression of the emotion *is* the emotion. Further, this point of view provides for an interesting challenge to Wendt's conception of the person. In the previous chapter, I argued

that Wendt's inside test is unnecessary because in everyday interactions we operate by presuming that other people have minds and an internal psychological life without needing additional proof. In addition, the other minds problem was used to point out that we can never be sure that others possess a mind and have an inner psychological life similar to the one we experience from our subjective and unique point of view. Treating others as psychological persons is based on actions and utterances ascribed to them. In order to take part in everyday exchanges we do not need proof of the inner life of other people in order to make sense of them and address them from within the person grammar. All we need to do is to have reasonable grounds to presume that those that we interact with as psychological persons have a similar internal life to ours. The same can be said about the state-as-person. When looking for such an inside test for persons, Harré warns against reifying aspects of discourse and treating them as if they were entities of the mind. With regard to the state-as-person the same warning about problematic reifications applies.

If we accept this view, it has the interesting consequence that the state as a psychological person is in a sense more "ideas all the way down" than the state as a moral person. This provides for a crucial departure from Wendt's approach.²⁰ Wendt argues that moral and legal personhoods are social conventions whereas psychological personhood also requires constitution from the inside.²¹ He chooses to focus on psychological personhood because this, for him, provides the stricter test of whether the state can be a person.

It is interesting to contrast Wendt's view with others who study moral agency and moral personhood. For example, Toni Erskine argues that in order for the state to qualify as what she calls an "institutional moral agent" it needs to have "an identity that is more than the sum of identities of constituting parts, a decision-making structure, an executive function ..., an identity over time and a conception of itself as a unit".²² In her account, in order to be a moral agent, a

²⁰ For the distinction between moral and psychological personhood and their relation to the constructivist principle of "ideas all the way down" see Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 294. As the foundation for this Wendt is referencing Vincent, 'Can Groups Be Persons?'

²¹ "Law and morality being social conventions, it seems clear that legal and moral persons are constituted entirely by social recognition." Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 294.

²² Erskine, 'Kicking Bodies and Damning Souls: The Danger of Harming "Innocent" Individuals While Punishing "Delinquent" States', 267. See also Erskine, 'Assigning Responsibilities to Institutional Moral Agents: The Case of States and Quasi-States', 71. And Erskine, 'Locating Responsibility: The Problem of Moral Agency in

suitable inside, as Wendt would put it, in the form a decision-making structure and executive function, is a necessary condition.

In contrast to Wendt, I argue that this picture looks radically different with regard to psychological personhood. From the perspective of constructionist psychology, the quest for a suitable inside of the person is a futile one. As outlined, constructionist psychology criticises mainstream psychology for its attempts to investigate the “inside” of the mind – be that in the form of postulating entities in the mind or cognitive mechanisms modelled on the functioning of computers or presuming that psychometric tests revealed anything beyond the discourse in which they are situated. Taking Harré’s view, psychological personhood is defined as being a person, understood as a location in time and space, to which utterances and flows of actions can be attributed. Further, it is only in discursive interactions that psychological properties such as the “self” and emotions come about. A suitable inside is assumed to be in place based on our own experience of ourselves as persons “from the inside”. This inside, however, is linked to our unique, embodied point of view. It does not need to be proven or investigated for person-oriented discourse to function. It is this perspective that marks the psychological personhood of the state, as it is understood here, as a stronger constructivism ‘all the way down’ than Wendt’s version.

This debate can also be related to questions of internal and external sovereignty as well as to the concept of quasi-states.²³ Doing so is useful in further elaborating what I call the *constructed state-as-person*. In his 2004 article, Wendt links external and internal sovereignty to his distinction between, on the one hand, being a person by social convention and, on the other hand, “really” being a person based on a suitable inside constitution.²⁴ Similarly, the criteria for a minimal definition of the state that he outlines in *Social Theory* emphasise internal sovereignty, especially the points he borrows from the Weberian conception of the state. In *Social Theory*, Wendt’s minimal definition of the state that subsequently serves as the basis for

International Relations’, 701. For the link between sovereignty and moral personhood emerging in modern thinking on the state see also Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty*, 195.

²³ These concepts themselves deserve much more critical attention than I am able to give them in the context of this argument. For a critical engagement with external and internal sovereignty see Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*. For the concept of quasi-states see Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

²⁴ Wendt, ‘The State as Person in International Theory’, 293-294.

arguing that it is also a person includes “an institutional legal order” as well as “a monopoly on the legitimate use of organized violence over a society within a territory”.²⁵

However, from within the framework presented here, internal sovereignty is *not* a necessary criterion for the state as a psychological person. I am arguing that a state can be a “failed state” or a quasi-state and still be a psychological person as long as it enjoys international recognition.²⁶ As elaborated above, from the theoretical position taken here, psychological personhood can only be located within discourse. As long as a state can reasonably be seen as being a participant in such a discourse by being represented accordingly and by that representation being regarded as legitimate, it can also be said to be a psychological person. This brings us back to what Wendt refers to as personhood by social convention. In other words, as long as certain social conventions, for example the membership in the club of sovereign states, are seen as being fulfilled by the state, we are also able to treat it as a psychological person, in the sense of constructionist psychology, by applying person-oriented discourses to it.²⁷

It also worth pointing out how this conceptualisation of the state-as-person does not require that the state consist of a homogenous group of citizens forming a coherent whole that can clearly be distinguished into an ‘inside’ and an ‘outside.’ The state of the twenty-first century as opposed to the nation-state of the nineteenth century would struggle to fulfil these criteria. While the metaphor of the state-as-person provides the imagery of a coherent whole that is

²⁵ For Wendt’s minimal definition of the essential state see Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 213.

²⁶ Robert H. Jackson makes a useful point related to what he calls negative sovereignty, understood as freedom from external interference. He argues that quasi-states emerged from the process of decolonialisation; in many cases these states only enjoy negative sovereignty and are given “juridical statehood while as yet disclosing little evidence of empirical statehood”. Hence, the contemporary world of states is a diverse one and is based on upholding a principle (external sovereignty) that is not in all cases reflected in “reality”. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World*, 25, for negative sovereignty see 27. Psychological state-personhood as it is understood here builds on negative sovereignty. Inversely, a state that fulfils criteria of internal sovereignty but does not enjoy international recognition cannot be seen as a psychological person from within the framework of the *constructed state-as-person* presented here. Compare Kingston and Spears, especially the introduction and chapter one, for an overview of what they call states-within-states. Paul Kingston and Ian S. Spears, eds., *States-within-States: Incipient Political Entities in the Post-Cold War Era* (New York and Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

²⁷ The point here is similar to Charles Manning’s idea of the game of “let’s play sovereign states”. Compare Aalberts who also draws a connection with Jackson’s quasi-states (257) and Wittgensteinian insights (253-254). Tanja E. Aalberts, ‘Playing the Game of Sovereign States: Charles Manning’s Constructivism *Avant-La-Lettre*’, *European Journal of International Relations* 16, 2 (2010).

homogenous and can clearly be divided into an 'inside' and an "outside", a "self", and an "other", for the metaphor to work we do not actually require the state to be homogenous or a coherent whole.²⁸ The metaphor is based on the minimal criteria for the application of person-oriented discourses that I take from Harré. By applying such person-oriented discourses to the state, it is made to seem like a homogenous, coherent, clearly identifiable entity. The heterogeneity, diversity and fuzziness of what we call the state are hidden by the usage of the metaphor. In that sense the metaphor does not *require* the state to be homogenous and coherent; rather, it *creates* the image of homogeneity and coherence.²⁹

Having established the *constructed state-as-person* based on Harré's minimal criteria, it is worth stressing the implications of the utilisation of person-orientated discourses to the state. In the following this will be done with a focus on three kinds of language games: the concept of the self, emotions, and the idea of friends and enemies.

²⁸ It needs to be noted that in this sense, utilising the metaphor of the state-as-person is the continuation of a particular modern interpretation of the state that allows for it to be neatly distinguished in an inside and an outside. R.B.J. Walker remarks in the context of discussing external and internal sovereignty, inside and outside of the state, that this particular lens on the state "express[es] the decisive demarcation line between inside and outside, between self and other, identity and difference, community and anarchy that is constitutive of our modern understanding of political space". The metaphor of the state-as-person works to re-affirm this particular understanding more than to question it. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*, 174.

²⁹ It is useful to draw a parallel with Benedict Anderson's imagined communities here. He points out how the nation is imagined as a community of people, as a horizontal comradeship. Glossing over actual inequalities, hierarchies, and exploitation, the image of the community creates that very community. In other words, the imagined community works despite "empirical" evidence to the contrary. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 7.

The three selves of the state

An IR scholarship that has turned, as Wendt does in *Social Theory*, from the analysis of the behaviour of its most important units to the analysis of identities and interests, also has to engage the self. Indeed, the self comes before the interest. As Erik Ringmar reminds us, “[i]t is only as *some-one* that we can have an interest in *some-thing*.”³⁰ Similarly, albeit with a very different philosophy of science position resulting in a distinctly different vocabulary, Wendt argues that identity is “an actor’s self-understanding” and “generates motivational and behavioural dispositions”.³¹

From the perspective taken here, accounts of the self are narrative accounts. Following the Wittgenstinian insights utilised by constructionist psychology, the self is not an entity inside the mind; it only comes about discursively. Having established the state-as-person that fulfils Harré’s minimal criteria for the functioning of person-oriented discourses, narrative accounts of the self as they are utilised in everyday discourses can potentially be applied to make sense of the state in IR. Each kind of self outlined by Harré fulfils a specific function in discourse. As we have seen, Self 1 is linked to having a specific point of view from which to perceive the world and from which to act. In this sense the self delineates an inside and outside and the *self* from the *other*. Self 2 describes a set of unique characteristics and includes an autobiographical account. Finally, Self 3 is the self in interaction with others. Elements of all three can readily be identified in various accounts of the state in IR. From the perspective taken here, the applicability of these narratives of self depends on the metaphor of the state-as-person. Going back to the *three modes of metaphors* established in Chapter 3, we can alternatively see these narratives of the self as rhetorical instruments for persuasion, as a useful framework for orientation and analysis, or, and this would be the strongest claim, as constitutive of the world of IR. My contention is that we need to take the third possibility seriously.

Arguing from within Harré’s Self 1, the state becomes an agent only through the narratives told and re-told by individual human beings who take the perspective of the state. The world is seen

³⁰ Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action. A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War*, 76, emphasis in original.

³¹ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 224. “Identity”, in the way Wendt uses the term in this passage, is close to Harré’s Self 2.

as a world from the standpoint of that particular state. The differences between us and them, between inside and outside, are emphasised. Similarly, as part of the discursive accounts of Self 1, the state is narrated as an agent. The argument that the state can only ever be a *second-order person* also implies that the state depends on individual human beings acting on its behalf. Building on that, the argument put forward here is that by assembling these actions into the narratives of Self 1 the state is created as an agent by allowing for discourse in which the state features as acting from its particular point in the world. Further, Self 1 also allows for actors to take responsibility for their actions by associating them with themselves.

If we follow this line of interpretation further, Harré's Self 2 can be localised in national biographies and similar accounts. It is worth quoting Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* here. With regard to what he calls the "biography of nations" he remarks "[a]s with modern persons, so it is with nations" and he sees an overlap between how we tell our own biographies and how we tell the stories of the life of the state.³² Similarly, Ringmar shows how in the seventeenth century Sweden fashioned a Self 2 with a national biography linking the country and its kings to ancient times, specifically designed to gain recognition at home as well as abroad.³³

Self 3 marks the self in interaction. It is worth contrasting this with the symbolic interactionist account that Wendt gives of the hypothetical first encounter between two states.³⁴ I argue that

³² Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 205. However, in the same passage he continues to argue that there is an important difference between narratives of persons and narratives of states. In the case of the story of the person there is a clear beginning (birth) and a clear end (death). The story of the state does not offer these markers and, hence, Anderson argues, it needs to be told slightly differently with regards to sequences of events and the timeline presented.

³³ Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action. A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War*, 156-164.

³⁴ Compare Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 328ff. Indeed, the symbolic interactionist account of a First Encounter between two states, Ego and Alter, starts with what I would read as an analogy between the materiality of individual human beings given through their embodiment on the one hand and the "bodies" of states created by "shared ideas supervening on biology" on the other. In the same passage Wendt argues that despite the differences between people and states, the absence of a material body in the case of the latter, the result is the same: "exogenously given, self-organizing facts – personal and corporate identities – that act upon and resist the world". This makes it seem as if the First Encounter between states is a special case of an abstract idea of "First Encounters" that can be applied to both states and people and maybe even other entities. Yet, I would argue that the understanding of a First Encounter is inevitably bound-up with the world-seen-as-people; it is not an abstract principle that applies to both people as well as states. We can only conceive of it by relating it to individual human beings in interaction. Hence, I argue, we do not follow the principle of deduction but of metaphorical thinking.

this hypothetical encounter can only be understood by recourse to the background knowledge of similar encounters between individual human beings. The perspective taken here reminds us that the narrations of these are not culturally or historically neutral. But, most importantly, the account of a hypothetical encounter does not work without implicit recourse to an idealised image of individual human beings in interaction. Processes such as role-taking and altercasting outlined by Wendt can only be understood and known in the first place by reference to the behaviour of individual human beings. Insights from constructivist psychology serve as a reminder that, firstly, selves are only created in interaction, and, secondly, that we need to start conceptualising states-as-persons by looking at individual human beings in interaction.

States' emotions

With regard to emotions, two familiar themes re-emerge. First, utilising constructionist psychology and Wittgenstinian insights, emotions are seen as something that is not first felt and only then expressed. Second, emotions are understood as being constructed discursively and serving specific functions in discourse; their “biological basis” can be neglected. With regard to the *constructed state-as-person*, these insights, as we have seen, allow us to shift the focus away from the question of who feels the emotions on behalf of the state. In contrast, from the perspective taken here, the *expression* of emotions and the *social function* served by emotion-discourse are key.

It is also worth highlighting two key arguments from Chapter 4 that were made as part of introducing the emotional turn in IR. First, the emotions of states are neither understood as the emotions of state leaders or representatives nor are they understood as emotions of a group.³⁵ The state-as-person is understood to be a metaphorical construction and the focus shifts towards the question of how emotions can legitimately be attributed to it and away from the question of who is feeling the emotion. Second, by focusing on the emotional turn in IR, the argument is made that it is problematic to sharply distinguish between rationality on the one hand and emotions on the other hand. One of the key insights of this development in IR is that the ideal of a purely rational approach towards world politics is a problematic stance that should be overcome. This is not a new stance but one well worth bringing back into the spotlight again – as the emotional turn in IR does. For example, a similar insight can already be found in Arnold Wolfers' seminal text *Discord and Collaboration*. After acknowledging that parts of the discipline seek a “dispassionate assessment of the national interest”, he goes on to argue that

this dissociation between the cold-blooded pursuit of the national interest and human feelings is never complete. Only as a first step in the

³⁵ For example, Nicolas Wheeler and Ken Booth who comment on the Palestine-Israel conflict with a focus on trust. They argue that “[i]t was a ‘king’s peace’ not a ‘people’s peace’; in other words, it was *temporary* trust between leaders not *embedded* trust between societies.” They make a distinction between the trust at the level of leaders and the trust at the level of the population. From the perspective taken here the focus lies on narratives about states-as-persons and the role of trust in these narratives. Nicholas J. Wheeler and Ken Booth, *The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation and Trust in World Politics* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 251.

analysis of the problem does it make sense to treat interstate relations as if they were immune to human sentiment.³⁶

From the perspective taken here, emotions are a form of knowledge; they represent a judgement of a situation and highlight what is deemed appropriate and inappropriate. They are socially acquired via paradigm scenarios. The metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person* allows for the application of these paradigm scenarios to the state. In that way, it allows for the application of the same culturally specific knowledge of appropriateness and inappropriateness of actions to the world of inter-state relations. Emotions, understood in this way, are also expressions of moral judgements.³⁷

A critique like the one put forward by Janice Stein that the attribution of emotions to the state “is a difficult argument, because it attributes to the collective what is an embodied individual experience,” is not relevant to the account suggested here.³⁸ First, emotions are not seen as embodied from the perspective of constructionist psychology. It is interesting to note how many arguments on emotions at the level of the state focus on the relationship between emotions and the body and draw their key conclusions about ideas of states-as-persons from this relation. We have seen how Wendt works with the idea of a superorganism and discusses the possibility of *ersatz* subjectivity. Todd H. Hall makes a similar point when he argues that “[b]ecause states are collective, institutional actors, one cannot claim that they feel angry – ... they do not have a coherent body capable of feeling anything.”³⁹ The *constructed state-as-person*, as we have seen, does not require embodiment and the state is not seen as a unitary actor. Secondly, while my account draws on the emotion discourses at the level of individual human beings, these are not

³⁶ Wolfers is given prominence here because he is cited as one of the few direct engagements with the idea of the state-as-person by Wendt. Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 290-291. For the quotation see Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, 26.

³⁷ Compare Rom Harré and Grant Gillette’s conclusion in this regard. They argue that an “emotional feeling, and the correlated display, is to be understood as a discursive phenomenon, an expression of judgement and the performance of a social act”. Harré and Gillett, *The Discursive Mind*, 147.

³⁸ Janice Stein, 'Psychological Dimensions of International Decision Making and Collective Behaviour', (Toronto: unpublished manuscript, 2001), 24. As cited in Todd H. Hall, 'We Will Not Swallow This Bitter Fruit: Theorizing a Diplomacy of Anger', *Security Studies* 20, 4 (2011), 530.

³⁹ Hall, 'We Will Not Swallow This Bitter Fruit: Theorizing a Diplomacy of Anger', 532. A similar argument is made by P. E. Digeser who points out that “states are *ontologically* incapable of having emotional commitments.” P. E. Digeser, 'Public Reason and International Friendship', *Journal of International Political Theory* 5, 1 (2009), 30, my emphasis.

attributed to a collective but to an abstract concept, the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person*.

To tell emotional stories about states by drawing on the discursive conventions utilised by individual human beings in everyday conversations is, from the perspective taken here, to express judgements about a situation or actor. Emotion stories about states-as-persons represent knowledge and in some cases attempts to change the dynamic of a situation or to re-negotiate the terms of a relationship. Albeit coming from a different perspective, Hall comes to a similar conclusion with regard to the diplomacy of anger when he argues that “[t]he strategic value of the diplomacy of anger lies in the image state actors convey to others about what they will or will not tolerate, where the red lines of acceptable behaviour are drawn, and what is the strength of their commitments.”⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Hall, 'We Will Not Swallow This Bitter Fruit: Theorizing a Diplomacy of Anger', 534.

States as friends and enemies, systemic cultures of enmity and friendship

One of the central themes of Wendt's *Social Theory* is the idea that interactions between states can produce and re-produce features of the international system. Having proclaimed "anarchy is what states make of it",⁴¹ Wendt aims to show in *Social Theory* how the system of states can be transformed from being dominated by enmity to being dominated by friendship. While being sympathetic to the same basic ideal, namely an investigation into possibilities of transforming the international system into a Kantian culture of friendship, two questions come into focus from the perspective taken here. First, how can we gain an understanding of what enmity and friendship mean? And second, how does systemic transformation come about? The first question will be addressed here while the second question will be reserved for Chapter 7.

In the following discussion, the focus will be on friendship rather than enmity. Although, the observations made below apply to both, friendship seems to be the more interesting case. While we can identify a number of scholars who point to a lack of serious engagements with friendship in international politics, there is also some very recent scholarship on friendship between states that is well worth considering.⁴²

Friendship and enmity have been central to politics, and not just since Carl Schmitt's infamous proclamation that political actions can be reduced to the distinction between friend and enemy.⁴³ The concepts of friend and enemy can often be seen to "function as a convenient, seemingly 'natural' classification for the relations of states as sovereign equals".⁴⁴ Parallel to the observation made in Chapter 1 that modern ideas of states and ideas of individual persons grew up together, we can point to a similar link between the state and the individual human being

⁴¹ Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics'.

⁴² For example Alexander Wendt and Felix Berenskoetter observe a lack of serious or systematic scholarship on friendship in IR while at the same time aiming to rectify this situation. See Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 298. And Felix Berenskoetter, 'Friends, There Are No Friends? An Intimate Reframing of the International', *Millennium* 35, 3 (2007), 647. Further, a recent edition of the *Journal of International Political Theory* was devoted almost entirely to ideas of friendship between states and peoples. See for example the introduction by Nicholas Onuf. Nicholas Onuf, 'Friendship and Hospitality: Some Conceptual Preliminaries', *Journal of International Political Theory* 5, 1 (2009).

⁴³ Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, expanded edition ed. (London and Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007 [1932]), 26.

⁴⁴ Onuf, 'Friendship and Hospitality: Some Conceptual Preliminaries', 1.

with regard to concepts of friendship and enmity. Evgeny Roshchin links the idea of public and private friendship, being introduced at the beginning of modernity by legal thinkers such as Hugo Grotius, to the emergence of external and internal sovereignty.⁴⁵ He argues that “the political reality of the emerging sovereign state coincided with the emergence of an analytical distinction between private friendships and public, political or international, friendship.”⁴⁶

Similarly, drawing on ancient Greek thought, Nicholas Onuf points to the connection between the idea of friendship among individual human beings and friendship among political entities. He quotes Aristotle with the observation that “just as cities are friends to one another, so in the like way are citizens.”⁴⁷ Although these examples can only serve as a tentative illustration, the *persisting prevalence* of concepts of enmity and friendship in efforts to make sense of the relations between states is rendered less surprising when we keep these links in mind. However, how to define enmity and friendship remains up for debate.

Within IR scholarship, we find cases in which the terms enemy and friend are used in a way that does not problematise their meaning and the analysis is either based on the assumption that these concepts can be used in a neutral fashion or implicitly starts from everyday knowledge of what it means to be an enemy or a friend.⁴⁸ In other cases, a specific thinker is invoked to provide a framework for the concepts of friend and enemy.⁴⁹ In the first case, I argue, the conceptions of enmity and friendship are inevitably inter-twined with culturally specific

⁴⁵ Evgeny Roshchin, 'The Concept of Friendship: From Princes to States', *European Journal of International Relations* 12, 4 (2006), 609-611.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 610.

⁴⁷ Aristotle, 'Eudemian Ethics', in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. J. Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1968. As cited in Onuf, 'Friendship and Hospitality: Some Conceptual Preliminaries', 7. The concept of friendship underlying this is the Aristotelian concept of civic friendship that is based on equality as well as utility. It is also interesting to note that the analogy seems to start from the state and is then also applied to the relations between persons and not the other way around.

⁴⁸ Compare for example Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, chapter two. While he sounds a note of caution at the beginning of the chapter (25), he then proceeds to treat the terms as a given.

⁴⁹ As mentioned earlier, Nicholas Onuf invokes Aristotle. P. E. Digeser draws on Jennifer E. Whiting's Aristotelian account of interpersonal friendship to argue that self-concern does not preclude concern for others. Catherine Lu also takes her starting point from Aristotle arguing that he provides an “account of political friendship as distinct from but analogous to personal friendship”. Felix Berenskoetter draws on Martin Heidegger's notion of anxiety to argue that the friend as a significant other is important in controlling anxiety (but invokes also an Aristotelian concept of friendship). Onuf, 'Friendship and Hospitality: Some Conceptual Preliminaries'. P. E. Digeser, 'Friendship between States', *British Journal of Political Science* 39, 2 (2009), compare especially 325. Catherine Lu, 'Political Friendship among Peoples', *Journal of International Political Theory* 5, 1 (2009), 41. Berenskoetter, 'Friends, There Are No Friends? An Intimate Reframing of the International', 655 and 664.

assumptions that need to be made explicit. The reservoir of knowledge that these scholars implicitly draw on is specific to their culture and their time. Even the claim to a neutral definition of enemy and friend cannot avoid starting from or implicitly invoking how these terms are used in everyday conversations.⁵⁰ In the second case, the justification of why a specific thinker is utilised is often, unsurprisingly, tied up with the aims of the project; but most of the time it remains unclear why a particular perspective is preferred to another. In this context, it is important to remember that the concepts of enemy and friend have been through considerable reformulations; they are not fixed but moving targets.⁵¹ Further, I agree with Felix Berenskoetter who points out that “[w]here friendship [in IR scholarship] is discussed it is treated thinly.”⁵²

To illustrate these points, three examples of scholarly treatments of friendship between states can be invoked. Wolfers, starting from a concept of friendship that remains unproblematised and seems to be based on an everyday understanding, maintains that “[a]s long as there are conflicting aims, there will be instances of enmity” and with regards to friendship he argues that “[n]ations defending common values and interests may come to form ... bonds of friendship.”⁵³ In contrast to that, Felix Berenskoetter starts from an Aristotelian concept of friendship and builds on Hannah Arendt’s idea of the political, understood as a plurality of being. He argues that “[a]llowing for plurality and difference in friendship certainly is unavoidable for a meaningful treatment of intimate relations in international politics.”⁵⁴ Both of these accounts have very different implications. On the one hand we have Wolfers who cites conflicting aims as an obstacle for friendship; on the other hand Berenskoetter sees plurality, which we might interpret as also including a plurality of aims, as an integral part of friendship. One concept seems to be based on an everyday understanding of friendship; the other evokes specific

⁵⁰ Schmitt for example argues that “[t]he friend and enemy concept are to be understood in their concrete and existential sense, not as metaphors or symbols, not mixed and weakened by economic, moral, and other conceptions, least of all in a private-individualistic sense as a psychological expression of private emotions and tendencies.” Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 27-28.

⁵¹ Roshchin, for example, points out how the medieval concept of political friendship described as a vertical relationship among non-equals was seen as a political instrument (in relation to subordinates and as part of the political vassal or patronage systems) that would later be replaced by internal sovereignty. He argues that only with the emergence of internal sovereignty does the idea of public friendship as a vertical model disappear (602 and 607-608). Political (international) friendship as a relationship between equals emerges with Hobbes (613-614). Roshchin, 'The Concept of Friendship: From Princes to States'.

⁵² Berenskoetter, 'Friends, There Are No Friends? An Intimate Reframing of the International', 650.

⁵³ Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, 30 and 100.

⁵⁴ Berenskoetter, 'Friends, There Are No Friends? An Intimate Reframing of the International', 668.

thinkers who link their understanding of public friendship to a specific understanding of the political.

As a third example regarding friendship between states, Wendt can be invoked as a theorist who aims at presenting a “neutral” conceptualisation. Yet, despite taking a definition of friendship as his starting point that is tailored to the problem of national security and linked to the formation of a system of collective security, I argue that Wendt does not avoid building his idea of friendship on an understanding that is embedded in everyday discourses of friendship and enmity.⁵⁵ This is best exemplified when he points to homogeneity, understood as likeness, as an efficient cause for friendship between states and the emergence of a Kantian system characterised by friendship.⁵⁶ For Wendt, the importance of likeness is based on the rationale that seeing others as similar to oneself fosters identification and hence a deeper internalisation of friendship.⁵⁷ I see this as an assumption based more in the world-of-people-in-interaction than in the world-of-states-engaged-in-collective-security.

In the midst of these opposing proposals for conditions of friendship based on a variety of thinkers on the one hand and unproblematised assumptions about friendship based on everyday conceptions on the other hand, I suggest to, once more, follow Harré who argues that the starting point for any such project should be the question how a word is used in everyday conversations.⁵⁸ Put differently, we need to ask how the terms enemy and friend are used in

⁵⁵ Wendt defines friendship as “a role structure within which states expect each other to observe two simple rules”. The first rule is non-violence and the second rule stipulates mutual support if threatened by a third party. When states expect each other to observe these two rules and when this expectation and commitment is temporally open-ended, friendship between states exists. From the perspective of the macro-structure, a system of collective security is in place. Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 298-299. For the focus on national security compare *ibid.*, 298, fn 136.

It is useful to read this in connection with Wendt’s distinction between personal identity and role identity in mind; he points out how role identity exists only in relation to others. *Ibid.*, 227. Similarly, he points out that in a culture of friendship that is not fully internalised states hold a conception of friendship “that most individuals might think hardly worth the name”. *Ibid.*, 305.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 353ff. Likeness is focused on corporate identity, understood as fulfilling the formal criteria of what it means to be a state, as well as type identity, understood as regime type. In this context democracy and capitalism are specifically mentioned as key factors for likeness.

⁵⁷ For this rationale see *ibid.*, 354. For possible degrees of internationalisation with regards to friendship compare *ibid.*, 302-307.

⁵⁸ While acknowledging it as a common practice, those sceptical of the idea of states as enemies and friends see the suggestion that the concepts might be drawn from “everyday talk” as one of the problematic points that are to be criticised. Compare Simon Keller, ‘Against Friendship between Countries’, *Journal of International Political Theory* 5, 1 (2009), 59.

everyday discourse. Parallel to the investigation into the self and emotions elaborated above, this provides the elements of a narrative of friends and enemies in which the *constructed state-as-person* can feature. By drawing on how the concepts are utilised in everyday conversations, the approach proposed here allows for making culturally specific assumptions explicit. Following insights from constructionist psychology, it is the everyday discursive exchange that offers insights into our psychology.⁵⁹ Further, this investigation builds on common practices in lay conversations as well as academic approaches. Instead of looking for definitions of enemy and friend that are removed from their social and historical context, this very context is taken as the starting point.

This leads to an account in which, based on the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person*, the state can be imagined as a person and the language games of enmity and friendship that are used in everyday discourses can be applied to it. From this perspective, friendship and enmity are neither related to group-level feelings nor inter-personal relations but to narrative accounts in which the state features. The narratives of states as enemies and friends are to be understood as knowledge about what is deemed acceptable and unacceptable. They are moral judgements as well as ways of defining relations. As Ringmar puts it, narratives of enemies and friends create “an affective geography of friends and enemies”.⁶⁰ Based on the distinction made in Chapter 3 regarding the *three modes of metaphors*, these narratives of enemies and friends can serve as tools for persuasion, and as frameworks of orientation, but also as the very ideas that constitute characteristics of the system of states.

⁵⁹ This is the insight of what Harré calls the second cognitive revolution. Rom Harré, 'Emotion and Memory: The Second Cognitive Revolution', in *Philosophy, Psychology and Psychiatry*, ed. A. Phillips Griffiths (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁶⁰ Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action. A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War*, 164.

Conclusion

This chapter presents an alternative to Wendt's conception of the state-as-person based on a metaphorical account that draws on insights from constructionist psychology. I argue that the metaphor of the state-as-person is based on the possibility of making the minimal criteria of personhood suggested in Harré's account, especially from his *The Singular Self*, useful to understand the state. These minimal criteria for the functioning of person-oriented discourse are as follows: having a location in time and space and showing continuity over time. In addition, we need to be able to attribute a flow of utterances and actions to the state and need to be able to perceive it as a participant in interaction. It is argued that the state does fulfil these minimal criteria based on the principle of external sovereignty with an emphasis on territorial integrity. These, together with the appropriate representation, allow for the application of person-oriented discourses to the state. A suitable inside of the state, such as an internal decision-making structure and self-organising qualities do not matter for the *constructed state-as-person* suggested in this thesis. Hence, the idea of the state-as-person suggested here includes quasi-states in the circle of potential state persons while it excludes states and entities that do not enjoy international recognition.

In addition, in order to enable me to challenge some of the ontological and epistemological assumptions of Wendt's notion of the state-as-person, constructionist psychology has been utilised to provide insights into the construction of selves and emotions as well as regarding cultural specific concepts of friend and enemy. Drawing on the underlying assumption that the way we make sense of ourselves as persons is also how we make sense of states in IR, the *constructed state-as-person* is presented as the metaphorical link that enables us to apply person-oriented discourses to the state. It is through this process that IR is given meaning for practitioners, scholars, and lay persons. It is a way of humanising the relations between states and offers the possibility to utilise a vast repertoire of judgements regarding appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and morality. In this regard, the chapter has presented narratives of emotions as well as narratives about friends and enemies, interpreted from the perspective of constructionist psychology, as being based on paradigm scenarios and containing knowledge with regard to appropriate behaviour and moral judgements. However, these cannot be defined in the abstract but are cultural specific.

While this chapter has fleshed out the idea of the *constructed state-as-person* by engaging in metaphor-mapping, discussing material and embodied implications of the metaphor and using three instances of person-oriented language games as illustrative examples, the following chapter is tasked with further addressing disciplinary implications of the approach suggested here. Among other things, this concerns addressing the disciplinary divide between ways of making the state intelligible, the agent-structure debate, forms of systemic interaction, and possibilities for systemic change.

Chapter 7: The *constructed state-as-person* – implications for IR theory

For the discipline of IR, the state is the most central point of departure and the debate regarding its intelligibility remains a key theme. A lot of work focuses on the state, its scientific ontology as well as ontological status. In other words, the questions of what the state is and whether it is real are still very much alive. Yet, some of the moves that the discipline makes as part of these debates need further probing and questioning. Accepting the importance of the state and taking the state-as-person debate in the discipline as my starting point, I have engaged with these questions over the course of the previous chapters, culminating in the suggestion of an alternative position in the form of the *constructed state-as-person*.

This final chapter offers the opportunity to return to some of the fundamental questions and debates regarding the state and the state-as-person in the discipline of IR. In this chapter, I aim to clarify the position I take with the *constructed state-as-person* further in order to highlight how it differs from other approaches in the debate and to illustrate the added value of my suggestion and its implications for the study of IR. In doing so, four particular points emerge. First, I point out how the approach taken here, although metaphorical in nature, does not lend itself to support the assumption that the state-as-person is *merely* a metaphor and also does not endorse an instrumental treatment of the state and the state-as-person. My insistence on the theory-constitutive nature of metaphors and the role of structural mapping in developing a metaphor provide the grounds for taking this position. Further, in Chapter 1, the state-as-person debate was framed in terms of asking questions about the intelligibility of the state. Two opposing positions, one insisting on the reality of the state and/or the state-as-person and the other locating the state and the state-as-person on the level of language and practice, have been outlined. With the *constructed state-as-person*, I disrupt this dichotomous view of the intelligibility of the state. Based on this concept, I am in a position to argue that a sharp dividing line between those scholars who are interested in advancing arguments in favour of the

ontological reality of the state and the state-as-person on the one hand and those who seek to investigate the social practices and processes that constitute the state and the state-as-person on the other hand cannot and should not be drawn. From the perspective of the *constructed state-as-person* these are two sides of the same coin. In other words, the suggestion made here is that scholars of IR need to work with those aspects of the state that are structural and located at a deeper level of social reality and those aspects of the state that are based in language and shared practices at the same time.¹ It is the interplay between the two that yields the most insightful results for IR scholars as it gives due recognition to actors' perceptions and concepts while acknowledging the larger structural context.

Second, it is important to highlight how my engagement with the state and the state-as-person speaks to wider disciplinary debates, especially the agent-structure debate. Alexander Wendt's body of work is generally regarded as a profound contribution to this debate and he is sometimes credited with introducing the agent-structure debate to IR.² By offering a critique of his approach with regard to the state-as-person, I also offer an alternative position within the agent-structure debate. This position was already advanced implicitly when I argued that the state is a really existing structure but that the state-as-person is to be located on the level of linguistic realism. Further, in my account agency firmly rests with individual human beings acting alone or in groups. It is this acceptance of human agency, as opposed to locating agency with the state-as-person that opens up convincing possibilities for systemic change. Part of the task of this chapter will be to make this contribution, which might seem contradictory at first glance, more explicit and to outline its implications for studying IR.

Third, having identified the state-as-person in the discipline as being strangely devoid of emotions, part of the task of this thesis is to build the idea of the *constructed state-as-person* on a conception of the person that includes an explicit acknowledgement of emotions. In line with the aims of the scholars of the so-called emotional turn, this addition is in itself a contribution. However, beyond that emotions play two important functions. First, as outlined in the previous chapter, they are the basis for judgements of appropriateness of *constructed state-as-person*

¹ With regard to "a deeper level of social reality", I am drawing on the scientific realist critique of some of the debates in IR. A good overview that illustrates the idea of 'levels' of social reality can be obtained from Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism'.

² Adler, 'Constructivism in International Relations'. For a more critical perspective regarding Wendt's role compare Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 138ff.

behaviour in IR. Second, a focus on emotions allows for explanations of 'irrational' *constructed state-as-person* behaviour understood as actions that do not follow the overall logic of the state system. I argue that it is this irrationality that opens up possibilities for systemic change.

Fourth, the approach suggested here offers an alternative perspective on questions of systemic interactions of states and possibilities for change in the systemic culture. In this regard, this chapter, once more, stresses the ways in which a departure from Wendt's approach takes place. The particular vantage point of the *constructed state-as-person* has profound consequences for how we theorise possibilities for systemic change. In *Social Theory*, Wendt sought to make a contribution to the discipline by suggesting how a transformation towards a Kantian international culture, a culture of other-help, could be achieved. In very general terms, I share his normative motivation regarding an international culture of other-help, but based on my critical engagement with him and the wider disciplinary debate, I arrive at a different suggestion regarding how we could bring about this transformation. If the state is conceived of as a structure that is personified on the level of linguistic realism, it is no longer "anarchy is what states make of it".³ Rather, anarchy becomes what we make of it.

³ Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics'.

Making the state intelligible: overcoming a disciplinary divide

The question of intelligibility of the state and the state-as-person is still crucial for the discipline. One way of framing this debate is by identifying two opposing camps, as it is done by Jens Bartelson as well as some of the other participants in the debate and as it has been echoed in the overview provided in Chapter 1.⁴ On the one hand, we find scholars such as Wendt and Colin Wight who insist that we need to accept that the state really exists and that our disciplinary engagement with it needs to take ontological questions as its starting point.⁵ On the other hand, scholars such as Iver B. Neumann and Patrick T. Jackson locate the state and the state-as-person on the level of language and intersubjective practice and argue that an investigation of these practices should be the main focus of scholars interested in understanding the state in IR.⁶ We can identify this particular framing of the debate at the core of Wendt's writing and behind his motivation to engage the idea of the state-as-person. Given his philosophy of science commitment to a scientific realist position, Wendt argues that we need to take the reality of the state and the state-as-person seriously. In his 2004 article, he frames the debate by highlighting two dichotomous positions. On the one hand, he argues, there are those scholars that use the idea of the state-as-person in an *as-if* fashion, as a useful metaphor or analogy. With Wight, he argues that these IR scholars, and for Wendt they hold the majority, treat the state-as-person in instrumentalist terms.⁷ On the other hand, there are those scholars that engage harder ontological questions about the existence of the state and the reality of the state-as-person. Wendt associates himself with the latter group and argues that to engage these kinds of questions is the only way to ensure disciplinary progress. Wight, also arguing that we need to accept the reality of the state while, in contrast to Wendt's position, insisting that we need to let go of the notion of the state-as-person in order to make progress, introduces a slightly different perspective. Wight also distinguishes between scholars that stress the need to accept that the state really exists and those scholars that locate the state in language and social

⁴ Bartelson, 'Second Natures: Is the State Identical with Itself'.

⁵ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory'.

⁶ Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too''. Neumann, 'Beware of Organicism: The Narrative Self of the State'.

⁷ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory'. Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity'.

practices. However, with regard to the latter, he distinguishes between an instrumentalist treatment on the one hand and a metaphorical account on the other.⁸ Both face similar problems when it comes to ontology and, Wight argues, both “allow the theorist off the ontological hook.”⁹ The instrumentalist treatment allows the theorist to use theoretical terms *as if* they existed in order to advance a theory. The problem, for Wight, is that this impedes disciplinary progress by shying away from harder ontological questions. The metaphorical treatment, Wight points out, also shies away from harder ontological questions by neglecting the fact that in order for metaphors to do any useful work, they need to be based on the real qualities of aspects of the real world. In other words, Wight stresses that, while the language we use to convey reality is metaphorical, the structure of this reality itself is not and this is what IR scholars need to pay attention to.¹⁰

This brief reminder of the key points of the debate serves as the starting point for highlighting the specific contributions that this thesis makes regarding the intelligibility of the state and the idea of the state-as-person and its relation to “harder” ontological questions. From the vantage point of the *constructed state-as-person*, the distinction between addressing, on the one hand, ontological reality and, on the other hand, metaphorical treatments is a false dichotomy which I aim to unpack in the following. I take the position that regardless of how we answer the question of intelligibility of the state, metaphors play a key role in the process. This was the argument advanced in Chapter 3 and brought to bear on the idea of the state-as-person in Chapter 6. However, an important distinction needs to be made between the state and the state-as-person. It is Wight who stresses this distinction for advancing the state-as-person debate and it is this distinction that forms a key part of the critical engagement with Wendt’s work undertaken in Chapter 2 of this thesis.¹¹ As detailed in previous chapters, based on the distinction between the state on the one hand and the state-as-person on the other, I argue that the former is a really existing structure while the latter is located on the level of linguistic realism. In this sense, I agree with Wight’s position in the debate that “the state is real, but that it is not [really] a person”.¹² This also sets me apart from Neumann and Jackson’s position, both

⁸ Wight, 'State Agency: Social Action without Human Activity', 271-273.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 272.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 270.

of whom do not see this commitment to the reality of the state as a necessity. Yet, despite accepting the point that the state-as-person is to be located at the level of linguistic realism, in contrast to deeper levels of reality, the approach I wish to advance with the *constructed state-as-person* is neither a *mere* metaphor approach nor can it be charged with being an instrumentalist treatment of theoretical terms. This is an important move as it allows me to give metaphors their long overdue recognition in the discipline while also making suggestions towards overcoming problematic disciplinary divides.

The *constructed state-as-person* suggested in this thesis is both real and fictitious and both aspects are intertwined in important ways. There are two *sides* to the story to tell, but there is no point in separating them or even using them as the basis for disciplinary divides. It is actually not the case that there are two separate stories to tell, using, but arguing against, the phrase popularised by Martin Hollis and Steve Smith.¹³ Rather, the two stories, one story being an investigation of the real existing structures of IR (explaining) and one story looking at the linguistic elements relating to these structures (understanding), are closely intertwined.

As a starting point for locating the position that I take with the *constructed state-as-person*, it is worth highlighting what I understand the state-as-structure to be and to re-iterate what linguistic realism with regard to the state-as-person entails. I argue that the state is a structure and tie this understanding of structure to the position advanced by scientific realist scholars.¹⁴ In this sense, I take the side of Wendt and Wight. While scientific realist and critical realist scholars do not offer a uniform account of structure, certain common elements can be identified:

- a commitment to argue against a flat, individualistic ontology and tendencies of reductionism,
- a position that locates structure at deeper, not directly observable levels of social reality and argues that reality is stratified,

¹³ Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). For a discussion compare Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 72 and 88. For this argument also compare Margaret S. Archer, *Realist Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 149-150.

¹⁴ Given Wendt's detailed engagement with scientific realism in *Social Theory*, this, at first glance, seems like an endorsement of his position. However, this is not the case. First, the state is an agent in Wendt's framework. Second, and perhaps more importantly, his account of structure does not leave the plain of a flat ontology that scientific realist scholars wish to argue against. Compare footnote 16.

- a position that includes both ideational and material factors in any understanding of structure, and
- a determination to argue against the reduction of an investigation of the social world to the investigation of language.¹⁵

Most importantly, a structure, such as the state, exists independently of individual human beings and their awareness and conceptualisations of it. The structure is also not reducible to the actions of individual human beings. This opposes Wendt's position in later parts of *Social Theory* where he veers towards a more idealist conception of structure by arguing that "[s]ocial structures do not exist apart from their instantiation in practices."¹⁶ In contrast, following scientific realist scholars, I argue that parts of the state-as-structure are to be located at a deeper, non-observable level of social reality; it includes both ideational and material factors and is not exhausted by investigating the language associated with it or related language games.

Moving to the state-as-person, it is important to distinguish its linguistic realism from the deeper realism I attributed to the state-as-structure. As we have seen in Chapter 3, we can distinguish between three kinds of realism: empirical, linguistic, and critical realism. In their article "After Postpositivism?" Heikki Patomäki and Colin Wight introduce this distinction into IR debates and argue that both empirical and linguistic realism suffer from the problem of not getting at deeper levels of social reality. The key point of their contribution is the argument that reality is neither captured entirely by what can be perceived, as empirical realism would argue, nor by what can be spoken of, as linguistic realism would maintain. A social structure such as the state has an intransitive dimension that is neither directly observable nor entirely located in language. In other words, reality and the knowledge we have of it are not the same; the state and the concepts we have of the state are not the same. Yet, our social theories are language-

¹⁵ Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, Chapter 4. Patomäki and Wight, 'After Postpositivism? The Promises of Critical Realism'. Colin Wight and Jonathan Joseph, 'Scientific Realism and International Relations', in *Scientific Realism and International Relations*, ed. Jonathan Joseph and Colin Wight (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

¹⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 313. Another quotation is useful to put this into context as it provides a more balanced view to the strong statement that social structures only exist when instantiated in practice. Wendt argues that for example "[d]istributions of ideas are social structures. Some of these ideas are shared and some are not. I focused on the former, which make up the part of social structure known as culture ... [T]herefore, the shared ideas or culture of an anarchic system is its structure, although in reality there is more to its social structure than that." Ibid., 309.

born which means that “scientific activity relies on socially produced conceptual systems.”¹⁷ Similarly, the conceptions that agents have of the social world are language-born and their actions are influenced by these conceptions *and* those aspects of the structure that remain hidden by a particular concept. This has important consequences for social sciences and the position I take with the *constructed state-as-person* in response is that metaphors are a key element in mediating between these two dimensions.

As outlined in Chapter 3, following a scientific realist critique of Wendt’s approach regarding the state-as-person, I argued that the state-as-person can only be located at the level of linguistic realism. In other words, the state is not really a person. In the previous chapter, I identified elements of the state-as-structure – the principle of external sovereignty, territorial integrity and diplomatic representation – that allow us to *speak* of the state as a person.¹⁸ The metaphor of the state-as-person has been suggested as the result of this interplay between elements of the state-as-structure and linguistic devices (language games) commonly used in everyday person-oriented discourse. In other words, I showed that the state can be spoken of as a person and that the idea of the state-as-person emerges from this debate. It is this point that bridges the disciplinary divide with regard to the question of the intelligibility of the state and that stands as a barrier against the argument that the state-as-person is a *mere* metaphor or an instrumental theoretical device.

The last part of this section is devoted to making this move clearer by stressing three points. First, it is useful to issue a reminder regarding the difference between social and physical sciences. Social structures need to be distinguished from natural ones. With regard to the former, the conceptions that agents have of structures matter a great deal more. Second, while structures are never fully captured by only looking at the concepts held and actions undertaken by agents, social structures depend on agents for their production and reproduction. From the perspective of the *constructed state-as-person*, it is important to emphasise that shared ideas and concepts, many of which are metaphorical in nature, play a crucial role in the process of production and reproduction. In this sense, I argue that the idea of the state-as-person plays a crucial role in the (re-)production of the state-as-structure. Third, it is also important to acknowledge that not all

¹⁷ José López, 'Metaphors of Social Complexity', in *After Postmodernism. An Introduction to Critical Realism*, ed. José López and Gary Potter (London: Athlone Press, 2001), 91.

¹⁸ Though, it is important to stress that the state-as-structure is not fully captured by only these aspects.

social structures are the same. The state in IR is a special kind of social structure that, more than other social structures, depends on representation. This last point draws a connection back to Hobbes's perspective on the state as a fictitious person and his account of personification and representation outlined in Chapter 1 as well as the emphasis on processes of personation.¹⁹ It is these three points that I aim to clarify further in the following and that, taken together, allow me to make the case for a greater appreciation of the role of metaphors and against overstated disciplinary divides.

Illuminating these three points further, it is best to begin by stressing that a commitment to the existence of social structures does not provide an understanding of these structures.²⁰ The difference between the state and the state-as-person, between philosophical and scientific ontology, is important to acknowledge. One is a really existing social structure, the other a conceptualisation of it. It can reasonably be assumed that, given the non-observable, intransitive nature of social structures, there are better conceptualisations of the state-as-structure than those that we currently hold as scholars and practitioners.²¹ As we have seen in previous chapters, one of the key commitments of scientific realist scholars is to uncover understandings that get ever closer to the unobservable nature of social structures. Science, whether of the natural or social variety, is understood as the "progressive approximations to reality".²² Related to this process of approximation of our theories to the unobservables of the social world, is a second task specific to the social sciences that critical realists emphasise. From this perspective, social science also always has a "critical impulse" because agents might not be aware of the role that social structures play in shaping them and their actions, particularly as far as the intransitive dimension of social structures is concerned. It is the possibility of social science to shed light on these more hidden aspects of social structures that gives it, potentially, an "emancipatory role".²³ This second goal of social sciences clearly sets them apart from the physical sciences. At the same time, social sciences have the much harder task of navigating not

¹⁹ Compare Skinner, 'Hobbes and the Purely Artificial Person of the State'. And Runciman, 'What Kind of Person Is Hobbes's State? A Reply to Skinner'. With regard to processes of personation compare Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too'.

²⁰ López, 'Metaphors of Social Complexity', 89.

²¹ Note how intransitivity is a term introduced by scientific realists such as Colin Wight, Jonathan Joseph, Milja Kurki, and Heikki Patomäki into IR debates, drawing on the work of Roy Bhaskar. For a similar point regarding the problem of 'correct' representation compare Suganami, 'Wendt, IR, and Philosophy'.

²² Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 66.

²³ Wight and Joseph, 'Scientific Realism and International Relations', 16.

only the language-born nature of their own theories but also the language-born nature of the concepts that agents hold of social structures. However, it is important to stress that it is problematic to mark lay theories and those theories held by practitioners as simply an obstacle to be overcome, a block in the road towards discovering the intransitive nature of the social world. The concepts held by agents, although they only ever capture social structures partially and imperfectly, might still matter for the production and reproduction of social structures – a process that only happens through agents. I argue that even ‘wrong’ concepts can begin to matter when they form the basis for perceptions, judgements, and actions. By shaping actors’ perceptions, judgements and possibilities for action, actors’ conceptions of the structure shape in important ways how the structure is produced and reproduced. The concepts held by agents, regardless of how accurately they reflect the structure, matter.²⁴ However, this is not to say that any concept goes. The commitment to the state-as-structure implies a commitment to an ontological reality that resists certain interpretations.

As we have seen, this thesis emphasises that metaphors are especially relevant in the process of exploring intransitive truths. For the scientific and critical realist, metaphors usually play the role of bridging the gap between the scholar and the intransitive dimension of social structures. Richard Boyd was utilised to this end in Chapter 3.²⁵ As we saw in the same chapter, Wendt and Wight and Patomäki pay respect to the role of metaphors in limited ways. However, what emerges here and what needs to be strongly emphasised is a perspective on metaphors that locates them with agents and makes them relevant for the production and reproduction of structure. The process of structural mapping of metaphors, outlined in Chapter 3 and brought to bear on the state in the previous chapter becomes important here. The structural mapping of the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person* illustrates what aspects of the state-as-structure are drawn upon for the metaphor to do useful work and for person-oriented language games to be applied to the state. It is these aspects of the structure that facilitate the state-as-person perspective. At the same time, this process also points to the elements of the state-as-

²⁴ Note how this is in line with the critique of Wendt’s approach offered in Chapter 2. In *Social Theory* Wendt argues that our current concepts of states, having the state-as-person in mind in particular, mean that we must have gotten something right in the past. Otherwise, the concept would have been rejected a long time ago. I follow upon Hidemi Suganami’s critique to suggest that the fact that a concept is still prominent does not allow us to draw any conclusions regarding its accuracy in getting at deeper structures of social reality. Suganami, 'Wendt, IR, and Philosophy'.

²⁵ Boyd, 'Metaphor and Theory Change: What Is "Metaphor" a Metaphor For?'

structure that are not drawn upon for the state-as-person metaphor and that, hence, resist such an interpretation.

This is not the space to offer a theory of the production and reproduction of social structure based on agents' concept. However, it is worth pointing out that within critical realist scholarship Margaret Archer's morphogenetic approach offers a useful theoretical perspective. She suggests a way of theorising the interplay between agents and structures that avoids reducing one to the other, that locates causal powers in both agents and structures, and that allows us to focus on the production and reproduction of structure in a temporal fashion. While structure is not reducible to agents, their actions, or concepts, structures depend on agents for their production and reproduction. At the same time, agents are always located in and shaped by existing structures that have been produced by past agents. Archer points out that her account calls for analytical dualism which means that we need to acknowledge that agents and structures are not two sides of the same coin but radically different.²⁶ At first this seems to be very close to Hollis and Smith's position, mentioned earlier, that maintains that there are always two stories to tell. It also seems to give support to the scholarly legitimacy of the rift in the state-as-person debate. However, Archer also argues that in addition to analytical dualism the social scientist also needs to put the interplay between agents and structures into sharper focus.²⁷ To this end she suggests her morphogenetic/morphostatic approach. It is precisely this point at which possibilities for change can be located. Society is an open system that is "peopled". Archer points out that this means that it "can always be re-shaped through human innovativeness".²⁸ However, this does not take place in vacuum and of course not all interpretations or innovations are supported by social reality. Hence, action results from both, the situations people find themselves in (structure) and people's reasoning about these situations.²⁹

It needs to be stressed that only certain parts of the state-as-structure are illuminated and "active" in the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person*. The approach of structural

²⁶ Archer specifically comments on Roy Bhaskar's Transformational Model of Social Activity (TSMA) Archer, *Realist Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach*, 151.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 152.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 208-209.

mapping of the metaphor allows us to pinpoint these parts. This means that we know what elements of the structure are drawn upon when the state-as-person metaphor guides actions. It also highlights what aspects of the structure can potentially be changed through changes in this particular metaphor. And conversely, it highlights what aspects of the structure remain untouched but might still influence actions. Hence, this is not to deny the importance of social science in illuminating the intransitive dimension of social structures – those aspects that are not expressed in concepts and practices. At the same time, this aspect of the metaphorical mapping process is also a defence against the charge of instrumentalism. It is clear that the state-as-person does not exist. It is a concept that connects with the state-as-structure in certain points and these points of contact bridge the gap between the realm of intransitive ontological existence and concepts at the level of linguistic realism. It is in these points of contact between the social structure and the concepts of the structure that action emerges and production and reproduction of the structure takes place. This is not to say that structures only influence action when they are “reflected” in concepts. This is also not to deny that structures are reproduced without being reflected conceptually. However, I argue that the interplay between concepts and structure is especially important for the state in IR because the state is a kind of social structure that depends on representation more than other social structures such as modes of production or, to use a very different example, gender. Hence, I argue that even more than other social structures, the state is dependent on the concepts used by agents. That is why state-as-person ideas deserve serious attention. In the case of the state in IR, agents not only produce and reproduce structure. Rather, in those cases in which the state is seen from the outside, agents, in certain positions, are also asked to represent the structure. While the structure resists certain representations, I suggest that there is considerable leeway for agents’ representations to take on a variety of forms. This brings me back to a quotation taken from Ringmar that stands at the beginning of Chapter 1 and that is worth repeating here.

Although the state can be described in many different ways, when viewed from the outside – as one entity among others in world politics – it is almost invariably talked about in anthropomorphic terms. It is

seen as an 'actor' or 'a person'; it is 'someone' or a 'subject' to whom intentions, memories, rights and obligations are attached.³⁰

However, we also need to acknowledge that conceptual changes might occur that are resisted by structures and do not have structural consequences. Archer uses feminism as an example of conceptual changes that did not lead to comparable structural changes.³¹ In other words, we might think of the state in any way we want, but not every conceptualisation will stick. The key difference here, I argue, is that the state in IR is a structure that depends on representation, because of that it is more amenable to conceptual changes, while still being able to resist certain concepts. In this sense, the *constructed state-as-person* is a call for a thorough investigation into the concepts held by those agents that are of key importance for the production and reproduction of the state-as-structure.

The points developed so far can now be drawn together to identify the *constructed state-as-person* with a specific position in the agent-structure debate. I outlined how locating agency with individual human beings can be squared with talk of the state-as-person and how this talk connects with the state-as-structure in important ways. I showed how treating the state-as-person does not necessarily degrade human agency and how the state-as-person can be combined with a position in the agent-structure debate that locates agency with individual human beings, acting alone or in groups, and is committed to treating the state as a social structure.

The focus is on the *interplay* between agents and structures. It is this process that the *constructed state-as-person* is getting at and that is crucial to understanding IR. Focusing on the interplay between the two means to reject a disciplinary divide between Erklären and Verstehen à la Hollis and Smith and the disciplinary divide identified at the core of the state-as-person debate.

Similarly, the account developed in the form of the *constructed state-as-person* transcends the philosophical wagers and resulting positions regarding how to do science introduced to IR debates by Jackson in his *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations*. As we have seen in

³⁰ Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State', 443.

³¹ Archer, *Realist Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach*, 146.

Chapter 3, Jackson combines two philosophical wagers into a two-by-two table, resulting in four possible positions. One wager entails a decision about subscribing to either a mind-world monist position or a mind-world dualist one. The other wager entails a decision on the question of whether or not things beyond our direct experience can be known. Resulting from this is the following two-by-two table.³²

		Relationship between knowledge and observation	
		phenomenalism	transfactualism
Relationship between the knower and the known	mind-world dualism	neopositivism	critical realism
	mind-world monism	analyticism	reflexivity

In Chapter 3, I used these four positions to highlight the different roles metaphors play as part of each. Here, rather than offering a critique of Jackson, I argue that some research projects need to oscillate between positions. With the *constructed state-as-person* I make a commitment to the existence of the state-as-structure. I argue, following scientific realist commitments, that the state-as-structure exists independent of it being known, conceptualised or instantiated in practice. This puts me firmly in the upper right corner. However, I also argue that, in contrast to the state-as-structure, the state-as-person is to be located at the level of linguistic realism. This puts me in one of the two bottom categories. I argue that both aspects need to be taken seriously and can be studied on their own – as the dividing line in the state-as-person debate illustrates. However, the *constructed state-as-person* calls for taking both of them into view at the same time. By referring back to structural mapping outlined in Chapter 3, I have aimed to show how the concept of the state-as-person connects with the state-as-structure in important ways. It is this connection that allows for person-oriented discourse of states to take place. At the same time, by pointing to the role of agents in producing and reproducing social structures, the concept does more than highlighting certain aspects of the state-as-structure. It becomes

³² Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 37.

constitutive of it. If we are interested in processes of structural change of the state as well as the international system, the interplay between the two becomes of utmost importance and we need to transcend Jackson's categories in our research if we are to understand these processes of change.

Lastly, taking this suggestion on board, one might wonder about the emancipatory commitment of scientific realist scholarship in light of the account of the *constructed state-as-person*. The *constructed state-as-person* itself does not represent an investigation into those aspects of the structure that escape conceptual "representation" and belong to the intransitive realm of the social. However, an investigation into the intransitive dimension of social structures, critical realist scholars argue, is precisely where the emancipatory potential of the social sciences is to be located. While the *constructed state-as-person* cannot fulfil this ideal, I argue that it, nevertheless, does more than confirming the status quo. First, as already mentioned, by engaging in structural mapping of the metaphor, we are able to highlight the metaphor's blind spots. Second, and most importantly, potential for change is located within metaphor change. Parts of Chapters 4 and 5 have made suggestions towards an alternative conception of the person. This alternative conception of the person questions materialistic and individualistic accounts and opens up potential for reframing what it means to be a person by looking at the construction of selves and emotions. Based on the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person*, this can have consequences for how the relations between states are conceived. This aligns the *constructed state-as-person* with Wendt's *Social Theory* project in some ways. Patomäki, for example, argues that "Wendt's point is to replace the capitalist conception of man with a socio-psychological conception."³³ Similarly, the *constructed state-as-person* is to be understood as the attempt to question taken for granted assumptions about the formation of self and the role of emotions and to offer an avenue towards alternative conceptions of the person and the state-as-person. This is where an emancipatory potential, though not in the stricter sense employed by scientific realist scholars, is to be located.

³³ Patomäki, *After International Relations. Critical Realism and the (Re)Construction of World Politics*, 87. However, at the same time he criticises this aspect of Wendt's work for not transcending what he calls the "international problematic". In other words, Wendt does not go far enough. Compare also Marjo Koivisto, 'State Theory in International Relations: Why Realism Matters', in *Scientific Realism and International Relations*, ed. Jonathan Joseph and Colin Wight (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 78.

To summarise, what I have outlined here offers an important corrective and clarification regarding the role of metaphors and the interplay between structures and agents. It should now be clear that the dichotomy that Wendt opens up between a *mere* metaphor approach on the one hand and an investigation into the ontological reality of the state and state-as-person on the other represents an unhelpful dividing line. If we are serious about disciplinary progress, both need to be taken into view at the same time and it is their interplay that deserves attention. Further, while Wendt and Wight's warning against an instrumentalist treatment of theoretical terms is a crucial point in the debate, the problem of instrumentalism, understood as treating theoretical terms as if they existed, does not arise for the *constructed state-as-person*. By distinguishing between the deeper ontological reality of the state-as-structure on the one hand and the linguistic realism of the state-as-person on the other, it is acknowledged that the state-as-person highlights only certain aspects of the state-as-structure. However, it is also argued that the state-as-person should be part of IR theories not because it offers a useful *as-if* treatment of the state-as-structure in IR, but because it guides actors' perceptions, judgements, and actions and therefore acquires constitutive status for the state-as-structure. To what extent state-as-person ideas play such a role is an empirical question. In other words, as long as we can show that the state-as-person has relevance for shaping actors' understandings, judgements, and actions and hence, plays potentially a role in the reproduction of the structure, the discipline needs to engage the state-as-person and disciplinary progress can indeed be made in this area. The process of metaphor-mapping illustrates how elements of person-oriented discourse can be utilised in order to make sense of the state and what elements of the state-as-structure are drawn upon as part of this process. The account I give in the form of the *constructed state-as-person*, therefore, gives structure its due, acknowledging both its material and ideational elements. In this sense, it is not as ideational as Wendt's account presented in later parts of *Social Theory* where he tends to reduce structures to shared ideas. At the same time, as arguments presented in Chapter 5 illustrate, the conception of the person utilised for the *constructed state-as-person* is more "ideas all the way down" than Wendt's rump materialism would allow for. In this sense, I am also being a more radical constructivist than Wendt.³⁴

³⁴ For locating Wendt's position compare Jorge Rivas, 'Realism. For Real This Time: Scientific Realism Is Not a

The observations of this section aim to clarify my “middle position” in the debate regarding the intelligibility of the state and the specific position within the agent-structure debate that results from this. Based on this, suggestions for the study of IR can be made. A research programme that is interested in working with the idea of the *constructed state-as-person* needs to study three things: aspects of the state-as-structure, the concepts of persons, including socially shared ideas about the self and emotions, and the interplay between the two that is conceptualised via metaphor structure-mapping. Further, if the specific interest lies with studying possibilities for change, as it is the case with Wendt’s systemic project, the structure of the international system also needs to be put into greater focus as an element that makes certain interpretations possible while acting as a barrier to others. The following section will pay particular attention to this.

Compromise between Positivism and Interpretivism', in *Scientific Realism and International Relations*, ed. Jonathan Joseph and Colin Wight (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 212.

Rethinking systemic interactions and systemic change

Wendt, from his particular position in the agent-structure debate, argues that “it is only through the interaction of *state agents* that the structure of the international system is produced, reproduced, and sometimes transformed.”³⁵ As outlined in greater detail in the previous section, I take a fundamentally different perspective. In the account given with the *constructed state-as-person*, the state is a structure and agency is located firmly with individual human beings. It is important to remember that the state only ever becomes what I call a *second-order person* in the framework presented here. The state depends on individual human beings acting, alone or in groups, on its behalf. This point has important implications for how systemic interactions are accounted for and how process is theorised. I share the ideal of what Wendt’s Kantian culture of anarchy in which relations among states are characterised by friendship, understood as other-help. However, building on the *constructed state-as-person*, the possibilities for the realisation of a Kantian culture are conceptualised in fundamentally different ways. This section aims to clarify this position further and highlighting its consequences for studying the relations between states and the potential for transformation of these relations.

When dealing with process, Wendt describes a symbolic interactionist model of the interactions between states whereby “[o]n the basis of their representations of Self and Other, Alter and Ego each construct a ‘definition of the situation’.”³⁶ A process of acting and reacting based on self-concepts and an interpretation of the other’s actions is seen as leading to a *shared definition of the situation* which includes alter-casting the other and role taking on both sides. Wendt uses the thought experiment of a First Encounter, a situation of a hypothetical “world without shared ideas”, to illustrate how assumptions about self and other lead to specific interpretations of actions, reactions, and ultimately to the formation of a certain conception of self and other and thereby a certain systemic culture.³⁷ Wendt argues that “the basic idea is that identities and their corresponding interests are learned and then reinforced in response to how actors are

³⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 366, emphasis added.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 329.

³⁷ For an overview of this thought experiment – that Wendt elaborates on as part of the idea that social learning is one of the key mechanisms for “cultural selection” and hence the formation of international systemic features – see *ibid.*, 324-335. For the term “world without shared ideas” compare *ibid.*, 328.

treated by significant Others.”³⁸ This allows Wendt to argue that, for example, self-interest is neither intrinsic to states, nor an inevitable outcome of an anarchic state system. Rather, it is constituted relationally on the basis of a symbolic interactionist exchange.³⁹

One important difference between Wendt’s account and the position taken in this thesis needs to be highlighted from the outset. From the perspective of the *constructed-state-as-person* it can only ever be human beings that are developing assumptions about the self and other of states, interpreting actions and reactions of states, and therefore contributing to the formation of a systemic culture. With regard to the *constructed state-as-person* being based on a conceptual metaphor, it can only ever be individuals, acting alone or in groups, who are doing the acting and thinking. Alter and Ego need to be imagined by individual human beings. From this perspective, Wendt’s First Encounter and the consequent systemic features are not the result of states interacting, but rather the result of the narratives told about states and on their own or in interaction, the meaning this interaction is given through these narratives, and the actions these narratives inspire in individual human beings and groups acting on behalf of the *second-order person* of the state. Crucially, this means that the three cultures of anarchy are “produced, reproduced, and sometimes transformed” through the *stories told about states and stories acted upon* under systemic constraints.⁴⁰

This insistence on locating agency with individual human beings, acting alone or in groups, has the important consequence that culturally specific narratives about self and other are then also the location of possibilities for change of a state systemic culture. This is why I conclude that Wendt’s famous phrase, “anarchy is what states make of it”, needs to be adapted to say “anarchy is what *we* make of it.”⁴¹

However, it is important to note that this point does not mark this approach as a methodological individualist one. The “we” in my rephrasing of Wendt’s catch-phrase does not mean to imply that IR is reducible to individual human beings. First, persons are conceptualised

³⁸ Ibid., 327.

³⁹ Ibid., 322.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 366.

⁴¹ Compare Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics'.

as fundamentally social, in truly holistic fashion.⁴² The concepts of self and emotions as well as of friend and enemy are seen as being constituted discursively and do not exist outside of discourse. Self and emotions cannot be reduced to the properties of individuals. Secondly, the account of the state-as-structure elaborated on in the first section of this chapter works as a defence against ontological and methodological individualism. Understanding the state as a structure in scientific realist terms makes it irreducible to individual human beings and their conceptions. Yet, as elaborated in the previous section, these conceptions matter especially in the crucial moments of production and reproduction of the state-as-structure.

From this perspective two points of critique emerge with regard to Wendt's First Encounter, his hypothetical assumption of "a world without shared ideas".⁴³ Although this is a hypothetical situation without shared ideas, in Wendt's account each state actor already comes with two kinds of "baggage" to the encounter.⁴⁴ On the one hand, Wendt's state actors have material characteristics and needs and, on the other hand, they hold representations in the "form of some a priori ideas about who they are".⁴⁵ In contrast, based on Harré's constructionist psychology, I argue that an idea of who "I am" does not exist prior to interaction and social learning. In other words, social structure precedes the agents. However, most importantly, in my account the *second-order person* of the state comes with a significant "baggage" of another kind. This baggage consists of shared ideas that, in contrast to Wendt's account, are to be located within the cultures and societies of those agents whose narratives bring about the *constructed state-as-person*.

Having highlighted these fundamental differences between Wendt's approach and the one suggested here, there are two additional moves that this section needs to make. First, by looking at processes of change of the state systemic culture and by contrasting Wendt's approach and the *constructed state-as-person* approach proposed in this thesis, it becomes clearer how culturally specific ideas held by agents become relevant for systemic interactions. Most importantly, by looking at Wendt's suggestions regarding a possible transformation from a Lockean international culture, our current system, to a Kantian culture of other-help, I can

⁴² For a discussion of holism and the conception of the person in IR and in relation to Wendt compare Hidemi Suganami, 'On Wendt's Philosophy: A Critique', *Review of International Studies* 28, 1 (2002), 35-36.

⁴³ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 328.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

illustrate how the same transformation potentially looks like from the perspective of the *constructed state-as-person*. Second, in light of these observations, further implications for the study of IR are outlined. While studying the conceptions held by agents is not sufficient on its own, I will make a strong case for their relevance and the need to acknowledge the impact that ‘domestic’ culture has on the *second-order person* of the state in IR.⁴⁶

With regard to processes of change, Wendt argues that “[s]tructural change occurs when actors redefine who they are and what they want.”⁴⁷ This redefinition can lead, through symbolic interactions, to changes in the shared beliefs about who Ego and Alter are and the rules of their relationship.⁴⁸ In other words, their collective identity changes and this, ultimately, can change the structure of the international system.⁴⁹ Four constraints on this constructivist account are mentioned by Wendt. First, the redefinition of identities and interests has to be shared to have structural effects.⁵⁰ Second, power plays a role in the sense that ideas held by more powerful states have greater impact.⁵¹ Third, the international systemic culture enables and constrains certain redefinitions.⁵² And fourth, international systemic culture only becomes unstable and amenable to change when enough important actors change their conceptions and their behaviour accordingly so that a tipping point is crossed.⁵³

Keeping these four points in mind, we can look at how Wendt describes the process of change from a Lockean to a Kantian culture. A Lockean international culture is characterised by rivalry.

⁴⁶ I use the term “domestic” with great caution here. It is used to highlight the difference between international culture and the culture that is most relevant for structuring people’s concept of self and emotions. It also follows general IR terminology and established distinctions. Yet, I do not wish to imply that cultures neatly conform to state borders. Depending on the case at hand, it might be very difficult to assign one specific culture to a state or even identify a dominant culture within a given state. Similarly, one culture might be shared across states. Ultimately, this is an empirical question.

⁴⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 336-337. This constructivist position is put in contrast to what Wendt calls a rationalist position described as the assumption that identities and interests are exogenously given and that change occurs based on changes in expected utility functions.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 335.

⁴⁹ Wendt distinguishes between collective identity change and structural change. He argues that “the main point I want to make here is that because the structure of any internalised culture is associated with a collective identity, a change in that structure will involve a change in collective identity, involving the breakdown of an old identity and the emergence of a new. Identity change and structural change are not equivalent, since identity formation happens ultimately at the micro-level and structural change happens ultimately at the macro, but the latter supervenes on the former.” *Ibid.*, 338.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 335.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 331.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 339.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 340.

States cast each other in the role of rival which means that, while there is no guarantee for the absence of conflict or even the absence of violence, there are international rules and institutions which pose limits to conflict and violence.⁵⁴ States “expect each other to act as if they recognize their sovereignty, their ‘life and liberty,’ as a right, and therefore not to try to conquer or dominate them”.⁵⁵ In contrast, a Kantian culture is characterised by friendship understood as other-help. States engage in pro-social behaviour, “treating others as if one not only respected their individual security concerns but also ‘cared’ for them, a willingness to help them even when this serves no narrowly self-interested purpose”.⁵⁶ In this sense, a Kantian culture goes beyond a Lockean one as the conception of self includes a regard for others that is not instrumentally related to concerns for the self.⁵⁷ Two points are worth noting. First, as part of a Lockean culture, states engage in pro-social behaviour but out of egoistic concerns. Yet, Wendt argues that this, over time, might help create identities that include a regard for the other that is non-instrumental.⁵⁸ In other words, treating the other instrumentally as a friend might lead to actual friendship over time. Second, Wendt identifies four master variables that facilitate the transition towards a Kantian culture because they “undermine egoistic identities and help create collective ones”.⁵⁹ The master variables are interdependence, common fate, homogeneity, and self-restraint. It is important to note that the first three, called efficient causes by Wendt, are systemic factors and the fourth master variable concerns state behaviour. Together, they support the formation of Kantian international culture. The more of them are present, the more likely a Kantian international culture becomes. However, Wendt also points out that “all that is necessary for [structural change towards a Kantian culture] to occur is one efficient cause combined with self-restraint.”⁶⁰ Hence, we can point out that the shift towards an identity of other-help which is central to bringing about a Kantian international culture has basically two sources in Wendt’s account. First, repeated pro-social behaviour or behaviour that

⁵⁴ Ibid., 280-282.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 279.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 341.

⁵⁷ However, it is important to note that Wendt argues that when a Lockean international culture is strongly internalised, the sense of self already includes a sense the group of states that the self is a member of. In this sense, a Lockean international culture paves the way for a Kantian one – albeit only in “the passive sense of self-restraint”. Ibid., 293. Yet, a Kantian culture in Wendt’s sense has to go beyond self-restraint and an instrumentally treatment of the other as a friend. Compare *ibid.*, 305.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 342.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 343.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 343-344.

facilitates pro-social attitudes leads to Kantian identities. Second, facilitation via systemic characteristics, namely interdependence, common fate and homogeneity, is also important. These conditions can be seen to nudge a state towards Kantian identities and ultimately can bring about a Kantian international culture.

My main point of contention here is that after the First Encounter, ideas seem to play little or no role in bringing about systemic change. Further, the international culture of friendship that Wendt describes, pointing out his alignment with neofunctionalist scholars such as Karl Deutsch and Ernst Haas, is based on a very thin conception of friendship, based more on instrumental behaviour and systemic factors than an agreement about corresponding values and ideas of friendship.⁶¹ As pointed out earlier, Wendt emphasises that identity change and structural change are closely intertwined. However, how identities are re-conceptualised as part of this process of moving towards a Kantian culture remains unclear. Most importantly, in Wendt's account, it remains unclear how, after a push towards more Kantian behaviour, *ideas* of friendship come about.

With the *constructed state-as-person*, I am able to point to the "domestic" source of the ideas that accompany structural change at the international level.⁶² This has two consequences. On the one hand, I argue that while instrumental friendship might arise based on systemic "nudging", an internalisation of corresponding norms can only go hand in hand in with a negotiation between various culturally specific concepts. On the other hand, I am also able to question the general applicability of Wendt's master variables. In the previous chapter, I showed how friendship and enmity can only be understood within a specific cultural context. I also criticised Wendt for presenting friendship, at least when it refers to deeper levels of internalisation and goes beyond an instrumental treatment, as a neutral concept. I was able to question the assumption that likeness, Wendt's heterogeneity master variable, breeds friendship. Depending on the specific conceptualisation of friendship, likeness might not

⁶¹ For Wendt's reference to these scholars compare *ibid.*, 343.

⁶² Wendt speculates about such a 'domestic' source only with regard to his fourth master variable when he argues that democratic states might be more inclined to show self-restraint. He argues that "[f]or reasons of cognitive consistency, habit, and/ or societal pressure, and if the international environment permits, states will tend to externalise or transpose domestic ways of doing things – resolving conflict, organising economic relationships, observing the rule of law, and so on – in their foreign policy behavior." *Ibid.*, 361. In the introduction to *Social Theory* he explicitly states that domestic factors also influence state identities heavily but adds that this aspect is not the focus of the book. *Ibid.*, 11.

necessarily play a role. While many historic examples seem to suggest that the recognition of likeness in some respects has played an important role in the transformation towards peaceful relations between states, this does not rule out the assumption that friendship might be possible in the face of heterogeneity.⁶³

The argument presented so far can be illustrated by drawing on Democratic Peace Theory as a point of comparison. Wendt's theory of systemic change is in line with and builds on Democratic Peace Theory and Kant's arguments regarding the establishment of perpetual peace. Discussing his four master variables, Wendt makes this explicit and argues that "much of Kant's reasoning about why republicanism would lead to 'perpetual peace' is replicated, but he leaves the social theory underlying his argument implicit."⁶⁴

Wendt agrees that, given their internal structure of decision-making, democratic states are more likely to show self-restraint.⁶⁵ First, it is worth noting though that Kant's *Perpetual Peace* is not built on friendship among states in the sense that Wendt employs the term and does not require them to be "friends", understood as a concern for the other being part of a definition of the self. For Kant peace follows from the logic of Republican government. In the first definitive article of *Toward Perpetual Peace* he argues that

[t]he republican constitution also offers the prospect of the desired consequences, namely, perpetual peace ... if the agreement of the citizens is required to decide whether or not one ought to wage war, then noting is more natural than they would consider very carefully whether to enter such a terrible game, since they would have to resolve to bring the hardship of war upon themselves.⁶⁶

Second, Democratic Peace Theory builds on a wealth of empirical evidence that shows that democratic states are less likely to fight each other.⁶⁷ However, both Democratic Peace Theory

⁶³ The argument that likeness is important for peaceful relations can for example be found in Bruce M. Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 8.

⁶⁴ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 343.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 344 and 364.

⁶⁶ Immanuel Kant, 'Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch', in *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, ed. Pauline Kleingeld (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006 [1795]), 75.

⁶⁷ Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World*. Obviously, much depends on the definition and operationalisation of the key terms, democracy and war. Also, it is important to stress that

and Kant's argument amount to what can be called a negative peace, understood as the absence of war. Identification with the other in Wendt's sense of friendship among states is not required. By introducing the importance of identity and interest formation and symbolic interactions, Wendt provides a sophisticated social theory account of systemic interactions. However, while Wendt can point to symbolic interactions as the source of an international culture, he can explain cultural change towards a Kantian culture only through systemic "nudging" and self-restraint. Neither Democratic Peace Theory nor Kant's perpetual peace is interested in this kind of transformation towards non-instrumental friendship and a system of other-help. However, Wendt's account with its social theory underpinnings needs to be. I argue that the look towards culturally specific notions of self and emotions is indispensable to understand non-instrumental friendship and other-help. Indeed, the normative interpretation of Democratic Peace Theory does just that. The argument here is that shared values and a commitment to norms of peaceful conflict resolution explain the absence of war between democracies.⁶⁸ However, because agency is located with states in Wendt's account, he cannot take this point further. In this context, a look towards culturally specific notions of self and emotions is crucial for three reasons: pin-pointing potential sources of conflict and misunderstanding, locating specific needs such as the need for recognition and taking these needs into account, and building upon these notions to work towards a Kantian international culture.

In conclusion, it is important to note that the account of the *constructed state-as-person* does not challenge Wendt's basic premises, symbolic interactions, and his four constraints on systemic change as outlined. The big difference is, of course, the location of agency. However, based on the idea of the state-as-person as a metaphor and *second-order person*, the basic logic remains in place. Whether Wendt's four master variables – in other words systemic factors and one characteristic of his state actors – or indeed culturally specific ideas of self and emotion matter more for bringing about systemic change is an empirical question that cannot be answered in the abstract. However, with regard to systemic changes, as we have already seen, I

the empirical evidence, within the limits of the studies undertaken, unmitakably points to the fact that democracies do not fight each other. Yet, they cannot be regarded as generally more peaceful in their relations with other states.

⁶⁸ Miriam F. Elman, 'The Need for a Qualitative Test of Democratic Peace Theory', in *Paths to Peace: Is Democracy the Answer?*, ed. Miriam F. Elman (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1997), 11-12.

argue that cultural specific conceptions of self and emotions play a crucial role when it comes to state actors' identities. Wendt describes incentives to move from a Lockean culture to a Kantian one. But he does not give a source for changed conceptions that would transform rival identities to friend identities. Is it enough to have self-restraint and encounter an international structure that is conducive of the formation of collective identities? I argue that is it not and leads, at best, to a negative peace. While helpful in understanding democratic peace, we are still missing an important dimension of the potential of international structural transformation.

For the study of IR and its transformation, this calls for a focus on three aspects: the structure of the state systems, the culturally specific ideas about self and emotions, and their potential interplay. The first aspect pays respect to Wendt's master variables while the third aspect pays tribute to Wendt's four constraints on systemic change. However, I argue that, in addition, understanding the concepts that form the basis of narratives about the *constructed state-as-person* is crucial. The next two sections will explore this point further by looking specifically at the potential role of emotions and concepts of self in bringing about systemic change.

Bringing emotions in to understand “irrational” behaviour and the potential for systemic change

In this section I argue that culturally specific concepts of emotions play an important role as potential sources for international systemic change because they point to perceptions and behaviour that seem “irrational” from the perspective of the international system. This opens up an avenue to act in discord with systemic rules and if such behaviour reaches a certain tipping point, international systemic cultures can change.

In the previous section, I argued that states enter what Wendt, in a thought experiment presented in *Social Theory*, calls the First Encounter with a certain “baggage”. In contrast to Wendt, the baggage suggested in connection with the *constructed state-as-person* takes the form of established conceptions about self and emotions that are to be located in the context of “domestic” cultures. Hence, I argue that studying culturally specific notions of what it means to be a person and the paradigm scenarios associated with emotion-concepts is of relevance for understanding the relations between states. In Chapter 6, I highlighted the added value of “bringing emotions in”. In this section, having outlined my specific position in the agent-structure debate and my alternative account of processes of systemic change above, I focus on the potential role played by emotions in the context of the *constructed state-as-person* and systemic change.

As we have seen, this thesis aligns itself with the so-called emotional turn in the discipline. In this sense, one contribution of the *constructed state-as-person* is an added focus on emotions and a more explicit theorisation of the role of emotions in shaping social encounters and judgements of appropriateness. In this sense, Wendt’s focus on identity and interests is taken further by adding an explicit account of emotions. By locating emotions thoroughly and almost exclusively in the social realm, as it is done in this thesis by drawing on constructionist psychology, it is argued that emotions are based on shared ideas and are culturally specific. Emotions are learned on the basis of paradigm scenarios and can be refined over time.⁶⁹ Some cultures repress some emotions while cultivating others. Therefore, there is a culturally specific

⁶⁹ Sousa, *The Rationality of Emotion*, 184.

repertoire of emotions and related appropriate behaviour.⁷⁰ For example, as we have seen in Chapter 5, using anger to re-address the terms of a relationship is common practice in Western cultures while considered inappropriate in others.⁷¹ With the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person*, I suggest an avenue to explain how emotions become relevant for the state in IR. In the previous chapter, I have shown how this demarcates my account from Wendt's remarks regarding state emotions and avoids certain aspects, such as the question of the location of the *experience* of the emotion, that have been identified as problematic in his work. I have also brought my suggestions regarding the role of emotions into debate with a number of IR scholars, including Arnold Wolfers, Richard Ned Lebow, Janice Stein, and Todd H. Hall. Most importantly, the account of the *constructed state-as-person* allows me to reject individualism on the one hand and, on the other, the notion of the state-as-group and related attempts of making social psychology applicable to understanding the relations between states. It also allows me to question the strict dividing line between rationality on the one hand and emotions on the other. Based on these observations and my position in the agent structure-debate introduced in the previous two sections, I am now able to add an account of "irrational" perceptions and behaviour and, resulting from that, highlight potential for systemic change.

One of the key driving forces of the emotional turn in the discipline of IR is to question and overcome the separation between rationality on the one hand and emotions on the other.⁷² This point can be found in Jonathan Mercer's work, for example, who argues that an explicit acknowledgement of emotions leads to better explanations.⁷³ It is important to note that rationality and "irrationality" are context-specific labels that always carry normative weight and are always used from a certain perspective. To speak about rationality as such is unhelpful, yet it is easy to slip into this kind of talk.⁷⁴ However, more precisely, it is the rational actor assumption

⁷⁰ Harré, *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, 101.

⁷¹ Averill, *Anger and Aggression: An Essay on Emotion*. Averill, 'The Acquisition of Emotions During Adulthood'.

⁷² Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', 119.

⁷³ Mercer, 'Rationality and Psychology in International Politics'. Compare also Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships'.

⁷⁴ Robert O. Keohane for example can be found arguing that "much of my own work has deliberately adopted Realist assumptions of egoism, as well as rationality." Robert O. Keohane, 'Empathy and International Regimes', in *Beyond Self-Interest*, ed. Jane J. Mansbridge (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 227. As quoted in Crawford, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', 117, fn 4.

that scholars of the emotional turn take issue with.⁷⁵ It holds that actors engage in purposive action, have consistent preferences, and are utility maximisers.⁷⁶ The important work of scholars of the emotional turn is to point to alternative sources of decision-making and behaviour.

What I would like to add here is another perspective on the understanding of the debate between rationality and emotions. I maintain that acting rationally can only be understood when it is put in the context of certain structural conditions, including expressed norms and rules that define what is rational. The three cultures of anarchy outlined by Wendt are well suited to illustrate this point. What seems like rational behaviour in a Lockean or Kantian international system is “irrational” in a Hobbesian culture. It is the system and its rules that determine what is deemed rational. Therefore, “irrational” behaviour describes actions that are in discord with systemic constraints. We have seen that such “irrational” behaviour is entirely possible, though it will incur a punishment or disadvantage. Wendt, for example, points out that in a Lockean international culture, characterised by the rule of law, “irrational” behaviour is possible because the deviation does not have serious consequences. In contrast, “irrational” behaviour in a Hobbesian world is a question of survival and can be fatal.⁷⁷ If “irrational” behavior is indeed possible in a Lockean system, exploring the reasons and sources for such behavior becomes important. IR scholarship that is wedded to the rational actor assumption will typically point to misperceptions, incomplete information, or the cognitive limits of reasoning. In contrast, scholars of the emotional turn point to alternatives. The alternative source for “irrationality” of the *constructed state-as-person* is to be found in the culturally specific emotions and associated paradigm scenarios. This is where the “baggage” of the domestic culture that is brought to symbolic interactionist encounters becomes crucial. Because the state is only ever a *second-order person* that depends on being sustained by narratives that draw on the conventions of person-oriented discourses, perceptions, and reasoning have two sources:

⁷⁵ Neta Crawford for example points out that “[e]motion virtually dropped from the radar screen of international relations theorists in the mid-twentieth century when the rational actor paradigm became dominant.” Crawford, ‘The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships’, 122.

⁷⁶ These three points make up the rationality assumptions of Rational Choice Theory. Compare Paul K. MacDonald, ‘Useful Fiction of Miracle Maker: The Competing Epistemological Foundations of Rational Choice Theory’, *The American Political Science Review* 97, 4 (2003), 552.

⁷⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 323.

the international system and its culture on the one hand, and “domestic” culture on the other. To which side the balance tilts is an empirical question. However, since a Lockean culture allows deviation from systemic constraints without suffering severe punishment, perceptions and behaviour that are “irrational” from the perspective of the state system have a greater chance of being relevant for the *constructed state-as-person*.

Building on this, the suggestion for IR scholarship is clear. Studying culturally specific notions of self and emotions is indispensable for understanding the kind of state behaviour that is most interesting – behaviour that seems “irrational” and behaviour that ultimately might be a source of systemic change. However, in contrast to those scholars who either focus on individual decisions-makers or use aspects of social identity theory in connection with the state-as-group hypothesis, the suggestion here is to study the notion of self and emotions as they are typically held in a specific culture. Based on Wittgenstinian commitments and Harré’s constructionist psychology, this entails studying the expressions of emotions on the linguistic level and the kinds of paradigm scenarios that are fundamental to specific emotion concepts. These provide alternative sources of reasoning to the rationality of the international system by providing a different set of self-definitions and preferences.

Processes of radical change: re-thinking persons, re-thinking states

In this final section, I would like to make a more radical point regarding the idea of the *constructed state-as-person*. As we have seen, I differ fundamentally from Wendt in that I argue that it is not “anarchy is what states make of it” but “anarchy is what we make of it.”⁷⁸ Simply put, if the concept of the state-as-person fundamentally depends on how we see ourselves as persons, a re-thinking of person-oriented concepts could lead to a re-thinking of states and most importantly the system of states. Building on the observations made in the previous sections, here I take the suggested potential for systemic transformations further by focusing at the concept of the self. The suggestion, based on the idea of the *constructed state-as-person*, is that a conception of the self that is based on a different balance between the individual and the group and that draws less firm boundaries between self and other, can lead to a re-thinking of IR.

To begin, five points of caution need to be expressed that highlight the limits of the suggestions made in the following and pay respect to the position that it is not “ideas all the way down”. First, as we have seen, a change in constitutive metaphors, which is essentially what I am suggesting here with regard to the state-as-person, does not occur often and cannot be engineered or planned.⁷⁹ Such a shift is a social process in which certain key individuals play a more important role than others. I do not offer a theorisation of such processes here. Rather, I wish to point out that such processes are possible, as highlighted for instance by the discussion in Chapter 1 regarding the history of relations between concepts of persons and concepts of states. It is this possibility that has important consequences for the idea of the state-as-person. Secondly, I have argued that modern ideas of states and modern ideas of persons grew up together.⁸⁰ As outlined in Chapter 6, the state as an institution of IR – especially the principles of

⁷⁸ Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics'.

⁷⁹ In this instance, a change in (root) metaphor can be likened to Kuhnian paradigm shifts. For an explicit link between Pepper's root metaphors and Kuhn's paradigm shifts compare Eric C. Scheffield, 'Root Metaphors, Paradigm Shifts, and Democratically Shared Values: Community Service-Learning as a Bridge-Building Endeavour', *Philosophical Studies in Education* 38 (2007). Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970). Stephen C. Pepper, *World Hypotheses: A Study in Evidence* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1942).

⁸⁰ Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume 2. Renaissance Virtues*.

external sovereignty and territorial integrity and the system of diplomatic representation – facilitates a certain reading of the state that, in turn, facilitates the metaphor of the state-as-person. However, this also means that any fundamental re-thinking of states has to struggle with institutional inertia and the durability of established practices. Third, this suggestion of possibilities for change implies a one-directional relationship between the two concepts. It implies that the concept of the person shapes the concept of the state-as-person in important ways. However, as outlined in detail in Chapter 3, a metaphorical relationship is a two-way process between concepts. The process of structural mapping outlined in Chapter 6 illustrates this further. Hence, it is worth issuing a reminder that a metaphorical process is not one directional. Fourth, it is important to keep in mind that the potential for change that I am suggesting here only touches upon those aspects of the state-as-structure that are reflected in the metaphor. In other words, interpretations of the principle of external sovereignty, territorial integrity, and processes of diplomatic representation are open to re-adjustments through a re-thinking of the metaphor of the state-as-person. These re-adjustments might have far-reaching consequences for the international system. However, the potential for change through metaphor change clearly meets its limits with regard to the distribution of state capabilities and the power inequalities inherent in the international system. In this sense, it is *not* ideas “all the way down”.

Fifth, there is another limit to possibilities for construction of the person and the state-as-person that needs to be acknowledged. As mentioned, the basic premise behind this section is that a re-thinking of how we understand the concept of the person, especially with regard to the relation between self and other and the boundaries of the self, can lead to re-thinking the state and its relations to other states. However, keeping with the perspective of constructionist psychology, it is important to acknowledge that our ability to develop concepts is bound up with our ability to form a symbolic system that, in turn, is limited by human ethology. As argued in Chapter 5, this circumscribes what can be imagined and, more specifically, it circumscribes how we can make sense of ourselves as persons.⁸¹ Yet, while the symbolic system, bound up with human ethology, limits possibilities for social construction, this still leaves ample possibility for

⁸¹ See Harré and Gillett, *The Discursive Mind*, 146.

variations and opens up opportunities for exploring how things could be otherwise.⁸² However, constructionist psychology is also helpful in pointing out how person-related discourse and hence the concept of the person is bound up with a particular culture and a particular time. Constructionist psychologists typically look to different cultures and historical periods to argue that concepts of persons and emotions are not given but made and that nurture takes precedent over nature. In the writings of these scholars, examples from non-Western cultures are used to illustrate that certain emotions are either not universally shared or take on a very different shape and are associated with a different set of socially appropriate behaviour across cultures.⁸³ The same can be said for concepts of persons. This is where space for potential change, within the limits of the human ability to develop symbolic systems, opens up.

Having added these five points of caution, suggestions towards potentially re-thinking the concept of the person with implications for the state-as-person can now be made. Throughout Chapter 5, I have drawn on Wittgensteinian insights, as utilised in the writings of Harré, to argue against some of the prevalent ideas regarding persons and especially states-as-persons in IR. The Cartesian world-view of mind-body-dualism and the entativity-account of the mind have been challenged. It has been suggested that many ideas fundamental to the state and the state-as-person are inevitably bound up with Western individualism. The idea of the person commonly held, and reflected in the idea of state-as-person, is in a lot of ways a Western idea with ancient Greek origins that is strongly based on a Judeo-Christian perspective.⁸⁴ Yet, it is

⁸² This exploration of "how things could be otherwise", is outlined by Ian Hacking as one of the central aims of constructivist scholarship. Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?*, 6.

⁸³ Harré often refers to the work of anthropologist Catherine Lutz and her work on the emotions of the Ifaluk. Harré and Gillett, *The Discursive Mind*, 146. Harré, 'An Outline of the Social Constructionist Viewpoint'. Lutz, 'The Domain of Emotion Words on Ifaluk'. Catherine A. Lutz, *Unnatural Emotions. Everyday Sentiments on a Micronesian Atoll and Their Challenge to Western Theory* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

⁸⁴ Compare Mauss, 'A Category of the Human Mind: The Notion of Person; the Notion of Self', 14 and 20. More specifically it seems to be Protestant Christianity that brings about the focus on the individual. See Louis Dumont, 'A Modified View of Our Origins: The Christian Beginnings of Modern Individualism', in *The Category of the Person. Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985 (1982)), 113-119. And Martin Hollis, 'Of Masks and Men', in *The Category of the Person. Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 217. However, it also useful to keep in mind that any culture will carry a diverse set of concepts of self. Carrithers reminds us that in complex societies disparate theories of the self can flourish. Carrithers, 'An Alternative Social History of the Self', 255. In addition compare also the following anthropological account C. Geertz, "'From the Native's Point of View": On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding', in *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology*, ed. C. Geertz (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

helpful to remind ourselves, as Louis Dumont for example argues, that “modern individualism, when seen against the background of the other great civilisations that the world has known, is an exceptional phenomenon.”⁸⁵ Similarly, Harré’s three selves, elaborated in Chapter 5 and utilised with regard to the state-as-person in Chapter 6, can be identified across most cultural contexts. Yet, they take on different forms in different cultures. For example, Harré points out how Self 2 and Self 3, encompassing personal characteristics and the self in interaction, seem to be less unified in, for instance, Japan. He argues that Japanese culture allows for a multiplicity of the sense of the self that would be seen as pathological in a Western culture.⁸⁶ And he points out that “[t]he case of Japanese selfhood is invaluable both in helping us to free ourselves from the illusion that only the self-structure of Protestant individualism is normal, and in illustrating one of the ways that multiplicity in selfhood is a cultural norm.”⁸⁷

In that sense, constructionist psychology invites us to speculate how the state-as-person and the international system would look if non-Western, non-individualistic concepts were the dominant ones. Going back to the three characteristics of the sense of identity, distinctiveness, continuity, and autonomy, developed by Michael J. Apter and utilised by Harré for his *The Singular Self*, we can easily imagine a conceptualisation of persons that puts less emphasis on these characteristics or at least partially challenges them.⁸⁸ With regard to concepts of self, a look to the East can again be instructive. For example, regarding the central Hinduist text, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, we can observe that “characteristics usually essential to modern concepts of the self are presented in the *Gita* as defining the constitution of a false or illusory self.”⁸⁹ We can take this observation as an invitation to imagine how the state and IR would look if they were based on a fundamentally different conception of persons and selves.

⁸⁵ Dumont, 'A Modified View of Our Origins: The Christian Beginnings of Modern Individualism', 93.

⁸⁶ For an overview compare Mara Miller, 'Views of Japanese Selfhood: Japanese and Western Perspectives', in *Culture and Self: Philosophical and Religious Perspectives, East and West*, ed. Douglas Allen (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

⁸⁷ Harré, *The Singular Self. An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, 159. Compare also Frank Johnson, 'The Western Concept of Self', in *Culture and Self: Asian and Western Perspectives*, ed. Anthony J. Marsella, George A. DeVos, and Francis L. K. Hsu (New York: Tavistock Publications, 1985).

⁸⁸ For the three characteristics compare Apter, 'Negativism and the Sense of Identity', 75 and for an overview of potential challenges to these accounts compare 77.

⁸⁹ Douglas Allen, 'Social Constructions of Self: Some Asian, Marxist, and Feminist Critiques of Dominant Western Views of Self', in *Culture and Self: Philosophical and Religious Perspectives, East and West*, ed. Douglas Allen (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 9, ephasis in original.

In the remaining part of this section, this more radical suggestion needs to be brought into dialogue with Wendt's writings and larger disciplinary debates. First, it is important to note that Wendt's person and Wendt's state-as-person are profoundly individualistic and "Western" when compared to non-Western examples in which the "I" already includes a "we". This has consequences for how Wendt describes possibilities for developing a system of other-help, the Kantian international culture described in more detail in early parts of this chapter. A deep internalisation of the Kantian culture, described by Wendt as a position from which actors define the security of the other as "literally being their own" is easier to achieve, or perhaps only possible at all, if the conception of "I" already includes a "we" to a much stronger extent than Western individualistic conceptions of the person allow for. Second, the possibilities for change that I am suggesting here can potentially concern the constitution of the state-as-person as such. Apter's sense of identity – consisting of distinctiveness, continuity, and autonomy – fundamentally shapes understandings of the person. A world of states which puts less emphasis on distinctiveness and autonomy would look fundamentally different. However, this goes beyond what Wendt suggests, or even can suggest, as part of his symbolic interactionist account between two states. As we have seen, Alter and Ego are already established prior to their hypothetical First Encounter. In my account, as we have seen above, they are already shaped by ideas of selves and emotions present in their respective cultures. Given the influence of Western states and current international power structures, Western ideas of individualism are, unsurprisingly, prominent across the international system. It is these ideas that stand in the way of a deeper internalisation of a Kantian culture. In contrast to Wendt, who argues, as we have seen in this chapter, that change in the international culture towards a Kantian ideal can come from repeated pro-social and self-restrained behaviour and favourable systemic factors, I argue that the potential for change lies within cultures that emphasise a different conception of the self. Based on this, it can be suggested that if the emphasis on distinctiveness and autonomy was weaker than it is in Western individualistic cultures, a more internalised system of other-help can be imagined. As a historic example, with regard to the notions of distinctiveness and autonomy, we can point to the system of European states during the Middle Ages, the *respublica Christiana*. A current example might be found in the collective identity formation

among Asian states and how it differs from the collective identity of European or Western states.⁹⁰

To support this point, a detailed study of culturally important conceptions of persons, the regional structures, and their interplay, on the back of key agents, is required. Working with the metaphor of the *constructed state-as-person* allows me to point to possibilities for a fundamental reshaping of the system of states by re-thinking conceptions of persons. In this regard, the five points of caution elaborated in the beginning of this section have to be kept in mind. However, the very possibility of re-thinking the concept of the state-as-person that becomes possible on the basis of the metaphorical mapping processes, offers an exciting opportunity. Even if this, for now, only takes the form of being able to point to the possibility that things could be otherwise. In this sense, it is “anarchy is what we make of it”, albeit not under the conditions of our own choosing.

⁹⁰ Alexander Woodside, 'Territorial Order and Collective-Identity Tensions in Confucian Asia: China, Vietnam, Korea', *Daedalus* 127, 3 (1998). Marilyn Brewer and Wendi Gardner, 'Who Is This 'We'? Levels of Collective Identity and Self Representations', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 71, 1 (1996). Christopher Hemmer and Peter J. Katzenstein, 'Why Is There No Nato in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism', *International Organization* 56, 3 (2002).

Conclusion

This chapter draws the themes of this thesis together to highlight how the account given here differs from Wendt's approach, especially regarding systemic interactions and agent-structure accounts, and to pin-point the larger contributions that the *constructed state-as-person* makes to disciplinary debates and understanding and studying the relations between states.

I address the disciplinary divide with regard to the question of the intelligibility of the state by suggesting that the question of the ontology of the state and the narratives and practices that sustain the state need to be studied. This leads me to argue that for certain research projects – and the state-as-person is one of these – scholars need to occupy various positions in Jacksons' two-by-two table of philosophical wagers. In other words, we need to be mind-world monist and mind-world dualist at different points of the project. The researcher interested in the idea of the state-as-person needs to oscillate between two perspectives: understanding the structure of the state but also studying the concepts used to make this structure intelligible. Based on this, I clarified the position within the agent-structure debate that I take with the *constructed state-as-person*. From the position taken in this thesis, the state is a really existing structure while the idea of the state-as-person is to be understood at the level of linguistic realism. Resulting from this is the *constructed state-as-person* as a *second-order person* that is based on a process of structural metaphor mapping between person-oriented discourses and elements of the state-as-structure. This also means that agency is firmly located with individual human beings, acting alone or in groups. In this account, narratives matter, especially at the crucial moments of production and reproduction of the structure. Yet, it is not the case that any narrative goes as the state-as-structure enables and constraints.

Based on these observations, I was able to give an alternative perspective on systemic interactions and systemic change. I followed Wendt's symbolic interactionist account. Yet, because agency is not located with the state but with individual human beings, the symbolic interactionist account is faced with a "domestic" baggage in the form of culturally specific concepts of self and emotions. This also means that narratives, informed by culturally specific emotional paradigm scenarios and a sense of what it means to be a person, become relevant for the state in interaction. There are structural constraints on these narratives. Yet, for the shift

from a Lockean international culture of rivalry, our current system, to a Kantian international culture of other-help, this domestic baggage and the related narratives matter. When making suggestions towards a Kantian international culture, Wendt presents a case whereby states are nudged towards instrumental friendship. The assumption is that this, over-time, might lead to actual friendship understood as a situation in which self-definitions include a concern and care for others. However, because Wendt locates agency with states, he cannot explain this shift beyond an instrumental account of friendship. In contrast, I argue that this is where culturally specific concepts of emotions and notions of the self become important. Further, from my perspective, Wendt's Kantian peace remains a negative peace and only by engaging various culturally specific concepts can it be transformed into a positive one. In this chapter I also point out how this is as an important consideration for democratic peace arguments.

Looking at the role of emotions concepts and their paradigm scenarios, I was able to suggest a source for perceptions and behaviour that seems "irrational" from the perspective of the international system. Rationality is argued to be context-specific and by studying culturally specific concepts of emotions, an understanding of "irrational" behaviour can be gained. It is important to note that this is fundamentally different from suggestions that locate deviations from rationality with misperceptions, cognitive biases, or cognitive limits to decision-making. Further, it calls not for the study of individual decision-makers or group process but for studying concepts and their associated paradigm scenarios prevalent in a specific culture. Ultimately, the argument is that "irrational" perceptions and behaviour are especially important if one is interested in the potential of systemic change as they provide alternatives to the logic of the international system.

Lastly, and in stark contrast to Wendt, the perspective developed in this thesis allows me to question the state-as-person more fundamentally. I suggest that a metaphor change, indeed a paradigm change, is potentially possible on the basis of a re-thinking of person-oriented concepts, such as Apter's sense of identity consisting of distinctiveness, continuity, and autonomy.⁹¹ Generally speaking, Asian conceptions that are less individualistic come to mind as an alternative to the Western conception of the person. Based on the metaphorical mapping process, this re-thinking concerns external sovereignty, territorial integrity, and diplomatic

⁹¹ Apter, 'Negativism and the Sense of Identity'.

representation. Relations between states that emphasise distinctiveness, continuity, and autonomy to a lesser degree are at least thinkable on the basis of this alternative perspective.

However, it is important to stress that I do not wish to argue that it is ideas “all the way down”. The two previous points regarding emotions and conceptions of the self are faced with systemic constraints. Yet, I maintain that if change is possible at all, its source is to be located in culturally specific concepts of emotions and self. In other words, a change in conceptions of persons and a better understanding of the role of emotions in making judgements of appropriateness are a necessary, although not sufficient part in the transformation towards a system of other-help. Therefore, anarchy is what we make of it, but not under the conditions of our own choosing.

Conclusion: The *constructed state-as-person* in IR theory

This thesis critically engages with Alexander Wendt's conception of the state-as-person and develops an alternative based on a conception of persons that draws on how people make sense of themselves in everyday discourse. I call this alternative to Wendt's "states-are-people-too" position the *constructed state-as-person*.¹ The prevalence of the assumption that the state is like a person in contemporary IR theory and Wendt's strong statement are an important part of the motivation behind this thesis. Further, in 2004 Wendt suggested that "if we want to have states then it is better they take the form of persons rather than something more amorphous."² I follow him in this conviction and his focus on psychological personhood.

While Wendt is not the only one with an interest in conceptualising states in relation to people, he is the most prominent proponent in IR. With "anarchy is what states make of it" and "states are people too" he makes two of the strongest statements in the discipline in this regard.³ With the *constructed state-as-person*, I am responding to what I perceive as problematic in Wendt's work. This critique mainly concerns his *via media* constructivist approach to the state-as-person and related to that his essentialism and materialism with regard to persons, selves, and emotions, his insistence on the state-as-person being real, his position in the agent-structure debate, and his stance on the role of metaphors in the process of making sense of the world, including the scientific process.

This thesis also needs to be understood in the larger context of making a contribution to IR scholarship at a time when the fundamental role of the state in the discipline's theorising is increasingly questioned. From the perspective of those who argue that the state is undergoing a

¹ For this phrase see Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 215.

² Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 316.

³ Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics', *International Organization* 46, 2 (1992).

decline in terms of power and relevance in the face of globalisation, it must seem strangely anachronistic to be working with the proclamation that “states are people too”.

Here, an interesting dichotomy opens up which I point to in the introduction and further articulate in the first chapter. On the one hand, the self-understanding of the discipline is fundamentally tied to the concept of the state. *International relations*, in its current form, would have no *raison d'être* were the state to disappear from its research programme.⁴ However, following the argument that the state cannot easily be identified anymore with the nation, itself a controversial term, or territory, an argument is made that previous ways of identifying and imagining the state have to be transformed.⁵ Hence, IR theory's concept of the state is more than ever in need of re-conceptualisation. It is precisely with this context in mind that the “states-are-people-too” position is reformulated and becomes the *constructed state-as-person* in this thesis.

The *constructed state-as-person* emerges out of questioning some of the core philosophy of science assumptions made by Wendt. Hence, in the first instance, it is a suggestion for a re-conceptualisation of Wendt's idea. However, in a further step, the *constructed state-as-person* offers the potential for a fundamental re-imagining of the state in IR. This thesis argues that recourse to conceptual metaphor theory and constructionist psychology paves the way for such a re-conceptualisation. The former allows me to question the relationship between mind and world that underlies accounts of the state and the state-as-person. The latter is useful in developing a non-material, non-individualistic understanding of how people make sense of themselves and how self and emotions are created discursively. Eventually, the suggestion that stands at the end of the final chapter is that it is not “anarchy is what states make of it” but “anarchy is what we make of it.”

In the following, first, I will summarise the main points of the argument presented over the course of the six chapters of this thesis. Second, I will highlight the specific contribution that this thesis makes to the state-as-person debate by suggesting the *constructed state-as-person* as an alternative to Wendt's approach; I will also highlight the more general contributions that this thesis makes to IR theory. Here, the role of metaphors in the scientific process that is advocated

⁴ Compare Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 177.

⁵ Compare for example Sørensen, 'The Transformation of the State'.

in this thesis and the potential for introducing constructionist psychology to IR will be highlighted as key contributions. Lastly, I will point to the limits of the approach followed in this thesis and make suggestions for further research.

Chapter 1 provides reasons for engaging the idea of the state-as-person by illustrating how the tendency to anthropomorphise or personify the state is prevalent in the discipline. It is argued that because the state is ubiquitous in the discipline, but at the same time opaque, a key disciplinary task is to make the state intelligible. Depending on whether one argues that the state really exists or whether one locates it in discourse and shared practices, this process of making the state intelligible will take on fundamentally different forms. However, I argue that in either case, the state needs to be imagined and the image we encounter prominently in the discipline is that of the person. This prevalence is taken as the motivation to further investigate state-as-person ideas.

Looking more specifically at what I call the recent state-as-person debate between Alexander Wendt, Iver B. Neumann, Patrick T. Jackson, Colin Wight, and others, the same fundamental dichotomy between two different ways of making the state intelligible is identified – with Neumann and Jackson subscribing to narrativist accounts and Wight and Wendt arguing that we need to engage the question of whether or not the state and the state-as-person can be said to really exist. A second line of contention in the debate is identified in arguments regarding what kind of person the state is. Here, a distinction between moral, legal, and psychological personhood is crucial. Following Wendt, the question of psychological personhood of the state is chosen as the focus of this thesis. Further, building on Jackson's suggestions, Hobbes's idea of the state as a fictitious person which is established in a process of authorisation and representation and is to be viewed as separate from both the ruler and the ruled is introduced in Chapter 1. Hobbes's argument is especially useful for a systemic approach that is interested in developing ideas of states-as-persons further because it is part of the process by which the state eventually came to be seen as an independent agent.

Chapter 2 focuses on Wendt's specific conception of the state-as-person and his *via media* constructivist and philosophical realist premises in more detail. As a result, four main points of critique are outlined. First, questioning Wendt's scientific realist position with regard to the state and the state-as-person, it is argued that we can assert the reality of the state without also

needing to argue that it is indeed a person. I argue, by drawing a distinction between philosophical ontology and scientific ontology, that the state is a really existing structure with causal impact in the world. The state really exists. Personifying it is a prevalent way of making it intelligible. However, this is not to argue that the state indeed is a person from a scientific realist perspective. Second, Chapter 2 argues that we can and should take the social construction of persons and selves further than Wendt does. Third, I maintain that the role of metaphors in making sense of the state and the state-as-person needs to be made more explicit. And fourth, the chapter suggests processes of personation as a fruitful approach towards generating an understanding of persons and hence the state-as-person.

Chapter 3 focuses specifically on the role of metaphors with two aims: first, to make a general contribution by arguing the case for their role in the scientific process and, second, to argue that the state-as-person is best understood as a metaphor. It maintains that confining metaphors to the role as figures of speech derives from a neopositivistic understanding of science that builds on an outdated conception of a metaphor understood as a comparison.⁶ The chapter introduces the interaction view of metaphor, whereby a metaphor is seen as an interaction of thoughts which brings two different ideas in contact with each other and thereby produces new insights, which form the basis of creating new knowledge.⁷ Second, concerning the role of metaphors in science, a distinction is introduced between pedagogical metaphors that are useful for explaining a theory, and theory-constitutive metaphors that are at the core of theoretical assumptions about the world.⁸ From this perspective, I argue that a theory-constitutive metaphor lies at the core of Wendt's "states-are-people-too" position. To illustrate the interaction of thoughts present in a metaphor, I draw on the concept of structural mapping between the source and target domain of a metaphor.⁹ Taking these points together, I suggest a working definition of what I call a "scientific metaphor" which describes a potentially open-ended research process that explores the connection between source and target domain and can potentially function to facilitate exchanges between different disciplines on the one hand and, on the other hand, concepts and social structures. Hence, the idea of the state as a

⁶ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*.

⁷ Black, *Models and Metaphors. Studies in Language and Philosophy*. And Black, 'More About Metaphor'.

⁸ Boyd, 'Metaphor and Theory Change: What Is "Metaphor" a Metaphor For?'

⁹ Gentner, 'Are Scientific Analogies Metaphors?'

psychological person is developed by looking at the possibilities of an interanimation of thoughts between concepts of persons and concepts of states and between concepts of person in the context of the state-as-structure.

Given Wendt's assertion that the state really exists, we also need to ask whether or not it is possible to address the state-as-person from a scientific realist perspective and whether or not such a perspective fits with the particular focus of this thesis on psychological personhood. It is argued that a useful metaphorical relationship can be developed between states and persons. However, ultimately, a decision is taken to do this at the level of linguistic realism which means that relationships between *concepts* of states and *concepts* of persons are explored in the context of the state-as-structure. Suggestions that the metaphor of the state-as-person is also useful in addressing a deeper reality of IR are not pursued. I argue that, analogous to Wendt's miracle argument, the prevalence of state-as-person ideas in the discipline suggests that we must have gotten something right. This is taken to justify an engagement with the concept. Hence, developing the idea of the state as a psychological person further is justified as long as we keep in mind that this is conceptual work and does not speak to deeper social realities.

Keeping these points in mind, Chapter 4 presents an account of how people develop a sense of self and other typical psychological characteristics. It introduces the so-called emotional turn in the discipline and, following suggestions made as part of these interventions, discusses ways of utilising findings from psychology. After having identified IR's state-as-person as a person strangely devoid of emotions in the first chapter, one of the key aims of the recent emotional turn – overcoming the strict dichotomy between rationality and emotions – is taken on board for the idea of the *constructed state-as-person*. This connects the endeavour undertaken here with Wendt's notion of the state as a psychological person, which is defined as the ability for subjective experience of the world, including having the capacity for emotions.¹⁰ In order to work towards this notion of the state as a psychological person, a reductionist understanding of the state-as-person that would theorise states' emotions through recourse to individuals is rejected. Similarly, treating the state as a group and utilising insights from social identity theory to talk about group emotions, and ultimately the emotions of the state, is also rejected. In contrast, the conclusion of Chapter 3 is re-affirmed here by deciding to undertake the task of

¹⁰ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 312.

theorising about psychological state personhood on a conceptual level through an analysis of the role that person-oriented discourse that is utilised to make sense of the state in IR.

Building on these points, Chapter 5 draws on constructionist psychology to outline an alternative understanding of persons, one that emphasises the role of language in the construction of self and emotions, and places this approach in contrast to Wendt's. By drawing on constructionist psychology, the assumption that how we make sense of ourselves is also how we make sense of the state is transformed into arguing that we can and do apply the same language games we use for making sense of people to the state. Indeed, inspired by the work of Rom Harré, who in turn draws substantially on Ludwig Wittgenstein's theory of language, we can understand aspects generally defined as psychological phenomena, such as the self and emotions, as language games. In this sense, this thesis argues, states can become people too.

We need to note that from the constructionist account, the researcher does not look "inside" the mind to generate an understanding of people. This thesis rejects an exploration of what Wendt would call the inside constitution of the psychological person.¹¹ From the constructionist perspective, the person is a location in time and space that exists prior to discourse and makes discourse possible in the first place. However, the self (including identities and interests) and emotions are established discursively. In other words, the self is realised through narrative conventions and discursive practices. Drawing on constructionist psychology allows me to argue, in contrast to Wendt's physicalist commitments in "The state as person", that what matters for understanding people can be located entirely in discourse. The physical is transformed to a mere location for the narrated, the self.

The chapter also introduces a discussion of emotions from the perspective of constructionist psychology. A perspective is developed that defines emotions as social products that are shaped by language and culture.¹² Again, it needs to be stressed that, similar to the constructionist conception of the self, emotions are not located inside the mind. Rather than being given emotions, *qua* nature, we are socialised into them. Further, emotions, understood in this way, are to be seen as a kind of knowledge. They reflect a judgement about what is reasonable, what is appropriate and what is right; the emotional repertoire of a society reflects values and moral

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 295.

¹² Johnson-Laird and Oatley, 'Cognitive and Social Construction in Emotions', 459.

concepts held in that society. This also means that, similar to the specific expressions of the self, emotions are culturally specific. Conceptualising emotions as separable from their material basis does away with the problem of physicalism with regard to state consciousness as outlined by Wendt. It addresses Wendt's point that the state might hold an "an *ersatz* subjectivity", whereby people are experiencing the emotions on behalf of the state.¹³ From the constructionist perspective, it is not the felt experience of emotions that matters for understanding them, but rather, their discursive expression.

Yet, Chapter 5 also shows that, even from the perspective of constructionist psychology, we do not escape the material body after all. As outlined, the "biological basis" of emotions is seen as irrelevant for understanding human emotion. However, human physiology still matters in some way because it, first, enables the development of the very sign system we use to generate meaning. The argument developed here, based on Wittgenstinian insights as utilised by Harré, is that if we had a different physiology, our sign system would be a different one. Second, human physiology matters as a tool for expressing this sign system and acting upon it. Keeping this in mind, I argue that the state-as-person can only ever be a *second-order person* because it does not escape the dependence on individual human beings to speak and act on its behalf. This means that even from within a more radical constructed account of the person, there is still an ultimate ontological firewall that the state does not cross.¹⁴ In my account, the firewall is constituted by the state's lack of a physiological basis for the development of a sign system and the lack of tools for using a sign system. The state is made into a person by speaking about it as a person. But for this, it fundamentally depends on individual human beings as its agents.

Having outlined the constructionist account, this thesis turns to developing an alternative to Wendt's state-as-person position fully and highlights its potential implications for IR theory in Chapter 6. The resulting *constructed state-as-person* is an imagined entity that emerges by bringing internationally accepted practices with regard to the state – recognition, territorial integrity, and representation – into contact with discourses about persons. An interanimation of thoughts between these two domains is suggested. Hence, in a first step, Harré's minimal criteria for the application of person-orientated discourses are made useful for thinking about

¹³ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 313-314.

¹⁴ Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, 188.

states. These minimal criteria of the person are the following: having a location in time and space and showing continuity over time. By drawing on the principle of external sovereignty, we can argue that the state can be mapped onto these minimal criteria. To relate this point to Jackson's critique of Wendt, it is the minimal criteria that allow for a process of personation, understood in the context of this thesis as the application of person-oriented discourses to the state.¹⁵ Based on this, three specific person-related discourses regarding the three senses of self, emotions, and relations of enmity and friendship are made useful for the *constructed state-as-person* and are brought into dialogue with current IR literature.

Chapter 7 draws these points together to stress the departure from Wendt's account and the contribution to disciplinary debates that the *constructed state-as-person* makes. The chapter develops a clear position regarding the fundamental disciplinary divide in the state-as-person debate between those scholars who seek to investigate the ontological reality of the state-as-person and those who locate the state-as-person at the level of discourse and social practices. The suggestion is that those interested in the idea of the state-as-person need to occupy both positions at different points of the research project. In this sense, this thesis argues that those interested in the idea of the state-as-person need to occupy both a mind-world monist and a mind-world dualist position, using Jackson's framework, at different points in the research project. Following from this, a clear position within the agent-structure debate is articulated that locates agency firmly with individual human beings, acting alone or in groups, and subscribes to the view of the state as a structure. The state-as-person, located the level of linguistic realism, mediates between the two based on the process of metaphorical mapping. The metaphor of the state-as-person represents a way of making the structure intelligible. Yet, it is constrained by structural factors while, at the same time, plays a crucial role for the production and reproduction of the structure. This position also allows me to propose a theory of international systemic change that differs from Wendt's approach and is able to locate sources of change in culturally specific concepts of self and emotions. Finally, a tentative suggestion is made that re-thinking the ideas we hold about persons can lead to re-thinking ideas about the state with potentially systemic consequences.

¹⁵ Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People Are States Too''.

In addition to the key points developed in Chapter 7, this thesis makes a number of significant contributions to both the state-as-person debate and to IR theory more generally over the course of the first six chapters that deserve to be highlighted again. By critically engaging with Wendt's suggestion that "states are people too" and putting forward an alternative conception in the form of the *constructed state-as-person*, this thesis offers an account of the person and the state-as-person that is fundamentally non-material and non-individualistic. As an outcome of the critique of Wendt's approach, an account is put forward that avoids Wendt's essentialism and offers a solution to what Wendt calls the problem of *ersatz* subjectivity, understood as the focus on the location of the experience of the emotion.¹⁶

Further, based on insights from constructionist psychology, I am able to argue that an inside test of personhood, as suggested by Wendt in 2004 for the state-as-person, is unnecessary because in everyday interactions with other people we can operate under the assumption that they are persons based on the flow of actions and utterances emanating from them without requiring proof of their suitable psychological inside constitution. Hence, we do not need to search for a suitable inside of the state-as-person.

However, as summarised, the suggested *constructed state-as-person* is to be located at the level of language first and foremost. Hence, another outcome of this thesis is that an argument about the state-as-person cannot be sustained at a deeper level of social reality. This outcome stands in contrast to Wendt's insistence that the state-as-person is real. It also supports the criticism that the state-as-person concept held by mainstream IR is not helpful in exploring a deeper social reality, in the critical realist sense, of IR. What is presented in this thesis is not an argument for the "reality" of the state-as-person. However, the argument pursued, by drawing on constructionist psychology, is that a meaningful understanding of individual human beings located in a "world-seen-as-people" does not need to draw on this deeper level of reality.¹⁷ While the person marks a location in space and time that shows continuity, a meaningful understanding of selves and emotions is to be located in discursive practices. The self and emotions are not to be sought inside the mind but at the level of discourse.

¹⁶ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', 311-314.

¹⁷ Harré, 'Discourse and the Embodied Person'.

The two key moves that this thesis introduces as a response to the critique of Wendt's state-as-person conception – the argument for taking metaphors seriously for theorising in IR and the turn to constructionist psychology – should also be seen as more general contributions to the discipline. First, this thesis argues that metaphors are to be understood as potentially theory-constitutive elements that can operate from either a mind-world dualist or a mind-world monist perspective. Focusing on the role of metaphors, understood as an interanimation of thoughts that can be made explicit through engaging in structural mapping, shifts attention from the question of “what” to the question of “how”. This allows us to focus specifically on the process of how new insights are created by making the relation between the source domain and the target domain of a metaphor explicit and thereby being able to actively engage in tracing and initiating changes in our most important concepts. Given nascent approaches that engage with the theory-constitutive role of metaphors in connection with key IR concepts, such as the respective works of Richard Little and Michael Marks, potential for further research is opened up by the suggestions made in Chapter 3.¹⁸ Second, a key result of the discussion in Chapter 4 is that we should be wary of making the assumption that findings from psychology are of greater scientific rigour than those delivered by the social sciences and especially post-positivist accounts. Doing so would be to blindly accept a neopositivistic understanding of science, which is highly debated in IR. Further, this thesis argues that if we utilise psychology, we need to carefully look at the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the findings on which we are drawing. Moreover, by engaging current attempts to bring psychology to bear on IR's most important concept, this thesis presents an argument for firmly rejecting the application of social psychology to the state and its systemic interactions. Lastly, by turning to constructionist psychology, a point of caution is added that we should be critical of those psychological approaches which operate by postulating entities “inside” the mind.

Based on this outline, four suggestions for further research are made, each of which is suggested in order to take further the contributions made in this thesis. First, the usage of state-as-person ideas needs to be analysed in practice with a specific focus on not only instances of anthropomorphisation or personification of the state but also with a focus on, first, the relationship between socially accepted concepts of persons and concepts of states and, second,

¹⁸ Marks, *Metaphors in International Relations Theory*, Marks, *The Prison as Metaphor. Re-Imagining International Relations*, Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models*.

the possibilities for culturally specific ideas of self and emotions to influence conceptions of the state-as-person under the constraints of the state-as-structure. Second, taking this a step further, we need to ask whether the suggestions made as part of the *constructed state-as-person* are also applicable to other key entities in IR. In principle, the strong constructivist account given here would allow for such applications, as long as Harre's minimal criteria for personhood are fulfilled. Hence, the usage of the concept might be extended to other corporate actors that IR finds relevant. Third, looking at the more general contribution to IR theory that this thesis makes, it is suggested that an investigation into the role of metaphors in selected mind-world monist and mind-world dualist approaches in IR can create new insights. What is missing from the general debate is an account that is able to show explicitly how metaphors play a role beyond figures of speeches and heuristic devices in various IR accounts. Following suggestions made in Chapter 3, the theory-constitutive role of metaphors in critical realism, analyticism, and reflexive approaches should be researched in a comparative fashion. Fourth, this thesis suggests constructionist psychology as a useful addition to IR theorising and utilises it to argue in favour of a process of personation with regard to the state. In addition, constructionist psychology can be applied to specific cases of either corporate or individual actors. In this regard, we can ask how the discursive construction of selves and emotions influences policy and behaviour in IR.

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