# The Peace of Westphalia and the World State:
# A case for causal pluralism in International Relations

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**Abstract**

In light of Alexander Wendt's article promulgating the inevitability of a world state, this thesis explores the constitutive conditions surrounding the formation of competing political communities in early modern Europe in order to probe the efficacy of Teleology as an explanatory device in the study of International Relations. During the period of the Peace of Westphalia, there was little indication that the territorial nation state would develop into the dominant political unit it is known as today. By exploring the development of common social structures leading up to, and after Westphalia, it is argued that although its component treaties areregarded as seminal events of history, the development of statehood was an iteratively constituted process that began centuries earlier and continued for centuries thereafter, and was by no means an inevitable outcome to the actors of the period.Using Wendt's article as a foil, and 'Complexity Theory' as a theoretical lens, it is argued herein that change in the international system occurs whenthe practices of its actors modify the rules and norms that constitute the system. Such changes in turn, modify the structure of the system allowing new patterns to 'emerge' through the self-organization of antecedent events.

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An organism cannot be a machine, because a machine has onlymoving force; but an organism has an organizing forcethat cannot be explainedby mechanical motion alone.

Immanuel Kant

**The Peace of Westphalia and the World State:**
**A Case for Causal Pluralism in International Relations**

## Introduction

For centuries, the territorial nation state has been the dominant organized political community in the international system. Accordingly, the study of international relations (IR) has focused primarily on the state as its principal unit of analysis. In recent decades, the emergence of transnational political and microeconomic exchanges among states and non-state actors alike, coupled with advances in technology, a deepening sense of economic interdependence, and shifts towards globalization, have led scholars to inquire whether the relevance of states is gradually being subsumed by the formation of global interests.[1] Issues such as climate change, cross border migration, human trafficking, energy interdependence, resource scarcity, organized crime, and financial crises all reflect areas where the interests of nations routinely overlap one another, often resulting in efforts for greater cooperation.[2]

The apparent drift away from state-centrism has therefore evoked considerable debate about the long-term viability of the state in the wake of a growing list of characteristics that are slowly, but unequivocally recalibrating the international system. The alleged changes that are taking place vis-à-vis the diffusion of power from states to non-state actors[3] call into question whether a central institution of statehood – sovereignty – will continue to remain entrenched, or whether



[1] For example, Kenichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State*, (Harper Collins, 1996), Jean-Marie Guéhenno, *The End of the Nation State,* (University of Minnesota Press, 2000), Ian Angell, *The Information Revolution and the Death of the Nation State,* Political Notes no. 14 (1995).

2 Examples of this include the Kyoto Protocol, which is linked with United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change and the International Conference on Cyber Security, January 9th, 2012. Fordham University, http://www.iccs.fordham.edu/ (accessed May 06, 2012)

[3] Joseph Nye: *The Future of Power,* (Public Affairs Books, 2011), 113

systemic changes incentivizing greater transnational cooperation and ideational exchange will precipitate a fundamental shift away from the sovereign, territorial nation state, and towards global hierarchy.

The historiography of states is routinely married to the 1648 Peace of Westphalia[4], which marked the end of two long wars and ushered in an era of territorial statehood characterized by recognition in territorial integrity, sovereignty, and non-intervention. This however, only represents a snapshot of a process had been ongoing for centuriesand continues to the present. In fact, as Stephen Krasner argues, what most today commonly considerthe Westphalian system of sovereign states has little to do with Westphalia, and is more closely related to developments in the eighteenth century, during which the concepts of autonomy and freedom of intervention from external actors became central to statehood.[5] Thus misconceptions about the specific elements of the Peace of Westphalia and its two component agreements, the Treaties of Münster and Osnabrück, have to an extent misinformed contemporary historical perceptions of states and sovereignty. This is an important point because much of the recent literature on the demise of states treats modern statehood as synonymous with sovereignty and Westphalia; often using both as landmark concepts to illustrate that the discourse on globalization and world governance are merely a disaggregation of a construct that took place in the middle of the seventeenth century.[6]

Quite separately, the discourse surrounding terms like global governance, world state, and world government has been steadily increasing as analysts grapple with the consequences of on going



[4]I use the simple term "Westphalia" to encompass the Peace of Westphalia as well as interchangeably to refer the component treaties of Münster and Osnabrück.

[5] Stephen Krasner, "Rethinking the sovereign state model", Review of International Studies, 27, (2001) 17-42. Krasner cites the influence of Emmerich de Vattel as central to the 'externalization' of sovereignty.

[6]For example, Oscar Schachter, *The Decline of the Nation-State and its Implications for International Law,* Columbia Journal of Transnational Law 36:7 (1997)

changes within the international system. Alexander Wendt, famously suggested that a world state is a historical inevitability based on the increasingly destructive nature of weapons technology and a five step process that willspur the international system from a Hobbesian war against all to a Kantian system of peace, cooperation, and ultimately a world state.[7] In substantiating his claims, Wendt employs teleological reasoning to propose that the international system is evolving towards a final causality (a world state) based on Aristotle's four causes approach. If in 1000 BC there were 600,000 independent political communities on earth and today there are approximately only 200, then, he asserts, it prima facie proves that there is a developmental process guiding the international system.[8] In Wendt's construct, the global struggle for recognition and the logic of anarchy will incentivize iterative changes beginning with a system of states, towards a society of states, then a world society, followed by global collective security, and ultimately a world state.[9]

The world state argument has been attacked on two primary fronts. First, as Vaughn Shannon alleges, Wendt is charged with having abandoned the spirit of the same Constructivist IR that he is synonymous with having developed by undercutting the role of human agency.[10] Teleology, with its core assumptions of directionality and final causation, becomes problematic because "inevitability" and the Constructivist mantra that reality is socially and intersubjectively constructed, and shaped by human agency rather than preordained as a given, appear distinctly at odds with one another. This in Shannon's view reduces agents into a type of motivational



[7]Alexander Wendt, "Why a World State is Inevitable", European Journal of International Relations 9:4. (2003) 491-542

[8] Ibid. 503, Wendt uses anthropologist Robert Carneiro's 1978 assertion that for 99.8 percent of history, humans had lived almost entirely in autonomous groups, which by 1000 BC had increased to 600,000. Charting the decrease to roughly 200 in the present day, Wendt postulated that the historical trend supports the number eventually becoming 1 – a world state.

[9]Ibid, 517

[10] For example, Alexander Wendt, "Social Theory of International Politics"(Cambridge University Press, 1999), Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States make of it", Cambridge University Press, 46:2 (1992) 391-425.

monocausality where the sole purpose of actors becomes their quest for collective recognition that precipitates a world state.[11] By promoting a top-heavy approach that overplays the role of structure while restraining the significance of agency, Wendt, in Shannon's view, squanders an opportunity to present factors that would make a world state possible, rather than inevitable.

Similarly, Paul Hartzog takes Wendt to task on his linking teleological reasoning with self-organization theory. Hartzog argues that Wendt is confused in his definition of what actually constitutes teleology, because his characterization refers to it as "the role of end states channeling system dynamics toward certain outcomes"[12]. As will be examined later, Wendt's blending of terminology such as "end-states, fixed point attractors, and final causality", with self-organization theory can be problematic because self-organization or complexity theory, rather than facilitating final causes, focus onprocesses that emerge through progressive feedback. In short, Hartzog argues that Wendt is actually advancing *Teleonomy*rather than teleology[13], which will be expounded on in the first chapter. The great conundrum of Wendt's world state argument is that it makes blanket predictionson the future of the world without leaving its observers any recourse of falsifying what has yet to happen.

This thesis therefore, will deconflict Wendt's teleology, final causality, and the broader question of change in the international system by examining the period leading up to and immediately after, the Peace of Westphalia. It is argued that the state and the conditions whereby statehood is possible today did not spontaneously arise following the end of feudalism or as a result of the Reformation. The institutions that underpinned territorial statehood had been in the making for



[11]Vaughn P. Shannon, "Wendt's Violation of the Constructivist Project: Agency and Why a World State is Not Inevitable", European Journal of International Relations 2005

[12]Wendt, "Why a world state in inevitable", 501.

[13] Paul B. Hartzog, "Panarchy is what states make of it: Why a world state is not inevitable", Panarchy.com 2005 (Accessed 12 May 2012)

centuries. Likewise territorial sovereignty, interstate cooperation, and freedom of intervention from external units did not arise until further revisions and treaties were incorporated well into the nineteenth century. There was nothing inevitable about the territorial nation state, as it is known today,becoming the dominant political unit to emerge from an era of competing city-states, confederations, and territorial states. Likewise there was also nothing inevitable about states becoming units that would dominate the international system for centuries after the treaties were signed. Nor, did the people who lived in the middle of seventeenth century haveany hint that Westphalia would in later centuries be viewed as a symbolic, if not watershed moment in history that transformed the political topology of world politics for centuries thereafter.

Using Wendt's world state approach as a foil, I will investigate what the expectations of elites and the general publics were during the period immediately following the signing of the treaties. I argue that the interplay of units during the era preceding Westphalia was greatly influenced by mutually constitutive factors. First, a population explosion that began during the high Middle Agesenabled a proliferation in ideas and trade, which was later influenced greatly by the Protestant Reformation. Changes in the system created a construct wherein political units became increasingly competitive, and from which the territorial state emerged the winner. Similarly, it was by no means inevitable that the state that emerged out of the seventeenth century would evolve into the sovereign; largely autonomous political unit it is known as today. Iterative changes took place over time and the notion that states were to be autonomous and impervious from intervention did not solidify until the latter part of the eighteenth century.[14]

Following Wendt's critics, I argue that teleological reasoning based on final causation is unable to account for why Europe transitioned from feudalism to territorial statehood because the

[14]Krasner, "Rethinking the sovereign state model", p17. Krasner argues that sovereignty is not a constant, but rather a construct that has been violated many times over the course of history.

concept of final causation is fundamentally incompatible with the perpetually adaptive nature of the international system. Further, I propose that IR theories such as neorealism, neoliberalism, as well as elements of the constructivist approach, each in their own way, do not account for the underlying complexity of factors required to broadly analyze transhistorical change. A brief, obligatory summary suggests that Waltzian Realists struggle to account for ideational concepts that transcend the rigidly inflexible constraints of anarchy, polarities, relative gains, and balance of power dynamics. By contrast, Liberals take matters a step the right direction by proposing that interests and institutions shape state behavior and preferences, and therefore influence the behavior of governments.[15] This however, falls short in terms of examining specific elements of ideas, shared norms, rules, and the self-identification of individuals within groups. Constructivism fills just such a void, however I propose that the aforementioned qualities offer greater temporal value as part of a systems theory approach that is capable of grappling withthe unpredictable nature transhistorical phenomena.

Probing the role of teleology and systemic change in IR is a worthwhile pursuit given Wendt's notable contributions to IR theory,[16] and the significant interest surrounding Francis Fukuyama's writing on the End of History, in which he alleged "the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government".[17] It also challenges analysts to rethink contemporary notions of causation in IR by proposing that systemic change need not be analyzed exclusively through linear frameworks, or the mechanistic view of cause and effect. Evaluating Wendt's approach through the historical precedent of the period leading up to and after Westphalia can be of value to policy analysts



[15]Andrew Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory ofInternational Politics", International Organization 51 (1997) p.513

[16]Wendt was recently selected as "the scholar who has the greatest influence on the field of international relations in the past twenty years". http://artsandsciences.osu.edu/news/alexander-wendt-selected-top-scholar-in-international-relations (Accessed 28/5/12)

[17]Francis Fukuyama, "Have we reached the end of history"? The Rand Corporation, 1989

seeking to approach the international system through an alternate theoretical lens that side stepsthe repetitive discussions inherent in the rationalist-reflectivist debate that is common in contemporary IR.

This thesis is comprised of three chapters. In chapter one, I examine the concept of causation and teleological reasoning by exploring its history and prior applications within the hard and social sciences. This is done in order understand what it is and how, if at all, it can be applied to answer specific questions about the international system; specifically focusing on Wendt's use of it. I then offer an alternative theoretical framework that corrects problematic elements of Wendt's approach and provides a foundation from which to evaluate macro-level changes. In chapter two, I provide a historical analysis of the conditions leading up to and after the Peace of Westphalia, with a specific emphasis on evaluating the competing units in feudal and post-feudal Europe and whether there was anything inevitable about the eventual dominance of the territorial state. I also examine the range of expectations, both short and long term, following the treaties of 1648, to elucidate whether it was inevitable that the seventeenth century state would evolve into the autonomous, mostly-sovereign units they are widely perceived to be today. In chapter three I argue that a world state is neither possible nor inevitable merely based on historical precedent, but that one*is* possible based on a multiplicity of constitutive conditions that are explored.

## Chapter 1. Teleology and Complexity Theory

### 1.1 Background: Causation

In this chapter I will lay a theoretical foundation that will introduce a different approach to causation by synthesizing elements of existing frameworks to blend into a systems theory that incorporates norms driven Constructivism with Complexity theory. This will then be applied in chapter two.

Exploring whether a world state is inevitable by examining the era surrounding Westphalia as a comparative foil warrants a degree of clarification on what precisely is meant by "inevitable". In *Why a World State is Inevitable*, Alexander Wendt reintroduces the conceptsof teleology and final causationinto IR parlance by proposing that the historical reduction in organized political communities around the world over the past several millennia, combined with increasingly destructive weapons technology, and the transfer of collective group identity from the state to the global level, all point in his view towards the inevitable formation of a world state. Although avoiding any hard predictions, he speculates that this will happen within one to two hundred years.[18]What is problematic to Wendt's effortis that the use of teleological reasoning by scholars in the natural and social sciences has been largely viewed as illegitimatedue primarily to the rejection of final causation as a plausible analytical device.

Prior to the 16th century, contemporary views on causation were informed largely by the works of classical Greek philosophers. This however changed during the time of Rene Descartes when he refined the parameters of causation to refer exclusively to simple "pushing and pulling"

[18]Wendt, "Why a world state in inevitable", p 492.

effects.[19]Following Descartes, the drift away from ancient Greeks was further codified when the philosophy of David Hume advanced the notion of empiricism in which he argued "the search for knowledge should take precedence over the nature of reality".[20]

For Hume, this entailed limiting notions of causation to simple phenomena that were observable to people. Hume's contributions over time served as a methodological guidethat continue to inform and influence modern empiricist traditions to this day, by linking the legitimacy of causation to observable human events and deterministic processes.[21] In doing so, his contributions have also greatly influenced the so-called positivist traditions of the 20th century, including those in the social sciences, by advancingnotions of "if A then B" cause and effect situations and concepts like 'explanatory value' and 'dependent variables' as the new methodological Orthodoxy in IR.[22] Questions about what defines cause have also informed the rationalist-reflectivist debates within IR, as the former have embraced the Humean path of analyzing observable phenomena, whereas the latter, perhaps in defiance of such norms, have gravitated towards a distinctly interpretavist notion of analyzing international politics based on "mutually constitutive" forms. This has led Milja Kurki to argue that post-positivists reflexively reject the concept of causation as a distinctly positivist logic of inquiry, whilst paradoxically making their own inquiries that much like those of positivists, are implicitly grounded in causal logic.[23]

The growing dichotomization about what causation is and how it can be evaluated, I argue, has created a false choice from which IR scholars are expected to tackle the question of "why things

[19]Milja Kurki, "Causes of a Divided Discipline: Rethinking the Concept of Cause in International Relations Theory", (Cambridge University Press) 32:4 2006. P 191
[20]Kurki, 192.
[21] Ibid, 192.
[22] For example, Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *"Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research"*,
[23]Kurki, 199.

happen". Furthermore, Wendt's unorthodox approach in his world state argument, offers a new lens from which to analyze systemic change that has been largely underexplored by subsequent scholars. Thus, I argue that the monocausal, "push-pull" approach is of little benefit towards evaluating macroscopic historical phenomena such as, for example, a hypothetical structural overhaul of the international system from anarchy to hierarchy (a world state), or a similar transformation from feudalism to territorial autonomy and sovereignty during the course of several centuries as will be highlighted in the following chapter. It is helpful to broaden the concept of change in the international system by returning to the approach of the ancient Greeks.

When exploring causation in IR, I will argue that events happen not by a single cause and effect connection between two observable units, but rather by the simple idea that the term "cause" implicitly masks an underlying diversity.[24] Traditional empirical observations of phenomena are informed by complex "deep ontological" social relations that provide a degree of explanatory depth that the interplay of observable variables cannot pick up on.[25] To expand on this as a methodological device, I return full circle to Aristotle in order to flesh out specific elements that may be of benefit to IR analysis. I also acknowledge that while 'chance' is a factor at the micro level, events are inextricably tied to one another in comprising large-scale macro level systemic changes.



## 1.2 Four Causes and International Relations Theory

[24] Peter Godfrey-Smith, appears in H. Beebee, C. Hitchcock, and P. Menzies, (eds.) "Oxford Handbook of Causation" (Oxford University Press) 2010 pp 326-337

[25] Kurki, "Causes… et al" p 197

Aristotle's four causes account allows for a deeper, more ontologically complex way to explore causation. Although conceptualized nearly 2000 years before Descartes, I assert that Aristotle's concept of four causes provides underlying explanatory power to events that the Humean or Cartesian models lack. The approach posits that causes constitute things or objects, with each cause having a unique interplay with the other to create an object or advance a process.

Material Cause

Material causes refer to that out of which something is generated or constructed. This can be interpreted as being something like a chair or a bridge or at a deeper level the material components that make up chairs and bridges, such as for example, wood and steel. What is notable about material causes is that they allow the analyst to approach material factors as those that constrain or enable, rather than as linear cause and effect attributes inherent in causal monism. Material cause also offers the ability to include the relevance of material factors in evaluating phenomena.[26] An example would be the materials that were used to build Gutenberg's printing press and the subsequent proliferation of knowledge through printed materials in the fifteenth century. It was not the raw materials used to build the press that conditioned the outcome, but rather the way the technology was used to propagate information. As such, using material causation as an explanatory tool by itself is incomplete and requires the interplay of other causes in order to paint a more comprehensive picture.



Formal Cause

[26]Ibid, p 206

By contrast, formal causes refer to the structure by which things are reified and the terms by which theybecome determinate. If an alloy of metals was the material cause for the early printing press, then information that was spread as a result of the materials was its formal cause. This is also an area that opens itself up to bringing in ideational factors that are particularly helpful with approaches that explore social reality and the norms, ideas, rules, and discourses that construct it.[27] In more refined terms, formal causes explain complex factors that are implicit in so-called mutually constitutive scenarios.[28] This can be valuable in terms of analyzing scenarios that constrain or enable events based on ideational factors. As an example, the Protestant Reformation was in Aristotelian terms, a formal cause that constrained and enabled outcomes during the period leading up to Westphalia.

Efficient Cause

Efficient causes refer to the familiar cause and effect "push-pull" causation that positivists are familiar with. However one should not view an efficient cause as a stand-alone process suggesting an "if A then B" scenario. The difference lies in that efficient causes in Aristotelian terms are one of several constitutive factors that by themselves have limited value in evaluating an outcome.[29] Only when juxtaposed against material, formal, and final causes, do they take on a more ontologically deep meaning. For the printing press, Gutenberg himself represents the efficient cause of the machine, as he was the agent responsible for creating a unique alloy of metals and constructing them into a form that allowed for the material and formal causes to proliferate. The interplay of all causes is not linear, but rather contingent on the influence of the others. Efficient causes are known as 'active' causes because they imply a degreeof agential

[27]Kurki, p207.
[28] Ibid, p207
[29]Ibid p208

action, whereas the material and formal causes are in Aristotelian terms known as 'conditioning' causes because they are distinctly constitutive.[30]

Final Cause

Aristotle's fourth and final cause refers to the aim or purpose behind why something is made. The term "Telos" is Greek for purpose or goal and serves as the foundation for teleology and teleological explanation. Final and efficient causes are conceptually bound together in that they infer a degree of agential action. Although widely accepted by the Greek Philosophers, teleological reasoning has in recent centuries been viewed as illegitimate within scientific circlesdueto pervasive concerns that its use implied an endorsement of an unverifiable metaphysical doctrine.[31]Further, the concept of future goals influencing events in the present was viewed as deeply problematic and contradictory to the accepted linear approach of mechanistic causation. After all, how could events from the future shape events in the present? Others found teleology to promote an "objectionable anthropomorphism" by employing terms like "goal-directed" or "purposive". This in the eyes of scientists denied the significance of human agency in carrying out planned, intentional activities towards an end goal.[32]

Following Kant and Hegel,[33]Wendt uses teleological reasoning as the conceptual backbone of his argument for world state formation by dividing it into two separate forms – intentional and non-



[30] Ibid 208
[31]Ernst Mayr, "The multiple meanings of teleological." In Towards a New Philosophy of Biology, Harvard University Press (1988), 99. 38-66
[32]Ibid, 40.
[33]Wendt differentiates between the teleology of Kant and Hegel by suggesting Kant did not believe nature to be purposive, whereas Hegel accepted the ontological argument that nature was teleological.

intentional. Although subtle, the differences between the two result in starkly different philosophical trajectories and bear most of the responsibility for the criticisms his world state concept has received. Wendt characterizes intentional teleology as that which is driven by "purposive agents whose desire for an outcome helps bring it about."[34]This is the specific aspect of teleology that draws the ire of natural and social scientists alike – goal seeking that is based on the intentionality of a purposive agent, with the implicit assumption that the agent is at the end of the process rather than the guiding it from the beginning.

By contrast, unintentional teleology generally falls under the rubric of biological processes that do not require any intentionality to occur unless there is an actor whose agency is consciously guiding the process.The development of an organism from fertilization to adulthood is an example of an unintentional teleological process. An organism does not choose to grow up; rather it is pulled towards a "fixed point attractor" of adulthood.[35] By positing Aristotelian causation into an analysis of change in International Relations, this thesis must thereforereconcile the use of teleology and final causes, lest face familiar criticisms of under theorizing the role human agency plays in international politics. Like Wendt, I argue that agency is the driving force behind micro level processes at the bottom of the system.[36]The propagation and complex interplay of rules, norms, ideas, and discourse, all to varying degrees require a measure of agential behavior in order to be constituted into social reality.

Thus an examination of systemic change would be incomplete without an account of the specific factors and agents that modify them. When applying an Aristotelian model of causation at the micro level, I submit that final causes are not only relevant, but often times necessary to explicate the mutually constitutive nature of the other three causes. Devoid of further options,

[34]Wendt, Why a World State is inevitable, 496
[35]Ibid, 496. Wendt argues that positivists view this process as efficient rather than final causation
[36] Ibid, p 529

mechanists and proponents of linear, monocausal approaches attribute final causes as being efficient ones.[37]This is because the mechanistic view is unable to escape the logic of "push-pull" causation. Traditionally, the main strand of criticism against the use of teleological reasoning has been that it infers a degree of metaphysics, theology, and other extra-scientific logic that is incompatible with the natural and social sciences.

1.3Introducing Teleonomy:

I argue that such views are predicated on a fundamental misinterpretation of what teleology is, and that they do not take into account recentlyrevitalized strands of debate surrounding its role in emergence, self-organization, and complexity theory.[38]First, and semantically, the definitionin recent years been broadened by the introduction of Teleonomy. Teleonomic processes are inherent in living nature and involve goal directed behavior.[39] The difference between it and teleology is that behavior is not in any way preordained as a given because actors require agency in order to achieve outcomes. In this regard it is synonymous with what Wendt characterizes as unintentional teleology. Identical concept, different terminology. In IR parlance, migration, war, election campaigns, foreign policy negotiations, and resource nationalism all fall under the umbrella of teleonimic processes because they are driven by goal directed behavior. Outside IR, concepts like food getting, courtship, and ontogeny are likewise teleonomic for identical resaons.[40]



[37]Wendt, World State p 496

[38] See for example, Robert Geyer, "Europeanization, Complexity, and the British Welfare State", the UACES/ESRC Study Group on The Europeanization of BritishPolitics and Policy-Making, University of Sheffield (2003)

[39]Mayr, "The multiple meanings of teleological" p 44
[40]Ibid, p44

Second, Teleonomy is driven by a program wherein processes "learn and adapt" to environmental challenges. Such complex adaptive behavior is required for the process to iteratively "move up in the world" by using feedback from previous processes to self-organize towards new outcomes. The important distinction that one should take away is that Teleonomy is an updated, more intuitive version of teleology that is specific to goal directed processes in living organisms and lacks the implied "metaphysical baggage" inherent in Aristotelian final causality.

1.4 Social Reality and Complexity

This brings to bear the question of whether complexity is compatible with the core tenants of constructivism; specifically the concept of social reality.[41] At first glance, the notion of actors altering systems through their actions rather than being constrained by immutable structures infers an approach-favoring agency as the dominant driver of change. As articulated by Koslowski and Kratochwil, it is the practices of actors that affect the rules and norms that constitute international relations, wherein the practices of international actors are driven by those of domestic actors. As the practice of norms and rules change at the domestic level, change occurs at the international level.[42]

Here, the example of Mikhail Gorbachev altering hardline Soviet policies in favor of Perestroika and Glasnost changed the institutionalization of identities in the Soviet Union during the 1980s.[43]Such changes, I argue, are fundamentally compatible with the structural tenants of



[41]Here, I draw on concepts from Alastair Iain Johnston, "Treating International Institutions as Social Environments", International Studies Quarterly 45 (2001) p 488

[42]Rey Koslowski and Friedrich Kratochwil, "Understanding change in international politics: the Soviet empire's demise and the international system", International Organization 48:2 (1994) p.216

[43]Ibid, p.247

complexity wherein micro level processes inform macro level boundary conditions. What delineates my approach from Wendt's is a rejection of teleological outcomes. Processes (agents) simply continue to operate at lower levels of the system, which in turn changes the macro level boundary conditions of the (International) system. Self-organization and emergence are simply qualified as enabling characteristics that develop from antecedent events. Emergence accounts for the development of rules and norms through the shared, intersubjective convergence of actor experiences. It also allows the micro processes of socialization – concepts like interest formation, language, and persuasion – to be subsumed into a mutually constitutive structural model that is imbued by purposive behavior. Excepting Wendt's world state argument, the use of structural concepts in Constructivism, have by this author's estimation, been under explored.[44]

## 1.5 Downward Causation

Having explored agential concepts, I nowintroduce downward causation as a device to illustrate the tendency of the international system to self-organize. Self-organization refers to the emergence of coherent patterns from interactions by independent components.[45] A key feature of self-organizing systems in differentiating them from mechanistic ones in that they lack any centralized or external control.[46] Examples include ecological systems, the Internet, the global economy, beehives, and the prisoner's dilemma. A prominent property of self-organization is called 'emergence', which refers to the way nature articulates itself on different organizational

[44]My gut instinct on the lack of macro systems theorizing is due to the a priori generalizations that embracing systems theory is too conceptually similar to Waltz's structural realism, the core tenets of which many IR scholars find problematic.

[45]Menno Hulswit, "How Causal is Downward Causation"? Journal for General Philosophy of Science / Zeitschrift fur allgemeine Wissenschaftstheorie, 36:4 No2 (2005) p262

[46]Francis Heylighen, "The Science of Self-organization and Adaptivity", in: L. D. Kiel, (ed.) Knowledge Management, Organizational Intelligence and Learning, and Complexity, in: *The Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems* (Eolss Publishers, Oxford) 2001, p.4

levels, each of which are influenced by their own mutually constitutive factors.[47] Accordingly, 'downward causation' is defined as the idea where events at a higher level have a constitutive effect on those processes at the lower level.[48]This has been applied to social phenomenain the downward causation literature, where Menno Hulswit gives an example of a planned festive activity on a weekend day involving an entire community.[49]

> The day may begin in silence like any other, but gradually some individuals begin to engage in activity. Some go to the baker, others go jogging, while others walk their dog. Then as the hour of activity draws nearer, some people walk or drive to the location where the activity will take place. Over time, crowds develop but the activity may still be described as that of individuals. But as the number increases, a crowd slowly 'emerges' to the point where the behavior of the individuals constituting the crowd can no longer be described in terms of the activity of the individuals alone. On the contrary, as the number of people 'swells to' a crowd, people seem to be governed increasingly by the behavior of the crowd. Even physical properties, such as speed or even the heart rate of the people involved, are determined far more by the behavior of the crowd than by those of individuals. Those who usually walk fast are 'forced' to slow down; those who usually walk slowly are 'forced' to walk faster. Once the crowd is in place and the activity begins, the 'law' of the crowd becomes even more imperative. Some people behave in ways that would be entirely foreign to them if they were all by themselves. In short, the behavior of individual people seems to be governed by the crowd that is constituted by those people.

This is self-organization, emergence and downward causation. The crowd self-organizes in the absence of any centralized planning, its core characteristics 'emerge' seemingly out of nowhere, and once it becomes large, it causes the individuals within it to behave differently. I argue that the system of international politics should be evaluated in identical terms – as a complex, adaptive, self-organizing system where ideas, norms, rules,identities, and discourses 'emerge' devoid of centralized planning. Once such complexities are established, they constrain and enable the subjects who comprise the system to behave in ways commensurate with the boundary conditionsthat they themselves put in place. At the macro level, it is the perpetual interplay of these factors that define the trajectory of the system. At the micro-level, I argue, core constructivist concepts are constituted by human agency and non-intentional final causes based on progressive feedback(Teleonomy) are allowed, but not mandatory. Quite separately at

[47]Hulswit, p.263

[48]Nino El-Hani and Antonio Pereira, "Higher-level Descriptions: Why Should We Preserve Them?" Journal of Minds, Body, and Matter 2000, p 133

[49]Hulswit, p.264

the macro-level, teleological outcomes remain illegitimate because anything to the contrary would deny agency at the micro level. This is why, as I will argue in the third chapter, a world state is possible, but not inevitable.

Having defined a theoretical framework based oncore constructivist concepts and modern complexity theory, I will animate these concepts in the following chapter by examining the conditions whereby feudal Europe transitioned from an era of feudalism to territorial states; with a specific emphasis on whether states were an inevitable outcome or whether other factors enabled them to emerge as the dominant units of their day.



## Chapter 2. The Anatomy of Statehood

## 2.1 Introduction

At the beginning of the 17th century, the European systemconsisted of a variety of social structures that were a mired in political and sectarian conflict. These included city-states, leagues, and territorial states, all of which were juxtaposed against the imposing presence of the Holy Roman Empire. The 1648 Peace of Westphalia with its two component agreements – the treaties of Münster and Osnabrück – symbolically codified a process that had been evolving for centuries and would continue to change for centuries thereafter. Given the number of competing units at the time, one might ask why territorial nation states emerged as the dominant social structure of the era. The views of scholars vary on the specific factors.

Hendrik Spruyt, for instance, argues that the sovereign territorial state was better equipped to "prevent defection by its members, reduce transaction costs, and make credible commitments to other units".[50] This in turn was incentivized by the state sovereignty concept wherein authority manifests itself in internal hierarchy, with no credible authority outside its borders.[51] Similarly, such a process also regulated inter-unit behavior in that itattracted other units to structure their affairs within sovereign territorial parameters.[52] This in Spruyt's view represents a form of "institutional selection".By contrast, Dan Nexon divides analyses on modern state formation into three categories –Bellocentrists, Econocentrists, and Ideationalists – each of which roughly correspond to neorealism, liberalism, and constructivism.



[50]Hendrik Spruyt, "Institutional Selection in International Relations: State Anarchy as Order". International Organization, 48:4 (1994) pp527-557 (p528)
[51]Stanley Benn, "The uses of 'Sovereignty'", Political Studies 3:2 (1955) pp109-122
[52]Spruyt, "Institutional Selection et al" p 528

Nexon contends that that the Westphalian period was innately driven by the crisis of the Protestant Reformation, which inevitably changed the balance of power in Europe. He does not place religion as the central causal factor, but rather focuses on intersecting heterogeneous religious movements and the impact they had on reshaping the early modern European political landscape.[53]Religious strife therefore merely served to activate various differences that were already problematic within the system by mobilizing movements against dynastic rule, undermining the ability of rulers to impose specific "identities to their heterogeneous subjects", and placing greater pressure on rulers.[54]

Daniel Philpott on the other hand, places religion as the primary cause of the Westphalian era by floating a counterfactual claim that asks whether the system of sovereign states would have even arrived had the Protestant Reformation not taken place.[55] Healleges that those social structures that experienced a 'Reformation crisis' also happened to embrace greater interest in Westphalia, whereas the parties that did not experience such a crisis tended to be indifferent.[56] Philpott argues that the very nature of Protestantism is endemic to sovereignty.[57]I argue that statehood and the conditions that made Westphalia possible emerged out of processes that began centuries earlier, in which intersubjective social rules, norms, and self-identification was revised by institutional changes. Such changes altered the boundary conditions of the system and allowed further changes to develop.Material and economic factors were relevant to the extent that they constrained and enabled institutional conditions, and were socially informed by the interests of actors.



[53]Daniel H. Nexon, *"The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires, and International Change,"*(Princeton University Press) 2009 (p3)
[54] Ibid, p4
[55]Daniel Philpott, "The Religious Roots of Modern International Relations", World Politics 52 (Jan 2000), 206-45 (p206)
[56]Ibid, p207
[57]Ibid, p207

## 2.2 Formation of the Territorial State:

Territoriality is a central tenet of modern statehood in that it separates internal political authority with external exclusivity by dividingterritories into two separate demarcations: the public-private realm and the internal-external realm. Internal exclusivity involved the right of the sovereign to employ the legitimate use of domestic force, where as the external gravitated around a unit's right to wage war.[58]Hendrik Spruyt argues that the first iteration of such a concept took place during the Capetian Dynasty (987-1328) in what is now present day France. Between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, and against a backdrop of entrenched feudalism, the Capetians implemented new ideas, rules, and norms that incentivized a shift towards territoriality.

First, there was the "identification of the central state as guardian of res publica", in which a series of kings in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries instituted reforms casting the monarchy as the central adjudicators of legal affairs; often prosecuting anyone who interfered with those performing their royal obligations. Later, Phillip IV of France tied the concept of taxation with representative assemblies in order to facilitate the collection of tax revenues.[59]By the early part of the thirteenth century rulershad managed to demarcate their own territory by managing local administrations, curtailing interference from the church, initiating 'royal justice and the use of Roman law', and shifting organizational structures away from personal kinship factors and the universal land claims of the Holy Roman Empire.[60]Such shifts reflected "territoriality and the



[58]John Ruggie, "Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations", International Organization 47:1 (1993) pp139-174 (p151)
[59] James Collins, "State Building in Early-Modern Europe: The Case of France", Modern Asian Studies 31:3 Special Issue: The Eurasian Context of the Early Modern History of Mainland South East Asia, 1400-1800 (July, 1997) p 610
[60]Hendrik Spruyt, *"The Sovereign State and it Competitors",* (Princeton University Press, 1994) p79

social formation of states", wherein states are characterized as having "the recognition of mutual rights subject to a common law within a given territory".[61]

Beyond, the introduction of new rules and norms, material factors also played a role in the consolidation of the early French state. The emergence of new battlefield technologies such as gunpowder and organized infantries drove up the tax burden for the funding of warfare and subsequently incentivized the consolidation of centralized authority structures.[62]Rules, norms, and shared experiences changed, as did the way people – nobles, serfs, and royals alike – self-identified with their respective roles. This, I argue, represents an example of systemic change through the emergence of new boundary conditions, both ideational and material, which redefined the micro level rules by which actors were able operate. It was both ideational and material factors that set feudal era Capetian France apart from its contemporary units in Germany and Italy.

The interplay of actors seeking to strengthen their power and influence created complex social alliances that incentivized greater central authority that was in stark contrast to the decentralized modes of organization in Italy and Germany. Such phenomena cannot be classed as reductionist because the sum of unit level actions cannot alone account for systemic change. They merely enabled changes to existing modes of organization wherein territoriality became dominant. Nexon disagrees with Spruyt's assessment that the territorial state was born in Capetian France under the logic that following such a rationale undercuts appreciation for Nexon's own account of how the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation impacted the development of statehood.



[61]Friedrich Kratochwil, "Of Systems, Boundaries, and Territoriality: An Inquiry into the Formation of the State System". World Politics 39:1 (1986) p.29
[62]Spruyt, Sovereign State et al. p83

Following Spruyt, I argue that unit analysis should begin during territorial formation because events that took place later in the seventeenth century warrant a degree of contextualization, and beginning in late Capetian France is the most logical choice.The original territorial state rose out of a simple social bargain between Capetian rules and their subjects. As material costs for war and the building of new infrastructure rose, kings developed bureaucratic tools to tax individuals in order to make up the costs. In return, taxpayers received a degree of protection from the king.[63] The emerging relationship between kings and burghers allowed the monarchy to create a construct exogenous to feudal parameters, and likewise allowed nobles a means to wield greater influence on royal decision-making as a result of the side payments.[64]It was a tacit quid pro quo that allowed multiple parties to benefit from the cooperation of others and changed the rules, and shared norms by which actors self-identified. This illustrates the multiplicity of factors that weighed into the territorial state building processes. One simply cannot attribute change to unilinear monocausal factors, as it was the social bargain between multiple parties that informed changes in the shared understandings of their societal roles, which played asignificant part in conditioning outcomes.

Against Wendt,[65] I argue that there was nothing inevitable about the social arrangements that made the territorial state successful. The process was driven by purposeful actions of agents who sought to maximize their power and influence, materially, economically, and ideationally. Actors seeking to consolidate their power were enabled to do so by the boundary conditions that were constituted through agential actions in which institutional changes precipitated shifts in rules, norms, and self-identification. The simple construction of social reality by itself requires



[63] See for example, Jean Dunbabin, "France in the Making 843-1180". (Oxford University Press, 2000). The entire volume provides an in-depth look at material costs to build new infrastructure. Specifically, there was a shift in the construction of castles from wood to stone during the Capetian period that precipitated the need for greater revenue.
[64]Spruyt, p89. Kings sidestepped the issue of nobles complaining about direct relations between Kings and burghers by effectively paying off the nobles.
[65]Wendt, "Why a world state is inevitable", et al.

perpetual revisions in the boundary conditions of its own system. Thus, change can be better analyzed by what Geoffrey Hodgson characterizes as 'reconstituted downward causation'. Here the French system is being modified by emergent properties by way of institutional change, however the changes are not reducible to theactionsof individual agents at themicro level, where agency reigns supreme.[66] The 'emergence' of the initial Capetian territorial state was a result of mutually constituted social bargains between the kings and burghers, with each side standing to gain something. The kings gained a degree of income from taxation and the burghers reaped the benefits of being lifted from feudal servitude through the protection of localized dealings with the royals.[67]

Further undermining the feudal system was a royal decree by the kings to have one currency within the entire French realm. In addition to a more centralized role for the government in terms of territorial matters, the shift towards a common currency, perhaps some seven hundred years early, served to solidify France's drift from fragmentation towards territorial hierarchy.[68]In the sixteenth century, the emergence of territorial demarcation redefined aspects of individual identity, to the extent that emphases on commonality among the peopleincentivized a degree of stewardship of the state. It was during this period that Jean Bodin began to identify lawmaking with sovereignty in order to regulate communitarian property.[69] People began to perceive their identity around the emergence of new norms.

Having established the parameters for early statehood, I will now juxtapose the conditions that made the territorial state a viable institution in the European political landscape of the late

[66]Geoffrey M. Hodgson, "Institutions and Individuals: Interaction and Evolution". Organization Studies, January 2007
[67]Spruyt, p106
[68]Spruyt, Institutional Selection,. p541
[69] James Collins, "State Building in Early-Modern Europe: The Case of France", Modern Asian Studies 31:3 Special Issue: The Eurasian Context of the Early Modern History of Mainland South East Asia, 1400-1800 (July, 1997) p. 620

Middle Ages against the conditions of two of its competing institutions – German city leagues and Italian city-states. An important distinction between France and Germany was that the French kings sought a social bargain with the burgers and made side payments to gain favor with their nobles, which incentivized all parties to adhere to the authority with the kings. Germany was quite different in that German kings sided with their lords and against the towns. Rather than capitulate to such an approach, the towns coalesced to form 'leagues', with the Hansa being one of the more notable ones. Leagues and confederations served in parallel capacity to the sovereign territorial concept in France. They collected taxes, participated in conflicts, signed treaties and maintained economic activity, however they did not succeed in demarcating a large swath of territory to the extent that the French Capetians did.[70]

This is a key point of deviation between the two units, and was a result of a political bargain betweenkingsand nobles. In doing so, they incentivized the creation of such leagues of cities as a means for protection and to discharge the functions of what the territorial state was providing in France. Germany remained largely fragmented for centuries following the formation of the Hanseatic League in the middle of the fourteenth century, with the lord-town dichotomy as its central political axis.[71] Here the ambitions of German kings to control Italian territory and the ceding of local power to the lords in favor of their support for imperial conquests abroad sent the German political structure into a different trajectory than Capetian France. The dichotomy between France and Germany suggests that there was no unilinear causal path towards Westphalia, given that the various European social structures of the time each changed over time due to a multiplicity of causes, most of which were endogenous to their geographic spheres.[72]Whereas the French territorial system diluted the grip of Feudalism, the German approach, by creating a degree of fragmentation, tended to empower the lords to seek greater

[70] Spruyt, p109
[71]Ibid, p111
[72]Ibid, p111

authority.Accordingly, the people continued to identify with feudal norms.In the towns of the Hanseatic League, the issue of territory was dealt with by each town managing its own jurisdiction through arrangements such as with the Knights of the Teutonic Order. In short, the League was a decentralized network of cities that banded together for safety in the absence of protection from German kings who had placed greater emphasis on relations with feudal lords than the townspeople. Leagues also executed important institutional measures such as property rights and the rule of law.[73] Legal institutions were one area where the towns of the Hansa were able to maintain pace with the growth of territorial states. Most of the towns adopted the law of Lübeck for their own legal jurisdictions and if a conflict arose, it could be referred directly to a court in Lübeck for resolution.[74] The League allowed its citizens to take on a different shared identity of members of a community with certain legal rights, as opposed to contemporary cities on the outside, who had to rely on nearby national states to for legal, market, and security mechanisms.[75]

By contrast, Italian City States were much larger in population than the Hanaseatic League towns to the north, and as such, had the ability to field bigger armies. This allowed the individual cities to operate less like decentralized networks and more like independent, self-contained entities. As with the Hansa, the Italian City states were heavily involved in trade, although unlike their northern contemporaries who dealt primarily in low cost goods, the Italians generally traded in luxury items. Spruyt argues that the variance in low and high quality goods between German and Italian units contributed to different modes of organization in each area. In the case of city states, the nature of trading in luxury goods with higher profit margins created a 'cut throat' competitive logic between, among others, Venetians and Genoans, which coupled with larger

[73]Alexander Fink, "Autonomy and Institutions: The Rise of the Hanseatic Cities" Department of Economics, George Mason University, 2009
[74]Jefferey Sellers, "Transnational Urban Associations and the State in Contemporary Europe: A Rebirth of the Hanseatic League?" Jahrbuch für europäische Verwaltungsgeschichte (2003) p.9
[75]Ibid, p18

populations and access to more military assets, incentivized the states to become compartmentalized from one another. Whereas the Hansa towns were more likely to form alliances, Italian city-states were generally more likely to be locked in perpetual competition.[76] Furthermore, there was less friction between feudal lords and city-states because the nature of the luxury goods trade did not interfere with the revenues lords ordinarily made from domestic sources. More broadly, feudalism was never as deeply entrenched in the Italian sphere as it was in northern Europe.[77] Relations between the city-states and the papacy were largely amicable given that both sides mutually recognized the need for solidarity against potential incursions by German imperial forces to the north. Likewise, city-states were different than the sovereign territorial state of France, in that their internal organizational structures were more diffuse than the territorial states.[78]This, in Niccolo Machiavelli's view, was due to internal failings and "the grave natural enmities that exist between the people and the nobles".[79]

When explored collectively, I argue that the reasons each of the three units migrated in different paths were fundamentally economic and social. In France, the Kings opted to cultivate strong ties with Burghers as a means to ensure stable sources of taxation and the people reciprocated because they were interested in non-feudal institutions that could leverage the economic boom. The relationship served to undermine the power of feudal lords and the Catholic Church, and place the onus of protecting the people on the royals. This was the beginning of internal hierarchy and domestic rule of law, and it was rendered possible through a reconfiguration of shared rules and norms.



[76]Spruyt, p134
[77] Ibid, p137
[78] Ibid, p148
[79]HaraldWydra, "Human Nature and Politics: A Mimetic Reading of Crisis and Conflict in the Work of Niccolo Machiavelli", Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture 7:Spring 2000 p 36-57

The German leagues and Italian city states were also driven by a distinct logic of leveraging economic opportunities, but the decision of the German kings to seek the support of lords and nobles incentivized the townspeople to create their own league of cities through which they collectively pooled their resources for protection and economic control of northern European waterways. Conversely, the city-states of the south were incentivized to remain independent units who were mired in their own material and economic struggles with one another due to the more lucrative nature of luxury goods transiting the area. In this regard, the Italian city-states were far more 'state like' than the decentralized league structure to the north where individual towns made strategic decisions with the regional consensus of other towns.

Although primarily economic in nature, the use of reductivist logic suggesting that each unit evolved only through realist or liberal, logic would be incomplete. Spruyt's argument that 'institutional selection' drove units to self-select based on endogenous social bargains is congruent with my position that systems self-organize at the micro level and new patterns of group behavior emerge to cause the different macro level outcomes. In times of economic expansion, traders gravitate towards stable institutions that can protect their business interests. In France this meant the Kings because they inhibited the influence feudal lords had on the burghers. In Germany, it involved a 'safety in numbers' approach to avert interference from local lords, and in Italy it entailed centralized city-states that behaved much like territorial nation states, exceptwithout strong central hierarchy.

My conclusion of unit analysis rests on two points. The first is that the French territorial state contained two key characteristics that the other two, to varying degrees, could not match – internal hierarchy and external territorial demarcation. The two are largely interdependent in that a degree of internal hierarchy allowed the kings to consolidate authority of a given geographic area. The decentralized organizational structure of the Hansa and other confederations, and the

slightly more centralized city-states to the south offered little to compete with the French model. Fundamentally, this is a central reason why states are to this day perceived as sovereign units that have stood the test of time. Second, it is this internal-external construct that promoted the development of domestic dynamics such as the rule of law, stable taxation mechanisms, a degree of mutual identity, common currency, and a central leadership structure, that incentivized other units to either adapt or be punished by defections and a loss of legitimacy.[80]Even before one begins to introduce economic, material, ideational, and a myriad of other factors that play into why state are states, internal hierarchy and demarcated external territoriality provide the blueprint that to varying degrees, has lasted seven centuries.

I reinforce these points to illustrate that there was nothing inevitable about each of these units developing the way they did. The process was firmly driven by human agency and the propagation of rules, norms, and ideas, which manifested themselves through the formation of economic and material interests. If population growth and economic expansion were important factors in the feudal period, then an endogenous shock of new ideas spurred new changes from the sixteenth century and beyond. In the following section I will illustrate the influence that the ideational factors of the Reformation had on Westphalia; specifically focusing on how such factors play in to state formation.



## 2.3 Unit Changes before Westphalia

[80]For example, during Westphalia the decentralized nature of the Hanseatic League towns was brought into question when their representatives were initially denied legal legitimacy during Munster and Osnabruck. This was done under the pretext that the league was not mentioned anywhere in the Treaty of Augsburg, thereby causing those in attendance to question its legitimacy at Westphalia. (see Spruyt, p170)

As modes of organization within the various social structures continued to develop over the centuries, the European system was put to the test through an endogenous wave of ideational upheaval that came with the Protestant reformations. Martin Luther's rise to fame coincided with Charles V's ascent as Holy Roman Emperor and initiated a series of 'reformation crises' that would play out through much of Europe for the next 125 years.[81] It was the 'emergence' of new strands of religion,and the prevalence of 'composite states' and dynastic rule that led Dan Nexon to characterize this period as a 'profound crisis in the European political order'.[82] This poses the question of how the French territorial state fared during the reformation period. France was already sovereign and territorial for more than a century before the reformation began,[83]. The French initially sought to repel reformist ideologies from entrenching within their borders, but quickly switched tactics to creating a buffer zone to keep the expansionist Habsburgs out.

This served to reinforce the territorial demarcations of the French borders and in doing so, strengthen the sovereign domain of their own state system. Having clear internal hierarchy and external territorial demarcations, I argue, was of particular benefit to the survival of the French state during this period. The social bargains between the kings and burghers from centuries past had by now solidified the concept of the state protecting those inside from outside harm. Still France was forced into its own reformation crisis when Calvinists sought to reform its domestic theology. The subsequent conflict that resulted out of this struggle ultimately spurred the French to seek a system of sovereign states, as such a system would disincentive both religious and military cross-border transgressions.[84] If Capetian France was spurred by population growth and economic expansion, then I argue, that Reformation era France was motivated by the ideational aspects of retaining its Catholic identity through the consolidation of its territorial integrity.

[81]Nexon, "The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe", p2
[82]Ibid, 2
[83] Daniel Philpott, "The Religious Roots of Modern International Relations" Project Muse, p233
[84]Ibid, p237

Likewise the same reformation that invoked a degree of territorial solidarity in France had the opposite effect on the towns of the Hansa. The decentralized nature of the towns made internal dissent difficult to mediate and also made the league vulnerable followingthe outbreak of multiple wars that impeded trade routes. Over time, the internecine conflicts of the sixteenth century exploited the decentralized structural weaknesses of the league concept and the towns gradually seceded.[85]The Italian city-states also stood to lose out during the reformation and were by the latter part of the sixteenth century, reduced to bit part players of the broader dynastic struggles between the Habsburgs and their adversaries.[86] Nexon regards the influence of continental dynastic disputes as a significant influence behind the gradual demise of city leagues and city-states, and I will embellish this by adding that the geographical benefits of having a large territorial state replete with hierarchical governance, a standing army, and internal taxation to fund it, provided a far more stable atmosphere to grapple with the complex changes taking place across the continent.

More broadly, the intense nature of how the Reformation roiled Europe for well over a century illustrates the epistemic shift that took place throughout the continent. This complex interplay of material, economic, and ideational factors, I will argue, renders the analysis of this period through the lenses of realism, liberalism, and constructivism, incomplete. This is simply because each approach cannot reconcile why elements of the other two remain relevant. Viewing the system as a whole, rather than the sum of its parts however, can tidily circumvent this problem. The reformation was simply an endogenous wave of ideas that changed the boundary conditions of the system, and allowed further material and economic factors to manifest themselves. New

[85]Jennifer M. Franson, "Zenith and Decline: The Hanseatic League and the Teutonic Order in the Late 14th and Early 15th Centuries, 2000 Available at http://www.troynovant.com/Franson-JM/Essays/Hanseatic-sources-notes.html(Accessed 5/24/2012)

[86]Daniel H. Nexon, *"The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires, and International Change,"*(Princeton University Press) 2009 (p89)

beliefs, rules, norms, and interests 'emerged' because the properties of the system had been altered. The crisis of the Reformation period simply forced the variance in social structures to come to a head – leaving the concepts of territoriality, internal hierarchy, and external territorial demarcation as the most logical structures.

## 2.4 The Peace of Westphalia

Conceptually, the notion of Sovereignty was never explicitly mentioned in the 1648 treaties of Münster and Osnabrück. This however did not preclude Westphalia from having a major impact on what the concept meant at the time. Prior to 1648, decision-making generally revolved around the sovereigns of the church or the Empire. This changed when the treaties contained language stipulating that outside entities (such as the Church) could not deny its validity.[87] By removing the influence of church and empire to transgress into national affairs, Westphalia tacitly served to codify the emerging system of states.Citizens of this time could not have been able to digest the historical relevance of Westphalia during and immediately after the 1648 period for two simple reasons. First, generations of Europeans had grown accustomed to war since the Reformation crisis began in the early sixteenth century and had seen prior attempts at peace such as the Augsburg settlement nearly 100 years earlier, as not yielding any lasting results. Thus after generations of conflict, there was no reason for commoners to believe that Westphalia would be any different. Second, the Church's opposition to the treaties would have undermined notions of a long-term peace coupled with a stable system of sovereign states.



As Derek Croxton argues, the Church viewed Westphalia, much as it did the Treaty of Augsburg; as a temporary placeholder of peace until it could summon all parties to reunite the

[87]Derek Croxton, "The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 and the Origins of Sovereignty", The International History Review, 21:3 (1999) p573

branches of Christianity.[88] In the simplest terms, it was business as usual after 1648. Neither the Church nor the Holy Roman Empire ceased functioning, and the empire continued to be viewed as a collective sovereign organization. The continued presence of both entities coupled with specific language regarding individual rights of people to worship in neighboring countries or send their children to study abroad, also reaffirms that the people did not conflate Westphalia with sovereignty to the extent of how it is perceived as today.[89]

To further develop this strand, I submit that there are four fundamental types of Sovereignty that emerged at different times over the past five centuries. Sovereignty in its domestic guise – as articulated in the writings of Hobbs and Bodin - refers to the ability of political units to regulate domestic behavior through centralized authority structures. By contrast, Interdependence sovereignty is the ability of states to regulate movement of people and goods across their territory.[90]On the other hand, International legal sovereignty acknowledges the concept of mutual legal recognition under the logic that states within the international system are free and equal.[91]Following Krasner, my argument here is that it was actually that 'Vattelian'form of sovereignty that has led to modern misperceptions linking Westphalia to a concept that did not take flight until the eighteenth century when legal scholars Emmerich de Vattel and Christian Wolff wrote about the perils of states intervening in the domestic affairs of other units. This largely 'externalized' a concept that had previously been endogenous to domestic affairs. It is precisely this principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of others states I argue, that was completely unknown to the elites and citizens who were present at Westphalia.[92]



[88]Ibid, p572
[89]Ibid, p575
[90]See for example, Christopher Rudolph, "Sovereignty and Territorial Borders in a Global Age" International Studies Review 7:1 (2005) 1-20
[91]The work of Lassa Oppenheim has been central in defining Sovereignty. See for example, Oppenheim's International Law 123 (H. Lauterpacht ed. 8th ed., 1955). Also, Mark W. Janis, "The New Oppenheim and its Theory of International Law", Oxford Journal of Legal Studies, 16:2 1996
[92]Stephen Krasner, "Rethinking the sovereign state model", Review of International Studies, 27, (2001) 17-42. Here, I echo Stephen Krasner's view that sovereignty was not fully understood at the time of Westphalia, and that various forms of it have been sporadically violated between Westphalia and the present day. Given that people of

The broader question of whether the events of Westphalia can be retroactively viewed as a teleological final cause wherein the international system self-organized following the ideational upheaval of the Reformation, is therefore adjudicated by the iterative nature of how notions of sovereignty changed over the centuries. Westphalia was not a final cause but merely a prominent milestone of a process that began much earlier and continues to unfold in the present day. Therefore teleological reasoning is inadequate in terms of explicating Westphalia, just as my core argument posits, it is inadequate in explaining the formation of a world state. The system of international relations is a complex adaptive system that functions devoid of centralized planning or final causes.

This chapter has analyzed specific factors behind what made the territorial state a more viable political unit in contrast to the other prominent social structures of early modern Europe. There are valid arguments promoting material factors surrounding the proliferation of war capabilities,[93] economic aspects inherent in the expansion of trade following rapid population growth, and ideational factors suggesting the crisis of the Reformation incited a sufficient degree of conflict that played a key part in change. There are two fundamental points that can be gleaned from this. First, the theoretical musings of realists, liberals, and constructivists each offer varying accounts of how changes took place. From a realist perspective, the balance of power dynamics that unfolded via competition among social structures in concert with improvements in war technology might be suggestive of actors capitulating to their respective security dilemmas. The interdependence of war was underscored by security dilemmas in which conflict begat yet



the mid 17th century could not have known about Vattelian sovereignty at the time of Westphalia, I see this as significant evidence that no one could have predicted the formation of a system of states, in similar terms as it is difficult today to predict a world state because we don't know all of the variables involved with the formation of one.
[93]See for example, Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime: In Bringing the State Back In edited by Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). p.170

more conflict.[94]Liberals may find their argument through the proliferation of trade in the northern areas of the Hansa, the southern Italian city-states and French tendency to provide the most stable environment to leverage cross border transactions. Constructivists may argue that the Lutheran inspired ideational changes that began in the early sixteenth century and led to the European Reformation crisis played a seminal role in recalibrating the rules, norms, ideas, interests, and discourses of the period. Contrastingly, Complexity Theory offers a fresh theoretical approach at the systemic level that can subsume relevant elements of traditionalist IR paradigms and account for new patterns of change without resorting to unilinear, monocausality or the logic of Cartesian reductionism. Thus, I argue that all of the material, economic, and ideational changes that took place in early modern Europe affected the boundary conditions of the international system. The perpetual interplay of purposeful agents drove the process and subsequent changes in boundary conditions allowed for the 'emergence' of newly adaptedpatterns of behavior among the agents who constitute the system.

Second, the Peace of Westphalia cannot be viewed as having been driven by teleological factors of final causality. It was the result of a complex set of factors that had been developing for centuries and were the result of human agency at the micro level, and alterations in the boundary conditions at the macro. The elites and citizens at the time of Westphalia were not fully aware of its significance in 1648, because the nature of sovereignty as it is commonly perceived today, did not fully develop until the eighteenth century. In the next chapter, I will scale this dilemma of final causality into a modern context in order to analyze whether the lessons leading up to Westphalia offer any insight into the oft discussed modern notions of disaggregated sovereignty, global governance, and the formation of a world state.



[94]Ibid, p170. Here, Tilly makes the simple claim that during this period "War made states".

# Chapter 3. Conditions for a World State

## 3.1 Introduction

Perceptions that sovereignty has in recent years been disaggregating from the state have been satiated by a growing discourse in the IR literature surrounding global governance and the diffusion of sovereignty from states to non-state actors.[95] The work of Alexander Wendt, in particular has garnered significant attention that was spurred on by the confluence of globalization and the not so fortuitous rise of Wendt's core paradigm, Constructivism, to the cutting edge of IR literature.[96] My task in this chapter will be to recalibrate the findings of state formation during early modern Europe and analyze whether the conditions of unit change that took place in centuries past can be extrapolated into an analysis of world state formation. Wendt's core argument on the inevitability of a world state was based on interdisciplinary literature that self-organizing systems are driven by teleological fixed point attractors suggesting that the logic of anarchy is to create a world state.[97]

By employing teleology as a theoretical constant, Wendt is able to cobble together disparate strands of research on collective identity formation, the proliferation of increasingly destructive weapons technology, the observation of a dramatic reduction in organized political communities from the ancient to the present, and various components of evolutionary biology to rationalize the why a world state is inevitable.



[95]See for example, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, "Power and Interdependence", (Longman Publishing, 3rd Edition 2000), Also see Thomas Weiss, "What Happened to the Idea of World Government", International Studies Quarterly 53 (2009) 253-271. Ian Angell, "The Information Revolution and the Death of the Nation State", Political Notes 114 (1995). Anne-Marie Slaughter, "Squaring the Circle? Reconciling Sovereignty and Global Governance through GlobalGovernment Networks: A New World Order" (Harvard Law Review) 2005

[96]See for example, Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it", International Organization 46:2 (1992) pp-391-425 and Alexander Wendt, "Social Theory of International Politics", (Cambridge Studies in International Relations) pp.452

[97]Alexander Wendt, "Why a World State is Inevitable", European Journal of International Relations, 9:4 (2003) 491-542

Following Wendt, I propose self-organization theory asa starting point to examine historical changes within IR. However I reject notions that teleological reasoning is a necessary device and indeed, if Wendt were to remove that element, he would have trouble reconciling the 'inevitability'part of his argument. Complexity theory need not be linked with teleological outcomes because the nature of the system as I propose it is reflected through complex adaptive behavior that propagates through self-organization rather than final causation. Processes are informed by antecedent processes and in doing so; reformulate the boundary conditions of the system to account for change. Therefore, a world state is possible, but not inevitable. The following section explores conditions that may incentivize shifts towards a world state;with three specific areas where change may yield the necessary conditions for a drift towards hierarchy.

The entrenchment of globalization policies, economic interdependence, and the 'deep socialization' inherent in greater swaths of people socializing across state boundaries, I argue, will continue to wield strong influence on interest formation, ideational exchange, and rules, norms, and discourses. Scholars have taken note of a phenomenon where the concept of power itself is diffusing from states to non-state actors and from west to east.[98]Such shifts, when taken as a standalone issue, offer limited explanatory value. However, when juxtaposed against the ever-deepening interdependencies inherent in global macroeconomics and the proliferation of technology, they may reveal an internal self-organizing mechanismindicating that the system is reshaping its boundary conditions through the emergence of new patterns of social reality.



## 3.2The Proliferation of Information and Ideas

In early modern Europe, the ideas of Martin Luther and other reformation thinkers had a profound effect on systemic change. Today's strands of ideational change however, do not

[98]For example, Joseph Nye, "The Future of Power", (Public Affairs Books) 2010

propose a one size fits all change of thesystem. The recent proliferation of technology offersanimportant feature that early modern Europeans could not access – instant communication, and the universal de-compartmentalization of ideas, cultural norms, and collective interests.[99] I argue that the proliferation of information is a vehicle that could radically alter perceptions of norms at the sub state level, and in doing so incentivize domestic institutional frameworks to 'get with the program' and become congruent with emerging institutionally driven norms at the international level.

The populist uprisings of the 2011 "Arab Spring" and "Occupy" movements were above all social movements facilitated by the availability of inexpensive technology. Groups gathered to socialize and exchange ideas in online forums where government minders could not impede their development.[100]This was in stark contrast to earlier in the 20thcentury when governments were able to wage effective propaganda campaigns against publics through printed materials. The ability to achieve the same effect in the age of video has undermined the ease with which misinformation propagates. This was no more evident when 1970s Soviet television attempted to exploit images of Americans in long lines at gas stations in order to display the poverty of capitalism. When cameras interviewed a man waiting for gas, they panned to a long line of vehicles at the pumps, leaving Soviet viewers with the inadvertent impression that Americans could afford cars.[101] The fundamental capability of states to limit their citizens' ability to transparently observe how citizens in other states live has been greatly eroded, with significant implications on citizen perceptions on shared, transnational interests.



[99]David Henderson, "Information Technologyas a Universal Solventfor Removing State Stains", The Independent Review 4:2000, 517-523
[100]Ekaterina Stepanova, "The Role of Information Communication Technologies in the 'Arab Spring': Implications beyond the region", PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 159 (2011)
[101]Henderson, p519

Governments that have traditionally attempted to limit access to outside information have been thwarted by enterprising citizens who find 'work arounds'. The Internet and mobile technologies are thus, strong enablers of new ideas about governance, human rights, and greater transparency. As was evidenced in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev's posture of liberalization through Glasnost quickly flooded the country with films, videos, books, and ideas about life on the outside, which expedited changes in public opinion about the Soviet past and life on the outside.[102] The Soviet system self-organized as the formation of new interests, rules, and norm dynamics enabled state and citizen behaviors that were previously constrained. Although these factors were in no way unilinear, their mutually constitutive nature nonetheless aggregated to affect domestic changes.The proposition that a world state is possible would therefore by furthered by ideational changes spurred by technological advancements in a similar fashion to how ideational changes affected the Reformation.

### 3.3Institutional Norms and Collective Identity

Advances in and greater access to technology open up possibilities for deeper inter-cultural socialization across previously inaccessible boundaries. Such communications are necessary for the transfer of identity from the sub-state to a global level, in order to precipitate world state formation. Here, Wendt draws on a Hegelian idea for the struggle for recognition as an attractor for his argument, under the pretext that individuals seek recognition as members of particular groups, and accordingly, group-to-group recognition is driven by the need for members to be recognized as individuals.[103]



[102] Scott Shane, "Dismantling Utopia: How Information Ended the Soviet Union", (Ivan R. Dee Publishing) 1995
[103]Alexander Wendt, World State et al p516

Whether with or without the teleological component, it becomes problematic to use this reasoning to equate to collective identity formation because it is impossible to make accurate predictions of how patterns of identity will develop. I argue that although changes in identity remain central to the shifting of the "we-feeling" from below to above the state, changes in self and group identity are mutually constitutive and largely reliant on one another. As Rodney Bruce Hall opines, "the self-understandings, or collective identities of collectiveactors, do have causal significance for the interaction of the "units" and thus must be included as an element of structure".[104]World state formation would require a broad scale recalibration of group identity away from the state level, to the extent that individuals would above all else, self-identify as constituents of a global society.

### 3.4 Sovereignty and Territoriality

Shifts in norms and identity would also feed into another necessary concept in the formation of a world state. Under Hierarchy, the very nature of sovereignty would require a fundamental recalibration, as the aforementioned four strands of domestic,interdependence, international-legal, and Vattelian sovereignty could be rendered anachronistic.[105] Wendt' s world state approach casts sovereignty as an ancillary factor that is swept along by the changes of his five-step progression towards hierarchy. In step three – World Society – dealing with rogue or criminal states is constrained by states retaining their sovereignty, and in step four – Collective Security – sovereignty remains at the state level. It is only through the pressure of smaller and mid sized states that great powers are eventually compelled to capitulate, thereby transferring

[104]Rodney Bruce Hall, "National Collective Identity: Social Constructs and International Systems" (Columbia University Press) 1999 p73
[105]This is based on Krasner's four types of sovereignty

state sovereignty to the global level and releasing the final variable necessary for world state formation.[106]

There is little emphasis beyond identity and collective security, on specifically how interdependence, interjurisdictional, and most importantly, externalized "Vattelian"sovereignty would diffuse from the system of states to a world state. Critically, it is these factors that are the ideational scaffolding for today's micro and macroeconomic system and an argument for a world state would need to account for how global hierarchy would viably replace the economic, legal, and territorial issues that are central to the current system. World state formation would thus, require a radical recalibration of sovereignty in order to compensate for the disintegration of the current system. Although further research is warranted, Wendt's argument also underplaysterritorial considerations that would arise out of hierarchy. Identity and security aside, the system of states has been demarcated since the 1659 Treaty of the Pyrenees in which a commission analyzed how to set up borders between France and Spain.[107] Subsequent demarcations were set up to accommodate the dominant political units – territorial states – within the system, and thus a wholesale change in what constitutes a dominant unit would also require a redefinition in terms of how, and on whose terms such a new unit would be demarcated. A fundamental problem a world state would be faced with adjudicating would be the same issue that contributed to the system of states in the first place – that is as John Ruggie describes, a "patchwork of overlapping incomplete rights of government that were inextricably superimposed and tangled".[108] One might therefore ask if Wendt's position entails reverting back to the early modern concept of nonexclusive territoriality under a world state. Although not



[106]Wendt, World State et al, p525
[107]Friedrich Kratochwil, "Of Systems, Boundaries, and Territoriality: An Inquiry into the Formation of the State System". World Politics 39:1 (1986) p.33
[108]John Gerard Ruggie, "Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations", International Organization, 47:1 (1993) p150

inevitable, the further entrenchment of such conditions would incentive a shift towards global hierarchy.



## Conclusion

I have argued herein that final causes and teleological reasoning are fundamentally incompatible with the nature of social reality. This is because actors within the international system construct their understandings of the world through shared experiences that constrain and enable the rules and norms by which they live. The intersubjective nature of socialization also feeds into how actors self-identify in groups and the interests that are formed as a result of such interactions. Although the literature on what specifically constitutes teleology continues to be debated in the natural and social sciences, its application as it relates to Wendt's world state argument is problematic because it struggles to account for human agency as acentral facilitator ofchange in the international system.

In order to explicate the unpredictable nature of human agency, I have probed the efficacy of Complexity Theory as a device that offers a new systems theoreticallens from which to explore the probabilistic nature of change based on boundary conditions within given systems. The perpetual and cumulative interactions of people define new conditions by which further interactions are constrained or enabled. This accounts for the complex adaptive nature of international relations. Further, complexity offers a fresh architecture for analysts to approach change in international politics, particularly those wishing to depart from mechanistic reductionism and "observable phenomena" and towards the analysis of unexpected, emergent patterns through social interactions.

I have used Wendt's world state argument as a foil from which to examine factors that informed unit level changes in territorial states, city states, and a city league, in order to highlight the role of agency and illustrate how complexity can provide an alternative lens of evaluating change

during a seminal period of the international system. I have also highlighted specific conditions that would make a world state possible, but not inevitable.

My conclusions are that change is an ongoing process and outcomes are not reducible to the agents that constructed them. Territorial states became the dominant political units of their time and have endured over the centuries because they benefitted from internal hierarchy and external territorial demarcation, which incentivized actors to consolidate centralized control over taxation, security, and the protection of their religious identity. The decentralized nature of the German league undermined its ability to provide similar measures to its members in light of the growing threat of conflict. Similarly, the diffuse nature of authority within Italian city-states could not provide the centralized institutional mechanisms that the French state extended, which led to defections and fragmentation. These processes were by no means unilinear or monocausal, but rather were constituted through constant revisions in the way actors identified within their social environments. Teleology, cannot therefore account for the way the system meandered towards Westphalia, nor can it account for the alleged present day disaggregation of sovereignty and shifts towards global governance.

In order to expand on this, a degree of further research is warranted on the nature of evolution within the context of biotic social systems; with a specific emphasis on exploring correlations between social and evolutionary change.

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