A CRITIQUE OF WENDT'S SOCIAL THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

By

Bon Kwon Koo

THESIS

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

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This paper examines a theoretical flaw in Alexader Wendt's theory in international relations. By adopting constructivism in sociology, Wendt makes it theoretically possible for states to achieve a change of egoistic self-help culture of the international system. However, having states as given units in his methodology, his theory cannot comprehend the notion of human that must be included in a constructivist approach. Consequently, his theory loses consistency within constructivist logic. Moreover, when Wendt's constructivist approach is modified by including the notion of human, it shows a different viewpoint of the international system. That is, a change of the international system cannot be expected because human as social kinds is in endless process of constructing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the Study

According to a survey done by *Foreign Policy*, Alexander Wendt has been chosen as the third most influential scholar in the field of international relations.[1] Considering his continuous theoretical challenge to Neo-Realism that has been the dominant paradigm, the result shows that his theory is now perceived rather a breakthrough than series of critique. In fact, many scholars in these days provide empirical studies based on his theory and address that it comprehends matters that Neo-realism could not explain.[2] It seems that a new paradigm is taking place in international relations.[3]

Wendt's theoretical accomplishment is mainly driven by adopting constructivism. Constructivism believes that the social world is in endless process of construction done by people. It does not believe that there can be a given situation that exists timelessly because everything happens in the social world is what people have constructed. As people construct the world continuously, the situation is in the

[1] A survey questioned to 1084 scholars in the field. *Foreign Policy*, November/December, 2005.
[2] Chaim D. Kaufmann and Robert A. Pape, (1999), "Explaining Costly International Moral Action: Britain's Sixty-Year Campaign Against the Atlantic Slave Trade," *International Organization*, Vol. 53, No. 4, Douglas Porch, (2000), "Military 'Culture' and the Fall of France in 1940," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 4 and Kim, Hak-sung, (2000), "Theoretical Approach on Peace in the Korean Peninsula: Comparison among Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism," Korea Institute for National Unification.
[3] Hayward Alker, (2000), "On learning from Wendt," *Review of International Studies*, 26, p. 141

continuous process of change as well. If there is a given situation in the social world, which remains timelessly, in constructivism it means that the construction has terminated and, therefore people no longer exist in the world.

Based on constructivism, Wendt views the international system with the state centric systemic approach. Wendt argues that states should be methodologically given actors in his systemic theory. According to him, since an observation of the international system cannot comprehend every variable in domestic society and structures, the domestic level and the international system level should be separated methodologically. With given states, Wendt points out that the international system is what states construct. As long as states are in endless process of relating themselves to others, the international system is also in process, which can change by the change of states. After developing his constructivism in state centric system approach, he argues that states can build the Kantian structure of the international system, which refers to peaceful culture currently shared among the western democratic states.

It seems that a structural change of the entire international system can now be discussed and predicted by this new constructivist methodology. Unlike Neo-realism viewing the negative characteristics of the international system, which are the self-help and egoistic culture states share unchangeably and timelessly[4], Wendt's theory makes the international system open to a positive change.

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[4] Kenneth Waltz, (1979), <u>Theory of International Politics</u>, Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, ch. 6

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However, this study finds a critical methodological flaw in Wendt's theory, which makes his entire theory inconsistent. In his methodology, constructions in the domestic level and that in the international system are separated by a given concept. As a consequence, his theory cannot include the notion of human, which is crucial for constructivism to attain its primary concept—process. Since the theoretical stronghold that states are in endless process of constructing the international system is challenged by the absence of human in his methodology, his theory cannot obtain a position where it can expect the change of the international system. Hence, his argument on the Kantian culture becomes a superpowers-oriented teleology.

When Wendt's theoretical flaw is modified, constructivism with systemic approach provides an opposite viewpoint towards the international system. When the notion of human is included by a conceptual unity of human, state and the international system in constructivism, human as social kinds, who constantly in the process of constructing the world, becomes a hindrance for the change of the international system. Therefore, the Kantian culture Wendt presented cannot be expected to appear in the entire system.

Hence, the ultimate aim of this study is first to derive the methodological problem of Wendt's theory by using constructivist logic, which, to the best of my knowledge, has not been critically examined to date. Second, it is to solve the

problem methodologically, and present the implications the modified constructivist

system theory has upon the international system.

1.2. Scope and Method

This study employs critical review method to show a basic logic that

constructivism has and the methodological problem in Wendt's theory caused by his

constructivist approach. Second, it will adopt a constructive concept from sociology

to solve his problem and obtain a possible alternative.

This study is to intensely focus on methodology and the logic of

constructivism in international relations. Hence, the scope of analysis will be on

conceptual aspects of constructivist theories in the field of education[5] and the one

Wendt elaborated in international relations. Since this paper is to criticize and modify

Wendt's constructivist system theory, the international system will be the unit of the

analysis in the theoretical discussion.

This paper consists of six chapters, including Introduction. In chapter 2, the

overview of constructivism will be given in order to understand Wendt's

constructivism in international relations better and extract its basic logic, which will

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[5] The field of education is where major constructivist scholars first started the discussion. Even now, with long history, the field is the most popular one for constructivist discourses.

be used throughout this paper. In chapter 3 Wendt's constructivism is reviewed both in the social scope and the international scope. In doing so, the contradiction between his constructivism and systemic approach caused by the concept of state will be shown. In chapter 4with the basic constructivist logic Wendt shares, it will be argued that Wendt's constructivism fails to agree with the systemic theory due to its separation of human and state in methodology and therefore generates either a needless conclusion or a false image of the international system. an attempt will be made to modify his theory by adopting a concept that allows one to have a logical consistency in constructivist methodology. In doing so, whether or not a structural change in the entire international system that Wendt presented is possible to take place will be examined. Finally, chapter 6 will sum up the discussions in each chapter.

II. Constructivism

This chapter has two main purposes. First, it is to provide an overview of constructivist philosophy that helps to understand Wendt's constructivism in international relations. Second, to identify the methodological flaw of his theory effectively in following chapters, this chapter will develop a basic logic that is embedded in constructivism.

2.1. Overview of Constructivism

It is very difficult to discern exactly when theoretical paradigm called 'constructivism' first developed and by whom it was done. However, scholars agree that the term constructivism has been popularized by a pedagogist, called von Glasersfeld. According to him, the core element of constructivism which knowledge cannot reflect a 'thing in itself' stems from a skepticist school in ancient Greek philosophy that existed in B.C. 6, and has been formed periodically through various schools of philosophy such as rationalist, empiricist, critical philosophy and

pragmatism.[6]   Xenophanes, an ancient Greek skepticist that lived in B.C. 6, argued

that there is no way for a person to prove what he describes as the world to be true.[7]

Descartes, the father of rationalism, doubted on what people consider as given.[8] One

of the most prominent empiricists, Locke, contended that cognition of something—

idea—is derived from experience.[9] Kant as a critical philosopher pointed out that

what one conceive as subject and object is just an phenomenon, not 'thing in

itself.'[10] Finally, developed further from empiricism, pragmatism insists that every

idea, relations, and object are cognized by experience. The thinking process works

only under a situation where one has never faced before. In order to solve the

unknown problem, he thinks, produces ideas, and chooses one useful idea among

these as truth.[11]

　　Reflecting its discovery in many different kinds of school, it is also difficult

to define what constructivism is. Depending whether one believes in knowledge as

merely an individual cognition or a fact derived from inter-subjectivity among

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[6] von Glaserfeld, (1983), "Learning as a constructive activity," In J. C. Bergeron and N. Herscovics (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the North American Chapter of the International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education* (p. 41-69). Montreal: University of Montreal, p. 3-17

[7] Xenophanes argued that God cannot be conceived by human because what human considers God is actually based on what he experienced. See, James Lesher, (1992), <u>Xenophanes of Colophon: Fragments: A Text and Translation with Commentary</u>, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

[8] Descartes saw that the cognition of a thing obtained by experiences cannot be considered the perfect reflection of the thing because people have illusions and dreams that they believe true. See, Janet Broughton, (2002), <u>Descartes' Method of Doubt</u>, Princeton University Press.

[9] Locke recognized the dualization of the world: an object in itself and an object in the cognition. Thereby, what human believes to be knowledge is what he experienced. See, Nicholas Jolley, (1999), <u>Locke, His Philosophical Thought</u>, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

[10] 'Thing in itself' means the pure essence of a thing, which is not distorted by interpretation. To explore more, see, Immanuel Kant, (1781/1787), <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u>, Trans. by P. Guyer and A. Wood, (1997), Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

[11] von Glasersfeld, (1995), <u>Radical Constructivism: a way of knowing and learning</u>, London: Falmer Press, Ch. 2.

people and whether reality exists or not, constructivism obtains different labels and contexts.[12] Despite the variety of forms and contexts, however, constructivism can be characterized in two properties. First, it is a "theory of knowing." [13] Constructivism is about epistemology that begins with the question how we come to know what we know. The term, 'knowing' in itself illuminates its unique understanding of knowledge. Usually, knowledge implies something taken by actors and already a completed fixed form that is finished with formulation in terms of time. However, constructivists employ, 'know-*ing*' which refers to knowledge in a *process* to be constructed by actors *endlessly*.

Second, derived from the first property, constructivism can be explained by a dissention from objectivism in philosophy. Objectivism believes in the absolute truth that can exist essentially outside of human cognition timelessly. Based on this perspective, according to Jonassen,

> Knowledge is stable because the essential properties of objects are knowable and relatively unchanging. The important metaphysical assumption of objectivism is that the world is real, it is structured, and that structure can be modeled for the learner. Objectivism holds

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[12] There are two major schools of constructivism which are broadly used in every fields of social science: 1) radical constructivism 2) social constructivism. The only difference they have is seen when they discuss objectivity in knowledge. The former denies the existence of objectivity due to the emphasis on individual cognition while the latter acknowledges it through inter-subjectivity among members of society. However, they both share the characteristic that they deny an objective truth reflecting 'thing-in-itself' which objectivism assumes. See, Jeremy Kilpatrick, (1987), "What Constructivism Might Be in Mathematics Education," *Proceedings*, PME-XI; program, p. 3-27, Paul Ernest, (1991), The Philosophy of Mathematics Education, The Falmer Press.
[13] Kang, In-ae (1997), Why Constructivism?, Moon-eum-sa, p. 16

that the purpose of the mind is to "mirror" that reality and its structure through thought processes that are analyzable and decomposable. The meaning that is produced by these thought processes is external to the understander, and it is determined by the structure of the real world[14]

In other words, objectivism posits the world that contains the universal law, irrelevant to cognition of humans and reduces various contexts to it. To understand the world properly is to present the objective law without any subjective interference, and, by doing so, the presented world attains universality. Thus, the absolute truth—knowledge—can be *discovered* through reasoning which enables human to see the objective world.

In contrast to objectivism, constructivism denies the existence of the absolute truth. It focuses on the concept of contextuality, refers to differences created in social terms. An individual who conceives a thing is situated in certain types of cultural, historical, and social contexts. In addition, he relies on his experiences in those contexts when he is cognized with something. In this sense, knowledge is a thing continuously being constructed by one's own cognition that is built through those contexts when he understands a social phenomenon. Considering subjective terms of knowledge construction, constructivism points out that reality is very uncertain. This is in contrast to objectivism, which presupposes the law that can

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[14] D. Jonassen, (1991), "Thinking Technology: Context is everything," *Educational Technology*, 31(6), p. 28

discern the reality as it is. "It is made up of the network of things and relationships that we rely on in our living, and on which, we believe, others rely on, too."[15] Also, "[T]o the constructivist, concepts, models, theories, and so on are viable if they prove adequate in the contexts in which they were created."[16] Truth, therefore, becomes a historical tool which is meaningful and useful for individual to understand the world in their own way.

2.2. The Art of Constructing

In constructivism, there is one basic premise that can be logically elicited. Constructing operates everywhere simultaneously through oneself as long as he is born in the world. This paper suggests it to be called 'the art of constructing' for convenience. It is reasonable to do so because constructing itself seems to be an operation that one cannot overcome or control. Once he is born to this world, the operation of constructing starts in his property by socialization. Relating oneself to others is inevitable because he is not born with knowledge already constructed by others before he came to the world. Also, since the world is what people made of, constructing makes it exist as long as all human is not eliminated. As a living

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[15] von Glasersfeld, (1995), p. 7
[16] Ibid…, p. 7

knowledge, constructing makes human a human and the world the world.

The art of constructing can be explained by two ways. First, for a social kind, constructing has the nature of "-ing.", a non-stop on-going process. Constructivism asserts that knowing is a process continuously constructing and re-constructing one's understandings. In addition, the reality does not exist outside individuals independently. It is interconnected with one's cognition constructed in a certain contexuality. Hence, living in the world means constructing one's understandings of reality and his ontology under certain contexts he experienced before, and the previous experience that he used to construct understandings of reality becomes a different form of 'experience' in the present tense by continuous constructing in a new situation. By its dynamic nature, "[What] life is contextual and constructive means living is done within continuous constructing and re-constructing."[17]

Second, as long as individuals in society live as a social kind, constructing operates everywhere. The truism above generates four important theses as follows:

1. While one person is engaged in constructing, others are too at the same time.

2. In constructing the person involved at the moment, there are other people

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[17] Song, Un-kun (2003), <u>Ontological Constructivism and the Geography Education</u>, Kyo-yook-gua-hak-sa (do), p. 42

involved too.

3. While one constructing is operating, other types of constructing are operating simultaneously.

4. Consequently, by the on-going process of the world, different types of phenomena can be interconnected by individuals who are multiply engaged in each constructing in different time.

<Figue-1> is a simplified drawing which may be seen when one artificially stops time in the on-going process of the world. There are three phenomena A, B and C happening at the same time with different individuals involved in simultaneously. The lines 1, 2, and 3 indicate contributions to phenomena individuals made in different time. If one traces back through the line, he finds that some individuals are also engaged in P-B or P-C at the same time. When one observes P-A, he finds that it is made by the individual a, b and e at the moment. However, each individual also commit himself to P-B or P-C. This implies that phenomena are connected to each other through individuals with their experiences since constructing in their life is not merely one-time operation but life-time one. When a car accident happened to a person, for instance, he cannot go to work, and it can lead to a consequence of failure in achieving an organizational goal of his company.

P= phenomenon   I = individual
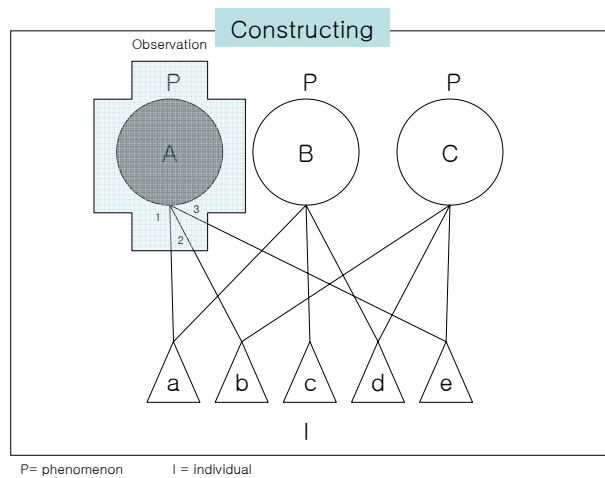
<Figure-1> A Sectional Drawing of Constructing in Stopped Time.

The above diagram enables one to ponder on the world further. In constructivist logic, how constructing can operate endlessly in the world is due to constructing in itself. Infinite number of phenomena are generated by individuals who are involved in a phenomenon since they are in an on-going process of engagement in different constructions. One phenomenon made by a certain group of people becomes a new situation to other people who need to interact with the group. Once interacted, another new situation, which is new to other people, is produced, and this is unavoidable because people are connected through phenomena in the name of social kinds. In this sense, constructing generates new situations for individual to operate another constructing, and the world is indeed the sum of the

endless constructions.

2.3. Conclusion

This chapter has shown two main arguments constructivists share despite of its various forms. Constructivism, first, focuses on theory of knowing. Second, it disagrees with a traditional thought such as the existence of absolute truth. Rather, it proposes that what is called 'truth' is constructed by individual's cognition in a contexuality that indicates social terms in a certain period. With these key arguments, a basic constructivist logic was presented. It is the art of constructing which implies that constructing operates anytime and everywhere simultaneously, and thereby it makes phenomena connected and generate other constructions. The logic is not surprisingly new. However, it will be applied to show logical flaws in Wendt's theory caused by his own constructivist logic in following chapters.

III. Wendt's Constructivism in International Relations

Wendt's constructivist theory of international relations can be divided into two sections as Wendt himself does so.[18] First, he presents a social theory that he believes to be a solution for the agent-structure problem in social science. Second, he applies his social theory to the theory of international politics by combining a systemic approach. Following what he did, this chapter will review Wendt's main arguments accordingly in each divided sections. First, the general constructivist assumption that he provides will be elaborated. Second, his constructivist interpretation on international politics will be discerned. Finally, the state systemic approach that makes Wendt distinct from other constructivists in the field of international relations will be emphasized.

3.1. Wendt's Social Theory

Wendt's discussion on the social theory starts with the agent-structure problem. The agent-structure problem begins with the following two truisms: "1) human beings and their organizations are purposeful actors whose actions help

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[18] Wendt divided his discussion into two major parts in accordance with their property. See, Alexander Wendt, (1999), Social Theory of International Politics, Cambridge University Press, p. ix

reproduce or transform the society in which they live; and 2) society is made up of social relationships, which structure the interactions between these purposeful actors."[19] Traditional schools such as structuralism and individualism attempted to reflect these two truisms by reducing one to the other ontologically. In order to answer the cause of a social phenomenon, structuralism tends to focus only on structure as a constraint upon its agents, while individualism looks at individual factors such as the nature of human and psychology. For example, there is a question why a person studies everyday. Structuralism argues that it is due to the structure of society, which conditions the level of education as a capital to survive and succeed. Individualism may insist that it is because he is a human who has a will to survive and succeed. In both statements, either the agent's will is reduced to coercive structure or the structural effect is reduced to agent.

In order to overcome the reductionism in the agent-structure shown in theories of social science, Wendt introduces one of the constructivist approaches, namely structuration theory. According to him, structuration theory obtains four research focuses as follows:

1) In opposition to individualists, they accept the reality and explanatory importance of irreducible and potentially unobservable social structures that generate agents.

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[19] Alexander Wendt, (1987), "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory." *International Organizations,* 41, no.3 p. 337-338

2) In opposition to structuralists, they oppose functionalism and stress "the need for a theory of practical reason and consciousness that can account for human intentionality and motivation."

3) These oppositions are reconciled by joining agents and structures in a "dialectical synthesis" that overcomes the subordination of one to the other, which is characteristic of both individualism and structuralism

4) Finally, they argue that social structures are inseparable from spatial and temporal structures, and that time and space must therefore be incorporated directly and explicitly into theoretical and concrete social research.[20]

Structuration theory sees the relationship between agent and structure in co-constitutive way. As the outcome of aggregated individuals differs from each individual in that group,[21] structure, which has the causal efficacy, exists outside of agents despite its invisibleness. Aggregated numbers of blocks shape of a building, for instance, which is ontologically different from a block. However, it is not always a building when blocks are piled up. It is a prerequisite that each block must be built in order with the intention to shape a building. Similar to the example, social structures are only "instantiated by the practice of agents."[22] Also social structure disappears when there is no meaning to agents. There must be reasons and self-understandings that agents bring into their actions. At the same time, agents as a social kind also cannot find their identity or meaning of themselves out of structures embedded in their actions just as a teacher cannot have an understanding of himself

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[20] Alexander Wendt, (1987), ...p. 356
[21] Durkeim explains this with the term, "social fact." See, Emile Durkeim, (1964) [1895], The Rules of Sociological Method, Eds. by George Catlin, Trans. by Sarah Solovay & John H. Mueller, New York: The Free Press of Glenco
[22] Alexander Wendt, (1987), ...p. 359

and his actions if there is no structure created by the relationship to students. Up to this point, structuration theory views agents and structures as "mutually constitutive yet ontologically distinct entities……[T]hey are "co-determined." Social structures are the result of the intended and unintended consequences of human action, just as those actions presuppose or are mediated by an irreducible structural context."[23]

These ontological distinctiveness and constitutive effects between agents and structures force one to see both agent and structure "simultaneously"[24] in order to explain social phenomena. Structuration theory points out that there can be two types of questions on which it focuses in order to explain a social phenomenon. First, the question, "how is action X possible," is to discern the domain of the possible. Second, the question, "why did X happened rather than Y" shows the domain of the actual. These two forms of questions are inseparable because the "why-questions require answers to how-questions."[25] For example, to explain why a person A went to X rather than Y, one must know how the person A and his choice were possible in the first place. Not taking both agents and structures as given, structuration theory puts those in a position where they can be problematic, and sees both in order to explain a particular social phenomenon.[26]

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[23] Ibid…p. 360
[24] Ibid…p. 361
[25] Ibid…p. 363
[26] Structuration theory has had difficulties in finding a proper methodology that leads to do so. Anthony Giddens was criticized by many scholars that his actual application of the theory to reality brings about a methodological reduction to structure. In this paper, thus, the problematic method Giddens and Wendt presented will not be illustrated. For the method and critics, see, Nicky Gregson, (1986), "On Duality and

Structuration theory permits one to deal with social structures within the concept of time and space.[27] As shown above, it combines two features in the major approaches. Structural explanation reveals "the conditions of existence or "rules of the game" of social action,"[28] by looking at historical tendency. Historical explanation contains more than a tendency in a social action shown throughout history. It provides an explanation on "actual events and objects as 'unities of diverse determinations' which have been isolated and examined through abstract [structural] research."[29] Finding interdependency of those two characteristics of the approaches, structuration theory becomes theoretically open to the time and space contextuality in a social action because the structure and agents are not given to one another as a static picture in its discussion.

In addition, Wendt finally applies the constitutive mechanism in the constructivist approach to the relationship between idea and material. Materialism tends to focus on materials as an independent variable in order to find a causal explanation on a social phenomenon. For example, Karl Marx explains social change

Dualism: The Case of Structuration Theory and Time Geography," *Progress in Human Geography* 10, p. 184-205 and William H. Sewell, Jr. (1992), "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation" *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 98, p.1-13

[27] It is certainly ambiguous in what context Wendt uses the concept of time and space in his work: 1) whether to emphasize the constitutive terms of agent and structure that one must use historical as well as structural approach at the same time, 2) whether to simply support his methodological extent of analysis that state can be an actor in international relations theory by referring to those in the light of changeable structures. The former will be taken in this paper according to the context of his arguments elaborated previously. As for the former, see, Nigel Thrift "On the Determination of Social Action in Time and Space" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 1, p.31-45 For the latter, see, Anthony Giddens, (1991), Modernity and Self-Identity, Cambridge: Polity.

[28] Alexander Wendt, (1987), ibid...p. 363

[29] Ibid...p. 363

only by the historical mechanism that is stimulated by economic value.[30] However,

constructivism allows one to look at the co-determinant feature of the two. When

constructivists concern a conflict caused by gold, for instance, they can look at ideal

aspects latent deep inside of the problem. Gold is a desirable material only when

people conceive so, yet it is gold, the material, which causes the conflict. Normally,

the constitutive effects between idea and materials are neglected in theories of

international relations.[31] Perceiving its inseparable effects in explaining cause,

Wendt emphasizes the role of idea must be included in the discussion of social

structures.

3.2. Wendt's Social Theory of International Politics

3.2.1. General Review of the Key Arguments

Adopting his social theory, Wendt elaborates theoretical flaws in

international relations theories caused by the agent-structure problem. He suggests

them to look at two different effects that states and international structures have in

relation to one another. Neo-realism, a structural approach, which has been the

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[30] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, (1970), The German Ideology, Lawrence Wishart: London.
[31] Alexander Wendt, (1999), ibid…p. 94-95

dominant school in international relations theory, only considers causal effects the

international structure has upon states. In other words, it takes structure as given and

treats it as one-way constraints upon what states do. Wendt argues that in the logic of

Neo-realism, all states become the same machines that merely follow the rule, and

there is no way to assume or explain the structural change happening in the real

world. Hence, in neo-realism, the given anarchic international structure in reality,

which refers to the absence of the central government conducting states in order,

forces states to pursue self-help and egoistic behavior permanently. However,

knowing the constitutive effect that there cannot be international structure without

states, Wendt argues that "anarchy is what states make of it."[32]

By concerning constitutive effects of states and the international structure

have, the extent of influence structures have upon states changes in theory. Wendt

points out that structural effects from the international system to states in Neo-

realism are confined only to the extent of constraint in their behavior. However,

structure also affects the property of states since they are mutually constructed by

each other. In other words, the egoistic property of states can be possible only under

the egoistic structure in which they are acting, while the character of egoism in the

anarchic international system is possible by actions taken by states.[33] Thus, anything

[32] Alexander Wendt, (1992), "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power
Politics," *International Organization* 46, no.2, Alexander Wendt, (1999), ibid…p. 6.
[33] Alexander Wendt, (1999), ibid…p. 87-88

given from the structuralist sense such as an interest in the self-help system and the identity of states can be and must be re-examined by the concern how states and the anarchy culture constitute each other.

Shared ideas among states play important role in the terms of the constitutive nature in the states and international system. Previous schools of international relations theory conceived that idea and materials are two separated variables. Neo-realism put material forces including power and interest as the independent variable for a structural change while opponent theories try to emphasize the role of institution and idea, which Neo-realism cannot cover with its independent variable.[34] However, for constructivism, in most cases, materials cannot have meaning and value independent from shared ideas of people. In the case of threats posed one from another state, for example, "five hundred British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the US than five North Korean ones because of the shared understandings that underpin them."[35] Here, the identity formed by a historical process is the deep underlying factors of the threat derived from materials, not materials themselves. Just as the case, the interest of states in the self-help system is apt to be formed by the idea. In this sense, to have its effect, power and interest must contain the premise that those material forces attain meanings through the ideational

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[34] Ibid…p. 93-94
[35] Ibid…p. 255

structure formed by shared ideas among states. Also what must be done or not done in the context of setting the state objectives depends on the socially shared ideas.[36]

The notions of the mutually constructive feature and of the ideational structure in the international relations show that anarchy has no logic in itself. "What gives anarchy meaning are the kinds of people who live there and the structure of their relationships……Thus, it is not that anarchic systems have no structure or logic, but rather that these are a function of social structures, not anarchy."[37] In other words, the self-help system of egoistic states is merely one kind of cultures not a permanent character of itself, built by a historical process of socialization among states. This implies that the culture of the self-help system can transform into a more collective system within a constitutive process itself because culture is collective ideas shared among states. As states interact with each other in different manners, the culture of anarchy alters by the notion of constructive ontology that the states and international system structure have.

Wendt proposes three types of culture in anarchy that are possibly appear by states' endeavor in the international system: 1) Hobbesian, 2) Lockean, 3) Kantian. First, the Hobbesian culture that appeared in 17th century refers to the state of "leviathan"[38] that states conceive another as an enemy and the violence is likely the

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[36] Ibid...p. 98-135
[37] Ibid...p. 309
[38] Thomas Hobbes, (1666), Leviathan, Eds. by C. B. Mcpherson, (1982), Penguin Classics; New Ed edition

primary tool to survive. Second, the Lockean culture, which has been shown since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, permits states to consider each other as a competitor possibly using the violence to achieve one's interest, but they cannot eliminate each other. Third, in the Kantian culture, states can be viewed as friends working on their security collectively and dealing with a conflict in a peaceful way. According to Wendt, the Kantian structure can prevail in the international system by change in the way states see each other. He clarifies that there can be one of two perceptions states acquire during the accumulation of interactions: the reproduction of egoistic vs. the change to other-regarding. Considering the international structure is made of what states do, if states endeavor to put other-regarding actions, the collective identity that includes others in the definition of 'self' can be built.[39] He argues that this is currently appeared among western democratic countries.[40]

3.2.2. Beyond Constructivism: Wendt's State Systemic Project

Distinctiveness Wendt's constructivist approach attains is rooted from his "states systemic project"[41] While other constructivists try to see states as one of

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[39] Alexander Wendt, (1999), ibid...p. 336-42
[40] Ibid...p. 258-299
[41] Ibid...p. 7

various societal structures and put more emphasis on social institutions,[42] Wendt lays

states as the agents in the international system. This is due to the two evidences: 1)

the functionality state has in reality, 2) a corporate agency as what state is. It may be

seen odd that Wendt as a constructivist adopts the way Neo-realism deals with the

concept of state because state can be considered one kind of many structures people

construct in the constructivist logic. According to Wendt, it is true that globalization

of the world weakens the importance of nation-state as the only actor in international

politics, and many interactions of non-state units are taking place. However, "states

are still the primary medium through which the effects of other actors on the

regulation of violence are channeled into the world system……[and] systemic

change ultimately happens through states."[43] For him, as it is odder if one does not

take a tree-centric approach in observation on forest, one must employ the state

centric approach in observation on the states system.

In order to show how states are constituted as unitary actors in the

international system, Wendt, first, present the definition of state that illuminates

"transhistorical, [and] cross-cultural essence[s]."[44] "[T]he essential state is an

organizational actor embedded in an institutional-legal order that constitutes it with

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[42] To explore more on this, see, Nicholas Onuf, (1989), <u>World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations</u>, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press and Friedrich Kratochwil, (1989), <u>Rules, Norms and Decisions: On the Conditions of Practical and Legal Reasoning in International Relations and Domestic Affairs</u>, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[43] Alexander Wendt, (1999), ibid…p. 9
[44] Ibid…p. 201

sovereignty and a monopoly on the legitimate use of organized violence over a society in a territory."[45] This essence discerns that states cannot be reduced to other social structures or individuals who constitute them. Second, he elaborates how an unobservable corporate agency gets to have a "life" just as human in the states system. Wendt points out that although what one sees as a state is at most the government, state is more than the sum of individual governmental actions. For example, "Had Bob Dole won the 1996 election, even though the US government would have changed the US state would have remained the same."[46] It is due to rather the structure of collective knowledge that individuals share and reproduce than an individual's or a group of people's belief. "A group of individuals only becomes a government, in other words, in virtue of the state which it instantiates."[47] Giving states ontological independence upon their units inside, Wendt presents how states become unitary actors. People in states accept the obligation to act together on behalf of collectivity, and by reproductions throughout time, it is institutionalized. Also, this unity is represented by the authorization mechanism. Any actions taken by members are attributed to the corporate body, namely state. Finally, just as a human body cannot be an actor without self-consciousness of "I" as an identity, states attain a collective identity that individuals are continuously aware of. States, in Wendt's

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[45] Ibid...p. 213
[46] Ibid...p. 217
[47] Ibid...p. 218

theory, are the actors who think and know what they want much as a person.

It seems that those factors Wendt presented to explain states as the agents are not related to interactions among states in the system level. Wendt asserts, more shockingly to other constructivists in international relations, that states are pre-social, which have essential needs for physical survival, autonomy, economic well-being, and collective self-esteem. What he means by "pre-social" is that states do not "presuppose other states (a state can be a state all by itself),"[48] and are "ontologically prior to the state system."[49] This can seem to be problematic in constructivist methodology because the above implies that states are not under the continuous process of construction but given when to view interactions among states in the state system level. Wendt explains that neither systemic approach nor constructivism can handle everything at once. He continues that there are different levels of social construction, and what he focuses is not on the formation of the individual state identity or foreign policy but strictly on the political structure of relations among states in the system level. In sum, for Wendt, in so far as states have independent existence prior to the states system, the political system can be separated from other systems in the international arena, and it is possible for him to concentrate only on the system level phenomena that are also different from phenomena in internal

[48] Ibid...p. 245
[49] Ibid...p. 244

structures such as the behavior and the preference of an individual state.[50]

3.3. Conclusion

This chapter has shown that Wendt denies the permanence of the anarchy culture in international politics. Focusing on the process of co-constitutive operation states and the international system have, he addresses that if states change, the current anarchy culture changes. In his argument, depending on what states do, the self-help egoistic anarchy culture can alter to others-regarding one such as the Kantian model.

To elaborate the above, Wendt employs two different methodologies, constructivist methodology and the state centric systemic approach. He sees the contents of the international system are always on process because the contents are what states constantly produce by relations. Thus, there cannot be a permanent property of the international system. However, he gets away from constructivist methodology by having states as given. In his state centric systemic approach, what to be focused are only actions of states shown in the international political system level. In order to confine the extent of analysis, Wendt sees the construction operation in domestic level and that in the international system level separated.

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[50] Ibid...p. 1-15, p. 245

IV. Critique

The main purpose of this chapter is to show how contradicting and, thereby, misleading Wendt's theory is. There have been many critiques on Wendt's theory of international politics. Some scholars point out that Wendt's theory is too abstract yet does not provide empirical cases to prove the validity.[51] Others criticize him for logical flaws caused in parts where he adopts various schools of methodology within his theory of international politics.[52] In contrast to those critiques, this chapter is interested in the overall logical contradiction. In order to elaborate on the above, first, how Wendt's art of constructing disappears when he discusses the international system will be shown. Second, this paper will discern that the problems arisen the above are more crucial than he assumed and contain dangerous notions of world politics.

4.1. Violation of the Art of Constructing

[51] Empirical studies said to be supporting Wendt's constructivism seem to miss the mark. Wendt is clear of his objectives in his theory: focusing on the system level analysis, not on identity formation of a certain state and a group of states. Those works are mostly about the importance of shared idea in structural changes or the process of identity formation which are not relevant to Wendt's concern on the relations among states in the system as a whole. See for examples, Chaim D. Kaufmann and Robert A. Pape, (1999),...ibid. and Douglas Porch, (2000),...ibid.
[52] See, Friedrich Kratochwil, (2006), "Constructing a New Orthodoxy?; Wendt's Social Theory of International Politics and the Constructivist Challenge," in Eds. by Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander, (2006), Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and His Critics, Routledge, p. 21-56, Brglez Milan, (2001), "Reconsidering Wendt's meta-theory: blending scientific realism with social constructivism," *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 4 (4): p. 339-62, Patomaki Heikki and Colin Wright, (2000), "After postpositivism? The promises of critical realism," *International Studies Quarterly*, 44(2), p. 213-37

It is important to recall that Wendt's constructivism has several key arguments that can be explained with the art of constructing. He emphasizes 'process,' in viewing the structure of the international system. The current feature of anarchy is not a given structure that cannot change because it is what states make of it. Thus, for him, the system is in the process of constructing, not at the end. Also, he shows the interdependency between agents and structure. Structure cannot exist without actions agents take. This means that, hypothetically, the event A in the structure X comprehends the agents Y at the same time, unlike individualism reduces the cause of A to Y while structuralism reduces the cause of A to X. In this light, agents and structure obtains the unity and continuity in time and space under an event. In perfect accordance with the constructivist logic, he provides an explanation on how states and the state system are being constructed. On the other hand, he explains domestic constructions by looking at how states become distinct from other social structures by people. It seems that both do not have a logical problem within its own level.

However, the methodological problem starts when he excuses his taking domestic and international structure in separate levels of constructing. When an event happening in the international system is constructed by states, it must happen

to individuals within the states at the very same time and place as well. In other words, states, the international system, and human as an actual active actor in states and the international system must attain unity in the name of constructing because actions, structure, and event in the international system are in fact all made by and emerged to human inside. States as a given concept cannot attain the unity because an observation only on states' actions in the system level does not tell Wendt what is really going among people in states. In his methodology, for example, a shared idea among states can also be shared among people but at the same time it cannot. It means that his methodology constantly bears the question whether states' actions are what people inside do or do not, and cannot answer this by itself. This leads his theory to be unprepared for a sudden change in the international system derived purely by domestic change or change in a non-state arena, which should not be a problem at all in the constructivist logic.

His theoretical reason for state as a given concept is not relevant to the matter at all. He admits that states are a structure constructed by individuals within. However, they are distinctive from these individuals. Wendt strongly contends that states are ontologically different from just aggregate of the individuals and constructed uniquely compared with other structures in society. Thus, states themselves can exist as agents. No one argues that states as one type of distinctive

structure really exist and affect independently upon individuals and that they are the primary actors in the state system. However, in the same sense, no one believes that a structure can eat, walk, think and act just as an independent human. How can they have effects without people who produce and reproduce them by actions? The distinctiveness, strong effects and roles in the international system, and ontological independence must presuppose human actions just as what he said in explaining the agent-structure problem. Thus, the reason he provides does not make up for the logical defect, and it is impossible for his theory to be theoretically open to include the time and space consistency among state, the international system and human.

There is a dilemma in the art of constructing. If Wendt includes human actions in his level of analysis, which constitutes theoretical consistency, there are too many variables other than 'political' ones to deal with. This makes him incapable of elaborating his systemic approach for the Kantian structure because his concentration only on political structure in the international system will be challenged by variables from other structures. At the same time, if he theoretically ignores human actions, he fails to comprehend the concept of the on-going process, which is made by human, in the international state system just as the Neo-realism he criticized in the same light. Wendt seems to follow the latter. What he has to pay for the choice is bigger than what he assumes. For instance, Wendt argues that states

have a tendency to be egoistic in their first relations to others.[53] In his level of

analysis, the tendency is already given. However, his art of constructing shows that

the tendency is constructed by people probably through the domestic history of

conflicts experienced before. If this is reduced to the states' action, which shows its

given tendency during interactions with others, the domestic level of construction

cannot have the status of on-going process that connects past and present. This can

also mean that people somehow stopped constructing in domestic level at some point.

Then, his assumption becomes as one that people are determined by the states'

tendency in first interaction in the system level. In this logic, the international system

cannot be seen in process because the actual actor who continuously operate process

is determined by Wendt's living creature—states. Consequently, he cannot address

that anarchy is what states make of it because without process, states cannot

construct anarchy.

4.2. Implications

The theoretical flaws discussed in the first part above cause the separation

between substances and consequences in reality. One may argue that these can be

ignored because a theory cannot comprehend every aspects of human life and they

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[53] Alexander Wendt, (1999), ibid...p. 306, 322-3.

are not crucially related to his innovative argument that anarchy can be altered by states. On the surface, cooperation taking place among western democratic states these days is certainly the sign of the process to Kantian culture of anarchy Wendt proposed. However, this is the case only in his system level of analysis. People in weak states may see the Kantian culture as not more than a cartel of strong powers and a growing coercion upon them. In the appearance, in the name of state, weak states can cooperate with strong powers, but, inside, also have discontent that may bring about conflict in the system level in the long term as history often shows.[54] In this case, no one can predict that the Kantian anarchy Wendt proposed can be established in a substantive level as well, only by looking at the system level actions of states. He must not miss that people, which are true substances of the states system, understand and view the world every second in their own contexts as his humanized states do.

When one elicits the conclusion without substances, it is likely to be teleology. Despite the international system is always on process that does not tell one the direction, Wendt believes in historical progress.[55] It seems that Wendt's definition of peace in the international system apparently means no war between

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[54] For the endless conflict between strong and weak, see, Ibn Khaldun, The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History, Trans. Franz Rosenthal, Eds. by N.J. Dawood (1967), Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 93-94, 136-42, 286.

[55] Katalin Sarvary, (2001), "Devaluating Deplomacy? A critique of Alexander Wendt's conception of progress and politics," Journal of International Relations and Development, 4(4), p. 380-402

states at the moment since he ignores substances while viewing the states system.

The 'peace' in this logic does not explain anything about the true sense of stability of

the international system. Just as the terrorist group al-Qaida hit the mainland U.S. in

2001, there can be violent conflicts between states and non-state actors in the

condition where there is no war among states. Moreover, those violent conflicts may

lead to a war between states as the U.S. invaded Iraq in the name of the war against

terrorism. Taking substances into account, there is no crucial evidences that the

Kantian structure in his methodology obtains the status of progress, and also the

Kantian anarchy, which he means by substances, appears in the entire system. Then,

there is no point to merely present the model. It can be a corny statement that the

Kantian culture can appear only for a moment in an endless process or only in some

parts of the system because substances such as diplomacy, movement of non-state

actors, and various cognitions upon an issue formed by the domestic level of

construction make the system always on process. This is what Wendt's theoretical

target, Neo-realism, has argued since the end of cold war. That is, there cannot be a

change *of* the entire system but only a change in the system, which does not

eliminate the self-help culture in anarchy.[56] Thus, it seems that the anarchy of

Kantian culture Wendt presented without concern on substances is one kind of

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[56] Kenneth Waltz, (2000), "Structural Realism after the Cold War," *International Security*, Vol. 25, No.1, p. 5

typical American teleology that strongly believes in progress and evolution in human history.[57]

Wendt's teleology, which is formed without taking substances into account, can produce a logic that justifies what superpowers do. Although his intention of presenting the Kantian model is not to argue that it must or will appear in the international system, the condition that his theory cannot produce counterevidence[58] makes his argument an ideology. In history, there was no such system as the current international system. Also, the Kantian culture shared among western democratic states cannot be found in history nor can in other regions now. In this condition, he views the Kantian culture as a progress that is desired by people. Thus, if there is a war between Kantian states and an exogenous third state, the third state at all times becomes an evil threat to peace—progress of history— that the Kantian states need to defeat all together. His theory with this defective point is likely to be used as an ideology by superpowers in the pursuit of their own interest. Moreover, his teleology without concerns on substances calls for integration of identity among states. This can bring up the question of whether "peace" should be a given priority over other values such as freedom of action (including freedom from interference) or justice."[59]

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[57] Stanley Hoffmann, (1977), "An American Social Science: International Relations," *Daedalus*, Summer 1977, p. 41-59

[58] Yang, Joon-hui, (2001), "Wendt's Constructivist Challenge on Walt's Neo-Realism," *Kook-je-jung-chi-non-chong*, Vol. 41 (3), p. 40-46

[59] Katalin Sarvary, (2006), "No place for politics? Truth, progree and the neglected role of diplomacy in Wendt's theory of history," in Eds. by Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander, (2006), ibid…p. 170

The constructivist process takes variety of cognition that individuals have for granted. For instance, democracy itself does not tell one whether it is good in any condition. The important criteria to judge are the contents and process of democracy in resonant with contextuality of individual states. However, in Wendt's theory, if the type of democracy cannot be viewed acceptable in some states, those states become the target to fix.

4.3. Conclusion

This chapter has shown that Wendt's theory fails to have theoretical consistency. The defects are rooted from his belief that constructing in the system and in the domestic one can be taken separately. Based on this, Wendt sees states as given units in the international system, and thereby ignores the notion of human. As examined with the art of constructing, the time and space gap between the international system and people as true actors take place in his theory. The gap made the theory impossible to grasp the substantive aspects of affairs in international politics, and consequently degraded his main purpose of explaining the structural change down to a mere corny self-evident statement and a dream without logic.

Additionally, similar to critiques made on Neo-realism long ago[60], this chapter

pointed out a dangerous implication his theoretical defects can generate. That is, it is

super powers oriented in that they can use them as ideology and justification of

international interference.

V. A Possible Theoretical Alternative

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[60] See, Robert Keohane, (1984), "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond," in Eds. by Ada Finifter, (1984), <u>Political Science: The state of Discipline</u>, Washington: The American Political Science Association, p. 503-540

As Niklas Lumann points out, the ontological status of structure is not constituted by each individual's property in relations. It is constructed by actions, which Lumann called communications, between people.[61] Wendt seems to be aware of the constructivist definition of structure because the structuration theory where he adopted constructivist methodology elaborates on its arguments under the basic premise of constitutive relationship between human actions and structure. According to Giddens, structure is "rules and resources, recursively implicated in the reproduction of social systems. Structure exists only as **memory traces**, the organic basis of **human knowledgeability**, and as **instantiated in action**."[62] In this definition, constitutive effects agent and structure have upon each other do not refer to ontological interdependence by their **beings** but by actual agent's **actions**. Actions cannot be done by states because they are not a living creature. In this light, Wendt needs the notions of human to be included in his approach if he tries to explain the constructing process of a system.

However, this is difficult. As Wendt addresses, "we cannot study everything

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[61] Niklas Luhmann, (1984), <u>Social Systems</u>, Trans. by John Bednarz, Jr., with Dirk Baecker, Foreword by Eva M. Knodt, (1995), Standford University Press, p. 137
[62] Anthony Giddens, (1984), <u>The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration</u>, Cambridge: Polity Press,   p. 6

at once."[63] Having the notions of human in the constructivist logic seems impossible to produce a system level analysis because one must include everything that is being done by people inside the system. To avoid this difficulty, one must limit the scope of observation by a given concept such as states. This may seem to be inevitable for constructivism in a study of the entire international system because other constructivists cannot get rid of the problem of a theoretical starting point as given, either.[64]

This chapter argues that abandoning theoretical consistency cannot be a trade off because it can generate a false conclusion. Especially when there is an alternative methodological way to include the notion of human in the system level analysis without theoretical inconsistency, Wendt's theoretical inconsistency cannot be excused or considered as an option.

The main purpose of this chapter is to modify Wendt's theory by including the notion of human, state and international system in a consistent way. With the concern on the art of constructing, this chapter will first introduce the new way of seeing agent and structure by adopting the concept of 'habitus' from a constructivist approach in sociology. Then, it will discuss the notion of uncertainty, which is brought up by the new concepts, in expecting a change of the international system.

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[63] Alexander Wendt, (1999), ibid...p. 14
[64] Maja Zehfuss, (2002), <u>Constructivism in International Relations</u>, Cambridge University Press, p. 247-245

Finally, with the developed concepts and notion, this paper will examine the possibility of systemic transformation to the Kantian culture.

5.1. Redefinition of Agent and Structure by the Art of Constructing

In viewing agent and human, the art of constructing can be applied. As shown in the overview of Wendt's constructivism in chapter 3, human and structure presuppose each other in order to exist. These two are not separated in actions that operate constructing. In this regard, four truisms of the art of constructing about human and structure can be suggested.

1. Human is in endless constructing in society.

2. Structure, thereby, is in endless constructing.

3. Different kinds of structure are in constructing while one is involved in only one kind.

4. Individual humans are engaged in different kinds of constructing at the same time.

Concerning the four truisms above, this section will redefine human and structure.

5.1.1. Agent, Structure and Habitus

Many scholars including Wendt seem to be confused with the real meaning of structure. Since they see individuals through a structure, the structure is seen as a constant existence. In this methodology, observers naturally posit the condition individuals in the structure are constantly engaged in that structure.[65] However, for the professor, an educational structure exists only when he teaches or works in university. Also, he is not engaged in only one structure. When he talks to his son, he is involved in a family structure, whereas when he buys stocks, he is in an economic one. In the perspective of individual human, structure is that appears temporarily only at the moment people relate with each other by action.

The misunderstanding caused by the structure centered methodology results in a neglect on the interconnectivity of structures in human action. Individuals in one structure are also engaged in other structures and, thereby, have memories of experiences in their mind, which can affect his actions in the structure. For instance, if one is deceived by a fund manager in the stock market, he is apt to doubt on

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[65] It seems that theories employing structure as the unit of analysis have this problem. Depending on which structure a theorist focuses on, people become subordinate to the structure. For example, theorists in Marxian school see relations of humans in economic structure as the primary source of a social change. In their methodology, what human does in his entire life is relating himself to others only in economic structures. Also, theorists who believe that development of technology is the source of a social change, people in their theory are subordinate to the structure of technology in society. For the former, see, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, (1962), Selected Works, Vol. 1, Foreign Languages Publishing House: Moscow and Immanuel Wallerstein, (1974), The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century, Academic Press. For the latter, Marshall McLuhan, (1964), Understanding Media: The Extentions of Man, New York: Signet Books and H. Russell Bernard and Pertti Pelto, (1972), Technology and Social Change, New York: Macmillan.

people whom he interacts with in his tennis club, and his action will be based on the doubt. In this case, his economic structure is interconnected with his cultural structure. Since he plays a role in cultural structure as well as economic structure, these two structures can affect each other by actions he puts.

If one ignores the interconnectivity, he is apt to draw a wrong conclusion. Human action is not rooted only on a structure but many structures he constructs in everyday life. Thus, perceiving one's action in a structure only as the action derived from and in context of the structure is an oversimplification that cannot reflect reality sufficiently. For example, Wendt proposed the Kantian model of international system only by looking at political structure. The conclusion about the possibility of a change of the international system cannot be plausible. Even if he sets people as the agents, his methodology ignores the fact that bad experiences in an economic situation can lead people to have the tendency of doubt and affect the actions put in the political structure.

In sum, the redefinition of human and structure must be provided following the four notions. First, structure affects human in action only when he interacts with people in structure. Second, structural effects attain constancy by human memory. Third, structures are synthesized in an action. Finally, human remembers the past by memory.

Taking habitus into account, it is reasonable to define structure as that within human. According to Pierre Bourdieu,
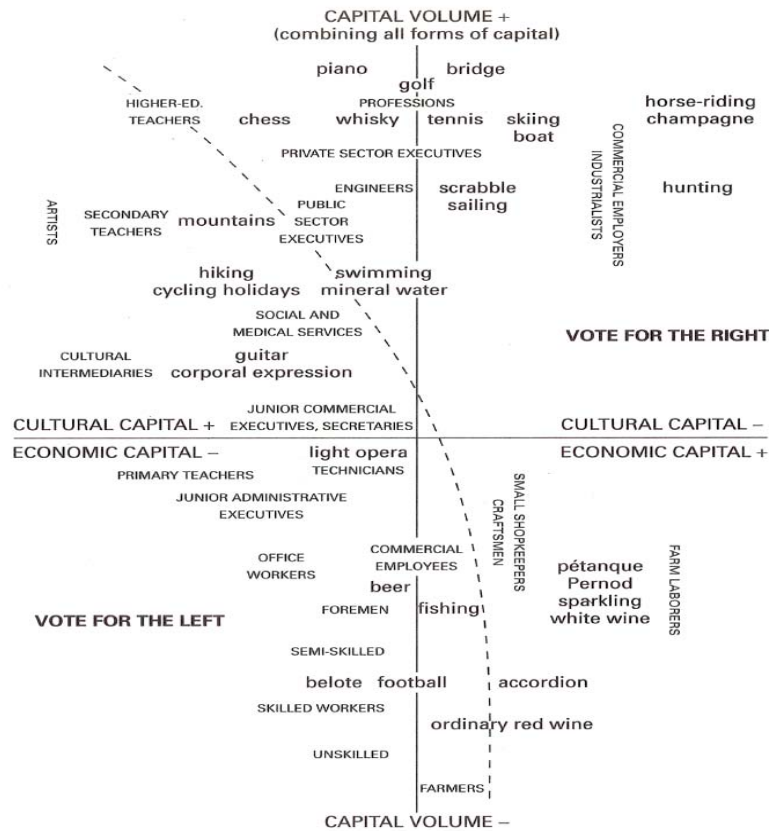
> [t]he habitus is a set of dispositions which incline agents to act and react in certain ways. The dispositions generate practices, perceptions and attitudes which are 'regular' without being consciously co-ordinated or governed by any 'rule……Dispostions are acquired through a gradual process of inculcation in which early childhood experiences are particularly important. Through a myrid of mundane processes of training and learning……, the individual acquires a set of dispositions which literally mould the body and become second nature……As a durably installed set of dispositions, the habitus tends to generate practices and perceptions, works and appreciations, which concur with the conditions of existence of which the habitus is itself the product.'[66]

What habitus implies is that individuals absorb and remember structural contents into their mind during each action with others. In life, individuals continuously experience different kinds of structures by relating themselves to others in society. Although a structure appears temporarily in an interaction, the structural contents are remained within individuals. For instance, the identity of father under the family structure remains even after the interaction with his son is temporarily completed. He is still father during the process of constructing in other structures such as economic and political ones because he remembers the family structure. Also,

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[66] John B. Thompson, (1991), "Editor's Introduction," in Pierre Bourdieu, (1982), <u>Language and Symbolic Power</u>, Eds. and Intro. by John B. Thompson, Trans. by Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson, (1991), Polity Press, p. 12

since it is not only one structure but many kinds of structures that individuals experience in their life, structures are synthesized within their mind. As a bankrupted person in economic structure, for instance, cannot be a student anymore in educational structure because he cannot pay for the tuition, these structures are not separated within human. In the <Figure-2> Bourdieu presented, depending on which economic and cultural position one stands at, dispositions in other structural contents vary too. If economic and cultural structure and other structures operate separately inside individuals, a structure with different contents cannot affect individuals' preference in other social structures as the figure shows. In this point of view, the definition of structure can be changed. Structure is the one within human mind, which is synthesized with other structures. Thus, when agent and structure are constructing each other, it is the same that individuals are constructing their synthesis of structures within themselves by relations to others.

There are two differences that *structure within* has comparing to *structure outside* that Wendt's theory is based on. First, a structural change in one social arena such as economic life is the consequence of actions formed by the hybrid different kinds of structures within individuals. Wendt's political structure in the states system, for instance, is supposed to be determined by methodologically categorized political actions isolated from other structural contents. In this categorization, the state

CAPITAL VOLUME +
(combining all forms of capital)

piano | bridge
golf
HIGHER-ED. PROFESSIONS horse-riding
TEACHERS chess whisky | tennis skiing champagne
boat
PRIVATE SECTOR EXECUTIVES

ENGINEERS scrabble hunting
PUBLIC sailing
ARTISTS SECONDARY mountains SECTOR
TEACHERS EXECUTIVES

hiking swimming
cycling holidays mineral water

SOCIAL AND
MEDICAL SERVICES VOTE FOR THE RIGHT

CULTURAL guitar
INTERMEDIARIES corporal expression

JUNIOR COMMERCIAL
CULTURAL CAPITAL − EXECUTIVES, SECRETARIES CULTURAL CAPITAL −
ECONOMIC CAPITAL − light opera ECONOMIC CAPITAL +
PRIMARY TEACHERS TECHNICIANS

JUNIOR ADMINISTRATIVE
EXECUTIVES

OFFICE COMMERCIAL SMALL SHOPKEEPERS
WORKERS EMPLOYEES CRAFTSMEN pétanque FARM LABORERS
beer Pernod
VOTE FOR THE LEFT FOREMEN fishing sparkling
white wine
SEMI-SKILLED

belote football accordion
SKILLED WORKERS
ordinary red wine
UNSKILLED

FARMERS

CAPITAL VOLUME −

<Figure-2> The space of social positions and the space of lifestyles (the dotted line indicates probable orientation
toward the right or left)[67]

action—actually human action—is posited as the action purely derived from political

structure existing outside human. That is, people inside of the states whom Wendt is

observing become actors living only for political structure. Under this premise,

Wendt can certainly predict a change of the international system. Even if people in

states doubt on others in different states, in Wendt's logic, the accumulation of

interactions will eliminate bad memories of people towards each other. As a result,

since what people do and think are only about relations among states, people can

[67] Pierre Bourdieu, (1998), Practical Reason; On the Theory of Action, Polity Press, p. 5

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finally include others in their definition of interest. However, *structures within* shows

that anything happens in one social arena constitute agents who are with *structures*

within, namely, all structures the agents contain. In this case, a change of the

international system derived from one structure is not easy to predict because any

event outside the political structural arenas will affect that agents.

Second, *structure within* includes concrete history of agent. In the concept of

structure outside in constructivist logic, history of agents is easy to be overlooked

because the agents are also categorized by the structure. What the methodology sees

is only a current feature of structural contents that individuals have, and when a

change of the structure is concerned, it is apt to posit the agents as a new starter of

constructing without memories having been built since the past. For example, Wendt

methodologically separated the international structure from human. Thereby, people

in the international system who in fact experienced all of three types of the anarchy

culture are classified by one of the cultures people in certain states share in the

present. In this methodology, the fact that people in the Kantian culture also

experienced Hobbesian and Lockean culture in the past, and therefore have

memories of them can be easily neglected because the starting point of the

observation is based on the classification. However, the on-going process means not

only happening now but also happened before. It refers to the time continuity of

constructing throughout history. For instance, if Wendt's Hobbesian culture has remained long time throughout history in the entire international system, this means, in the concept of *structures within*, it is habitus of people which reproduces the culture at the present time. In other words, memories inside the human mind are being realized through relations with others in every structure one is engaged in.

5.2. Uncertainty and Habitus in the Art of Constructing

In newly built concepts of human and structure, uncertainty is an important condition to study a change of the international system. In the new concepts, a change can be expected by taking individuals' memories of habitus into oblivion. To put it differently, a change can be obtained when there is no uncertainty which stimulates individuals to refer to knowledge. If individuals know everything, knowledge, which is built throughout history, is no longer needed. They may start a new constructing at the present, and attain a desirable change because they know what consequences each action brings. In this sense, whether uncertainty can be eliminated and overcome by people or not is a primary condition to concern before examining environments of the international system that may or may not lead people to attain the Kantian model.

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Concerning the art of constructing, uncertainty is generated by constructing. The world consists of constructions in different time and space, which makes impossible for all people to be engaged in all types of constructions. In this sense, although one does not intend to generate a new situation, the situation created by constructing in a place becomes new to other places. When another group experiences a new situation, the group creates another new situation for others who are to face it in the future. In the circumstance where continuous genesis of new situation takes place, individual has only knowledge built through past experiences. Thus, new situations individuals face at the present come as uncertainty.

Uncertainty cannot be overcome by human in any condition because human himself generates uncertainty. A change within oneself also creates uncertainty for others and his own habitus. According to Bourdieu, habitus does not only reproduce but also adjust itself to new situations.[68] When habitus of an individual is adjusted by new experiences, he generates uncertainty to others who will interact with him in the future because the adjusted habitus produces actions that are new to people who knew him in the past. Also, a change in one structure within an individual himself comes as uncertainty for other structures within. For example, a teacher suddenly becames jobless because he is laid off from school. The change in economic

[68] Patrice Bonnewitz, (1997), *Premieres lecons sur La sociologie de P. Bourdieu*, Trans. by Moon Jyung-ja, (2000), Dong-moon-sun, p.92-103

structure within him brings about uncertainty of his power in family and the continuous acquisition of cultural pleasure. Moreover, what one knows through experiences becomes uncertainty for himself as well. He is aware of a possible change of others any moment, which can be given by new situations. As he learns that he can change, he knows others can change as well. In this sense, uncertainty is what people make and live by.

5.3. Reexamining Possibility of Transformation to Kantian System

It seems that Wendt's change of the international system cannot be achieved for three reasons. First, interconnected structural contents within human constantly interfere with the process in the political structure. The characteristics of Hobbesian and Lockean culture are egoistic states with self-help culture. These are not contents prevailing only in the level of international and political system. Negative situations individuals experience everyday life such as domestic violence, crime, conflicts derived from poverty or unequal distribution of wealth drive them to keep the self-help culture although they seem not closely relevant to international politics. What make culture is individuals and individuals are hybrid of all structures they experienced in their life because they do not commit themselves into only one

constructing. When a new situation is given in the international arenas, individuals act based not only on experiences in politics among other states but also on all experiences they had in every structure. For example, once a person is deceived by another in everyday life, and if that threatens his quality of life, it is natural for him to see things in doubt. This, in fact, is what we are experiencing in everyday life, and international affairs are one part of life.

Second, the extent of the international system is extremely wide. The international system is an aggregate of all constructing happening in human life by its extent. Many matters unrelated to the political structure of the system level are being generated during the process and force individuals in the structure to reproduce their old perception. One state's economic development by the emergence of high technology comes as a future threat to others. It is because their habitus has been formed by experiences of war caused by a broken balance. To abandon this habitus, there should be constant interactions strictly focused on the two states without any interference from other matters from other structures inside the states and outside the political structure. However, this is impossible first because society inside the states can change anytime by an impact from other levels. As Copeland points out, a dramatic change in domestic society such as revolution can alter the state's

attitude. [69] Also, other states are also constructing while the two states are constructing. These different constructions can affect each other anytime. For instance, the relations of North Korea and Japan were deeply affected by the relations of South Korea and Japan in 1970's. [70] In this sense, the state that a state interacts with comes as complexity which makes people realize the incapability of human to know everything happening in the world. Once people know the possibility of change in domestic society and complexity in the international system, it is not easy for them to abandon the old perception of doubt already formed throughout history.

Finally, differences constantly cause different perceptions among states on the same matter. Since the relations among states are the relations of individuals with habitus formed in the past in different space, there are always differences among states. For example, democracy in Asian states and Western states is different[71] because when Asian states adopted it, they already had habitus formed within their society. Although constructing in the world wide level goes on continuously, differences remain because different people are not constructing in only one place together, but in various places simultaneously. The gap among people in different

[69] Dale C. Copeland, (2000), "The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Relaism," *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 203

[70] According to Hyun, the relations of North Korea and Japan were developed rapidly when Japan had conflicts with South Korea. Also, their relations were retrograded when South Korea was having good relationship with Japan. See, Hyun, In-taek, (1994), "The Relations of North Korea and Japan: The Cause of Structural Change," *Kook-je-jung-chi-non-chong*, 34 (2), p. 58-59

[71] Francis Fukuyama, (1995), "Confucianism and Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 6 (2) and Clark Neher, (1994), "Asian Style Democracy," *Asian Survey*, 34 (11)

places cannot be united due to the endless genesis of new situations these people make. Under this circumstance, people in weak states may see the Kantian structure prevailing in a region as the process that western super powers maximize their own interest and reduce the cost in defending from enemies who are different from them. With this perception, weak states can cooperate with strong powers merely because of fear to become one of their enemies. However, system is always on process. Corporate identity achieved by coercion can be overthrown in anytime just as history showing the circulation of "challenge and response"[72] Therefore, even if the Kantian culture is visible in the international system level, differences remained inside the system can stimulate people to refer to what history has shown.

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter has shown that Kantian culture prevailing in the entire international system is impossible to attain. To elaborate the above, this chapter first examined the new definition of agent and structure by using habitus, which enables one to have consistency in the art of constructing. According to the art of constructing, human is involved in structures in different kinds of social arena. Thereby, an action in one structure is not derived only from the contents of the

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[72] Arnold Toynbee, (1961), Reconsideration, New York: Oxford University Press.

structure but from habitus as the unity of all structures within. Second, uncertainty, which stimulates people to refer to habitus, was discussed. It seems that uncertainty cannot be removed because people continuously make uncertainty by constructing. Based on this, finally, this paper examined the international system and argued that the system cannot provide environments for individuals to abandon habitus. First, it is because there are many contents happening in everyday life, which reproduce the memories of the self-help culture. Second, complexity in the international system prevents one from abandoning habitus. Third, difference constantly generated by constructing in the world makes people to follow habitus in the long run.

VI. Conclusion of Thesis

This study started from the question whether constructivist methodology allows Wendt to ignore the notion of human in the international system. In order to answer this question, this study examined a basic logic that constructivist provides. By denying an absolute truth and emphasizing process of the knowledge construction, constructivism shows the basic logic, the art of constructing. That is, whether one desires or not, life of human is in endless process of constructing, and, thereby constructing which continuously generates newness for human to construct operates anytime and everywhere without discontinuity.

As Wendt calls himself a constructivist, he is also based on the art of constructing. By denying anarchy in the international system as a given fact, he criticizes Neo-realism by bringing up the agent-structure problem. He emphasizes the constitutive effects between states and the international system, which explains that the international system is the international system only when there are states. In other words, without actions that states put, the current feature of the anarchy system cannot exist. This implies that anarchy has no logic in itself because the contents of it

are what states do. Thus, the self-help culture of the international system is a momentarily shared idea among states in process that can alter when states change their perception upon others.

However, when examined by the art of constructing, Wendt's theory cannot attain consistency due to the concept of states as given agents. His given concept brings about a critical methodological flaw. That is, the notion of human who is the actual actor cannot take place in his theory. Wendt assumes that construction in the international system level and domestic level can be taken separately. As a result, his methodology implicitly divides time and space of state and of people in the states although the international affairs and state actions are in fact derived from people. This implies that process in the international system can be in question whether process of people in the system is the same one. With this defect, whether the process of constructing in the international system attains the time continuity cannot be clarified. Moreover, the gap produces a gap between substances and appearances in international affairs since what people do is the real substance of international affairs, and what states do is merely a part of what people do. Consequently, Wendt's methodology misses important variables caused by the dynamic nature of people inside states, which affect the international affairs.

After recognizing the theoretical inconsistency Wendt's methodological flaw

brought, this study put an attempt to modify Wendt's theory within constructivist logic. To replace the problematic concept of state by human, this paper adopted the concept of habitus from sociology. Habitus is a set of disposition made through experiences of individuals in continuous time. With this concept, the redefinition of human and structures were presented. Habitus is constructed by all kinds of structural contents experienced before, and the kinds are synthesized within human to have a certain disposition. This implies that structures exist in society are stored and synthesized inside the human mind. Also, an action human put in one structure is not derived only from the structural content. Rather, the action is rooted from the memory of his mind, which is mixed with all kinds of experiences in different structures throughout history. The notion of habitus shows that the international political structure and state are a part of the synthesized structures for individuals. Thus, state, the international system and human becomes unified into habitus in both time and space.

Taking habitus into account, Wendt's Kantian model cannot be expected in the international system. The art of constructing shows that constructing continuously generates new situations for individuals to refer to their habitus because they do not have knowledge about the situation. In this circumstance, a change of the self-help international system presupposes environments in reality which lead

individuals take their habitus into oblivion. However, under the condition where uncertainty, which people constantly make by constructing, affects individuals to refer to habitus, the international system does not seem to encourage people to attain the Kantian culture. It is, first, because violence and deception, which enlighten the self-help habitus, happen in individuals' life everyday. Since they keep these bad memories into habitus, there is no possibility that they forget the memories in the international affairs as well. Second, it is due to the extent of the international system. The international system includes all people in the world. Infinite number of unknown constructions for individuals operates in the system, and individuals know that there can be unintended consequences. Third, differences among people in states continuously make different perceptions on a matter. Since differences among states are what constructing generates constantly, it cannot be removed. When differences cannot be unified into one same value, there must be misunderstandings that lead people to pursue the old way to perceive others. Thus, the self-help culture in habitus is not likely to be forgotten.

Consequently, Wendt's arguments related to the Kantian model produce a dangerous notion. Due to his theoretical flaw, the Kantian model currently that is currently appeared among western superpowers can be an ideological tool to justify what superpowers do. Without concern on substances, he views what is constructed

among the western powers as an ideal model. Also, Wendt provides a hope that the

entire international system can achieve the Kantian cultures if all states put an effort.

In this sense, the real contents such as whether strong-powers' interference in weak

states is actually due to their interests or collective defense or an endeavor for the

achievement of the Kantian model cannot be explained clearly. Rather, what those

superpowers do in his theory becomes either a collective defense upon a threat or an

interference with just.

It seems that Wendt puts constructivism and a change in the same line. In

other words, in his theory, the fact that structure is what people construct seems to

naturally promise a change of society as a whole. This seems to be due to the fact

that his constructivism has developed through disagreements on Neo-realism, which

presents the static and permanent international system. Consequently, Wendt's theory

neglects the reproduction of old dispositions people themselves make in the system.

As shown throughout this paper, the achievement of an identical unity in every

individual's interest is out of human capability. It is because, by constructions,

human himself constantly creates complexity that stimulates the reproduction of self-

help culture in his mind. In this sense, unlike what Wendt intends, there cannot be a

change *of* the current system but only a change *in* that. The self-help system in the

entire system level will not change unless people stop engaging themselves in

constructing, which is impossible for a social kind.

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