Analogies of the international: System, structure, and world order

by

Regan Maynard Burles
Master of Arts, University of Victoria, 2014
Honours Bachelor of Arts, University of Ottawa, 2012

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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

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This dissertation examines the boundaries of world politics expressed in claims about the 'global' character of international order. The presence of a single political order that covers the surface of the globe—the international system—is often treated as axiomatic in international relations. Animated by the tension between this claim to global scope and critiques of world politics in international relations, this study investigates the way discourses of international politics sustain claims to global political unity. I do this through analyses of literatures that chart the past (the globalization of international society), present (theories of structure and the problem of world politics), and future (Kant's Cosmopolitan Right) of world political order in international relations. I argue that discourses of international politics sustain claims to global political unity through a specific understanding of order: system, understood as an irreducible relation between parts and whole. While descriptions of the international system abound, prevailing theoretical oppositions in international relations (such as anarchy and society, and hierarchy and equality), presume a particular account of an already present order that they describe. As a result, I argue, these theories of international order provide an implicit answer to some of the most intensely contested questions in world politics, such as the relationship between unity and diversity, that sets boundaries on imagining possibilities for political order on a planetary scale.

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Global, international, order

Debates in world politics are characterized by simultaneous claims to both political unity and diversity. While these claims take many forms, they generally express an opposition between an international conceived as a collection of particular political communities in the form of states and an international conceived as the universal political community of humankind. The international is split along these lines by a number of familiar dualisms such as universal and particular, local and global, state and system of states, or, in the parlance of the currently ascendant international nationalist movements, nationalism and globalism. Not only do these options animate many of the most vigorous and influential debates that characterize the discipline of international relations, but they in large part determine the limits within which contemporary political struggle takes place. Furthermore, they are expressed in numerous problems and debates that shape research on international politics, including those related to positions expressed by categories such as realism and idealism; the distinction between citizenship and humanity; conflicts between the authority of state law and of international law; and to the relation between state sovereignty and the globalizing forces of capitalist economic activity, to name only some among many others. Amidst these often violently negotiated oppositions, however, there is one source of agreement: that there is a single political order that covers the surface of the globe—the international system.

Most approaches in international relations consider world politics as a politics that is in some way beyond the system of states. Scholars identify world-scale political order with a variety of phenomena like the development of a capitalist world-economy;[1] gendered, raced, and classed

[1] Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Saskia Sassen, *Territory, authority, rights: From medieval to global assemblages*, (Princeton university press, 2008).

identities linked to imperial and colonial hierarchies;[2] global social movements;[3] or a world society,[4] that have fallen outside the conventional ambit of state-centred theories of international order.[5] The various social, economic, and technological interconnections that span the globe are now familiar in discourses of globalization. Less familiar, however, is the discourse of political globalization linked to these others, and largely explored in international relations. This dissertation examines the way these approaches share an account of political unity—that of an international political order coextensive with the surface of the globe.

Despite growing attention to various arrangements of international order, theories of international relations are rarely studied as theories of an already-existing planetary political unity. I thus investigate the conceptual resources through which discourses of international politics sustain claims to global political unity and provide an account of the political unification of the planet. This work is thus a study of the distinction between an international and a global or world order, but as a difference that has already been overcome. While a substantial amount of work in international relations is concerned with the (de-)legitimation of state claims to authority over particular territories, my interest here is to explain in part how discourses of international politics, even those contesting the legitimacy of state authority, legitimate claims to the territory of the globe.

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[2] Amitav Acharya, "Advancing global IR: Challenges, contentions, and contributions," *International studies review* 18, no. 1 (2016): 4-15; Mattern, Janice Bially, and Ayşe Zarakol, "Hierarchies in world politics," *International Organization* 70, no. 3 (2016): 623-654.

[3] Ronnie D. Lipschutz, "Reconstructing world politics: the emergence of global civil society," *Millennium* 21, no. 3 (1992): 389-420; Margaret E. Keck, and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond borders: Advocacy networks in international politics*, (Cornell University Press, 2014).

[4] John W. Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco O. Ramirez, "World society and the nation-state," *American Journal of sociology* 103, no. 1 (1997): 144-181; John Williams, "The international society–World society distinction," *Guide to the English School in international studies* (2014): 127-142.

[5] John Williams, "Pluralism, solidarism and the emergence of world society in English School theory," *International Relations* 19, no. 1 (2005): 19-38; Jens Bartelson, "From the International to the Global?" *The Sage handbook of the history, philosophy and sociology of international relations* (2018): 33-45.

The co-constitutive relationship between space and political authority has been explored in detail by scholars of political geography, geopolitics, and international relations.[6] As recent scholarship has shown, sovereign territoriality is enabled rather than undermined by the absolute space represented by the figure of the globe.[7] The globalization of the international system is understood to begin with the earliest European voyages to the Americas and their attendant efforts to map and conquer the 'free space' of the world outside Europe. Early modern discourses in international law emerged in relation to the understanding of the earth as a globe and its attendant challenges to Christian European universalism.[8] Philosophers such as Kant, as we will see in Chapter 4, were preoccupied with reconciling the unity represented by the image of the spherical globe and related Christian ideas about the unity of nature, reason, and the human species with the empirical diversity of life on earth.

On this model, international relations takes on a dynamic of what Edward Keene terms "toleration and civilization," in which relations among European states are organized on the principle of equality and relations between European states and non-European political communities on the basis of racial, civilizational, and cultural hierarchies.[9] The status of this resolution comes into question in discourses of both geopolitics and international relations with the political unification of the earth—the mapping of the earth as a spherical globe and the

[6] Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern geographies: The reassertion of space in critical social theory*, (Verso, 1989); John Agnew and Stuart Corbridge, *Mastering space: hegemony, territory and international political economy*, (Routledge, 2002).
[7] R. B. J. Walker, *After the Globe/Before the World* (London: Routledge, 2010); John Agnew, *Globalization & Sovereignty: Beyond the Territorial Trap*, (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018).
[8] Siba Grovogui, *Sovereigns, Quasi-Sovereigns, and Africans: Race and Self-Determination in International Law*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Carl Schmitt, *The* Nomos *of the Earth in the* Jus Publicum Europaeum, G. L. Ulmen, trans. (New York: Telos Press, 2003).
[9] Edward Keene, *Beyond the anarchical society: Grotius, colonialism and order in world politics*, (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 97; John M. Hobson, *The Eurocentric conception of world politics: Western international theory, 1760-2010*, (Cambridge University Press, 2012); Gerry Simpson, *Great powers and outlaw states: unequal sovereigns in the international legal order*, (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

establishment of the first world political order coextensive with its surface.[10] In short, modern claims to state sovereignty are embedded within a prior account of planetary political order. It is the consequences of this 'global' condition that form and have formed the basis of many theories of international order and it is the distinction marked by the 'globalization' of international order that is the subject of what follows.

This planetary political order involves not only a claim to territory, but also an ordering of populations and of humanity as an object of global governance. The process of political ordering often referred to as domestication—whether Ashley's version that focuses on the suppression of historicity and contingency or Patricia Owens' conception of domestication as a practice of colonial rule aimed at suppressing counterinsurgency—takes place not only at the level of the local political community but on a planetary scale.[11] As scholars of citizenship and migration note, dividing the global population into spatial containers within which their rights are granted and their freedom can be exercised is not the only way to organize human populations on a world scale. While the benefits and shortcomings of this ordering have been well-documented, its centrality to theories of world politics, its persistence in the face of challenges from its outsides, and its resistance to critical intervention are increasingly recognized in studies of world politics.[12] This ordering of the world into a system of sovereign states is primarily identified as a process of spatial and temporal division, both in relation to the boundaries of state territory and the distinction

[10] The way this story is told in international relations is the subject of Chapter 5.

[11] Richard Ashley, "The Powers of Anarchy: Theory, Sovereignty, and the Domestication of Global Life," (1998) In *International Theory*, pp. 94-128. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1995; Peter Sloterdijk, "*Rules for the Human Zoo*: *a response to the* Letter on Humanism," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 27 (2009): 12-28; Owens, Patricia. *Economy of force: Counterinsurgency and the historical rise of the social*, (Cambridge University Press, 2015); Jairus Victor Grove, *Savage ecology: War and geopolitics at the end of the world*, (Duke University Press, 2019). The concept is explored in greater detail in Chapters 2 and 3.

[12] The relationship between critique and political authority will be explored in greater detail in Chapters 2 and 3. For an incisive recent articulation of these difficulties see Anne McNevin, "Mobility and its discontents: Seeing beyond international space and progressive time," *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, Onlinefirst (2019): 1-18.

between ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ states and peoples.[13] Such divisions, however, as Barry Hindess points out, have “a significant systemic character and systemic effects.”[14] Rather than dividing an already-unified globe, the development of international order includes the political unification, in the form of an international system, of a previously divided globe, a unification which consists of a complex interplay between claims about global political unity and order and the kinds of political divisions necessary to govern such an order.

At issue in this work, then, is the very straightforward and often implicit account of global political unity and order that enables the political divisions and hierarchies that characterize world politics. As studies of cosmology and international order indicate, even the most abstract conceptions of form, structure, and order exert significant influence on what kinds of political claims can be heard, what political authorities are deemed legitimate, and where and how the boundaries of political order are located.[15] Philosophical and scientific theories of order provide answers to questions about the proper relationship between unity and diversity, parts and whole, and universality and particularity that are already given in the concepts and logics that animate theories of international politics.

Yet the notion that the international constitutes a global or universal whole has been challenged by postcolonial and decolonial, poststructuralist, and ecological literatures in international relations. These large, diverse, and by no means discrete bodies of scholarship draw on a variety of intellectual traditions and express multidimensional critiques of international politics. The chapters that follow respond to the challenges these critiques pose to claims to world

[13] For example, Timothy Dunne and Christian Reus-Smit, *The Globalization of International Society*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 3.
[14] Barry Hindess, “Divide and Rule: The International Character of Modern Citizenship,” *European Journal of Social Theory* 1, no. 1: 62.
[15] Walker, *After the Globe/Before the World*; Bartelson, *Visions of World Community*; Bentley B. Allan, *Scientific cosmology and international orders*, (Cambridge University Press, 2018).

politics and a unified world political order. What is at stake in these critiques is the form of order or unity through which political life is understood and imagined on a planetary scale. An overview of these literatures is enough to cast significant doubt on any claim that the international constitutes a universal whole.

First is the way the international system presents a singular vision of the world at the expense of a diversity of ethical, political, and ontological claims. Many studies demonstrate the way both individuals and groups are denied the status of subjects of the international, whether along the lines of race, class, or gender; through a logic of development that places some peoples and states less far along the road to fully achieved humanity; or by exclusions enacted upon those who cross conventional political boundaries in unconventional ways such as migrants and stateless peoples. As Naeem Inayatullah and David Blaney argue, while the Westphalian international system purports to solve the problem of ontological conflicts, what it does in effect is 'defer' the question of difference by tolerating political, ethical, and ontological difference only within the territorial boundaries of the system of states. Furthermore, postcolonial critiques of the discipline emphasize the way international relations works as a particular way of reconciling human universality and particularity, such that concepts, values, and forms of reasoning that characterize a local (European) tradition of thought have come to represent phenomena that are global in scope. International relations thus express what Tickner and Blaney call a "one-world world metaphysics" that "implicitly [accepts] the existence of a singular world, or *uni*verse."[16] The international order accommodates different worldviews safely contained within the boundaries of the state and system of states, but actively ignores, incorporates, or suppresses the emergence of alternative worlds, cosmologies or ontological orders that challenge the 'what' of international politics and not only

[16] David L. Blaney and Arlene B. Tickner, "Worlding, ontological politics and the possibility of a decolonial IR," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 45, no. 3 (2017): 294.

the 'how.'[17] While international relations may be open to a variety of epistemological approaches to the study of international order, the ontological underpinnings of that order are placed outside the realms of science and politics.

The second challenge to the current world order comes from the limits that earth systems place on modern aspirations to a universal global order premised on the familiar dualisms that continue to structure theories of international relations such as quantity and quality and Man and Nature. These critiques suggest that the abstraction of the spherical globe exhibits an objectivizing 'view from nowhere' at the expense of the particular ecological conditions that sustain planetary life.[18] In contrast to the smooth, empty sphere of the globe, these literatures point to the complex webs of organic life, geological shifts, and climactic conditions that are necessary for survival and constitute significant limits to human activity on the earth's surface. These conditions already feature in discourses of world politics as the effects of global warming such as wildfires, extreme temperatures, rising sea levels, and ocean acidification feature in debates on international law, arctic sovereignty, and migration, to name only a few among many possible examples. Responding to planetary limits requires, according to these authors, alternative understandings of planetary totality.[19]

Finally, scholarship on the problem of world politics raises the question not only of the limits of a world order imagined on the basis of a system of states, but of the limits of any account of world order as such. These scholars draw on a Kantian critical tradition premised on the finitude

[17] Kimberly Hutchings, "Decolonizing Global Ethics: Thinking with the Pluriverse," *Ethics & International Affairs* 33, no. 2 (2019): 115-125.
[18] Recent examples include Olaf Corry, and Hayley Stevenson, eds. *Traditions and trends in global environmental politics: International relations and the earth*, (London: Routledge, 2017); Cameron, Harrington, "The ends of the world: International relations and the Anthropocene" *Millennium* 44, no. 3 (2016): 478-498.
[19] Bruno Latour, *Down to earth: Politics in the new climatic regime*, (John Wiley & Sons, 2018); Bruno Latour, and Timothy M. Lenton, "Extending the domain of freedom, or why Gaia is so hard to understand," *Critical Inquiry* 45, no. 3 (2019): 659-680.

of human reason and thus the impossibility of any complete account of the world and by extension a world politics. Even absent the wealth of empirical examples of exclusions from the international order, for example, the notion of the international as a universal whole encounters a number of insuperable logical difficulties. Claims to universal political order, for example, are challenged by "the logical impossibility of a pure theory of internalization"[20] produced by the constitutive nature of exclusion. Any claims to universality the international might make, these scholars point out, can be understood as "a result of a hegemonic operation of universalization that conceals the particular origin or character of what it presents as universal."[21] This literature also points to the difficulties involved in imagining a move to a world order beyond the international, given that the system of states is conventionally understood as a plurality of states in opposition to world order understood as a single political community.

Despite these critiques, theories of international order (including the above) express an implicit account of global political unity in the form of an international system whose boundaries are coextensive with the surface of the globe. Most accounts of the emergence of world political order locate its origins in the recent past, as the result of either the period of European territorial expansion at the end of the nineteenth century or the universalization of the principle of sovereign equality with the founding of the United Nations in 1945. Though such a world order remains in its infancy, the idea that the earth is coextensive with a systematically unified global international political order has become axiomatic across a range of scholarship in the human sciences, and most importantly for this dissertation, in theories of international order. Given the critiques of world

[20] R. B. J. Walker, *Out of Line: Essays on the politics of boundaries and the boundaries of modern politics*, (London: Routledge, 2016), 76.
[21] Sergei Prozorov, *Void Universalism I*, (New York: Routledge, 2010), 9.

order outlined above, how do theories of international order sustain claims to global unity by providing an answer to the question of world political order?

My argument is that discourses of international politics sustain claims to global political unity through a specific understanding of order. This understanding, usually described by the term 'system,' refers to an irreducible or reciprocal relationship between parts and whole. While descriptions of the international system abound, prevailing theoretical oppositions in international relations—such as tradition and science, structure and agency, and system and society—presume a particular account of an already present order that they describe. In doing so, they draw an implicit analogy between order, international order, and world order. In this respect, what is at stake in the problem of world politics is not what kind of system the international is (that is, how the system is arranged), which is the preoccupation of most theories of international politics, but the conception of order expressed by the concept of system before it can be described as an anarchy, society, or some combination of both. By posing international politics as a structural problem (that is, one that involves a reciprocal or irreducible relation between parts and their arrangement), theories of international order provide an implicit answer to some of the most intensely contested questions in world politics that hinge on the question of the relationship between human political unity and diversity. As a result, theories of international order express claims not only about the limits of a particular arrangement of world order, but about the boundaries of world order as such. It is the form of these boundaries and their significance for theorizing the global quality of international order into which this work inquires.

I study this problem in relation to the question of political order in both its ontological and normative dimensions. As we will see in Chapter 1, systematic unity challenges the distinction between the ontological and normative as well as the material and the social. Discourses of

international politics thus employ an ontology of order that implies that order is necessarily normative, that is, a process of ordering. At the scale of the world, however, identifying an 'orderer' responsible for determining the limits of world order is not possible in the way it is supposed to be possible for sovereign authority in the case of the domestic political order. International politics is thus frequently linked to the question of how to understand 'order without an orderer,' a question to which Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* and Bull's *Anarchical Society* attempt a response. Such a question, as we will see in Chapter 3 and 4, depends on a prior account of a single planetary political order in the form of an international system.

By advancing a critique of a particular account of order and of unity, I aim to point towards the way this account provides a set of boundaries of world order, that is, limits not to the present international order or past international orders, but to prevailing accounts of what any world political order can and cannot be. These boundaries are significant not because they represent the only or the best accounts of world order, but because of their persistence in spite of the variety of conceptions of world order available.[22] Moreover, as Bartelson demonstrates through historico-philosophical investigation of the works of figures like Nicholas of Cusa, conceptions of world political community are neither particularly new, nor proper to modernity.[23] It is precisely the way that such alternatives are either incorporated within or denied entirely by prevailing theories of international politics that makes the quality and functioning of the boundaries of political order an urgent question.

[22] Two useful recent surveys in this respect are: Ban Wang, ed., *Chinese visions of world order: Tianxia, culture, and world politics*, (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2017); Rita Abrahamsen, "Internationalists, sovereigntists, nativists: Contending visions of world order in Pan-Africanism," *Review of International Studies* 46, no. 1 (2020): 56-74.
[23] Bartelson, *Visions of World Community*.

System and Order

In one sense, the consequences of systemic order could be seen as the subject of the majority of studies of international politics. To say that theories of international relations share a conception of systemic order is thus to make a point that is at once obvious and banal. As Olaf Corry puts it, "'system' defined in terms of interacting units is…better thought as an overarching category of which anarchy, hierarchy, and polity [Corry's own model of political structure]" are subtypes, each with a particular arrangement of parts."[24] In Corry's view, this makes an analysis of the international system less worthwhile than theories of its arrangement, such as those premised on anarchy or hierarchy. As I argue in this work, however, anarchy is one description among many of a model of structure already given be the concept of system. Theories of international relations are premised on the structuring effects of the overarching category of order of which the dominant theories of international politics are variations. An array approaches to the studies of international relations often described as fragmented, pluralistic, diverse, or heterogeneous, is united by a single theory of order: systematic unity.

Systematic unity is connected to a much broader series of metaphysical and cosmological assumptions about nature, knowledge, and causality that can be found in a wide range of contexts. Ideas about the relation between parts and whole that would be familiar to Waltz and Bull can be found in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in discussions relating to the relation between form and substance and the transformation and development of organisms. They can also be found in texts of Plato's on cosmology like the *Timaeus* and the *Parmenides* in relation to the question of the orderer and the ordering of the world and the relation between Platonic forms and the material objects in which

[24] Olaf Corry, *Constructing a Global Polity*, (Palgrave-MacMillan, 2013), 83.

they are manifest.[25] They are also present in early modern debates on subjectivity and space, as well as biological growth and development which were settled in the late nineteenth century, explored in Chapters 4 and 5. The significance of these varied contexts and their influence on theories of international politics will not all be dealt with here; rather, the aim of what follows is to introduce a set of problems related to the political consequences of the systemic account of world order expressed in discourses of international politics.

In the literatures I examine in this work, order and disorder are divided along the lines of two models of order: system and aggregate. These models are used by Hedley Bull to distinguish order from disorder, a collection of states from an international system, and a world of many political orders from a single, systematically unified world political system. They are also used by Kant to distinguish between nature and freedom and between a global 'state of nature' and a cosmopolitan system of states. While aggregate is associated with a mechanistic ontology on the model of classical Newtonian science in which there are no wholes over and above a set of component parts, system is associated with the organic view, in which neither parts nor wholes are reducible to the other.

Part of my argument is that discourses of international politics, especially, though by no means exclusively, in Anglo-American academic contexts, are formed around questions, problems, and answers found in the work of Kant. Most commentators locate Kant's international political thought in the context of the challenges posed to the doctrines of the unity of nature and reason by the empirical diversity of life and encounters with non-European others. Enlightenment Europe was confronted with the problem of how to reconcile the doctrine of unity of nature with the empirical diversity of life. These questions, however, are part of a much broader series of shifts

[25] William Bain, "*The Anarchical Society* as Christian Political Theology," in Hidemi Suganami, Madeleine Carr, and Adam Humphreys, eds. *The Anarchical Society at 40*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 59-74.

away from early-modern rationalism toward empiricism, from definition toward description, and from classification toward development, all linked to a growing sense of the limits of mechanistic science. This conception of system is a response to the limits of the mechanical conception of a whole as an aggregate, or a collection of individual units.

These transformations are linked to a new formulation of the figure of Mankind that has been identified as the subject of the international, and of the human sciences. This figure is the product of the eighteenth century "reinvention of mankind" linked to the development of organic thought and expresses the need to think of Man in both universal and particular terms. As Bartelson explains, "The massive influx of reports from expeditions to exotic places indicated that mankind was much more diverse than previously thought, again fuelling speculation as to whether all the peoples of the earth were of the same species."[26] This meant that, as Keene points out, "it was vital…to explain the diversity of human political and social organization around the world in a way that would be consistent with the uniformity [of human nature] thesis."[27] These discoveries posed a significant challenge to the doctrines of the unity of nature and of reason that characterized medieval Christian universalism as well as Enlightenment political philosophy. Philosophers of the period were thus confronted with the problem of the relation between existing accounts of the unity of nature and the variety of beings encountered by natural science. Kant's political project is thus not a simple universalism but an attempt to reconcile human universality and particularity.

Part of the difficulty in writing about order is the intimidating variety of names given to these two accounts of order. An aggregate is called alternately a heap, a collection, or a pile, while a system is called alternately a structure, an assemblage, or a whole. If this were not confusing enough, there is inconsistency in the use of these terms, such that the mechanistic view, for

[26] Jens Bartelson, *Visions of World Community*, 75.
[27] Edward Keene, *International Political Thought: A Historical Introduction*, (London: Polity Press, 2005), 150.

example, is often referred to as the 'systemic' view. In this work, I alternate between referring to a systemic account of order and using Kant's preferred term, systematic unity. In part this is due to the diverse contexts in which this analogy of order appears, as well as my desire to resist the conventional association of systematic unity with structural determination. Regardless of what terminology is used, as I demonstrate in subsequent chapters, the question the terms are used to pose implies an analogical account of order in the form of a systematic unity. As we will see in Chapter 4, Kant models the idea of systematic unity on the figure of the geometrical sphere, a figure Kant uses to conceptualize the earth. Both systematic unity and the sphere, on Kant's account, display the irreducible relation between parts and whole that characterize theories of international order.

I study this problem in relation to the question of political order in both its ontological and normative dimensions. As we will see in Chapter 1, systematic unity challenges the distinctions between the ontological and normative as well as between the material and the social. Discourses of international politics thus employ an ontology of order that implies that order is necessarily normative, that is, a process of ordering. At the scale of the world, however, identifying an 'orderer' responsible for determining the limits of world order is not possible in the way it is supposed to be possible for sovereign authority in the case of the domestic political order. International politics is thus frequently linked to the question of how to understand 'order without an orderer,' a question to which a range of literatures have offered responses. These responses can be divided in broad terms between anarchical and hierarchical approaches to the international system.

Diagnosing World Order

The distinction between political order and disorder is understood by modern traditions of political theory and international relations to be coextensive with the boundaries of the state. The domestic sphere, inside those boundaries, is characterized by the peace, order, and stability necessary for the pursuit of the good life, while outside the boundaries of the state lie disorder and violence. In Martin Wight's formulation, on this reading, international politics is nothing but the "untidy fringe" of political theory proper and lacks the order and regularity that characterize politics within states.[28] The speculative reflection of political theory is no match for the primary fact of international politics—the disorder that stems from the absence of a 'common power' to govern relations between states.

By now, the idea that international politics is characterized primarily by disorder has been challenged by a range of scholarship. Studies of order in international politics have pointed to shared norms and rules, as well as other forces that govern relations between states such as the balance of power, international law, and international institutions. Others have shown the way that the concepts and practices of international politics are marked by historically specific understandings of the subject, humanity, and truth that privilege certain identities, practices, and political aspirations while foreclosing many more. Historical investigations of international politics have meanwhile demonstrated the way international politics are characterized not by disorder but rather imperial, colonial, and hierarchical political and economic orders both before and during the establishment of a global international system. Approaches that understand the international system in anarchical and hierarchical terms, however, share an account of international order as a systematic unity.

[28] Martin Wight, "Why is there no international theory?" *International Relations* 2 (1960): 20.

Regulating systems

Typologies of theories of world order typically distinguish between approaches that aim at managing, regulating, or reforming the existing world order, and those that aim at transforming, revolutionising, or escaping it. Richard Falk, for example, distinguishes between system-maintaining, system-reforming, and system-transforming approaches to world order. Falk associates system-maintaining strategies with "governing groups and their supporting elites" who emphasize strengthening international institutions and developing globally-coordinated economic policy.[29] System-reforming approaches tend to acknowledge the need for the international system to respond to changing social, political, and economic conditions and thus take a longer-term view, while system-transforming approaches argue for "the need to transform the structure of international relations by diminishing the role of sovereign states in some decisive respects,"[30] of which the World Order Models Project serves as an example.

Nicholas Rengger, meanwhile, identifies two broad "families" of approaches to international order, the first of which includes work that aims to solve or manage the problem of order and the second which seeks to end the problem of order through emancipation or problematization.[31] Management approaches, argues Rengger, include theories that rely on the concept of balance "which has become the centrepiece of…political realism," international society approaches, and liberal approaches that emphasize the role of international institutions. Rengger divides approaches that aim to end the problem of order into those that aim for emancipation

[29] Richard Falk, *The End of World Order: Essays on Normative International Relations*, (London: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1983), 48-9.
[30] Falk, *End of World Order*, 52.
[31] Nicholas Rengger, *International Relations, Political Theory, and the Problem of Order*, (London: Routledge, 2000), xi.

beyond the system of states, like Linklater, and those that seek to problematize the way the question of order has been posed, such as Walker.

For Rengger, however, the problem of order in international politics remains a matter of theorizing an adequate conception of order, both empirically and normatively, in a realm where none seems readily apparent—international politics. He affirms this view through his own approach of bringing the resources of the Western tradition of political theory to bear on the problem of international order, thereby engaging in what Bull might call a domestic analogy and what Walker might call an affirmation of the sovereign state as the primary locus of political order. The approach taken in this work is rather to investigate the way theories of international politics already express a particular vision of order even before solutions like balance, society, or institutions can be proffered. This account of order is demonstrated clearly in Falk's typology, in which even world order may be transformed, but never in such a way that it ceases to constitute a system.

Most theories of international politics that emphasize the systemic character of international order take anarchy to be the organizing principle of the international system. Many thus agree with Mark Trachtenberg that "to get at the general problem of international order, you first need to deal with the theoretical issue of how things work in a purely anarchical world."[32] These accounts begin with the view that world order is defined, as Sorenson puts it, as "a governing arrangement among states, meeting the current demand for order in major areas of concern."[33]

[32] Mark Trachtenberg, "The Problem of International Order and How to Think About It," *The Monist* 89, no. 2 (2006): 210.
[33] Georg Sorenson, "What Kind of World Order? The International System in the New Millennium," *Cooperation and Conflict* 41, no. 1 (2006): 343-363. In the same special issue, two critiques of Sorenson point to some of the problems with which this work is concerned. Hanafi asks the question "Whose world order?" and L. H. M. Ling points out the way the four approaches to world order identified by Sorenson (realism, liberalism, constructivism, and international political economy) "all point to the *same* set of power relations on a global scale, otherwise known as neoliberal elite rule" (382).

Once established as a system of states, international politics an be analyzed in terms of polarity;[34] balance of power;[35] equilibrium;[36] international regimes;[37] or hegemony either in terms of great powers or capitalist ideology.[38] These are concerned with certain arrangements or patterns of system rather than with the form of order itself.

Two recent books, Ned Lebow's *The Rise and Fall of Political Orders* and Bentley Allan's *Scientific Cosmology and International Orders*, reconsider the question of international order. Lebow defines order as "the regular and proportional movement of the component parts of a whole," but quickly moves to a conception of social order as "legible, predictable behaviour in accord with recognized norms."[39] Allen's approach links changes in international order to changes in scientific cosmology. I share Allan's sense of the significance of scientific ideas and cosmologies to theories of political order, as well as his sense of the strong influence of natural science on theories international politics. Allan, however, by discussing the effect of certain cosmological ideas on international order, theorizes a continuity in the international system that my analysis aims to investigate.[40]

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[34] Karl W. Deutsch and J. David Singer, "Multipolar power systems and international stability," *World Politics* 16, no. 3 (1964): 390-406; J. David Singer, "System stability and transformation: a global system approach," *British Journal of International Studies* 3 (1977): 219-232; Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 1979.
[35] Ernst B. Haas, "The Balance of Power: Prescription, Concept, or Propaganda?" *World Politics* 5, no. 4 (1953): 442-477.
[36] Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1964); Karl W. Deutsch, *The Nerves of Government: Models of Political Communication and Control*, (New York: The Free Press, 1966).
[37] Ernst B. Haas, "Is there a hole in the whole? Knowledge, technology, interdependence, and the construction of international regimes," *International Organization* 29, no. 3 (1975): 827-876.
[38] Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, (Princeton: Cambridge University Press, 1981); John Ikenberry, ed., *Power, Order, and Change in World Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Robert Cox, *Gramsci, Hegemony, and International Relations: An Essay in Method*, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 12, no. 2 (1983): 162-175; Stephen Gill and Claire Cutler, *New Constitutionalism and World Order*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
[39] Ned Lebow, *The Rise and Fall of Political Orders*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 20.
[40] Bentley B. Allan, *Scientific Cosmologies and International Orders*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Robert Jervis, in contrast, explores in detail some of the consequences of systems as a particular form of order.[41] However, Jervis takes systemic order as given, proven by scientific experiment, whose consequences can then be applied to the domain of international politics. Thus, Jervis claims that "we all know that social life and politics constitute systems"[42] and further, that "very little in social and political life makes sense except in the light of systematic processes."[43] I agree with Jervis that systemic order is positively indispensable to the modern human sciences, but because systematic unity, in the many variations in which it comes and contexts in which it appears, remains one theory of order among many, the fact that 'we all know' that political order must be thought in terms of systematic unity is thus itself a phenomenon that bears examination. Moreover, because systemic order is for Jervis an ontological fact, his approach does not recognize the constitutive effects of the concept of system on international politics. In other words, he does not consider the way that systematic unity is what makes it possible to think the international as a distinct political order and sphere of action.

Hierarchy, empire, and colonialism

While the above theories largely take anarchy as their starting point and the international system of states as the form of international political order, many other scholars identify international and world order with imperial, colonial, or hierarchical power formations. As Zarakol and Mattern explain, as "International Relations (IR) now appeals far less frequently to anarchy and its systemic logics…a growing range of scholars is seeking to make sense of world politics through an

[41] Robert Jervis, *System Effects*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997).
[42] Ibid., 3.
[43] Ibid., 295.

analytical focus on hierarchies instead."[44] Their aim is to respond to the 'global' nature of world politics and argue that hierarchical approaches "promise to deliver…a framework for theorizing and empirically analyzing world politics as a global system rather than just an international one."[45] Global, for Zarakol and Mattern, means theorizing in a manner "that does not analytically conflate states and their sovereignty"[46] and that goes beyond thinking the state and international system as the primary subjects of international politics. The study of global order from the perspective of hierarchy thus promises a framework for studying world order that goes beyond the state-centrism of anarchical systems. However, despite this desire to move away from "anarchy and its systemic logics," Mattern and Zarakol claim that "hierarchically-centred approaches to world politics contain within them a path toward systemic theories that can accommodate global complexity."[47] System remains the organizing principle even of theories of hierarchical political order that aspire to global scope.

The way international order reconciles competing claims to unity and diversity is a persistent theme of contemporary histories of international political thought. These studies understand the international as a European answer to the problem of the relation between human unity and diversity, and thus locate international relations in the context of modern European responses to difference.[48] While much international relations scholarship privileges either one or the other of these options and thus treat unity and diversity as purely antagonistic, these studies attend to the ways that discourses of international politics theorize their coexistence within a single

[44] Janice Bially-Mattern and Ayşe Zarakol, "Hierarchies in World Politics," *International Organization* 70 (2016): 624.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Bially-Mattern and Zarakol, "Hierarchies in World Politics," 643.
[48] Muthu, *Enlightenment Against Empire*, 2003; Naeem Inayatullah and David Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference*, (New York: Routledge, 2004); Jens Bartelson, *Visions of World Community*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

order. In doing so, they demonstrate how international order expresses relations between multiple and often contradictory claims, forces, and qualities, including well-known binary oppositions such as universal/particular and hierarchy/equality. Edward Keene's introduction to international political thought, for example, aims to show "how ways of understanding the similarities and differences between communities have changed over time, as new concepts structuring these divisions have come to the fore."[49] Jennifer Pitts' recent volume *Boundaries of the International*, makes a similar claim, arguing that "the law of nations is Europe's distinctive solution to universal problems of order," a solution which "entails a particular combination of pluralism and universalism."[50]

Likewise, Adom Getachew's recovery of the "worldmaking" qualities in the writing of decolonial nationalists such as Eric Williams, W. E. B. DuBois, and Kwame Nkrumah, demonstrates the way that nationalist and internationalist political aspirations can be closely entwined rather than opposed. These writers articulated their nationalist aspirations in the context of an international order marked by economic and political inequality and the persistence of colonial domination, even in the absence of alien rule. A genuine postcolonial nationalism thus had to include transformation at the level of the international order.[51] These studies demonstrate the specificities of the historically contingent and changing ways in which competing claims to universality and particularity are reconciled in discourses of international law and politics.

This work is also valuable for the way it problematizes international order by revealing the relations of domination that inhere in claims related to the principle of equality between states or the universality of the European states-system by exploring how discourses of international politics

[49] Edward Keene, *International Political Thought: A Historical Introduction*, (Polity: Cambridge, 2005), 10.
[50] Jennifer Pitts, *Boundaries of the International*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 6.
[51] Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019).

legitimate claims to hierarchy between European and non-European states that works as "a source of justifications for and obfuscations of imperial domination."[52] As Getachew shows, critics of European imperialism were attuned to the ways that international order enables unequal economic and political arrangements.[53] These primarily historical accounts track the way that changes in various means of reconciling unity and diversity produce changes in the patterns of inclusion and exclusion and hierarchy and subordination expressed in discourses of international politics. While these patterns are increasingly understood through the lens of empire, these imperial dynamics are understood as working through, rather than against, contemporary international order.[54]

Despite the various formulations through which the international is understood to relate universality and particularity, the effects of these discourses are strikingly similar. Whether those outside the European system of states are known as "barbarians" or "uncivilized," or through discourses of "wildness" and "oriental despotism," the political effects are remarkably similar in form: difference is subordinated to identity and hierarchy trumps equality. Inayatullah and Blaney, for example, argue that the discipline of international relations functions on the basis of a logic of identity that demonstrates "a relative incapacity to acknowledge, confront, and explore difference."[55] Contrary to the understanding of the Westphalian system of states as a pluralistic response to a "universal Christian order," Inayatullah and Blaney describe international relations through the lens of what they term the "Westphalian deferral," the way the international contains difference within limits determined by the system of sovereign states. On their account, "the state is the domain where difference is translated into uniformity, while IR remains eternally a site of

[52] Pitts, *Boundaries*, 6.
[53] Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire*, 2019.
[54] Though the terms are difficult to disentangle. See R. B. J. Walker, "Lines of Insecurity: International, Imperial, Exceptional," *Security Dialogue* 37, 1 (2006): 65-82.
[55] Naeem Inayatullah and David Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference*, (Routledge: London, 2004), 2.

potentially dangerous, but one would hope manageable, confrontations with others." For them, the international thus represents "less a solution to the problem of difference and more a deferral of the need to face that problem frontally."[56] Discourses of international relations, on this account, do not simply erase or deny difference, but only consider difference within a particular set of limits; difference can only be expressed as "*international* difference."[57] It is thus only within the bounds of a particular form of political community, the modern state, that human diversity can be expressed in political terms. What is notable about these accounts is thus the contrast between the variety of concepts, historical moments, and fields (international law, law of nations, political theory) examined by these literatures and the continuity of their effects.

Several of these authors, in response to these effects, advocate for a transformation of international order into a more equal and more just political arrangement. For Jennifer Pitts, history can help illuminate the ways that discourses of international law obscure relations of domination and hierarchy in the present and thus contribute to the difficult task of "achieving the equality and consistency to which international law and much international political theory aspire."[58] Getachew, likewise, recovers postwar anticolonial worldmaking as a spur to "remake the international order" such that it is characterized by nondomination.[59] These pleas thus consider particular instantiations of international order, but not the conception of order that permits the theorization of international politics as an ordered political whole. To speak of international system, even before considering whether it is characterized by equality or hierarchy, freedom or domination, already gives an answer to the problem of the relationship between human unity and diversity: an understanding of order as structure. My goal, in this context, is to explore what accounts, at least in part, for the

[56] Ibid., 20.
[57] Inayatullah and Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference*, 6.
[58] Pitts, 27.
[59] Getachew, 32.

continuity that inheres in all these formulations.[60] Both approaches, I contend, rely on an account of the prior ordering of the world into a systematic unity understood as the accomplishment of the first world political order.

Method and Methodology

The most significant methodological problems that confront this study stem from the way that the analogy of order that is its object of study is itself deeply influential of the traditions of thought, academic disciplines, and claims to scientific authority that this work draws on as intellectual resources. Investigating the influence of a systematic conception of order on theories of the international system through the problem of the domestic analogy is impossible to justify or carry out on the basis of an existing social scientific methodology. The relation between systematic unity and the social sciences could scarcely be treated with any justice in a book-length study.[61] However, acknowledgement of the significance of systematic unity to the modern human sciences is enough to caution the study of such an account of order on a purely social scientific basis.

Moreover, increasingly recognized in international relations is the way the disciplines of the human sciences are products of histories of colonialism and imperialism and thus organized and oriented toward colonial and imperial political goals, ways of knowing, and conceptions of the world.[62] What this means is that questions about how to reconcile claims to political authority in relation to human unity and diversity are prior to the affirmation of any particular epistemological or ontological position. As Grovogui puts it, "international politics cannot be

[60] Comparison always requires some engagement with both similarities and differences. Cf. Edward Keene, *International Political Thought: A Historical Introduction*, (London: Polity Press, 2005).
[61] See Alix Cohen, *Kant and the Human Sciences: Biology, Anthropology, History*, (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2009).
[62] Sankaran Krishna, "Postcolonialism and International Political Sociology," *Routledge Handbook of International Political Sociology*, Pinar Bilgin and Xavier Guillaume, eds., (New York: Routledge, 2017).

properly grasped through theoretical answers to ontological and epistemological questions (first order)."[63] As a result, this is not a work that attempts to answer or is particularly interested in the question 'What is order?' Rather, my interest lies in the answers that are already given to that question in response to questions about the nature, past, and present of world political order. In this sense, I aim to uncover what is implicitly known about the international once it is designated a system, that is, posed as a problem of the relationship between parts and their arrangement. This study thus does not so much aim to discover anything new about international politics as to demonstrate what knowledge is already presumed by claims about the systematic quality of international order.

I consider my approach to political theory as resolutely empirical. The objects of my analysis are texts, and the concepts, principles, and problems through which they are constituted. I want to know how concepts of order work in terms of what possibilities they enable and foreclose according to their own internal logics. This is not a matter of explaining the meaning of these concepts by identifying their origins, whether such origins are identified as contingent, historical, violent, or transcendental. Rather, it is about trying to discern the effects of an analogy of order through which a specifically 'international' political unity can be judged as emerging or disappearing, present or absent, persisting or transforming. My goal in this respect is to trace an analogy of order that animates discourses of international politics. An analogy, on the model that I argue informs theories of the international order, is indicative neither of a complete identity between two things, nor of a mix of similarities and differences. Rather, analogies occur between arrangements of elements; they occur between relations, not things.

[63] Siba Grovogui, *Beyond Eurocentrism and Anarchy*, 109.

At times I have been tempted to follow Strauss and claim that these theories of international politics contain identical accounts of order that both pose and respond to timeless problems of philosophy and politics proper to humanity, problems and responses that trace lines across race, culture, and region.[64] At other times I have been tempted to imagine that the continuity and similarity I see across these literatures is an illusion, and that there was nothing common in the texts I encountered, that there was no 'order' there to compare, one with another, or that if there was, it was nothing more than the product of my own reason or imagination. Each articulation of international order I encountered, on this view, is unique, proper to its own historical period, geographical region, scientific discipline, or gendered, raced, and classed complex of power.

More tempting still was the impulse to think the influence of this analogy of order through a relation between past and present, continuity and change. On this basis, my analysis could rest on a comfortable indeterminacy between the two in which the reified categories of the present are revealed both as contingent in the sense of exhibiting differences from similar categories in the past, but also in the sense of being the product of particular expressions of historically and geographically distinct political conditions, the result of genealogies that trace violent struggles over the proper sites, sources, and boundaries of political authority.[65] On this basis, I could provide a lesson in both the errors and illusions of the past in relation to the knowledge of the present and the illusions of the present in relation to the knowledge of the past.

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[64] Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953); Leo Strauss, "What is Political Philosophy?" *The Journal of Politics* 19, no. 3 (1957): 343-368.

[65] Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, edited by D. F. Bouchard. Ithaca: Cornell University Press); Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, A. M. Sheridan Smith, trans., (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972; For more recent articulations of this approach in political theory and international relations see Quentin Skinner. *Regarding method*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); James Tully, "Public Philosophy in a New Key, Volume I: Democracy and civic Freedom," (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Beate Jahn, ed., *Classical Theory in International Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

These temptations are complicated, however, by recent scholarship on the many entanglements between claims to sovereign political authority and the distinction between past and present that enables modern historical knowledge. These studies point to the limits of historical periodization in relation to modern political aspirations to freedom, autonomy, sovereignty, and responsibility.[66] It is in relation to this difficulty that this work also responds to growing trepidation at the comfortable relationship between aspirations for critical knowledge and the political forms of the state and international system, which, in accounts such as Kant's, serve as conditions of possibility of such knowledge. Moreover, scholars increasingly point to the persistence of the state and international system as the limits of modern political imagination "despite all critique."[67]

Critique, as it is known in broad terms in the human sciences, is associated with a Kantian tradition of thought concerned with the identification with the limits of human reason, and, by extension, practical action and political possibility. This formulation is familiar to a range of critical approaches to contemporary political theory, including international relations.[68] In Foucault's widely cited formulation, which draws on Kant's "What is Enlightenment?" the critical attitude is one "in which the critique of what we are is at one and the same time the historical analysis of the limits imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them."[69] On this model, limit involves a distinction between a particular, finite space and a space

[66] Constantin Fasolt, *The Limits of History*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Kathleen Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); Kimberly Hutchings, *Time and world politics: Thinking the present*, (Manchester University Press, 2013). See also Jens Bartelson, "Sovereignty," and Tom Lundborg, "Time," in Reiko Shindo and Aoileann Ni Murchú, *Critical Imaginations in International Politics*, (New York: Routledge, 2016).
[67] Richard Ashley, "The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* XII (1987): 403-434; Jens Bartelson, *The Critique of the State*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); R. B. J. Walker, "Despite all critique," in Walker, *Out of Line*.
[68] Kimberly Hutchings, *Kant, Critique, and Politics*, (London: Routledge, 1996).
[69] Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?" in *Ethics, Subjectivity, Truth*, Paul Rabinow, ed., (New York: The New Press, 1994), 319.

outside it. In this sense, limitation is always external and has to do with the 'outside' of what is limited.

My interest here, however, is less in the limits expressed by prevailing theories of international order than in the boundaries of world order that they express. Kant, as we will see in Chapter 4, distinguishes between limits and boundaries when it comes to reason. A boundary, for Kant, has to do with internal limitation, that is, not the limits of reason in a given time and place in relation to a wider external field, but the limits of reason in any time and place produced by its own immanent limits. While most critical scholarship in international relations has been concerned with the limits of international order, my interest is in its purported boundaries, that is, the implicit account of the limits of *any* world order expressed by theories of one particular world order: the global international system. In discourses of international politics, these boundaries are marked by systematic unity. Systematic unity in the sense I mean it here is something that could be mistaken for a concept, an *a priori*, or an idea. A better name of the object of this study, however, is structure in the sense in which that term is understood by theories of international order, as an irreducible or reciprocal relation between parts and their arrangement. In other words, the object of this study is nothing other than itself; the order posited in discourses of international politics is itself an example of such an order.

The value of an analysis of the boundaries of world order in terms of an abstract theory of order is that, if certain limits or boundaries can be identified in the abstract conceptual moves by which claims about international and world order are made, these boundaries can be extrapolated to a much wider array of theoretical and empirical cases. As Robert Nichols has recently argued in relation to Marx, the value of analysis of a highly idealized picture of capitalism is that, "if Marx can demonstrate that capitalism requires systematic exploitation even under these highly idealized

circumstances…then he will have revealed capitalism to have been intrinsically flawed."[70] Similarly, investigating a highly idealized account of order shared by theories of international order reveals the internal limits that accompany such theories, that is, limits that will accompany (according to the theories under investigation) the boundaries of any world order.

The figures of Immanuel Kant and Hedley Bull loom large in this work. This is because of the exemplary way in which their theories of international politics express the simultaneously universalizing and particularizing dimensions of international order. In Kant, this is evident in the frequently noted ambivalence of his political writings in relation to the limits and possibilities of a world political community, as well as the way his work is appropriated for both liberal and realist purposes. Bull's conception of the system of states as an "anarchical society," meanwhile, is one of the most explicit attempts to theorize international order as an expression of both political unity and diversity. Both figures are linked to this theme due to the particular historical moments in which they were writing.

The work of Bull, and the literature on international society more broadly, furthermore, are increasingly read in the context of post-war decolonization movements and challenges to British empire. These scholars' abiding concern with what Getachew calls the "universalization of the state," and what Bull calls the "revolt against the West" indicate the extent to which Bull was guided by the problem of a multiplicity of competing value systems operating within a single world political order. Kant and Bull thus make an instructive pair because they lie on either side of the emergence of, according to theories of international politics, the transition from a world of many political orders to a world of one. While for Kant such an order is only a dream, for Bull it represents a pressing reality. It is this difference—between a world of many political orders and a

[70] Robert Nichols, *Theft is Property! Dispossession and Critical Theory*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020).

world of one and between a single space and a single political order—that theories of international political order both produce and erase.

Outline of the dissertation

Each chapter focuses on world order insofar as it is posed as a problem is a particular way: The problem of the domestic analogy (Chapter 1), the problem of world politics (Chapter 2), the problem of structure and its relation to tradition, science, and agency (Chapter 3), the problem of the relationship between International and Cosmopolitan Right in Kant's political thought (Chapter 4), and the problem of the globalization of international society (Chapter 5). In all these cases, an account of order works to structure both the questions and the answers that are asked and given by theories of international politics, especially in regard to political unity, whether in relation to the international system, the globe, or the world.

Chapter 1 explores this understanding of order in the work of Hedley Bull and subsequent literature on international society. Here I explore the conceptual distinction between aggregate and system through which Bull builds his theories of the international and world political systems. I argue that the difficulty of distinguishing between systemic and societal conceptions of international order lies in the abstract account of order at their root, which expresses an indistinction between the material and the social. I then demonstrate that this same account of order is used by Bull to distinguish between a world of many political orders and a world order generated by the expansion of the European system of states to cover the surface of the globe. This analogy, I argue, demonstrates a tension between Bull's skepticism about possibilities for world order beyond the system of states and his prior account of a world order instantiated by the international system.

This tension is explored further in Chapter 2, which examines the analogy between the problem of the domestic analogy as it is articulated by Bull and subsequent literatures on the problem of world politics. I argue that one of the central insights of Bull's critique of the domestic analogy—that the international is ordered in a way different than the state—has gone undeveloped and unrealized. As a result, the problem of the domestic analogy and the problem of world politics are posed in analogous terms. The way that both international and world politics are problematized along the same lines, moreover, suggests that the convergence between the two in the form of a global international system is unexamined in these literatures.

Chapter 3 considers the way this dynamic is at work in several literatures and debates that pose the problem of international order as a problem of structure by examining three analogies of structure: mechanism, organism, and complexity (or system). I do so through analysis of the 'second debate' between science and tradition, the debate on the relation between structure and agency, and what I argue is one contemporary iteration of the agent-structure problem in literatures that draw on theories of networks, assemblages, and complexity. International order is primarily posed, even by competing traditions of international political thought, as a problem of the relation between parts and whole, what in other contexts is called structure. It is on this terrain, expressed by systemic accounts of order, that discourses of international relations work to include, manage, and limit political difference. I contextualize these debates within the context of conflicts over structure across the twentieth century human sciences.

Chapter 4 examines the problem of the domestic analogy in Kant's political thought and its reception in international relations through the relation between International and Cosmopolitan Right. Kant, the chapter shows, conceives of the two as analogically related by systematic unity. I aim to show how Kant's conception of world in the political writings is analogous in form to that

of his conception of the international, that is, a whole irreducible to its parts. In this sense, I argue, the international for Kant is already a domestic analogy—an analogy of the world as a whole. In this sense, for Kant international order is an answer to the problem of the domestic analogy rather than its expression.

Chapter 5 considers Hedley Bull's account of world political order and its influence on the international society literature. While the domestic analogy is often used to demonstrate the impossibility of a move from an international system to a global politics, the way the international is posed as a problem of structure demonstrates that the Hobbesian leap from disorder to order, many to one, is presumed to have already happened, and that such a leap serves as the basis of claims about international politics. This insight is then used to advance a critique of the narrative of the globalization of the international.

Chapter 1

Order in the anarchical society: Bull's metaphysics of system

Two main conceptions of international order dominate most theories of international politics: system and society. These conceptions of order are usually thought to fall along the lines of major theoretical oppositions in international relations such as realism and idealism. In this chapter, I analyze the way these concepts are articulated in Hedley Bull's *The Anarchical Society*. I demonstrate the way that both concepts rely on an abstract logic of parts and whole by which Bull distinguishes order from disorder, an international system from states, and marks the genesis of world order. Beginning with this account of order, I demonstrate the way that these political orders are distinguished by Bull on the basis of the difference between an aggregate and a system. Though systemic and societal approaches are usually read as expressions of one or the other of these (i.e., aggregate or system), Bull's conception of both the international system and international society rely on a systemic or purposive account of order that expresses an indeterminacy between order in general and particular forms of (social) order. While varieties of world order such as the world political system and world society add important non-state elements to analyses of world order, these are premised on a prior political order determined with reference to systematic unity. As a result, *The Anarchical Society* is structured by an analogy between order, international order, and world order. This analogy, I argue in the final section of the chapter, raises questions about the tension between Bull's own doubts about the possibility of a world order beyond the international system and the structural account of the establishment of the first world political order outlined in the book that are addressed in literatures on the domestic analogy and world politics, which are the subject of Chapter 2.

Considering the systemic account of order that grounds Bull's theory of international order reveals a significant claim of Bull's critique: that theories of international politics express an implicit account of order. According to Bull, this is order understood as a relation between parts and whole, in other words, a system or structure. While the work of Bull has spawned significant bodies of scholarship on international order, this work tends to take the structural quality of international order as a starting point for analysis rather than subject it to critical scrutiny. The effects and implications of this form of order are thus left unexplored by both Bull and subsequent scholarship on international society, despite the significant ambivalences that characterize Bull's writing on the concept. The implication of Bull's critique—that theories of international order are premised on an account of political unity—have gone unrealized because the political consequences of the theory of order at the root of the problem—system—have gone unexamined.

Order in *The Anarchical Society*

The concept of an international system is not only the primary way in which scholars of international politics theorize international order but is also identified by a number of scholars as integral to international relations' claim to disciplinary autonomy. According to Buzan and Little, "without the concept of an international system, it would be difficult to justify international relations as a discipline. Without the distinguishing element of system the subject would quickly fragment back down to subsets of politics, law, economics, and sociology."[71] Jennifer Pitts identifies this dynamic when she explains that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries "historians and political writers came to understand Europe as a system, a 'state system' worthy

[71] Barry Buzan and Richard Little, "The Idea of 'international system': Theory Meets History," *International Political Science Review* 15, no. 3 (1994): 232.

of analysis in its own right, rather than simply the product of actions by states and statesmen."[72] Keene ties the concept of an international system with the emergence of international relations as a professionalized and institutionally embedded field of inquiry in the early twentieth century. The concept of an international system worked to unite a field that "lacked a clear consensus as to exactly what its terms of reference were."[73] The notion of an international system is linked in this way to the possibility of studying international relations in general.

That the international constitutes a system is now a truism that is accepted almost without exception within the discipline. As Buzan and Little note, the concept of an international system is "so central that the term is often left undefined."[46] They attempt to correct this oversight by defining international system as "a shorthand way of referring to the nexus of actors and interactions that constitute the subject matter of international relations."[74] Yet this definition is tautological; if 'international system' simply refers to the various elements which are the object of study of international relations, this does not explain why the phenomena said to constitute international relations should be studied with reference to an 'international' at all. Edward Keene, for his part, defines the concept of an international system in opposition to the concept of an international society, thereby linking international system to mid-twentieth century theorists who aimed to discover regularities of political behaviour based on the model of the natural sciences such as Morton Kaplan, Karl Deutsch, and Kenneth Waltz. Keene associates the concept of international system with so-called "scientific" approaches and the concept of international society with what are conventionally known in the discipline as "traditional" (historical, interpretive)

[72] Jennifer Pitts, *Boundaries of the International: Law and Empire*, (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2018).
[73] Edward Keene, *International Political Thought: A Historical Introduction*, (London: Polity Press, 2005), 194.
[74] Ibid.

approaches, presenting a picture of the discipline as divided along lines drawn during the second debate.[75]

Bull's *Anarchical Society* is an effective exemplar for its influence and for its explicit attention to an account of order *as such* on the basis of which various ordered arrangements can be identified, named, and studied. My analysis proceeds from a sense that *The Anarchical Society* is a text which, as Williams puts it, "continues to repay close reading."[76] Bull's careful elaboration of the distinction between system and society has become a touchstone for studies of international society and continues to be influential of much contemporary scholarship. Bull's description of the society of states, however, does not only contrast society and system, but rather presents international society as a more holistic account of the international than the concept of an international system, which is understood as a condition of possibility of an international society. For Bull, international order is not only present, but *sui generis*—different in form from the political order of the state.

This question of order is significant because it speaks to what Bull calls the "autonomy" of international relations. The target of Bull's critique is the notion that what is referred to as international 'anarchy,' that is, the lack of a common authority to govern relations between states, is synonymous with disorder. In "Society and Anarchy in International Relations" Bull cites the three *OED* definitions of anarchy: "'absence of rule; disorder; confusion'" and explains that he only employs the term in relation to the first definition, as "the question with which the essay is

[75] Keene, 195-202. For a sense of the primary positions in this debate and what is at stake in it, see: Klauss Knorr and James N. Rosenau, eds., *Contending Approaches to International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969). For a broad account of the second debate within the discipline see Yosef Lapid, "The Third Debate: On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era," *International Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (1989): 235-254. In this sense, Keene's concepts of international system and society, which are drawn from Bull, align with the oppositions between 'science' and 'tradition' and 'explaining and understanding' examined throughout this chapter.

[76] John Williams, "Order and Society," in Richard Little, et al., *The Anarchical Society in a Globalized World*, (New York: Palgrave, 2006), 14.

concerned is whether in the international context [anarchy] is to be identified also with the second and the third."[77] Bull's answer is, in short, no: anarchy is not synonymous with disorder but rather a particular form of order. Attempts to bring order to the supposed disorder of the international thus miss the way the international constitutes an already present order. Bull demonstrates the way that discussions of international politics assume the presence of a particular form of order, regardless of whether they theorize the international as an anarchy or a society. Bull's critique of systemic approaches to international politics is less a matter of a critique of international anarchy on the basis of the existence of an international society than of the view that international anarchy is itself characterized by order.

Bull develops this argument in relation to influential early modern theorists of the state as well as extant traditions of international law and political thought. In regard to the former, Bull explains that even Thomas Hobbes, the paradigmatic theorist of civil society and the state of nature, acknowledges significant differences between a state of nature among individuals and relation between states. In particular, "states are not vulnerable to violent attack to the same degree that individuals are."[78] While individuals can be killed "suddenly and in a single act," the death of states is not achieved so easily.[79] This is in part because, unlike the individuals in a hypothetical state of nature whose vulnerability arises from equality, "insofar as states have been vulnerable to physical attack, they have not been equally so."[80] Relations between states are characterized by hierarchy, the unequal distribution of vulnerability between great powers and small.

[77] Bull, "Society and Anarchy," 93.
[78] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 47.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid., 48.

Bull further argues that two traditions of international thought advance the notion that "the conditions of order among states were different from what they were among individual men."[81] The first tradition consists of discourses of international law, whether of the natural or positive kind, which suggest that states are subject to a certain set of common rules and norms of behaviour, and thus constitute a kind of society. And second are those that theorize international politics in terms of a balance of power, the result of relations between states taking place within a system of states "which makes its own demands upon their freedom of action."[82] Both traditions of thought, according to Bull, suggest that states do not exist in a condition of continual war, but instead form an international society. Crucially, this is not a society in the same sense as a state might be considered a society but is governed by its own logic due to the absence of a common power. Bull calls this a "society without government."[83] Despite this, the relation between system and society is consistently interpreted as the difference between international disorder and international order.[84] In other words, the terms are distinguished in terms of presence or absence, as distinct accounts of order, rather than along a continuum. Bull's account of the distinction between system and society, however, is far less stark than it appears in subsequent literatures.

Bull's well-known description of the international order as an anarchical society imagines the international as an amalgam of the simultaneously universalizing and particularizing dynamics produced by the system of sovereign states, states which act as though they are members of a single political community that operates on the basis of a certain set of shared values and norms of behaviour. The concept combines what he views as the three central traditions of international

[81] Bull, "Society and Anarchy," 80.
[82] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 80.
[83] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 79.
[84] See for example Edward Keene, "International Political Thought: A Historical Introduction," (New York: Polity Press), 2004.

thought: the Hobbesian tradition which conceives of the international as a state of war in which "the interests of each state exclude the interests of any other"; the Kantian or universalist tradition which conceives of the international in relation to "transnational social bonds that link the individual human beings who are the subject of citizens of state"; and the Grotian or internationalist tradition, which conceives of the international as a society of states, states which engage in conflict, but conflict that is limited by shared norms, values, and institutions. The distinction is central to Bull's conception of the anarchical society, given the way the concepts are identified with the Hobbesian and Grotian traditions, respectively.

Bull defines international order as "a pattern or disposition of international activity that sustains those goals of the society of states that are elementary, primary, or universal."[85] These goals are sustained by the five primary institutions of international society that Bull identifies: The balance of power; international law; diplomacy; war; and great powers.[86] According to Bull, these institutions are forms of *social* order, and as such, they are directed toward the achievement of particular goals. In the case of international society, these goals are threefold: First, preservation of the system and society of states; second, preservation of the independence of sovereign states; and third, the maintenance of peace in the sense of the temporary absence of war.[87] The primary goal of international society, on this account, is to secure a particular kind of order that enables other goals or patterns of order to follow. According to Bull, these particular goals are instances of the primary goals of all societies, to secure life, truth, and property.[88] The kind of order that must be preserved to secure international society are designated by the concepts of system and

[85] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 16.
[86] Along with many possible additions. For a recent example, see Olivia Nantermoz, "International refugee protection and the primary institutions of international society," *Review of International Studies* Onlinefirst (2020): 1-22.
[87] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 16-18.
[88] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, pp. 4-5.

society, which are often understood in relation to the difference between material and social order. As we will see in the next section, however, both concepts depend on a prior distinction between order and disorder in such a way that make order (in general) and social order (particular orders) difficult to distinguish.

However, this definition of international order relies on a prior conception of order expressed by the concept of a system of states. "A *system of states* (or international system)," Bull writes, is formed when two or more states have sufficient contact between them, and have sufficient impact on one another's decisions, to cause them to behave—at least in some measure—as parts of a whole."[89] This definition of a system is common to most accounts of international order, including, as will be shown in Chapter 3, that of Kenneth Waltz. Moreover, this conception of order is present in Kant's account of systematic unity, which is linked to the problem of the domestic analogy and world order in Chapter 4.

This account of order is significant given the goal of the preservation of the state-system as the primary goal of international society. As Bull observes, the preservation of the system of states is used both to justify the violation of state sovereignty and disruption of peace. The international system is an order "for which it has been widely said that it can be right to wage war."[90] This logic is captured by Adam Watson's concept of *raison de système,* the belief among states that "it pays to make the system work."[91] States acting to preserve the international system is not a sign of an absence of conflict between them but "is the recognition that the advantage of all the parties is to resolve such conflict within the framework of the system."[92] If the primary goal of international society is the preservation of the system and society of states, a goal which justifies

[89] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 9.
[90] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 17.
[91] Watson, *Evolution*, 240.
[92] Watson, *Evolution*, 240.

war, the limits of the 'order' whose boundaries are policed by violence on a world scale are of considerable significance.

Moreover, it is precisely the systemic quality of the present world order, according to Bull, that marks the boundary between modernity and its outsides. Despite being global in scope—a world order—the international system, Bull explains, is not representative of "any genuinely global culture, but is rather the culture of so-called 'modernity,'" a culture which for Bull is ultimately "the culture of the dominant Western powers."[93] Bull argues that "the disappearance of the elements of a system from the present pattern of universal politics could come about only as the consequence of the collapse of our present scientific, industrial, and technological civilisation."[94] If the preservation of a particular 'order' is the primary goal of the global system of states and the bulwark against the perceived collapse of global modernity, how the boundaries of such an order are defined has profound consequences for who gets to decide on those boundaries and the violences in whose name they are carried out.

System and society in international relations

The figure at the centre of discussions about what Adam Watson calls the "seminal distinction" between system and society is Hedley Bull.[95] Though Bull draws heavily on Martin Wight's concept of a states-system, he draws a sharper line between international systems and societies than does Wight.[96] According to Miller, the way Bull conceives of the distinction changes over the course of his career, such that terms that are initially treated as synonyms gradually become

[93] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 37.
[94] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 251.
[95] Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society*, (London: Routledge, 1992), 4.
[96] Geoffrey Berridge, "The Political Theory and Institutional History of States Systems," *British Journal of International Studies* 6 (1980): 82-92.

distinguished until they are delineated most sharply in *The Anarchical Society*.[97] Even in this text, however, it is evident that system and society have a common theory of order at their foundation.

Bull's careful elaboration of the distinction between system and society has become a touchstone for studies of international society and continues to be influential of much contemporary scholarship. The distinction has spawned a range of literature on international society and related concepts like democracy, nationalism, and legitimacy; sparked studies of historical international systems and societies; inspired a literature dedicated to the expansion of the European states system; influenced debates over the significance of culture in international politics, as well as debates over the merits of pluralist versus solidarist international societies; led to greater attention to the role of empirical and colonial processes in relation to the historical development of the international system; and has been linked to other approaches such as historical sociology and structural realism.

The significance of Bull's conception of order to *The Anarchical Society* and the literatures it inspires has not gone unnoticed. As John Williams notes, "the study of and reflection upon order…have constitutive effects…ideas like order play a highly significant role in shaping the interests that are the classic focus of enquiry into political actions."[98] Roland Bleiker identifies order as the condition of possibility of an international society.[99] As Edkins and Zehfuss point out, what is excluded from a concept as unimportant or irrelevant is constitutive of the concept itself. In the case of Bull, attention to the problem of order works as a perpetual deferral of questions concerning justice.[100] More recently, Mustapha Kamal Pasha has argued that the value Bull places

[97] J. D. B. Miller, "The Third World," in *Order and Violence: Hedley Bull and International Relations*, J. D. B. Miller and R. J. Vincent eds., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 65-94.
[98] Williams, "Order and Society," 21-2.
[99] Roland Bleiker, "Order and Disorder in World Politics," in Alex J. Bellamy ed. *The International Society and its Critics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 179.
[100] Jenny Edkins and Maja Zehfuss, "Generalising the International," *Review of International Studies* 31, no. 3 (2005): 451-471.

on order obscures the centrality of colonial violence to international order. "By defining 'order' and 'justice' in specific ways," he writes, "ownership of certain unsavoury features of the Western past can be evaded."[101] Order is not simply a possible result of particular political practices, but rather represents an ontological claim that is constitutive of the limits and possibilities of those practices. As we will see in more detail later in this chapter and in Chapter 5, Bull's abstract theory of order is closely connected to the claim that the world becomes politically ordered with the expansion of international society.

System and society are usually distinguished on the basis of a prior distinction between order in general and social order in particular. As Andrew Hurrell points out, this is a feature of "almost all analyses of social order," which begin by distinguishing between order understood "in the sense of stable and regular patterns of human behaviour…in contrast to chaos, instability, or lack of predictability," and order conceived as "a particular kind of purposive pattern…that involves a particular set of goals, objectives, and values."[102] These forms of order correspond to the distinction between an international system and an international society as they are elaborated by Bull and subsequent English School scholars. Watson, for example, explains that international system refers to an "impersonal network of pressures and interests" that influences state behaviour, while Reus-Smit notes how the concept usually refers to the material and physical as opposed to "intersubjective" dimensions of international politics.[103] On these accounts, system refers to the minimal form of order that enables the development of the common rules, values, and culture that are characteristic of international societies.

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[101] Mustapha Kamal Pasha, "Decolonizing *The Anarchical Society,*" in Hidemi Suganami, Madeleine Carr, and Adam Humphreys, eds. *The Anarchical Society at 40*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 100.
[102] Andrew Hurrell, "The State of International Society," Richard Little and John Williams eds., *The Anarchical Society in a Globalized World* (USA: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2006), 193.
[103] Christian Reus-Smit, "Struggles for Individual Rights and the Expansion of the International System," *International Organization* 65, no. 2 (2011): 209.

Though subsequent literatures generally take up one or the other of the options represented by the 'systemic' and the 'societal' understandings of international politics, others have problematized this distinction along both conceptual and historical lines. Scholars have responded to critiques of the system/society distinction in three main ways. The first is a pragmatic justification of the distinction on the grounds of its analytical usefulness. Watson, for example, despite his detailed critiques of the close relation between system and society, claims that the distinction is "a most useful one," while for Buzan, "without such a boundary, the concept of international society is too fuzzy to be used for either comparative analysis of different international systems or for analysis of the historical development of any given system." Iver Neumann concedes that the difference, "as demonstrated by the output of the [English] School…has proven itself as a nice analytical tool, which means that we may embrace the concept on pragmatic grounds."[104] Similarly, Zhang claims that, though the overuse of the terms system and society has led to confusion, the two concepts "can best illustrate the two stages whereby non-European states were eventually incorporated into the present-day international society."[105] Even if ontologically (or logically) dubious, the consensus among these authors remains that the distinction between system and society remains analytically useful, "not" as Adam Watson writes, "because it causes the complex reality of international relations to be simplified into this category or that but because it allows that reality to be illuminated by considering it from a particularly productive point of view."[106]

[104] Iver Neumann, "Entry into international society reconceptualised: The case of Russia," *Review of International Studies* (2011): 466.
[105] Zhang, "China's Entry," 4.
[106] Adam Watson, "Hedley Bull, states systems and international societies," *Review of International Studies* 13 (1987): 153.

While the distinction has certainly been productive, not all who use the terms believe they should be treated as discrete. Others suggest that system and society should be treated as the opposite poles of a continuum of international order. As numerous commentators have pointed out, it is difficult if not impossible to conceive of a system of states that entirely excludes a social dimension. System, these authors argue, necessarily implies some form of already-present social relation. This problem has prompted scholars to conceptualize the relation between system and society as a continuum. Watson suggests that system and society can both be located in the middle ground between the two unrealizable extremes of completely independent states and global empire. Similarly, for Berridge, what Bull "is really talking about is some kind of continuum in which a so-called 'states system' is really just a weak form of a 'society of states.'" On the continuum model, the move from a system of states to a society of states is the product of a historical evolution. On this model, Buzan and Reus-Smit consider international society a "natural product" of the "logic of anarchy" that animates international systems.

Rather than placing system and society on a continuum, other scholars prefer to deal with the problem by doing away with the difference altogether and using the term international system or international society exclusively. This is the approach that Reus-Smit takes in describing the effects of struggles for individual rights on the expansion of international society, and it has been adopted wholesale by the contributors to the recent edited volume *The Globalization of International Society*. These scholars, the introduction claims, "draw no distinction between international society and system, theoretically or historically."[107] This analytical move is one that

[107] Tim Dunne and Christian Reus-Smit (eds.), *The Globalization of International Society*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 33.

has been gaining increasing currency in studies of international order and international society.[108] Such an approach, however, reinforces the problem posed in this chapter, which is the way conceptions of the international system and society rely on an analogical account of order to theorize the establishment of the international system as world political order. Collapsing the distinction between system and society prompts greater attention to the theory of order at their foundation, rather than less.

Yet scholars of international society have demonstrated little interest in this theory of order. Buzan and Little, for example, agree with Weltman[109] that if a system "means no more than an interrelationship between whole and parts" then the term is both "'irrefutable and useless.'" [110] For, them, only the social or political qualities mapped on to the international system are of any scholarly or political significance. Buzan and Little argue that the system concept is valuable as an object of study only because "theoretical debates in IR have conceptualized the international system in a number of different ways."[111] In their view, the problem is that "there is so little agreement amongst theorists about what constitutes it."[112] This sentiment is also expressed by Alan James, who considers the question of the relation between system and society "a peculiarly academic exercise," worthwhile only for purposes of conceptual clarity.[113] These analyses begin firmly in the realm of social order and rule out any reflection on the possible consequences of the prior form of order with and against which social order is defined. The distinction between system and society thus works to exclude order in general from political significance.

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[108] Zachary Paikin, "Great power rivalry and the weakening of collective hegemony: revisiting the relationship between international society and international order," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* Onlinefirst (2020): 1-25.
[109] John J. Weltman, *Systems Theory in International Relations*, (USA: Lexington Books, 1973).
[110] Buzan and Little, *International Systems in World History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 35.
[111] Buzan and Little, *International Systems*, 6.
[112] Buzan and Little, *International Systems*, p. 48.
[113] Alan James, "System or Society?" *Review of International Studies* 19 (1993): 270.

Bull thought that the distinction between order and disorder in relation to international and world order was significant enough to write several detailed pages describing the abstract theory of order that grounds his theorization of the anarchical society. Such careful attention to questions of order take us neither into the realm of the mundane and useless nor into the domain of methodological practicality. Rather, they introduce questions about order, structure, and unity to which political theories of the international already give particular answers. These links are particularly evident when it comes to questions about the possibilities of world politics or world political order, given the connection between conceptions of the world or the cosmos and metaphysical questions about order, totality, and wholeness. While these questions are explored in greater detail in subsequent chapters, Bull's work provides an instructive example of their significance for theories of international order.

System and society: Bull's metaphysics of order

The Anarchical Society is unique in the way that it places the question of order at the forefront of scholarly investigation of world politics. Bull begins his text with an explicit and painstaking account of what constitutes order, one which informs his description of the international system and international society. A close look at Bull's account of order demonstrates that his understanding of system is deeply ambivalent in relation to two distinctions which are often treated as synonymous: the distinction between fact and value and between the material and the social. As I show below, Bull's concept of an international system expresses the form of order in general that he describes. This points to the significance of Bull's distinction between order and disorder, a distinction that receives little mention in the literature on international society. The form of order associated with system (order in general) and the form of order associated with society (social

order) in Bull's account both express the same form—a relation between parts that constitutes an organized whole.

Bull begins his text by distinguishing between order and disorder, a difference which is analogous to the relation between purposive and mechanical forms of order. Here Bull is concerned not with the limits of particular conceptions of order but the *boundaries* of order, that is, the conditions of possibility of *any* ordered whole, be it a set of books or an international system. "To say of a number of things that together they display order," he writes, "is to say that they are related to one another according to some pattern, that their relationship…contains some discernible principle."[114] Order results when a number of parts have been organized in relation to a common whole. To illustrate the distinction between what he calls a "haphazard relation" and an ordered relation, Bull uses the example of a number of books. "A row of books on the shelf displays order," he explains, "whereas a heap of books on the floor does not."[115] The row of books aligned on the shelf is arranged according to a principle by which they are organized, whereas the books on the floor lack any such principle. To use language that Bull will use later in the text, the books on the floor do not display order because unlike the books on the shelf, they are not related to one another as parts to a whole.

Next, Bull distinguishes between order in general and social order in particular. Order as such is to be distinguished from what he calls "order in social life," which is not any ordered pattern, but one designed to achieve the realization of purposes, goals, and values. Hurrell calls this distinction "beguilingly simple" because of the way that "order as fact and order as value are often very hard to disentangle."[116] Bull tries to do so by analogy with books, explaining that, "in

[114] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 3.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.

this purposive or functional sense, a number of books display order when they are not merely placed in a row, but are arranged according to their author or subject so as to serve the purpose or fulfil the function of selection."[117] The distinction between order in general and social order in particular is expressed in the difference between the books placed in a row, and books arranged according to some principle of selection. This is a curious definition, since Bull has just described books placed in a row as related to one another according to "some discernible principle."[118] Arranging books by author or subject is precisely to arrange them according to a unifying principle, just as arranging books in a row on a shelf is to do the same. In short, on Bull's account, both order in general and social order in particular are determined by an organizing principle or purpose that combines parts into an organized whole. Only phenomena that exhibit such a relation between parts and whole can be said to display order.

How then can social order be distinguished from order? Bull qualifies his definition by arguing that social order is not defined by purposive action in general, but by purposive action aimed at specific ends. For Bull, these ends are security from violence and death (life), guarantees of contract and agreement (truth), and some conception of private ownership (property).[119] Thus, while violent conflict exhibits a pattern, "this is a situation we should characterize as disorderly."[120] It is here, as Vincent aptly puts it, that "the exponent of order in social life in general is in practice a defender of particular orders."[121] The entanglement of order and social order in Bull's text is outlined in detail by John Williams, who shows how Bull vacillates between normative and 'objective' conceptions of order. At various points throughout *The Anarchical*

[117] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 4.
[118] Ibid., 3.
[119] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, pp. 4-5.
[120] Ibid., p. 3.
[121] R. J. Vincent, "Order in International Politics," in *Order and Violence: Hedley Bull and International Relations*, J. D. B. Miller and R. J. Vincent eds., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 44.

Society, Bull variously presents order either as an arrangement that displays purpose or goal-directed behavior in general, or as an arrangement that aims at those particular goals, that Bull views as conditions of possibility for social life.[122] The result, Williams explains, is that "the idea of society is virtually subsumed into the notion of order; for where there is order there is society, as the distinguishing feature of society is that it generates order."[123] In short, on Bull's account, social order is a particular form of order in general, but any attempt to identify such a general account of order inevitably lapses into particularity.

While the historical specificity of Bull's account of the basics of human order—life, truth, and property—has been demonstrated in detail, what has been overlooked is the way that Bull's account of the conditions of possibility of *any* order already expresses the necessarily particular character of order. In short, for Bull, the limits of order understood as an irreducible relation between parts and whole is that any such arrangement is necessarily particular, precisely because it is arranged, that is, ordered. In short, Bull's account of order *per se* is of an order that cannot but be particular—that is, arranged. The story of the particularity of any account of order is already embedded in Bull's theory of order as such. This is why attention to the account of the boundaries of political order expressed in theories of international politics is so significant. Standard critiques of *The Anarchical Society* that point out the particularity of Bull's universalizing narrative miss Bull's own account of the social quality of order embedded in the abstract relation between parts and whole posited by Bull as the foundation of order. Critiques of the universalizing features of theories of international society, then, must reckon with the way that Bull's systemic order already gives an answer to the relation between universality and particularity in the form of the irreducibility of the difference between order and social order in Bull's account.

[122] Williams, "Order and Society," 17-20.
[123] Williams, "Order and Society," 25.

Though descriptions of Bull's conception of order are divided between mechanical and purposive accounts, the way Bull distinguishes between order and disorder shows that his account of order is not a mechanistic one, but rather purposive, that is, expressed by an organized relation between parts and whole. As Williams admits, Bull's articulation of the relation between order, social order, and international politics is, at times, "deeply confusing."[124] Part of this confusion stems from the very different forms of order that are attributed to Bull's conception of an international system. The difference is in part attributable to the way that, as Jackson points out, "'system' is a term that invites a billiard-ball image of international relations as a mechanical 'clash of forces.'"[125] However, it is Bull's emphasis on a particular form of order—a whole not reducible to its parts—that leads others to conclude that for Bull, "order and purpose are in some fundamental way connected."[126]

These options are expressed clearly by William Bain, who argues that the names Hobbes and Grotius represent not the difference between the presence or absence of a society of states, but rather the difference between two forms of order: mechanical and purposive. Order for Hobbes is "something made as when a heap of bricks are arranged so that they form a house," whereas for Grotius the international realm imparts an intrinsic unity, despite the existence of separate states, which is greater than the sum of its parts. The Hobbesian account, according to Bain, is based on an Ockhamist, mechanical conception of order, while the Grotian is based on an immanent account of the arrangement of parts inspired by the Christian reworking of Greek origin stories such as Plato's *Timaeus*. Bain thus argues that Bull's Grotian conception of order is an Augustinian

[124] Williams, "Order and Society," 24.
[125] Robert Jackson, *The Global Covenant: Human Conduct in a World of States*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 113.
[126] Edkins and Zehfuss, "Generalising the International," 456.

variation of the Christian creation story and thus that *The Anarchical Society* constitutes a work of political theology.[127]

Yet here we find the same distinction between order in general and order in particular (social order) that appears in Bull's books analogy. To speak of a difference between 'bricks' and 'house,' like in the case of books being placed in a row on a shelf, is already to admit of some unifying principle over and above the component parts (in this example, bricks) themselves. Thus, while this analysis is aligned with Bain's view that the Hobbesian and Grotian understandings represent two conceptions of order rather than a distinction between its absence and presence, they express an identical account of order as a relation between parts and an organized whole. As in Bull's analogy, even in the case of Hobbes' system, parts are organized in relation to a unified order.

Bull sometimes acknowledges explicitly that there is no impartial conception of order, and thus that social order is "necessarily a relative concept"; what counts as order and disorder depends on one's purpose.[128] Bull thus articulates a conception of order that depends on purpose, and a conception of purpose that depends on a particular form of order. The reciprocal relation between order and social order in Bull's text helps explain the difficulty of distinguishing between system and society in studies of international order. Just as the difference between a purposive order in general (books on a shelf) expresses the same form of order as one directed toward the achievement of particular purposes, so system and society express an analogical form of order, one in which order is achieved through parts related by some kind of ordering principle. Ultimately, all of

[127] William Bain, "*The Anarchical Society* as Christian Political Theology," in Hidemi Suganami, Madeleine Carr, and Adam Humphreys, eds. *The Anarchical Society at 40*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 59-74.
[128] Ibid., 4.

Wight's 'traditions' rely on the form of order expressed by system: that of a relation between parts and whole.

It is in this sense that Bull's distinction between order and social order is not a difference in form, but rather social order is considered as a particular expression of order in general. Bull thus has much to say about how the social order of the international is maintained in relation to particular ends through common interests, rules, and institutions such as the balance of power, diplomacy, great powers, and war.[129] These elements of international politics, however, concern the maintenance of an already present system. While social order, on Bull's account, is constituted by parts arranged in particular ways for particular purposes, order in general is understood as the arrangement of parts in relation to a whole. This conception of order is overlooked when system and society are posed as opposites or as completely distinct accounts of order, as is done by both Bull and subsequent scholarship on international society.

This suggests a different picture of Wight's three traditions than the one articulated by Louiza Odysseos, who argues that the realism, rationalism, and revolutionism combined in Bull's concept of the anarchical society are premised on a modern conception of the subject as "sovereign and self-sufficient."[130] This results in an account of coexistence premised on what Odysseos calls a "logic of composition" which presumes that coexistence takes place between pre-constituted units (whether individuals or states). According to this logic of composition, the international names the sum total of this collection of autonomous, non-relational, independent units. Yet the international system, as Bull would have it, expresses a form of order in which the whole is not reducible to its component parts. The difference between a collection of states and a states-system expresses the difference between co-existence understood on the basis of a logic of composition

[129] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 95-124.
[130] Louiza Odysseos, *The Subject of Coexistence*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 2.

and co-existence understood as a relation between parts and a whole. As we will see in the next section, it is humanity's exit from the form of coexistence as composition described by Odysseos that for Bull marks the genesis of world political order.

Bull's central insight is that even conceptions of the international as anarchical presume a certain minimal order, expressed by the concept of a system, that enables any analysis of the international as a sphere of political action. Bull's description of the society of states does not contrast society and system, but rather presents international society as a more holistic account of the international than the concept of an international system, which is understood as a condition of possibility of an international society. Rather than posing them as opposites, Bull writes that "an international society…presupposes an international system, but an international system may exist that is not an international society."[131] The idea of an international society, on this account, is not a repudiation of the Hobbesian tradition, but builds on the basic idea of the international as an ordered whole, which is understood as the condition of possibility of an international society. The difference between system and society is not of a stark differentiation between order and disorder, but a matter of degree. To suggest, then, as Keene does, that a notion of system and society are conflicting conceptions of international order glosses over the way that system works as the ground of both scientific and traditional approaches to the study of international politics.[132]

This version of the distinction between anarchy and society is, in my view, the more analytically powerful one and the one that most aligns with a key claim of Bull's critique of the domestic analogy, which will be examined in Chapter 2. This is the insight that without the

[131] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 13.
[132] Edward Keene, *International Political Thought: A Historical Introduction*, (Polity: Cambridge, 2005), 195-202. See pages 34-35 for more detail. For a sense of the primary positions in this debate and its stakes, see: Klauss Knorr and James N. Rosenau eds., *Contending Approaches to International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1969. For a broad account of the second debate within the discipline see Yosef Lapid, "The Third Debate: On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era," *International Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (1989): 235-254. These debates are treated in more detail in Chapter 3.

acknowledgement of some "minimal form of order"[133] in international politics, and without that minimal form of order differing in form from that in domestic society, international relations loses its 'autonomy' to a degree that would make it impossible to speak of an international at all. Whether the international is understood to be made up of states, societies, individuals, regional state-systems, economic production and exchange, laws, norms, or some combination of the above (or more), what unites claims about the international, and what distinguishes international relations from other disciplines, is the idea that the interaction of these elements constitutes a political whole that is not reducible to its parts. Though the feature of the international that is conventionally said to justify the disciplinary autonomy of international relations is anarchy,[134] anarchy is merely one description among many of a more fundamental quality of the international—its status as a system. This status also marks the distinction between the presence and absence of world order.

World order: A global international

As in the case of international order, Bull's conception of world order includes a material and a social dimension. This latter, as in the case of the international system and society, relies on the distinction between an aggregate and a system. While varieties of world order such as the world political system and world society add important non-state elements to analyses of world order, these are premised on a prior order determined with reference to systematic unity. As a result, *The Anarchical Society* is structured by an analogy between order, international order, and world order. This analogy is striking given the way international order is often theorized as the negation both of the order of the state and of the order of the world. Furthermore, such an analogy reveals a

[133] R.B.J. Walker, "The Modern International: A Scalar Politics of Divided Subjectivities," in Gunter Hellman (ed.), *Theorizing Global Order: The International, Culture and Governance*, (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2018).
[134] Brian Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations,* (New York: SUNY Press, 1998).

tension between the difficulties Bull identifies in imagining the development of alternatives to the global system of states and the account of the genesis of world order recounted in *The Anarchical Society.*

While Bull's most frequently cited definition of world order, "patterns or dispositions of human activity that sustain the elementary or primary goals of social life among mankind as a whole,"[135] world order in *The Anarchical Society* is also defined on the basis of the distinction between aggregate and system. Bull writes that "the first global political system has taken the form of a global system of states. What is chiefly responsible for the emergence of a degree of interaction among political systems in all the continents of the world, sufficient to make it possible for us to speak of a world political system, has been the expansion of the European states system all over the globe, and its transformation into a states system of global dimension."[136] Thus, while Bull does distinguish between world order and international order, world politics for Bull has taken the form of international politics, because the international constitutes a single global political system.

The shift from a world of many political orders to a world of one is described with reference to the distinction between order and disorder with which *The Anarchical Society* begins. Bull marks the genesis of world order with reference to the distinction between aggregate and system, explaining that "throughout human history before the nineteenth century there was no single political system that spanned the surface of the world as a whole," but that "since the late nineteenth and early twentieth century there has arisen for the first time a single political system that is genuinely global."[137] What this means, in Bull's view, is that "before the latter half of the nineteenth century world order was simply the sum of the various political systems that brought

[135] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 19.
[136] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 20.
[137] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 19.

order to particular parts of the world,"[138] whereas the expansion of international society across the globe means that "order on a global scale has ceased to be simply the sum of the various political systems that produce order on a local scale, it is also the product of what may be called a world political system."[139] The international constitutes a single, global, political order because it is a form of order that exhibits a relation between parts and whole, a system.

This account of the development of a world political order is consistent with the theory of order that Bull outlines earlier in the text. Like the heap of books, and like the international, the world only becomes ordered with the emergence of a system, that is with the arrangement of the various 'local' political orders that populated the earth into an irreducible whole. It is precisely the lack of any relation between parts and whole by which Bull marks the difference between the world before the "globalization" of international society and world constituted by global international political order. While there is something that Bull can call "world order" before international society becomes global, relations between these local political orders are not organized in relation to a single political order of which they are all parts. On this account, before the European states system expands to encompass the globe, the various political orders of the world resemble the heap of books in Bull's metaphor. It is only when these local orders are understood as elements of a single system, a whole that is not reducible to its component parts, that, according to Bull, world political order is achieved.

Bull's theory of order has significant consequences for understanding world order. On this account, before the European states system expands to encompass the globe, the various political orders of the world resembled the heap of books in Bull's metaphor. It is only when these orders are understood as elements of a single system, a whole that is not reducible to its component parts,

[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.

that, according to Bull, world political order is achieved. It is precisely the lack of any relation between parts and whole by which Bull marks the difference between the world before the "globalization" of international society and world constituted by global international political order. While there is something that Bull can call "world order" before international society becomes global, the relations between these local political orders are not organized in relation to a single political order of which they are all a part; order is merely local order.

On this account, then, what is now called the globalization of the international system is synonymous with the development of world order. The Eurocentrism of the conventional expansion narrative has been outlined in much detail and is explored more fully in Chapter 5. What is notable about the analysis here, however, is the way that the link between the expansion of the European system of states and the development of world order is expressed in the abstract distinction between aggregate and system. This distinction has profound implications for studies of world politics, given that it marks the genesis of what for Bull is the first world political order: the global system of states. My interest here is in the convergence between international, global, and world *political* order. As Bull writes: "the first global political system has taken the form of a system of states."[140] It is on the basis of the distinction between system and aggregate, then, that Bull attributes an ordering function to the European system of states and positions that system as the subject of the creation of a world political order.

While what Bull calls world order and world society, however, do involve much more than the global system of states, it is this world political system that provides the foundation for reflection on possibilities for a world politics. Bull distinguishes between international order and world order, writing that the subjects of the former are states while the subjects of the latter are

[140] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 20.

individuals. Thus, world order is "more fundamental and primordial" and "morally prior" than international order. However, "if international order does have value, this can only be because it is instrumental to the goal of order in human society as a whole."[141] Possibilities for world order and world society, however, depend upon the prior (and originary) ordering of the world as a global international system. While the international is constitutive of world *political* order, then, world order exceeds the explicitly political dimension of global order.

What this means is that attention to the effects of Bull's systemic conception of order is not only a matter of another critique of the idea of a system of *states*. While the international system has primarily been defined, following Wight, as a states-system, decades of research has demonstrated the severe limitations of a state-centric conception of international politics. These studies emphasize the scope and complexity of the political relations beyond the state that comprise what is called the international system. These challenges to state-centric conceptions of the international have left the concept of the international system unspecified. Nonetheless, efforts to imagine an international system that is something other than a state-system, or as a state-system that includes a multitude of other elements-in-relation, still face the problem of the relations between these elements and the irreducible whole produced by (and that produces) their relations. Even if the list of the constitutive elements of the international system is expanded well beyond the realm of states—something that much of the critical literature on international politics over the last several decades has succeeded in doing—to include all the elements of what Bull calls the world political system, the basic problem remains: what is the relation between these various parts, be they states, nations, economic flows, individuals, practices, landscapes, borders, or citizens, and the political order which they condition and by which they are conditioned—the international.

[141] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 22.

Exactly what additional elements are constitutive of world order is the subject of considerable debate. Some point to the development of a culture of universal human rights or a global civil society.[142] Others suggest that humanitarian intervention in the name of human security is suggestive of world society.[143] These elements align with Bull's conception of a "world political system" which includes a greater range of social interaction within the whole of world political order. Bull insists that a global system of states is not synonymous with the world political system, whose beginnings Bull discerns in "the world-wide network of interaction that embraces not only states but also other political actors, both 'above' and 'below' the state."[144] All of these, however, are additions to the existing world order established by the system of states. The globalization of the states-system provides the unity that makes a 'world' out of what Bull might call the 'haphazard' relations between local political orders.

At the same time, however, this degree of interaction is insufficient for a world society, since for Bull the latter involves not just "interaction linking all parts of the human community to one another, but a sense of common interests and values, on the basis of which common rules and institutions may be built."[145] In this regard, Bull explains, "the concept of a world society…stands to the totality of global social interaction as our concept of an international society stands to the concept of an international system."[146] The relation between the world political system and world society is analogous to that between the international system and international society. At the root of this complex set of very fine distinctions is a single account of order—which Kant calls systematic unity—upon which claims about various world political orders, whether system or

[142] John W. Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco O. Ramirez, "World society and the nation-state," *American Journal of sociology* 103, no. 1 (1997): 144-181.
[143] John Williams, "The international society–World society distinction," *Guide to the English School in international studies* (2014): 127-142.
[144] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 266.
[145] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 269.
[146] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 269.

society, depend. Even if such orders are conceived as 'beyond' the systems of states, it is the globalization of international society that produces an ordered world within which the elements of a world political system and a world society might flourish.

As John Williams argues, however, Bull is skeptical about the possibilities for a world society in the wake of the second world war and struggles for decolonization. Moreover, the value of the concept may lie more in its normative content and analytic purchase than in its ability to specify a clear definition or historical point of origin.[147] What is notable for our purposes, however, is the tension between Bull's skepticism about alternatives for world political order and his own account of the genesis of world political order in the form of a global international system. Unravelling this complex set of distinctions between world order, world society, and world political system, reveals that they are related analogically through an account of systemic order. As Williams suggests, world society can be imagined on the basis of a pluralist (or 'systemic' in common parlance) model of order rather than as the gradual development of ever-greater solidarism.[148] Whether world political system, world international society, or world society, the form of such political orders is systematic. As a result, many of the difficulties involved in the move to a world society, world empire, and world state that Bull outlines are present in Bull's own account of the birth of global political order.

Bull identifies two possibilities for world order beyond the international in the form of a "world government." A world government could take the form of a world empire, according to Bull, if established by conquest, or a world state if established through contract between states. In both cases, however, the problems involved in imagining each are at odds with his prior account

[147] John Williams, "The international society/world society distinction," in *Guide to the English School in International Relations*, Cornelia Navari and Daniel Green, eds., (London: John Wiley & Sons, 2014), 127-142.
[148] John, Williams, "Pluralism, solidarism and the emergence of world society in English School theory," *International Relations* 19, no. 1 (2005): 19-38.

of global international order. Bull argues that there are three central obstacles to world empire, all of which have to do with the pluralism that conditions international order. The first obstacle is what Bull calls the "nuclear stalemate"; the second is the post-1970s growth of the "multilateral balance of power"; and the third is the continued power and significance of nationalism and national political communities.[149] All three elements act to constrain and limit the power of any one state to establish an empire by conquest.

Bull's second option, a world state, presents a dilemma related to the Hobbesian vision of a social contract. Here it is worth quoting Bull in full:

> The idea of world government by contract involves a dilemma. The case for world government, as it is made out by Kant and others, begins with the proposition that sovereign states are in a Hobbesian state of nature, from which they need to escape by subordinating themselves to a common government. But if states are indeed in a Hobbesian state of nature, the contract by means of which they are to emerge from it cannot take place. For if covenants without the sword are but words, this will be true of covenants directed towards the establishment of universal government, just as it will hold true of agreements on other subjects. The difficulty with the Kantian prescription is that the description it contains of the actual condition of international relations, and the prescription it provides for its improvement, are inconsistent with one another. Action within the context of continuing international anarchy is held to be of no avail; but at the same time it is in the international anarchy that the grand solution of the international social contract is held to take place.[150]

It is the anarchical condition of international order, on this account, that makes the transition to a world state a logical impossibility. Like Hobbes' 'natural Man,' states are either incapable of

[149] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 254.
[150] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 253.

coming to contractual agreement, in which case a world state is impossible, or they are capable of making such agreements, in which case no 'world state' to guarantee them is required.

These dilemmas, however, raise questions about the genesis of the world order that according to Bull has already been achieved: global international order. Despite Bull's attention to the difficulties of imagining and achieving a world order beyond international society, whether a world society, world empire, or world state, these difficulties are no less present in the case of Bull's account of the birth of present world order. These routes to world government, whether state or empire, are at odds with Bull's account of the global international order, given the way Bull theorizes the move from the absence to presence of world political order. This leap is reminiscent of Hobbes' account of Man's miraculous entry into civil society from the state of nature. It is difficult to overemphasize how stark the distinction is that Bull makes with respect to before and after the genesis of world order. The becoming-global of the international system is about a transition from a mechanical order, or a 'heap' in Bull's words, to a system. Thus, according to the logic of *The Anarchical Society*, the difference between a world constituted by a multiplicity of political orders and a world international political system is the difference between a disordered and an ordered world. The globalization of international order, on Bull's account, is the unifying process on the basis of which it is possible to judge world political order as either anarchical or hierarchical.

This difference is not a matter of one political order being transformed into another, but of a move from the absence to the presence of world order and from a world of many political orders to a world of one. In this sense, the change marked by Bull is not one characterized only by a gradual historical evolution, but also by a profound disjunction. Inasmuch as the possibility of a world government by contract involves a miraculous transformation of states from a warlike to a

peaceful condition, so Bull's account of the establishment of world order involves a situation in which the actual conditions of earthly political life before the birth of world order (the global international system), that is, a world order that is reducible to the local political orders by which it is constituted, is incompatible with the systematic unity of such an order. As Bull remarks with regard to Kant's account of the development of a world politics from an international politics, the conditions it describes ('haphazard' local orders) are incompatible with the prescription of a systematically unified world order.

At the same time, Bull's theorization of world order as organized along the lines of a system and society of states also casts doubt on the way the problem of world government is framed in *The Anarchical Society*. In the case of both world empire and a world state, the starting point in Bull's text is an anarchical world of many states, rather than the systematically ordered world political order, which, according to Bull, represents the first world order ever to exist on earth. The political dilemmas Bull outlines begin with the anarchical quality of the international system without considering the systematic unity that, for Bull, anarchy describes. Beginning with the ordered whole of an international system, however, suggests that the problem of world politics must be posed differently than it is by Bull and subsequent scholarship. Given the challenges involved in imagining a move from a world of many local political orders to a single world community, Bull spends surprisingly little time examining the transformation of a world of many local orders into a systematically unified world whole. Many of these problems have been explored by scholars in international relations under the heading of the problem of world politics, which is the subject of the next chapter. Conclusion

Bull's purposive theory of order is based on an abstract logic of parts and whole which informs the crucial distinctions between states and an international system and between a world of

many political orders and a world composed of a single, systematically unified political order. This account of order provides an answer to the relation between the material and the social and between the concepts of system and society. On Bull's account, the relation between both sets of concepts, like the relation between the parts of a system and their arrangement, is irreducible or reciprocal in character. It is this form of relation that determines the boundaries of international and world order, according to Bull. This account of order, however, raises questions about the transformation of the globe from an aggregate to a system, two theories of composition which Bull poses as irreconcilable opposites. These questions are explored both in Bull's critique of the domestic analogy as well as in the literature on the problem of world politics.

Chapter 2

The Domestic Analogy and World Politics

Building on the analogy between order, international order, and world order found in the work of Bull, this chapter investigates the tension identified at the end of the previous chapter—between Bull's account of international order and the related critique of what he calls the domestic analogy—through an analysis of the relation between the domestic analogy and the problem of world politics. The critique of the domestic analogy and the critique of world politics, I demonstrate, are posed in analogous terms, as a transformation from a plurality of states into a single world state. This way of posing the problem, I argue, is at odds with the presumption of an already-accomplished world order on which the problem is premised. While theorists of world politics attempt to solve the problem of international order differently than advocates of the domestic analogy—by reimagining the world rather than attempting to universalize domestic political order—they neglect to consider the way the international is theorized as a systematically unified political order itself. As a result, the implications of Bull's critique of the domestic analogy, namely the way that the international is conceived on the basis of a unique form of order, have gone undeveloped and unrealized.

In what follows, I consider the domestic analogy not as a single problem, but as the name of a constellation of problems related to the question of world political order. While the domestic analogy is at times posed as an epistemological and an explicitly political problem, in both cases what is at stake in debates over the domestic analogy, I argue, are the boundaries of world political order. The problem of the domestic analogy, rather than signifying the parochial narrowness of locality, culture, or the particular political community instead relates to the way international order is theorized as a unity analogous to that of the world.

Analyses of the dilemmas involved in thinking a world politics beyond the international focus on the problems produced by the view that the international represents the negation of a universalist politics of the world or of the globe. In the first section of this chapter, I argue that, elaborated in this way, the problem of world politics is an expression of the problem of the domestic analogy. In the second section, I evaluate three proposed solutions to this problem related to different accounts of world politics: Jens Bartelson's genealogy of world community, Sergei Prozorov's void universalism, and Rob Walker's analytic of finitude. I argue that by posing the problem in terms of the domestic analogy, that is, by posing the problem as one of particular political community, these solutions call for greater attention to the synonymy between international and world political order. Rather than ask how to get from an international to a world politics, these critiques of world politics raise the problem of how we are said to have *already* achieved a world political order in the form of an international system.

Bull's critique of the domestic analogy

The domestic analogy refers to the persistent tendency of theories of international politics to draw analogies between relations among individuals within states and relations among states themselves. According to Bull, the domestic analogy refers to "the argument from the experience of individual men in domestic society to the experience of states, according to which the need of individual men to stand in awe of a common power in order to live in peace is a ground for holding that states must do the same."[151] The domestic analogy, in this sense, consists of what is sometimes called the "state of nature analogy," the view that the disorder that reigns among individuals before the establishment of a sovereign authority is the same kind of disorder that reigns in relations

[151] Bull, "Society and Anarchy in International Politics," in James Der Derian, ed., *International Theory: Critical Investigations*, (London: Palgrave, 1995), 75.

between states.[152] For proponents of the domestic analogy, then, the solution to the problem of order in international politics must be analogous to the solution to the problem of order proffered by the political theory of the sovereign state.

Though the term was first used by Hans Morgenthau to explain the way that international law is modelled on state law, the most influential theorist and critic of the domestic analogy is Hedley Bull. Though explicit debates over the domestic analogy in international relations have subsided, the problems they identify have not diminished in either significance or difficulty. The problem of the domestic analogy is central to the problem of "methodological nationalism," identified in political science and sociology[153] and in debates over what has been called the "sovereignty dilemma,"[154] in Kant's writings. This problem concerns the relationship between domestic, international, and cosmopolitan right, which is the subject of Chapter 4. The problem also appears, I argue in this chapter, in recent literatures that address the problem of world politics. I begin this chapter, however, by showing that what is at stake in Bull's critique of the domestic analogy is the question of political order and whether and how international politics can be characterized in terms of order.

What is at stake in the problem of the domestic analogy, according to Bull, is the "autonomy"[155] of international relations, the idea that international politics represents a *sui generis* sphere of action and thus cannot be subject to the same expectations dominant in analyses of domestic politics. The limits of the domestic analogy that Bull aims to elaborate express the degree to which international politics are separate in kind from those that obtain within the state. Bull's

[152] Beate Jahn, *The Cultural Construction of International Relations: The Invention of the State of Nature*, (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan), 2000.
[153] Ulrich Beck, "The cosmopolitan condition: Why methodological nationalism fails," *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 7-8 (2007): 286-290.
[154] Katrin, Flikschuh, "Kant's sovereignty dilemma: A contemporary analysis," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 18, no. 4 (2010): 469-493.
[155] Ibid.

aim is not to escape 'domestic' principles, experience, and concepts altogether, but evaluate their limits in the context of international politics. As Suganami notes, "it appears sometimes…that we cannot do away with the domestic analogy altogether since some concepts we use in theorizing about international relations must necessarily originate in our domestic social experience,"[156] In this sense, the question of the limits of the domestic analogy is a question of whether and to what degree international politics can be considered a distinct domain of study amenable to the concepts and methods used to study domestic political life.

The domestic analogy is posed as a problem along epistemological and political lines. Both variations on the problem are posed as a question of the relation between the parts and the whole of political order, in this case between individual states and the international system of which they are a part. Whether the question is one of a universal science or a universal politics, the domestic analogy concerns the extent to which the concepts, practices and principles proper to the parts of a political order (states) are applicable to the whole (international system).

The epistemological version of the problem has to do with the conditions of possibility of knowledge. In this context, the debate over the domestic analogy is a debate over the possibility of a universal science. That is, it concerns the question of whether the world is characterized by a unity that renders it accessible to a universal reason, or whether knowledge is inevitably conditioned by particular historical, social, and political conditions. This difference is exemplified in the methodological disagreements that animated international relations in the second half of the twentieth century between tradition and science and interpretivism and positivism. In the broadest terms, this problem expresses the tension between the local and particular quality of knowledge, limited in both space and time, and the possibility of knowledge outside of the limits imposed by

[156] Hidemi Suganami, "Reflections on the Domestic Analogy: The Case of Bull, Beitz, and Linklater," *Review of International Studies* 12 (1986): 146.

the local and the particular to encompass the whole. The stakes of these issues are explored in more detail in Chapter 3 and 4.

The more explicitly political version of the problem of the domestic analogy has to do with the transformation of international politics as a solution to the problem of world order. The domestic analogy in this sense is an attempt to bring order to what is understood as a disordered international system. Advocates of the domestic analogy suggest that the solution to disorder among individuals, the sovereign authority of the state, is also the solution to disorder among states. They suggest that no order can obtain between states absent some kind of overarching authority, that, as Bull puts it, "anarchy in international relations is incompatible with society."[157] On this view, Bull explains, "the conditions of an orderly social life…are the same among states as they are within them: they require that the institutions of domestic society be reproduced on a universal scale."[158] Without the establishment of a 'common power' to govern relations between states, the international will always be characterized by violence and disorder. Establishing international order, on this view, is a matter of implementing domestic style political institutions and legal practices at the international level.

This transformation of the international into a world politics through the institution of a world state is made possible by the way international order is presumed to already be a world political order. As we saw in the previous chapter, that the international constitutes, in Bull's words, "a single political system that is genuinely global," is an idea so elementary that it scarcely merits mention in most literature on international politics.[159] The presumption of a synonymy between international, global, and world political order characterizes a range of contemporary

[157] Bull, "Society and Anarchy," 75.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 19.

discussions of the domestic analogy. Suganami notes that most world order proposals that employ the domestic analogy do not distinguish between international and world order, whether because the expected spread of international society or because of the simple equation of Europe with the world. He explains that "it is only in the recent period that proposals to encompass the whole world began to be advanced, and hence the necessity to distinguish between schemes for 'regional' organization and those for 'global' organization began to be felt."[160] By the time of Bull's writing, however, the synonymy between international, global, and world political order was understood as an achieved condition.

This synonymy is repeated in subsequent commentaries on the domestic analogy. Richard Ashley's poststructuralist problematisation of the domestic analogy includes both proponents of the analogy and critics such as Bull. Ashley follows Bull's critique closely in that he, like Bull, aims to theorize international anarchy as something other than an absence of order. However, Ashley argues that by making a distinction between domestic and international order, critics of the domestic analogy affirm the sovereign state as the privileged site of political order. These discourses thus engage in a "domestication" of political possibility by affirming state sovereignty as an answer to the question of political order, rather than as the subject of scholarly analysis. The result of this domestication is that the states are "regarded…as the self-evident conditions of life on a global scale."[161] Even the critique of the domestic analogy, on this account, results in the universalization of the state as the proper form of political community.

Yet, like Bull, Ashley does not follow through on the original critique of the domestic analogy but identifies international order with domestic (state) political order. Ashley's analysis,

[160] Hidemi Suganami, *The Domestic Analogy and World Order Proposals*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 38.
[161] Ashley, "Powers of Anarchy," 114.

drawing as it does on Foucault and Bourdieu, is sensitive to the co-constitutive relation between power and knowledge. The distinction between domestic and international, whether viewed as the difference between the absence and presence of order or between two forms of order, are effects of particular knowledge practices. The effect of these discourses is one of what Ashley calls "domestication" in which "knowledge practices…discipline the indeterminacy and equivocity of history, imposing structure upon it."[162] By presuming the distinction between the domestic and international, Ashley argues, both proponents and critics of the domestic analogy affirm the bounded, particular, domestic political order as the privileged site of politics and as the "possibility condition" of the sovereign figure of "reasoning man," the idealized model of the human that grounds modern claims to truth.[163] In doing so, critics of the domestic analogy no less than its proponents affirm the sovereign state as a full presence, an achieved condition whose authority becomes the ground of analyses of international politics and thus not subject to critical investigation.

The boundary between the state and international is therefore not a simple line that marks the boundary between the presence and absence of political order but is rather an effect of what Ashley calls "knowledgeable practices," historically specific understandings of the limits and possibilities of political life. The sovereignty of the state is understood as a historical political practice, a mobile and fragile effect whose constitution is always in process.[164] According to this view, the boundary between the state and the international, rather than being either denied or affirmed, must be taken as a site of a plurality of political practices subject to investigation. On

[162] Richard Ashley, "Powers of Anarchy," 102.
[163] Richard Ashley, "Powers of Anarchy," in James Der Derian (ed.), *International Theory: Critical Investigations* (London: MacMillan, 1995), 94-128.
[164] Richard K. Ashley and R. B. J. Walker, "Conclusion: reading dissidence/writing the discipline: crisis and the question of sovereignty in international studies," *International Studies Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (1990): 367-416.

this reading, neither domestic nor international can be conceived as prior to or productive of the other but are rather the subject of a mutually constitutive relation. It is thus not the presence or absence of authority that is the principal characteristic of the distinction between domestic and international, but the way theorizations of the relation between the two are productive practices constitutive of international order. Ashley and Walker thus emphasize the problem of the relation between the state and the international in response to the reification of the boundary between domestic and international (dis)order.

Ashley advances his critique of the problem of the domestic analogy by a move from what he calls the "anarchy problematique" to the problem of sovereignty. Although scholars of the "anarchy problematique" are concerned with identifying or constituting novel forms of international order, they begin their analyses with the problem of anarchy as a pure absence of political community, thereby affirming the presence of political order within the state. Like Bull, Ashley does not repudiate international anarchy but theorizes it as something other than a pure absence. International order is not an absence in need of "repair" but a pattern of order produced by the regularized practices of the bureaucrats, diplomats and scholars who act as if those boundaries are natural and necessary.[165] Hence Ashley argues that a critical analysis of international politics is possible on the basis of the community that is formed through the "rituals of realist power politics."[166] Here, Ashley follows Bull closely in the direction of the critique of anarchy understood as disorder. Whereas for Bull this anarchy expresses a particular form of order, Ashley theorizes anarchy as a "domain of plural possibilities" rather than "a dangerous void of meaning."[167]

[165] Richard Ashley, "The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* XII: 403-434.
[166] Ashley, "Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space," 406.
[167] Ashley, "Powers of Anarchy," 98.

Ashley understands the "geopolitics of geopolitical space," the process by which the community of realist politicians, diplomats, and scholars reproduce a particular vision of international politics, as one that takes place on a global scale.[168] He writes that "if the unity of this global process is difficult to grasp at first, it is largely because theoretical discourse on the anarchy problematique poses the problem of global co-operation as one of 'order without an orderer.'" For Ashley, the scope of this "global narrative of domestication…requires the imposition of a paradigm of sovereignty."[169] It is only through the form of sovereignty that "local instances of heroic practice can be orchestrated, and their effects can be concerted in a global process of domestication." For Ashley, the foundational principle of international politics remains sovereignty, and it is this principle that enables the process of domestication proper to international relations to achieve a global unity. As such, Ashley treats the international as a global political order, but one that only consists of 'local' orders.

As we saw at the conclusion of the previous chapter, however, the achievement of a world order is at odds with Bull's critique of the domestic analogy and its attendant skepticism with regard to possibilities for a world politics beyond the international system, whether world state, world empire, or otherwise. The difficulties involved in imagining a transformation from an international to a world politics are the subject of an extensive literature on what is called the problem of world politics. The problems involved in this transformation, I argue in this chapter, are analogous to the problem of the domestic analogy. What this suggests, I argue, is that Bull's critique of the domestic analogy not only casts doubt on conventional conceptions of the potential for a world society or world politics, but *any* account of world order, including Bull's own account of the development of a world political system. The prior accomplishment of a world political

[168] Ashley, "Powers of Anarchy," 113.
[169] Ashley, "Powers of Anarchy," 115.

order in the form of an international system is not taken into consideration by Bull himself or subsequent literature on the problem of world politics. It is this synonymy between international, global, and world order that is the object of critique of contemporary writing on the problem of world politics.

The Problem of World Politics

If the critique of the domestic analogy is a critique of the identification of international with domestic politics, the critique of world politics is a critique of the identification of world politics with international politics. Critics of discourses of world politics demonstrate the ways that claims to an international politics to be a politics of the whole (that is, of the world or the globe) are necessarily dogmatic and obscure the inevitably partial and particular character of world order in the form of an international politics. As in Bull's articulation of the problem of the domestic analogy, the problem of world politics in these theories is the difficulty of imagining a universal politics. In this case, however, the whole in question is not the international order that enables and constrains the activities of states, but the world within which that international order works as both limit and enabling condition of modern politics. The origins of this problem are identified by these thinkers as the modern cosmology in which the world, the whole, and the universal are expressed by the figure of the globe. As a result, the key to achieving a world politics lies in cosmology—in reimagining the world within which political life occurs.

In this section, I show the parallels between the way the problem of world politics is posed by these thinkers and the way the problem of the domestic analogy is posed by Bull. As in Bull's initial critique, the problem of world politics is posed in both epistemological and political terms. Yet the problem is posed in terms that suggest the international is equal to or identical with

domestic order. This way of posing the problem neglects the central insight of Bull's critique of the domestic analogy. Though the problem of the domestic analogy is not considered explicitly in the literature on the problem of world politics, the two problems are posed in an analogous way. Just as the problem of the domestic analogy approaches the question of world politics in relation to the boundary between the domestic and the international, the problem of world politics approaches the question in relation to the boundary between the international and the world. Likewise, just as the problem of the domestic analogy asks how to think and know outside or beyond the limits of the state, so the problem of world politics relates to the question of how to think and know outside or beyond the limits of the international. And just as critics of the domestic analogy argue that the international is not equal to or identical with domestic politics, so critiques of international relations argue that international politics is not equal to or identical with a politics of the world. These similarities are the result of the way that both problems are posed in epistemological and political terms in relation to the difficulties involved in moving from disparate parts to a unified whole.

First, like the domestic analogy, the problem of world politics is posed in terms of the difficulties involved in an inescapably 'local' knowledge accounting for a 'global' whole. Any claim to world politics can always be read as the universalization of a temporally and spatially circumscribed idea of the world. As numerous commentators point out, the "apparently universal account of the proper relationship between universality and particularity"[170] given by the modern international is itself particular. This "pervasive theoretical contradiction" is evident in the dominance of European or Western ideas, concepts, and ways of thinking and knowing dominant in a discipline that ostensibly encompasses phenomena that are global in scope. As Walker puts it,

[170] R.B.J. Walker, "Doubled Outsides," 77.

"while grasping at a global or universal phenomenon, [international relations] does so almost entirely within one culturally and intellectually circumscribed perspective."[171] This is a problem that plagues any attempt to make claims about world order, or any political form said to be common to humanity as such, as "every effort to impose a given set of values on the existing plurality of communities in the name of a common humanity is likely to be met with resistance on the grounds of its own very particularity."[172] In this sense, any claim about world order is vulnerable to critique on the grounds of the impossibility of any genuine claim to knowledge of the whole.

In political terms, the problem of the move from international to world politics is expressed analogously to that of the move from the state of nature to civil society. Just as the combination of many individuals in a state of nature into a unified political order is either impossible or unnecessary, so a move from many states to a single world political realm, whether imagined in terms of a world state or a cosmopolitan world community, is subject to the same problem.[173] As Bull suggests, moving from an international to a world politics in this sense appears to present the same dilemma as Hobbes' account of the miraculous leap from the state of nature to society. If states can form a world community, then no transformation is necessary; if they are incapable of it, dreams of world political community can only be that—dreams; world political community is either impossible or it has already been achieved.

Despite the duality of the problem, the relation between international and world politics is consistently problematized on the basis of the first possibility, in which the international is read as the negation of a world political order.[174] Despite obvious desire on the part of political theorists

[171] R.B.J. Walker, "World Politics and Western Reason: Universalism, Pluralism, Hegemony," in *Out of Line*, (London: Routledge, 2016), 37.
[172] Jens Bartelson, *Visions of World Community*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2.
[173] R.B.J. Walker, "The Territorial State and the Theme of Gulliver," 241.
[174] As noted by Tickner and Blaney, "World, Ontological Politics and the Possibility of a Decolonial IR," 294.

and others to envision more universal forms of political community, "the conceptual means at their disposal carry significant semantic baggage from that very world."[175] Any move to a conception of world community would paradoxically have to rely on a conceptual vocabulary premised on the very impossibility of such a community. Furthermore, the limits imposed by the international in relation to the possibilities of a world politics remain the 'domestic' limits of sovereign, self-identical states, the same limits identified by critiques of the domestic analogy. The primary obstacle to a world politics, on these accounts, is the form of political sovereignty that is taken to be the fundamental characteristic of the international. This point is expressed in different ways by Rob Walker, Jens Bartelson, and Sergei Prozorov.

Walker demonstrates how the distinction between the disciplines of political theory and international relations express rather than explain the logic of inside/outside that characterizes claims to state sovereignty.[176] Walker reads the space of international order as an expression of the finite limits of the politics of Man as articulated in relation to the constitutive outside of the infinite, expressed in the figure of the globe. For Walker, the globe is linked to the cosmological shifts associated with the Copernican revolution from the hierarchical cosmology of the Great Chain of Being to the horizontal cosmology of the infinite universe and the Galilean distinction between primary and secondary qualities. This distinction, between quantity, the mathematical or geometrical properties of things, considered to be their eternal and unchanging essence, the nature of things, and qualities, the ephemeral and changing effects of those natures, gave rise to the powerful dualisms that continue to structure international politics, such as those between Man and Nature, theory and practice, and subject and object, inside and outside. On this view, theories of

[175] Bartelson, *World Community*, 20.
[176] Martin Wight, 'Why is there no international theory?' *International Relations* 2 (1960) 35-62; Walker, *Inside Outside,* 1993.

international relations operate on the basis of assumptions about space, causality, and identity that are associated with the geometry of Euclid, the astronomy of Galileo, and the physics of Newton; in short, with the mechanistic ontology of classical science.[177]

The international, on this reading, thus represents the horizon or limit within which modern political life can take place, beyond which lies the equally desirable and unattainable realm of the infinite—the globe. The ambivalence that characterizes discourses of world politics, on this view, is the product of a modern politics premised on an account of human finitude articulated through a modern conception of Man separated from Nature, again by the figure of the line.[178] A politics of the 'globe' thus works as a regulative ideal of the ultimately non-existent totality of the world. This picture acts as the constitutive outside of the system of insides and outsides called the international, a system premised on finitude of the sovereignty of the modern subject and the modern state.[179]

The ontology of space that accompanies this mechanistic conception of nature have been identified as central to modern claims to sovereign authority for some time.[180] According to Walker, it is this conception of space that enables the international to resolve the relation between universality and particularity through a system of insides and outsides produced by the figure of the line. The international, on this account, works as a spatial resolution of the problem of difference, in which individuals can aspire simultaneously to citizenship within particular political

[177] R.B.J. Walker, *Inside/Outside*; John Agnew, "The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory," *Review of International Political Economy*, 1, no. 1 (1994): 53.
[178] R.B.J. Walker, "On the Protection of Nature and the Nature of Protection," in *Out of Line: Essays on the Politics of Boundaries and the Boundaries of Modern Politics*, (London: Routledge, 2016), 97-111; R. B. J. Walker, *After the Globe*, 63.
[179] R. B. J. Walker, "The Subject of Security," in *Out of Line: Essays on the Politics of Boundaries and the Boundaries of Modern Politics*, (London: Routledge, 2016), 82-96.
[180] Walker, *Inside/Outside*, 1993; Agnew, "Territorial Trap," 1994.

communities (states) within which they can achieve their full humanity.[181] Walker argues that the spatial divisions that characterize the modern international, drawn with Euclidian lines and points adapted to the spherical globe by Mercator, enable a metaphysics of inside/outside that produces competing claims about the eternal presence or imminent disappearance of the state, and a conception of international structure incapable of accounting for change.[182] While it may work to resolve antagonisms between universality and particularity, ultimately, Walker argues, this form of politics "affirms the priority of citizen over humanity, citizenship as the necessary but never guaranteed condition under which one might achieve a common humanity."[183] The proper locus of the political remains the particular political community.

Jens Bartelson, similarly, argues that modern sovereignty is sustained through a logic of identity/difference according to which identity can only be achieved in relation to prior difference. It is this logic, he claims, that makes "the tension between particularistic and universalistic conceptions of human community look inescapable."[184] Bartelson thus sees the international as grounded in a conception of political community as self-identical and uniform. The culprit, Bartelson argues, is what he terms the "*nationalization* of the concept of community itself, a process through which the nation became the paradigmatic form of human association in theory and practice alike."[185] It is a vision of political community as necessarily particularistic, as expressed by the notion that the state is the primary locus of political life, that produces the antagonism between universality and particularity.

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[181] R. B. J. Walker, "The Doubled Outsides of the Modern International," in *Out of Line: Essays on the Politics of Boundaries and the Boundaries of Modern Politics*, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 65-81.
[182] R.B.J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
[183] R.B.J. Walker, "Scalar Politics," 2018.
[184] Bartelson, *World Community*, 5.
[185] Bartelson, *World Community*, 4.

Though Bartelson does not explicitly link the globe to modern cosmology in the way that Walker does, his work nevertheless explores the relation between the globe, cosmology, and the possibility of world political community. In response to the problem of the nationalization of political community Bartelson turns to cosmologies in which "community was believed to be universal in scope and boundless in character."[186] These cosmologies, he argues, tend to "assume that mankind forms one single community partly by virtue of inhabiting the same planetary space…[and] regard the actual division and dispersion of mankind as accidental."[187] Bartelson's work highlights the way that in this context, the challenge the globe poses to theories of world politics is the tension between finitude of the globe and desired universality of world political community. In a chapter on Kant, Bartelson explains that Kant considers the spherical shape of the planet significant since "the only boundaries morally relevant to such a community are those of the planet as a whole" (155). For Bartelson, Kant is significant because he attempts to theorize a political community that encompasses all the peoples and human beings on the planet. Yet the notion of the globe as a "definite limit" to human political community is at odds with the aspirations of world community to universality. As Bartelson writes, "as long as we believe communities need to be bounded," he writes, "we will find it difficult to make coherent sense of the concept of world community, since a community cannot be fully inclusive and still have boundaries."[188] Moving from a conception of politics premised on the existence of sovereign state to a world political community understood as a common whole is therefore fraught with difficulty.

Prozorov likewise understands the international to be organized around a conception of identity as autonomy or self-identity, what he calls "a political ontology of identitarian pluralism."

[186] Bartelson, *World Community*, 10.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Bartelson, *World Community*, 19.

This ontology, according to Prozorov, "limits the political imagination to the binary opposition of the preservation of international anarchy and its hierarchical domestication in a variably conceived world state."[189] Like Bartelson, Prozorov identifies Carl Schmitt as the thinker who best expresses this form of political identity, understood as an opposition between friend and enemy. The key to Schmitt's theory of identity, in Bartelson's view, is the positing of the ontological primacy of difference. On this model, the "irreducible presence of radical alterity…ensures the preservation of pluralism and intersubjective equality."[190] The consequence of this form of identity is a conception of politics that is irreducibly multiple, a pluralist world of friends and enemies guided by the ever-present possibility of violent death. For Prozorov, the only vision of world politics possible on the basis of this conception of identity is a world state that "replicates on the worldwide scale the structure of authority that previously characterized particular political entities existing in the world."[191] The obstacle that international politics poses to thinking a world politics is the form of political identity expressed by modern political sovereignty.

Prozorov, meanwhile, attributes the "undecideable oscillation" that characterizes claims about world politics to what he calls "the inexistence of the whole."[192] On the basis of insights drawn from set-theoretical mathematics and introduced into philosophy and political theory by Alain Badiou, he concludes that "the concept of the world, understood in terms of cosmos, universe or totality, is ontologically inconsistent: the Whole has no being."[193] According to Prozorov, the impossibility of conceiving of the world as the totality of all things in a manner that is not logically inconsistent explains the perpetual tug of war in the disciplinary discourse of international relations

[189] Sergei Prozorov, "Generic Universalism in World Politics: Beyond International Anarchy and the World State," *International Theory* 1, no. 2 (2009): 216-217.
[190] Prozorov, "Generic Universalism," 220.
[191] Prozorov, *Void Universalism I*, 10.
[192] Prozorov, *Void Universalism I*, 9.
[193] Ibid.

between realism and idealism. Claims to world politics are responded to either "as a hegemonic gesture of universalism" or with "the preservation of its *ideal*," as something that can only be attained beyond presently existing political life.[194] Both Walker and Bartelson, along with the rest of the discipline, Prozorov claims, employ a conception of the world as a totality (that is, the sum of all things, the *cosmos*), the logical impossibility of which produces the "constitutive ambivalence" of world politics, an ambivalence that oscillates between "unproblematic presupposition and skeptical denial."[195]

Alternatives: World, Void, System

While they articulate the problem of world politics in a similar fashion, the prescriptions these writers offer for the problem differ. Bartelson responds to the problem by constructing a genealogy of prior conceptions of world community; Prozorov by formulating a theory of world politics grounded in a conception of the world as void informed by set-theoretical axioms; and Walker by theorizing the international order as an expression of the finitude of modern Man in relation to the infinite outside of 'the world.'

For Bartelson and Prozorov, rethinking the relation between universality and particularity expressed by the discipline of international relations can enable a discourse of world politics that avoids the pitfalls of the logic of identity that animates attempts to theorize politics beyond the international. In their view, the intellectual task is to imagine a form of world politics that embodies true universality, in opposition to the false universalism of existing conceptions of the international. This is necessary, according to Bartelson, in order to address what he considers "one of the greatest challenges faced today by the social sciences," which is the question of "how to

[194] Prozorov, *Void Universalism I*, 14.
[195] Ibid., 3.

understand the world as essentially one single community."[196] In a similar vein, Prozorov believes that the task for theorists is to "pose the question of the possibility of a genuine universalism that does not relapse into a hegemonic universalization of some particular content."[197]

The primary obstacle to this goal, for Bartelson, is the opposition between universality and particularity that he believes characterizes discourses of international relations. The problem of world community, then, revolves around the need to develop "a theory of identity that makes it possible to regard the universal and particular as mutually implicating rather than as fundamentally opposed."[198] In Bartelson's view, this conception of political community is a modern historical development, and is not present in pre- and early modern conceptions of world community. He thus investigates the historical origins of the conflict between universal and particular conceptions of human political community and looks to premodern conceptions of world community as inspiration for conceiving of world political community as an undivided whole. For Bartelson, the way to "restore these default settings of political thought"[199] by which the universal and particular are understood as mutually implicating rather than in conflict is through a turn to the cosmological. "Visions of world community," he writes, "invariably imply cosmological conceptions of the planet we inhabit, and locate the sources of human belonging and completion within a larger cosmological framework rather than within the individual community."[200] The emphasis that cosmology places on the human beings' shared planetary home, according to Bartelson, reveals the human community that precedes its division into particularistic political orders. It is thus the historical recovery of premodern articulations of world community that, in his view, can

[196] Bartelson, *World Community*, ix.
[197] Prozorov, *Void Universalism I*, xvii.
[198] Bartelson, *World Community*, 9.
[199] Ibid., 175.
[200] Ibid., 176.

demonstrate the historically specific character of the nationalization of political community characteristic of international relations, and thus point to a way beyond it.

The route to a universal conception of world politics that neither suppresses plurality nor privileges a particular as universal, for Prozorov, however, lies not in history but ontology. As Prozorov puts it, "if we try to approach world politics as heterogeneous to (inter)national politics, we appear to lack the very concept of the world that would be the ground of such a rethinking and are immediately driven beyond the disciplinary confines of IR and political science in the search for the new ground of our discourse."[201] It is a different account of Being as such, in his view, that can enable an account of world politics "not synonymous with international relations."[202] This involves conceiving of the world as a void, such that the universal is thought in the negative, as "the clearing of being, the void in which…positive and particular worlds come into being."[203] This conception of the world, according to Prozorov, can overcome the problem of "identitarian pluralism" that characterizes international relations, which involves "the understanding of politics as a relation between particular identities."[204] Conceiving of the world as void, in Prozorov's view, is the best alternative to existing conceptions of the world as either particular (something) or universal (everything). A conception of the world as nothing rather than something, Prozorov argues, can produce a universalism that does not represent a universalizing imposition of some particular content. According to this view, the world as void works as the condition of possibility for the appearance of an infinity of particular worlds. On this basis, Prozorov constructs a theory of world politics from three universal axioms derived from the void of the world: Freedom, Equality, and Community. Though Prozorov develops a rich, provocative account of world politics

[201] Prozorov, *Void Universalism I*, xxiv.
[202] Prozorov, *Void Universalism I*, xxiii.
[203] Ibid., xxxi.
[204] Sergei Prozorov, "Generic Universalism," 217.

from only a few premises,[205] the question here is whether thinking the world as void allows Prozorov to extricate himself (and international relations) from the constitutive ambivalence of world politics.

The problem with these approaches is that they reproduce the opposition between universality and particularity that was the initial object of critique. While Bartelson returns to the work of thinkers like Dante Alighieri, Nicholas of Cusa, and Bartolomé de Las Casas to demonstrate the way the modern account of the opposition between universal and particular is at odds with earlier conceptions of world community. Dante's cosmology includes "a vision of world community according to which mankind as a whole constitutes one singular, universal and boundless community."[206] This community consisted of the peoples of Europe, Asia, and Africa, which were understood to constitute the habitable world and the boundaries of the human *oikoumene,* or geographical region whose inhabitants are interconnected.[207] This conception of the earth as split between land and water and humanity and its others is replaced by one in which the two are connected as part of a single globe. For Nicholas of Cusa, this conception of the globe corresponds to "a universal community beyond all differences of faith."[208] Bartelson's analysis shows how accounts of the surface of the planet are closely connected to theories of human nature and the political problems and possibilities that flow from them. This connection that will be explored in relation to Kant's conception of the spherical globe in Chapter 3, and Bull's notion of a systematically unified global order in Chapter 5.

[205] This project is developed in Sergei Prozorov, *Theory of the Political Subject: Void Universalism II* (London: Routledge, 2010).
[206] Bartelson, *World Community*, 75.
[207] Ibid., 62.
[208] Ibid., 70.

Bartelson's own formulation of the problem of world politics, however, pits the particularism of the vision of political community expressed by a system of states against the universalism of world community. This move, as Prozorov points out, does not extricate Bartelson from the logic of identity he seeks to escape: "If it is only in the context of a particular cosmology of the world that the concept of the world community can arise in the first place, it must logically be particular as well. We are thus back to the logic of identity, which, for all its historical contingency, ends up working even in the historical contexts where it was presumably absent."[209] In this sense, Bartelson faces the same difficulty articulated by critiques of historicism. The historicization of visions of world community only highlights the historical specificity of his own account of world community, and of any other that might be advanced.[210]

It is this particularistic critique of universalism, which Prozorov judges "a much too easy target" given the way "every concept can be shown to have a historical origin," that is one of the central aims of the *Void Universalism* project.[211] Yet Prozorov's answer to the problem fares little better. Ultimately, his solution positions the authentic universality of the world as void made possible by the logico-mathematical axioms of set theory in opposition to the inevitably particular versions of universality that are produced by the world of international relations, the world understood as a finite totality. For Prozorov, too, then, the problem of the international is a particularistic conception of identity which can be overcome only through an account of ontological universality. Prozorov's analysis, however, rests on a claim about the ontological status

[209] Prozorov, *Void Universalism I,* 5.
[210] See for example Strauss's critique of Max Weber: Leo Strauss, "Natural Right and the Conflict between Facts and Values," in *Natural Right and History*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953). Bartelson also recognizes the limits of historical critiques. See Jens Bartelson, "Sovereignty," in Reiko Shindo and Aoileann Ní Mhurchú, *Critical Imaginations in International Politics*, (New York: Routledge, 2016).
[211] Prozorov, *Void Universalism II*, xvi.

of mathematics that is the subject of significant controversy.[212] Thus, while within the terms of his ontology of the world Prozorov manages to articulate a conception of universality that does not suppress particularity, the limits of this vision become evident when one imagines a challenge to this ontology itself, such as an alternative account of mathematics. In response to such a challenge, the only recourse is to assert the universality of his own account against the particularity of any other, which is indeed how Prozorov positions himself *vis-à-vis* discourses of international and world politics. We thus find ourselves in the exact predicament identified by these critics of international relations: Difference is permitted, but only within the bounds of a particular ontological order.

This critique is based on what Prozorov views as the three possible conceptions of world: World as everything, world as something, and world as nothing. His critique of both Walker and Bartelson is made on the basis of their conception of the world as everything, even if, in the case of Walker, this world remains "'before' us as an unattainable universality."[213] Walker and Bartelson, he writes, "converge in the basic assumption about the sense of the 'world' in world politics…understood in the sense of the Whole, a cosmos, universe or totality, in short, everything. It is precisely this understanding of the world as the whole that accompanies the discourse on world politics from the very emergence of the IR discipline."[214] It is the idea of the world as a whole itself that, for Prozorov, lies at the root of the problem of world politics.

Prozorov views such an account of the whole as an ontological impossibility proven by the set theory of mathematician Georg Cantor. Set theory, in brief, is a mathematical demonstration

[212] The question is whether mathematics is created or discovered, i.e. a product of human concepts, or a mind-independent reality. See: Henri Poincaré, "Why Space Has Three Dimensions," in *Mathematics and Science: Last Essays*, John Bolduc trans., (New York: Dover, 1963). See also Alfred North Whitehead, "Congruence," in *The Philosophy of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955).
[213] Prozorov, *Void Universalism I*, 8
[214] Ibid.

of the impossibility of a fully inclusive totality, that is, a totality that includes everything, including itself. This means that "as soon as we posit the existence of the world as the whole, it is possible to construct a power set of this world, which will be immeasurably greater than it, leaving an excess that cannot be incorporated into it."[215] As a consequence, "the world as the whole is never all there is: there always remains an excess that cannot be subsumed under this totality, which is thus forever resigned to being limited, partial and particular, irrespective of how it is defined." It is not a particular conception of world or of the whole that is problematized on this view, but the idea of cosmological order as such: "the inexistence of the whole is an ontological principle that is irreducible to any particular cosmology and rather throws into disarray the entire cosmological enterprise."[216] For Prozorov, the mathematical demonstrations of set theory prove the ontological impossibility of wholes and wholeness.

Prozorov's critique of cosmology, however, presumes that there is only one account of the whole—that is, of 'everything'—that of identity/One. The world understood as the totality of all things can only mean the world understood as "the sum of all beings."[217] It is this conception of the whole as equal to its parts against which Prozorov elaborates Alain Badiou's critique of cosmology. The whole on this account is equal to everything of which it is made up, that is, equal to its parts. For Prozorov, this is as true for Walker and Bartelson's 'world' as it is for a Spinozan conception of world that inspires Connolly's "world of becoming." In both cases, the crux of Prozorov's critique is that there is always something that exceeds the totality of the world and thus renders any conception of the world finite and particular in relation to an 'outside' which it cannot subsume.

[215] Ibid., 11-12.
[216] Ibid., 9.
[217] Prozorov, *Void Universalism I*, 8.

Although this critique is elaborated in opposition not to specific cosmologies, but to cosmology itself, Prozorov does not fully consider the way that wholes are theorized in ways other than 'the sum of all things.' Moreover, the crucial dimension of the concept of world, for Kant, is the way that attempts to think the world inevitably fall into what Kant calls antimonies of reason, questions about the world (for example, is the world infinite or finite?) that are beyond the capability of human reason to answer. It is in response to these difficulties, as will be explored in more detail in Chapter 4, that Kant elaborates a conception of the world as systematically unified. As seen in the previous chapter, it is through the notion of a system or structure that consists of a irreducible relation between parts and whole that characterize Bull's theory of international order. This is significant because this conception of the whole incorporates the notion of an irreducible excess into its very definition—neither whole nor parts are fully determining of the other. It is thus not clear that Prozorov's critique works in relation to a conception of the whole understood as a system, that is, as an irreducible relation between parts and whole. This is borne out by the way that set theory, like systems theories in general, is an articulation of the limits of classical science. Indeed, set theory is often identified as the mathematical axiomatization of the primary insights of systems theory.[218] The irreducibility expressed by systematic unity is a conception of the whole different than one understood as the sum of all things. In this sense, a world understood as a system would express the same ontological principles as a world elaborated on the basis of set-theoretical axioms.

In contrast to Bartelson and Prozorov's attempts to theorize new forms of political universality, Walker suggests that the problem of world politics be addressed through attention to the boundaries, borders and limits that characterize international politics in general, and the

[218] von Bertalanffy, *General Systems Theory*, 21.

boundaries between the international and the world in particular. Such divisions, Walker argues, function to reconcile human unity and diversity through "a systematic array of inclusions and exclusions among a diversity of more or less distinct states: a form of unity among diversity and diversity within unity that attracts a very broad array of characterizations."[219] The simultaneous claim to unity and diversity expressed in discourses of international politics is evident, in this account, in simultaneous claims to an international order characterized by one system and many states, a single humanity and many citizenships.

Walker's attention is focused primarily on the problem of world politics insofar as international politics is conceived as an antonym of the world, as the political expression of the finitude of modern Man, who, because of this finitude, is incapable of achieving total knowledge or developing a universal politics. As Prozorov explains, "for Walker…the task of critical discourse is, in full accordance with Kant's critical project, to guard its object against the illegitimate application of the powers of reason to it. …we are always 'before' the world, facing it as distant and inappropriable."[220] Walker's critique of international relations, according to Prozorov, thus dooms world politics to a perpetual "oscillation between being presupposed as self-evident and being unmasked as impossible."[221] It is the 'self-evidence' of the status of the international system as a global or 'world' order that remains relatively unexamined in these literatures. As I argue in Chapter 3, it is the designation of international order as a system that reconciles claims to political unity and diversity and enables the presumption that the international system is a universal political order in the sense that it encompasses the entire globe.

[219] R.B.J. Walker, "Scalar Politics," 11.
[220] Prozorov, *Void Universalism I*, 6.
[221] Prozorov, 6.

Conclusion

In all these cases, efforts to develop alternatives to the relation between universality and particularity expressed by the international reproduce the opposition that was the object of critique. This way of posing the problem misses the significance of the original critique of the domestic analogy—that the international cannot be understood as a simple absence of order, or as synonymous with state order. They each advocate for a universal conception of world politics in opposition to the particularity of the international. In this way, despite acknowledging the way the international works as a particular relation between universal and particular, these solutions ultimately identify the international with particularity and the problematic logic of identity they seek to overcome. Understood in these terms, the problem of transcending the international is understood in the same terms as transcending the state and its attendant logic of identity/difference. Sovereignty, on these accounts, is linked to a particularistic conception of identity as self-identity but is not considered in relation to the way the international is conceived as a single political order, a whole, itself.

The way the problem of world politics is posed in critiques of discourses of world politics, is, like the problem of the domestic analogy, one of a transformation of parts (states) into a whole (world political community). These approaches to the problem of world politics therefore theorize the international as simply the 'sum' of the states that populate the globe, rather than a positive political order in itself. As a result, the investigations surveyed above suggest that sovereignty is the primary form of identity in international relations. It is this form of identity, these scholars argue, that prevents the proliferation of different relations with difference in the context of world politics. By posing the problem as one of moving from parts to whole, these accounts do not

consider the way that the international is itself already theorized as a single order designated by the concept of system.

This has implications for a significant range of approaches in international relations that take the critique of sovereignty to be their primary form and inspiration. Sovereignty cannot account for the unity of the international if the international is understood in relation to the absence of sovereign authority. Even if the international system is understood as itself sovereign, it does not express the autonomous, self-identical, and uniform logic of identity that characterizes the modern subject and the modern state (and that would characterize a hypothetical world state). The logic of sovereignty provides an account of identity, but not an account of a relation between unity and difference that any account of international order would require. Critiques of sovereignty are unable to account for the way that the international is theorized as a whole, a single political order that works as a limit on political difference through a relation between unity and diversity determined by a particular account of order. They therefore neglect some of the most significant implications of Bull's critique of the domestic analogy.

Taking seriously Bull's critique of the domestic analogy requires thinking about how the international is conceived as co-extensive with the globe, that is, as a single, positive political order that encompasses the surface of the globe. This means posing the problem of world politics not only in relation to the way the international and the world are theorized as antonyms but in the way they are theorized as already the subject of a convergence, that is, as synonyms. The problem of world politics has generally been posed in relation to the question of the future possibility of transforming an international to a world politics. Scholars of world politics have enumerated in detail the many practical and conceptual difficulties involved in such a transformation. Prozorov describes this transformation as "the utopian and logically inconsistent idea of the unification of

all particular worlds into the whole."[222] However, as Bull's critique of the domestic analogy indicates, the problem of world politics is posed as if such a unification has already happened in the form of a world political system. While the form of that unity differs from the sovereign unity of a scaled-up version of state or empire, the question of how a set of discrete states become combined in a systematic unity is no less problematic. To the extent that theories of international politics rely on a diagnosis of the present presence of a world politics understood as international, international order works as an answer to the problem of world politics. In the following chapters, I show how discourses of international politics express this answer through the concepts of system and structure.

[222] Prozorov, *Void Universalism II*, xvi.

Chapter 3

Structural variations: Three analogies of order

Questions about the proper relation between parts and whole, like those that appear in Bull's discussion of order, also appear in debates over structure across the human sciences. In this chapter, I consider the answers that theories of structure in the human sciences and international relations give to this question in the form of the concept of structure. These answers tend to be grouped into three different categories, which correspond to different analogies of order: mechanical, organic, and complexity. In debates on world politics, structure is typically associated with space, stasis, and determination in contrast to positions that emphasize temporality, contingency, and change.[223] In these debates structure and structuralist perspectives are often taken to mean complete determination by the whole, whether taken to be the state, the international system, or some other social, political or economic arrangement of forces.

Examining the way that structure is posed as a problem in international relations, however, suggests a different picture in which these debates take place on the basis of an analogical model of structure. In posing the problem of composition as a question of the relation between parts and whole, whether expressed as the relation between systems and their units, between structure and agency, or between assemblages and their components, these discourses supply a normative vision of order which supplies an answer to the question of the proper relation between unity and diversity. This is a conception of order as structure, that is, as a reciprocal or irreducible relation between parts and whole. While the range of views on the political and scientific consequences of

[223] R.B.J. Walker, "History and Structure in the Theory of International Relations," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 18 (1989): p. 168; Richard Ashley, "The Poverty of Neorealism," *International Organization* 38, no. 2 (1984): 225-286; Richard Beardsworth, *Derrida and the Political*, (New York: Routledge, 1996), xiii.

this form of order vary widely across these literatures, the problems they address share this vision of structure as an effect of relations of difference.

This chapter examines the problem of structure across three debates in international relations, one between traditional and scientific approaches, one on the relation between structure and agency, and more recent debates that revolve around the concepts of assemblage, network, and complexity. It provides a schematic account of some of the most influential elements in these debates within the human sciences in general, before looking more closely at how they have been expressed in relation to international politics. I show how, despite their considerable differences, these debates share a framing of the problem of structure as one of a relation between parts and whole, and thus implicitly share an ontology of order. This ontology is one in which structure is understood as an effect of relations of difference, which gives rise to an irreducible relation between parts and their arrangement. The differences articulated in these debates, as well as the debates' circular quality are the result of divergent views of the implications of an analogical view of structure, rather than of competing conceptions of structure itself.

Analogies of Order: Mechanism, Organism, Complexity

The question of the relation between a whole and its parts is the subject of significant controversy across the human sciences, including international relations. This question is typically explored in relation to the concepts of system and structure. Accounts of structure in international relations tend to fall among what Richard Little identifies as three approaches to theorizing the international system: mechanism, organism, and complexity. By linking the problem of structure as it is expressed in the human sciences in general, and international relations in particular, my analysis shows that theories of international order are grounded in the complexity model. While this model

is often touted as an alternative to existing theories of international order, I demonstrate in this chapter its centrality to debates over tradition and science and structure and agency. The mechanism, organism, complexity trilogy informs typologies given by Karl Deutsch, who uses the terminology of mechanical, organic, and cybernetic approaches, and Richard Ashley, who distinguishes between behaviouralist, structuralist, and structurationist approaches to the relation between structure and agency. This section surveys these analogies of order in order to demonstrate the way that, given the questions they ask, theories of international politics share an analogy of order as an irreducible relation between parts and whole. This account is also found, as will be explored in the following section, in poststructuralist critiques of structuralism across the social sciences.

At stake in these debates is whether wholes are simply collections or "heaps" [224] of parts, in Aristotle's terminology, in which case wholes are equal to their parts, or whether wholes are complex or organized, in which case they are irreducible to their parts.[225] In Hedley Bull's terms, the two models correspond to the difference between an aggregate and a system. The classical view is expressed in the mechanistic natural philosophy of classical science, one associated with the geometry of Euclid, the astronomy of Galileo, and the physics of Newton. In a mechanistic system, causality is linear and only takes place between two adjacent components rather than being the result "conscious design" or purpose.[226] The universal laws governing a given system, according to this view, can be discerned by analysis—by reducing the system to interactions between its parts. On this model, there are no wholes over and above relations between interacting parts. Any 'whole' can be understood using an analytic procedure that breaks it down into its

[224] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Hugh Lawson-Tancred, trans., (London: Penguin, 1998).
[225] Little, "Three Approaches," 280; Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 1977; Walker, "Structure and History in the Theory of International Relations," 1989.
[226] Little, "Three Approaches," 272.

component parts. In sum, this is a model that treats composition as ontologically "innocent" in the sense that it does not require explanation. This model, crucially, can conceive of relations between parts, but not a relation between parts and any organizing force, principle, or structure. 'Wholes' on this model are not composed of parts, but instead are conceived as self-contained, impenetrable, indivisible, self-identical entities, like the classical model of the atom, or the 'billiard-ball' state.

In contrast, the organic view understands the action of the components of a system to be determined by the system as a whole and thus cannot be understood solely through analysis but also through reference to the whole. These holistic accounts of order, characterized as structuralist in other contexts as we will see below, consider structures to be entirely determining of the character and behaviour of their parts. Organic approaches develop in response to the limits of mechanical explanation, especially in relation to organic life. The organic, or structuralist view in international relations can be found in Morton Kaplan's structural functionalism, which presumes that "a scientific politics can develop only if the materials of politics are treated in terms of systems of action."[227] Kaplan's structural functionalism, based on the work of Talcott Parsons and David Easton, accompanied structuralist theories of linguistics, anthropology, and political economy in Europe. As outlined in the following section, these structuralist approaches were rethought by poststructuralist critics whose account of order mirrors the 'complexity' approach described by Little.

The organic model of structural functionalism, however, has been critiqued on a number of grounds. These critiques primarily point out the limits of analogies between an organism and a society, especially in relation to the emphasis of organic models on stasis and persistence rather

[227] Morton Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*, (USA: John Wiley & Sons, 1957), 4

than change.[228] More importantly, however, critiques of structural functionalism in international relations have pointed to the difficulties involved in maintaining an organic model that is neither mechanistic nor self-organizing. As Richard Little argues, structural functionalist explanations are unable to simultaneously maintain the distinction between structure and function and maintain the possibility of a universal science:

> Structural functionalism can either define structures and functions at a level which makes it indistinguishable from analysis that employs a mechanistic approach, or it can operate at a higher level of abstraction and eliminate the possibility of achieving the scientific understanding of social reality.[229]

What Little points out is that an organic model in which a structure determines the activity of the component parts is indistinguishable from mechanistic explanation unless some difference is admitted between the functions and the structure. In this sense, while the mechanistic and the organic models of structural functionalism share an account of wholes as aggregates, the complexity model posits a relation between parts of a whole—a system.

The feature that mechanism and the organic view of structural functionalism shares is that the difference between a structure and its component parts is either non-existent or irrelevant for analysis. Admitting such a difference, however, eliminates the possibility of universal laws of behaviour that can be determined and tested scientifically. According to Bull, furthermore, "international society does not display the kind of wholeness of unity" that would permit a description of "the nature and purpose of each part in terms of what it contributes to the 'needs' of

[228] In international relations see Haas, "The Hole in the Whole" and "Systems and International Regimes." For a critique that emphasizes the conservative imperative of organic explanations see Georges Canguilhelm, "The Decline of the Idea of Progress," *Economy and Society* 27: 2-3, 313-329.
[229] Little, "Three Approaches, 278.

the whole."[230] A less determinative conception of unity is required to theorize the kind of order displayed by international relations.

It is this kind of organic conception of structure of the structural functionalists that Karl Deutsch's systems theory is explicitly articulated against. Deutsch's approach is indicative of the final analogy of order—"organized complexity"—which subsumes both the mechanistic and the organic conceptions of system "by conceiving of a system as an organized set of relationships."[231] The "feedback loops" of these "open-systems" produce "non-metaphysical" teleology in the sense of self-directed, purposeful behaviour. While Deutsch shares Kaplan's concern with wholes and their effects—he argues that the advantage of a cybernetic model of political communication is that it permits the analysis of "whole decision systems" rather than "partial models of isolated traits of situations"[232]— he is dissatisfied by what he views as the two dominant models of order in political thought: mechanism and organism. Most interpreters of these approaches read them as reducing the elements of a system to the system itself, thereby eliminating any theorization of the relation between the parts and the whole which they compose. On this view, classical conceptions of mechanism "implied the notion of a whole that was completely equal to the sum of its parts, that could be run in reverse, and that would behave in exactly identical fashion no matter how often these parts were disassembled and put together again."[233] On the other hand, classical conceptions of organism suggest that "an organism…cannot be analyzed…it cannot be taken apart

[230] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 72.
[231] Little, "Three Approaches," 278-9.
[232] Karl Deutsch, *The Nerves of Government: Models of Political Communication and Control*, (New York: The Free Press, 1963), 16.
[233] Karl W. Deutsch, *The Nerves of Government,* 27. Deutsch makes the point that mechanism is an idealist metaphysics, since "the classical notion of mechanism was a metaphysical concept. Nothing strictly fulfilling these conditions has ever been found anywhere. The more complicated a modern mechanical device becomes in practice, the more important become the mutual interaction of its parts…and the interdependence of all those parts with their environment" (27). The point that even mechanisms do not behave according to the precepts of mechanistic metaphysics is later made by Latour in "*Onus Orbis Terrarum*," 2016.

and put together again without damage. Each part of a classic organism, insofar as it can be identified at all, embodies in its structure the particular function to which it has been assigned."[234] Here Deutsch distinguishes what he views as the overly deterministic model of structural functionalists like Kaplan.

Deutsch also identifies the links between organic, structural functionalist models and teleological theories of historical development based on racial and civilizational hierarchies. The organic model, according to Deutsch, not only fails to provide an adequate model of social cohesion due to the inability of the model to understand learning and autonomy, but also "encouraged some men to assert innate inequalities between races."[235] Though Deutsch does not elaborate on this point, the links between the organic, holist orientation of structural functionalism and evolutionary, developmental theories based on racial and civilizational hierarchies appear frequently, not least in Kant's political writings (Chapter 4). In international relations, these links have been pointed out most recently by alternative histories of the discipline that emphasize the significance of organic theories of order with the developmental schemes of the League of Nations and the Mandates System.[236]

This organic view is also tied to the reproduction of racist and heterosexist norms of gender and family. As Cynthia Weber demonstrates, the structural functionalism of Talcott Parsons, is predicated on a developmental view in which parts that do not serve a function in relation to a given social system are deemed incapable of modernization and development. In the case of Parsons, explains Weber, it is the "Christian, procreative, white, cisgendered, able-bodied

[234] Ibid., 30.
[235] Ibid., 31.
[236] Vineet Thakur, Alexander E. Davis, and Peter Vale, "Imperial mission, 'scientific' method: an alternative account of the origins of IR," *Millennium* 46, no. 1 (2017): 3-23; Jan Smuts, *Holism and Evolution*, (London: MacMillan, 1927).

bourgeois, heterosexual nuclear family" that is positioned as the "foundation of social and political development."[237] This produces the figure of the 'decadent homosexual' whose deviance must be punished and corrected to preserve the functioning of the social system as a whole.

Deutsch's preferred model of order is cybernetic and closely resembles what Little calls organized complexity. Deutsch's aim is to develop a model that can "describe processes of organization: self-sustaining or self-controlling or self-enlarging or self-transforming processes."[238] By incorporating the idea of information exchange and feedback loops through which entities as diverse as organisms, human social groups, and complex machinery, these developments, according to Deutsch, permit the cybernetic model to "represent growth and evolution," something the mechanical and organic models cannot do.[239]

Most analyses suggest that theories of the international system are dominated by the mechanistic model.[240] Moreover, debates over structure are consistently framed as an opposition between a mechanistic and a holist ontology.[241] In this chapter, however, I argue that the way structure is posed as a problem in international relations suggests most theorists of the international system employ the complexity model. The key element of structure, on these accounts, is that it is constituted by relations of difference.

[237] Cynthia Weber, *Queer International Relations: Sovereignty, Sexuality, and the Will to Knowledge*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 61-62.
[238] Deutsch, *Nerves of Government*, 37-38.
[239] Ibid, 38.
[240] Walker, "History and Structure in the Theory of International Relations," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 18 (1989): 163-183; Little, "Three Approaches," 273-4.
[241] Hollis and Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

System and Structure in the Human Sciences

Systems, structures, and the permutations and puzzles they produce can be pursued in many directions, and the details of the various ways they are elaborated in twentieth century debates would provide enough material for several volumes. Relevant for my purposes, however, is the question of the theory of structure expressed by the concept of system. On this question, theories of systems are remarkably uniform: systems or structures are arrangements of parts in relation to a whole. Though responses to this problem often privilege the role of either the whole or of the parts, and thus make themselves vulnerable to accusations of 'reductionism,' my interest is primarily in the implications of how the problem itself implies a certain account of what constitutes an ordered whole. As we will see in Chapters 4 and 5, this model of unity and order is central to the theorization of the global scope of international order.

Aside from a system of domination or totality, structure in international relations is frequently understood in terms of the concept of anarchy. According to Olaf Corry, "anarchy arguably remains the central model of structure in IR," which is only affirmed by attempts to theorize international politics with models of hierarchy. Corry operates on the same model of structure as Waltz in that his concern is how to theorize the arrangement of parts, that is, "how [political] constellations are put together." For Corry, 'system' defined in terms of interacting units is better thought of as "an overarching category of which anarchy, hierarchy, and polity are subtypes, each with a particular arrangement of the parts."[242] Corry points out the affinities between this account of system and the concept of a network, which "functions very much in the same way as the concept of 'system' understood as a set of interconnected units."[243] Consequently, "to say that a 'global network' exists is to say that units interact on a global scale which is roughly

[242] Olaf Corry, *Constructing a Global Polity*, (Palgrave-MacMillan, 2013), 83.
[243] Ibid.

equivalent to the idea of a global international system. This stays at the level of abstraction above that of anarchy, hierarchy, [and] empire."[244] It is the theorization of international order at this level of abstraction, however, that provides an account of structure that precedes debates over the concept in relation to science and tradition, structure and agency, and metaphors of structure like assemblage, network, and complexity. While I wholeheartedly endorse Corry's claim that "a monoculture of theory is the real problem,"[245] my sense is that such a monoculture is located in the theory of structure expressed by the concept of system at the foundation of theories of international politics, which takes structure to be an arrangement of parts, whether that arrangement is anarchically–, hierarchically–, or otherwise–arranged.

The questions and answers produced by this account of structure—understood as an effect of relations of difference—have been pursued in a range of literatures in relation to the concepts of system and of structure, terms which tend to be treated as synonymous.[246] In the twentieth century, debates over structure occur in sociology, philosophy, psychoanalysis, linguistics, political science, anthropology, political economy and international relations. In these debates, structuralism is taken to name analyses that insist on the priority of the whole in any given analysis of parts, whether that structure is of language, myth, or economic production. A given phenomenon, on these accounts, can only be explained in relation to the larger whole of which it is a part. Although the concepts are often used interchangeably, in the twentieth century 'system' tends to be more strongly associated with what are often referred to as the complexity sciences, literatures inspired by early twentieth-century developments in physics, thermodynamics, and cybernetics. 'Structure,' meanwhile, appears in relation to the broad intellectual movement in the

[244] Corry, *Global Polity*, 79.
[245] Ibid., 69.
[246] Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, (London: Palgrave-MacMillan, 1979). Giddens both notes the *de facto* synonymy of the terms (3) and defines them separately in his own theory of structuration (62).

human sciences known as structuralism, and the responses to that movement grouped under the name poststructuralism. These literatures, however, are intertwined, as they both address the limits of classical science, elaborate similar insights, and share influence.[247]

Theories of systems have proliferated in the twentieth century especially, and can be found in fields as diverse as biology, cybernetics, computer science, and sociology, as well as in attempts to develop a unified theory of systems that would unite these disparate endeavours.[248] General systems theory is defined by Austrian biologist Ludwig Von Bertalanffy as "scientific explanation of 'wholes' and 'wholeness' which not so long ago, were considered to be metaphysical notions transcending the boundaries of science."[249] In Bertalanffy's view, the limits of classical science, especially in relation to biological life, meant that "the fundamental problem today is that of organized complexity,"[250] that is, wholes that are irreducible in that they cannot be explained solely through an account of their parts. For Bertalanffy, the way to address this problem is through a general science of systems that identifies the qualities common to systems across the sciences.

The origins of the structuralist movement are conventionally found in the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure. For Saussure, the phenomenon of speech can only be understood in the context of the structure of language of which it is a part and from which it derives meaning. Crucially, this meaning is not derived from a relation of identity between a structure and its elements but is rather the result of the way meaning is produced by the marking of difference.

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[247] Derrida, for example, is influenced by Norbert Wiener's cybernetic theory in his critique of Saussure's structuralism. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 9-11. For a broad account of the similarities between the complexity sciences and poststructuralism, see: Paul Cilliers, *Complexity and Postmodernism*, (London: Routledge, 1998). My aim here is to note the similarities between the two in terms of the problems they pose, rather than suggest they advance a common intellectual or political project.
[248] For the classic account, see: Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *General Systems Theory: Foundations, Development, Applications* (New York: George Braziller, 1968).
[249] Ludwig Von Bertalanffy (1968) *General Systems Theory: Foundations, Elements, Applications*. New York: George Braziller: xx.
[250] Ibid., 17.

For Saussure, there is no natural or necessary connection between a sound (signifier) and the idea it represents (signified). It is only in relation to differences articulated within a particular language system that meaning becomes attached to a particular sign. It is thus precisely *because of* the arbitrariness of the signifier that a sign can only be understood in the context of a system of language, that is, within a social context. It is only by locating a signifier in a particular position or role by differentiating itself from other signifiers that a stable meaning is generated. Meaning, on this account, is entirely conventional; a given social structure is fully responsible for the production of the meaning of the parts that comprise it. Any speaker is thus powerless to use language in any way that lies outside the system of meaning within which they are embedded.[251] Similarly influential accounts of structure are found in Claude Levi-Strauss's structural anthropology[252] and Louis Althusser's structural Marxism.[253] It is Eric Hobsbawm's critique of Althusser's structuralism that in part inspires Richard Ashley's influential critique of neorealism.

Critiques of structuralism elaborated by figures like Derrida work by denying the possibility of closed systems of meaning such as those posited by Saussure. For a system to retain stability and mark itself off from other systems requires the existence of a stable centre or origin. Such a centre or origin, however, betrays the key premise of structuralist analysis: that meaning arises through difference. Either the stable origin or centre does not require difference to establish its meaning, in which case it can not be properly understood as part of the structure it organizes, thereby undermining the stability of that structure. Or such a centre or origin derives its meaning in relation to difference in the same manner as the other elements of the structure, in which case it

[251] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, eds., Wade Baskin, trans., (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959).
[252] Levi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, translated by John and Doreen Weightman, (New York: Harper & Row, 1969).
[253] Louis Althusser, *On the reproduction of capitalism: Ideology and ideological state apparatuses*, (London: Verso Trade, 2014).

cannot serve as a stable centre or origin. In either case, structure can never claim a stable presence determined by a fixed centre or origin. Rather, structure is always a matter of what Derrida calls the "structurality of structure," an active and perpetual ordering that works through the continual play of difference. The boundaries of a given structure, on this account, are never fixed and stable but are the continually shifting cause and effect of the production of meaning.[254] In this sense, as Anthony Giddens points out, poststructuralist critiques of structuralism remain closely linked to the problem of structure.[255] Rather than advancing what might be called an 'anti-structural' or 'post-structural' position, thinkers like Derrida advance an account of structure as irreducible relation.

System: Science and tradition

The account of structure as an effect of relations of difference is also present in the so-called 'Second Debate,' commonly understood as conflicts between Anglo-American scientific approaches and European (primarily English) classical approaches, conflicts paradigmatically expressed in the work of Hedley Bull and Kenneth Waltz. While the distinction between these approaches is typically framed as one between the predominantly American theories of structural determination that aspire to scientific status and the interpretive or agency-centred approaches of scholarship on international society, what is notable is how the distinction and tension between structure and agency appears not only between but within each of these literatures. What this demonstrates, I argue, is that the contours of these debates, their repetitive quality, and the nearly identical conclusions regarding structure at which scholars of many stripes seem to arrive, are

[254] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*; Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Science," in *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 278-294.
[255] Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems of Social Theory*, (London: Palgrave-MacMillan, 1979), 29-30.

indicative of a shared theory of order. My aim is neither to simply affirm nor deny the differences between these approaches, but to show the way they are animated by a common problem—which has its roots in a systemic account of order. The multiple positions, approaches, and commitments at work in these debates are enabled by the problematique of the relationship between parts and whole. Despite the variety of claims about the international that can be found in these literatures, they share a conception of order as an irreducible relation between a structure and its component parts.

It is in the methodological debates of the 1960s that the international is most explicitly theorized as a system, and in which the influence of general systems theory as well as particular variants from biology, cybernetics, and physics on the discipline of international relations can be seen most clearly. These debates, generally framed as involving an opposition between "tradition" and "science," reflect similar conflicts over the status of social scientific knowledge taking place in political science. In international relations, scientific approaches that aim to discover regularities of political behaviour based on the model of the natural sciences take systems to be the foundation of a science of politics, whether international or otherwise. The concept of a system, on these accounts, promises the unity that is a condition of possibility for a systematic science.

Commentaries on debates over structure in the context of international politics identify two main sets of approaches to the problem of structure. The first set consists of structuralist theories that aim to discover regularities of political behaviour based on the model of the natural sciences. These approaches aim to explain and predict political phenomena on a world scale in the same manner as the natural sciences. Second are classical approaches that deny this possibility by emphasizing the problem of the domestic analogy.[256] These debates, generally framed as an

[256] As Walker points out, these differences can also be identified within realist approaches. See: R.B.J. Walker, "Realism, Change, and International Political Theory," *International Studies Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1987): 65-86.

opposition between tradition and science, reflect similar debates over the status of social scientific knowledge taking place in political science. These two approaches are generally interpreted to fall along the lines of Hollis and Smith's distinction between explaining and understanding international politics. Yet what these approaches share, as Wight points out, are a belief in the significance of structure or the whole to understanding social and political phenomena.

Karl Deutsch, though sensitive to the limitations of both scientific and traditional approaches, nonetheless argues that the advantage of a cybernetic model of political communication is that it permits the analysis of "whole decision systems" rather than "partial models of isolated traits of situations." Later system approaches that operate on the basis of 'levels of analysis,' despite making sharp distinctions between individual, state, and international system, settle on the 'system' level as the most appropriate means of explaining international politics. Drawing on the structural functionalism of Talcott Parsons and David Easton, Morton Kaplan argues that "a scientific politics can develop only if the materials of politics are treated in terms of systems of action."[257] This model enables analyses of the international in terms of the relation between systems and subsystem, the balance of power, and international equilibrium.[258] Kaplan's structural functionalism is exemplified in his claims that "systems and subsystems in the international system have roles, and these roles have different functions depending on whether they couple activity within the subsystems of a larger system or between system levels."[259] In this sense, as for many structural functionalists, the international system is comparable to, and can be studied in a similar manner as, a "physiological system."[260] Structural functional analysis draws in this way on theories of organic order in which a holistic structure determines the function of its

[257] Morton Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*, (USA: John Wiley & Sons, 1957), 4.
[258] Kaplan, *System and Process,* 19-22.
[259] Ibid., 19.
[260] Ibid., 9.

component parts. It is this version of systems theory, in which parts are wholly determined by their position within a whole, that is frequently taken to be synonymous with the term structure in the human sciences.

One question at stake in these debates is therefore the possibility of a "science" of politics, which for the systems theorists of the time meant a science of politics that could be applied uniformly to both the domestic and the international spheres in order to explain and predict the behaviour of states. The concept of a system, on these accounts, promises the unity that is a condition of possibility for a systematic science. As Walker explains, this form of structural analysis partakes in "the positivist reduction of all human behaviour as being in principle open to explanation in terms of the same kinds of scientific methods."[261] As Walker points out, this leads to contradiction in the way that these scientific approaches affirm the distinction between state and international at the same time as they employ universal scientific methods that in principle deny the validity of this distinction. This contradiction also explains why structuralists like Waltz are often read as operating on a classical model of science despite the considerable influence that systems theories, which reject this classical model, have on systemic theories of international politics.

"Traditional" approaches, on the other hand, are understood to work by affirming the distinction between parts of the structure of the international, states, and the whole of which they are parts, the system of states. Hence Hedley Bull's famous warnings about the dangers of the "domestic analogy," in which politics among states in the international system are treated as analogous to politics among individuals within states. The application of social scientific methods intended to study politics within states to relations between states, on this account, "involves an

[261] Walker, *Political Theory and the Transformation of World Politics*, 22.

inappropriate transfer of method from one realm of human interaction—domestic society—to the entirely different world of the international system." On this basis, the distinction between traditional and scientific approaches is often understood in terms of the affirmation or denial of a distinction between a whole and its parts expressed as the affirmation or denial of the possibility of a universal science of politics.

The reception of the work of both Waltz and Bull is divided between structuralist and interpretivist readings, or in the case of Waltz, 'unit-level' interpretations of their respective theories of international politics. These options are given, I argue, by their analogous accounts of structure. One often-overlooked commonality between Bull and Waltz is their shared view that anarchy is not synonymous with chaos and disorder. For Waltz, if anarchy were to be characterized solely by disorder and violence it would become indistinguishable from domestic order, given the frequent use of violence by states against their own populations.[262] It is their answer to the kind of order—of structure—that characterizes the international that enables both structuralist and interpretivist readings of these literatures.

The Anarchical Society: Structural and interpretivist readings

Interpretations of the work of Bull and scholarship on international society more broadly is split between structuralist and interpretive readings. While the former emphasize the constraints placed on state, individual, and group behaviour by international society, interpretive approaches insist on the way the actions of such agents always exceed in some capacity the external constraints of the international political order. Such approaches, however, rely on the shared account of structure already articulated in *The Anarchical Society.*

[262] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 103.

Mark Bevir, for example, defends an interpretivist vision of the English School, which involves "defending the allied notions that agents make IR, that their actions are not limited by structures and are shaped by their own understandings of the meaning they have for them and others, and that explaining these actions requires an account of their meanings."[263] The forces that structuralists identify as responsible for shaping and constraining are effective "only because specific individuals happen contingently to hold beliefs that inspire them to act in a way that such a logic would suggest."[264] Structuralist constraints, while present, are never fully determining of the behaviour of actors, but are rather effects of individual responses to a given configuration of meaning.

Others draw on the significance of structure in English School scholarship to attempt a synthesis between neorealist and international society approaches.[265] According to Cecelia Navari, "anarchy understood by Bull, Manning, the British Committee (BC) and its heirs is a structural concept"[266] expressed in the idea of a states-system. The English School's structuralism on this account resides in the ordering function of the states system, the limits it places on possibilities for political action. While insisting on the English School's recognition of the significance of the limitations that social structure places on political action, Navari nonetheless comes to a familiar conclusion, that ultimately the English School is best understood as expressing a theory of structure in which "agents and structures co-constitute."[267] The structuration theory of Anthony Giddens,

[263] Marx Bevir and Ian Hall "The English School and the Classical Approach: Between Modernism and Interpretivism," *Journal of International Political Theory* 2020 (Onlinefirst): 12.
[264] Marx Bevir and Ian Hall, "Interpreting the English School: History, Science and Philosophy," *Journal of International Political Theory* 2020 (Onlinefirst): 5.
[265] Barry Buzan, "From international system to international society," 1993.
[266] Cornelia Navari, "Agents versus structures in English School theory: Is co-constitution the answer?" *Journal of International Political Theory* 16, no. 2 (2020): 250.
[267] Ibid.

Navari concludes, is the most apt theory of structure for understanding English School international theory.

Tim Dunne prefers to think of the English School as a variety of constructivism, given its concern with the social dimensions of international political life.[268] For Dunne, the "conceptual chasm" between neorealism and what he calls "international society constructivism," is the result of Bull and Waltz's "divergent understandings of 'holism.'"[269] Whereas Waltz understands international structure as anarchic, the ordering principle of the international for Bull is society. Waltz and Bull, however, while characterizing the particular arrangement of the international system in different terms, share an analogical account of structure as a relation between parts and their arrangement. While Bull and Waltz differ in their view of *how* the international is ordered, they agree on what makes it an order. And it is precisely a particular conception of a whole which unites the international theories of Bull and Waltz.

Waltz: System as structure

While Bull uses the term 'system' and Waltz 'structure' to define their theories of order, both do so in almost identical terms. "A structure," Waltz writes, "is defined by the arrangement of its parts. Only changes of arrangement are structural changes. A system is composed of a structure of interacting parts."[270] Like in Bull's definition of order, for Waltz the interaction of parts must be organized by some principle for order to be present. "Structure defines the arrangement, or the ordering, of the parts of a system. In defining structures the first question to answer is this: What

[268] The linkages between the approaches are also explored in Christian Reus-Smit, "Imagining Society: Constructivism and the English School," *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 4, no. 3 (2002): 487-509.
[269] Tim Dunne, "The Social Construction of International Society," *European Journal of international Relations* 1, no. 3 (1995): 379.
[270] Waltz, *Theory of International* Politics, 80.

is the principle by which the parts are arranged?"[271] Crucially, for Waltz as for Bull, this principle is one that is not reducible to the parts: "a system consists of a structure…the systems-level component that makes it possible to think of the units as forming a set as distinct from a mere collection."[272] This echoes Bull's understanding of system outlined in Chapter One. 'Set' and 'collection' here are synonyms for what Bull calls a 'heap' as opposed to a 'collection'; in both cases, the crucial point is that the parts of a system are neither reducible to nor entirely determined by their arrangement.

For Waltz, the structure of international order is determined by the principle of anarchy. Yet what an examination of Waltz's reflections on structure demonstrates is the way that the concepts of system and structure already work as an ordering principle in *Theory of International Politics*. While anarchy may be one way of describing an arrangement of parts, it is a description of a prior ordering that already arranges parts and whole (i.e. the principle of their arrangement) in an irreducible or reciprocal relation. Sjoberg argues, on the basis of Waltz's claim that "in looking for international structure, one is brought face to face with the invisible,"[273] that Waltz denies the existence of structure in international politics altogether. Yet Waltz is explicit that "structure is not something we see."[274] Structure is invisible because it is a feature of *relations* among elements rather than any of the elements themselves, or of their combination.

Waltz is clear enough in his view that the problem of international politics involves specifying the relation between a whole—the structure of the international system—and what he calls its "units," which, in the case of international politics, in his view, are states.

> If the organization of units affects their behavior and their interactions, then one cannot predict outcomes or understand them merely by knowing the characteristics, purposes, and

[271] Ibid.
[272] Waltz, 80.
[273] Ibid., 89.
[274] Ibid., 80.

> interactions of the system's units… Any approach or theory, if it is rightly termed 'systemic,' must show how the systems level, or structure, is distinct from the level of interacting units.[275]

Here Waltz uses the term structure not to refer to the relation between parts and whole, that is, the arrangement of parts, but to the whole produced by them. Structure, for Waltz, is thus the effect of a set of relations between parts that is not reducible to that arrangement. Thus, while Waltz's principle of anarchy certainly depends on the principle of sovereign equality, Waltz writes that "the sovereignty of the state has never entailed their insulation from the effects of other states' actions. To be sovereign and to be dependent are not contradictory conditions."[276] A system, then, is the relation between the parts of a system and its structure—the arrangement of the parts.

Because the way they pose the problem renders the relationship ultimately irreducible, these figures can be (and are) read in multiple, ostensibly contradictory ways.[277] Commentaries on Waltz that address the problem of structure can be found that precisely reproduce the set of options Waltz's formulation of the problem provides. These commentaries run the gamut from critiques of Waltz on the basis that his theory of international politics exhibits various forms of structural determinism,[278] to critiques that insist his conception of structure is ultimately reducible to the units that compose the structure and is thus not really a structural theory at all.[279]

A third category of commentaries claims that Waltz is sensitive to the irreducible relation between whole and part and thus alternates between privileging the structure and the units in his

[275] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (London: Addison-Wesley, 1979), 39-40.
[276] Ibid., 96.
[277] For a more in-depth account of this variety than can be offered here, see Wight, *Agents, Structures, and International Relations*, 1999.
[278] Richard Ashley, "The Poverty of Neorealism," *International Organization* 38, 2 (1984): 225-286. John Ruggie, "Constructing the World Polity"; Hollis and Smith, *Explaining and Understanding*, 1994.
[279] Alexander Wendt, "The agent-structure problem in international relations theory," *International Organization* 43 (1): 341-2; Hendrik Spruyt, "Historical Sociology and Systems Theory in International Relations," *Review of International Political Economy* 5, 2 (1998): 340-353; Jack Donnelly, "Systems, levels, and structural theory: Waltz's theory is not a systemic theory (and why that matters for International Relations today)," *European Journal of international relations* (2019): 1-17.

analysis..[280] The influential critique of neorealism developed by Richard Ashley, for example, is advanced in relation to these broader debates on the limits and possibilities of structural analysis. As Ashley describes, structure is central to the social sciences because of its ability to "grasp a structural totality that constrains, disposes, and finally limits political practice."[281] For Ashley, neorealists have left the promise of structural analysis unrealized due to the way their analysis proceeds on the basis of two different models of the whole, each of which undercuts the analytic potential of the other. The neorealist approach amounts to a hybrid "positivist structuralism" that oscillates between privileging a utilitarian, individualist theory of state behaviour or a totalizing model of anarchical structure.

This helps to explain why Waltz can be read productively in relation to post-structural critiques of international politics. As Ashley demonstrates, the oscillation between a mechanistic individualism and totalizing structuralism is evident in the reversal of priority between Man in *Man, the State, and War* and war in *Theory of International Politics*. Whereas in the former Man is taken to be "a prior rational identity—an originary presence" in opposition to the absence of international anarchy, in the latter the international system represents a set of positive limits on the activities of Man and State. This reversal, according to Ashley, is the sign of "the inescapable historicity of man."[282] As Wight explains, Waltz theorizes structure as "relations of difference" expressed in the distribution of capabilities. It is this shared structure that is at the root of recent analysis that links Waltz's theory of international politics and Derridean deconstruction through their shared articulation of an ethics of survival based on a conception of structure that "leaves

[280] Stacie E. Goddard and Daniel H. Nexon. "Paradigm Lost? Reassessing *Theory of International Politics*," *European Journal of International Relations* 11, 1 (2005): 9-61. Goddard and Nexon suggest that these commentaries point to a possible synthesis between structural realism and constructivism. The argument for synthesis presumes a prior separation between the two and thus misses the way that a synthesis is already present in their shared question.
[281] Ashley, "Poverty of Neorealism," 237.
[282] Ashley, "Living on Borderlines," 287.

ample room for change and contingency."[283] Chapter 5 explores some of the ways this account of structure is implicit in recent historical sociological approaches to the development of world order.

The divergence of commentary on Waltz has been attributed to his "penchant for ambiguity" and the "lack of attention to Waltz's structural functionalist foundations."[284] Both "traditional" and "scientific" literatures on international order, however, are split between structuralist and interpretivist readings in a manner that suggests that such divisions are the result of the shared account of order and structure that both approaches share. Thus, while Waltz can be read as a reductionist in one way or another, or even both ways at once, the way both Waltz and Bull pose the problem of international order admits a difference between a structure and its components. Advocates of both explaining or understanding international politics pose the problem of the international in a way that at least implicitly suggests that neither a system / structure nor its components are reducible to the other. This same dynamic is found in debates over the relation between structure and agency.

Structure: Agency and determination

In his study on the agent-structure problem in international relations, Colin Wight identifies the distinction between explaining and understanding approaches with two traditions of structuralism in social theory which he traces back to Durkheim's distinction between quantitative and qualitative social facts. The former is the ground of what Wight calls the American tradition of structural theory expressed in the structural functionalism of Talcott Parsons, Morton Kaplan, and

[283] Tom Lundborg, "Waltz and the Ethics of Neorealism: The Time of International Life," *European Journal of International Relations* 25, no. 1 (2019): 229-249.
[284] Stacie E. Goddard and Daniel H. Nexon. "Paradigm Lost? Reassessing *Theory of International Politics*," *European Journal of International Relations* 11, 1 (2005): 9-61. This explanation is particularly unusual given the way structural functionalism, whether that of Parsons, Easton, or Kaplan, is almost exclusively understood by interpreters as a theory of structural determination. For example, see Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*.

David Easton. The latter is the concern of what Wight calls the Continental tradition of structuralism, which is likewise grounded in the work of Durkheim and Marx, but influenced later on by thinkers like Freud, Husserl, and Heidegger. Regardless of their differences, Wight points out the way that both traditions affirm the importance of systematic unity to understanding social phenomena: "Both are committed to the belief that societies should be studied as total systems, or connected wholes (i.e. structures), and that the important factors of these connected wholes are their internal patterns of connection, and not the isolated elements of which these structures are composed."[285] It is in relation to the significance of systems and wholes that debates over structure and agency in relation to international politics are divided between those that privilege structure, those that privilege agency, and those that try to 'mind the gap' between the two by either specifying the particular relation between whole and part as in the theory of structuration, or by attending to how the distinction is discursively and materially produced.

Most current approaches to these problems emphasize the need for attention to both structural and agentic elements of human social life. Alexander Wendt, drawing on the social theory of Anthony Giddens, argues that "structuration theory," which posits the mutual constitution of structures and agents, can be fruitfully applied to international politics.[286] In Giddens' view, approaches based in either voluntarism and determinism miss what he calls the "duality of structure."[287] This model understands structures to be both enabling and constraining, and productive of "action," the mutual interplay of structural influence and intentional, reflective

[285] Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures, and International Relations*, 126.
[286] Alexander Wendt, "The agent-structure problem in international relations theory," *International Organization* 43, no. 1 (1987): 335-370.
[287] Giddens, *Central Problems*, 5. See also: Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

behaviour on the part of actors. For Wendt, structuration provides a framework for mediating between conflicting approaches to and accounts of, international politics.

Others emphasize the way that the question of the relation between structure and agency will always have more than one answer. For Hollis and Smith, there will always be "two stories to tell"[288] about structure, which correspond to two traditions of social science, 'explaining' based on classical natural scientific principles of cause and effect and 'understanding' based on the humanistic interpretation of historical change.[289] For these two, theories that purport to solve the problem miss the way that differing approaches reflect irreconcilably different ontologies.[290] Though Colin Wight concurs that there is no ultimate solution to the problem, he develops a fourfold theory of agency that aims to "redress the balance between agents and structures"[291] which he argues has been tilted to heavily toward structure. Wight's thus arrives at a common conclusion—that the relation between structure and agency is a problem without a "right answer."[292] For Wight, the intractability of the agent-structure problem suggests the need for greater attention to the ontological foundations of international relations scholarship.

Structure poses two related problems for the human sciences, according to Ashley. First is the dependence of practice on structure, the inescapable boundaries of broader contexts, processes, and subjectivities that both enable and constrain the practices of subjects. The second is the dependence of structure on practice derived from the impossibility of a purely discrete structural form separate from the processing of its ordering. "The contradictory positions" of the dependence

[288] Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, "Beware of Gurus: Structure and Action in the Social Sciences," *Review of International Studies* 17 (1991): 93-410.
[289] Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).
[290] Hollis and Smith, "Beware of Gurus," 410.
[291] Colin Wight, "They Shoot Dead Horses Don't They? Locating Agency in the Agent-Structure Problematique," *European Journal of International Relations* 5, no. 1 (1999): 110.
[292] Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures, and International Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

of structure on agency and the dependence of agency on structure constitute a "paradox," however, meaning that to choose one position over the other, would be to claim a sovereign ground outside of history, thus a reinscribing logocentric paradigm that privileges modern Man as the subject of history.

Twentieth century human sciences, on Ashley's account, refuse the undecidability of the two propositions in favour of resolving them in terms of either structure (structuralism), agency (behaviouralism) or a structurationist middle position. "The paradigm of sovereignty," he writes, "provides the indisputable principle that makes possible a 'strategy' of domestication in the absence of a 'knowing strategist.'"[293] These paradigms can vary widely—Ashley names Marxism, Christianity, and communitarianism—but they all act as self-limiting principles that work as a ground for the knowledge and authority of Man. While the limits these paradigms privilege differs, the form of authority they express remains a finite and absolute. In so deciding on the undecideable, these paradigms affirm the authority of a specific construction of humanity as Man that requires the political authority of the state as an enabling condition of knowledge and freedom.

This is equally the case, in Ashley's terms, for theories that specify the relation between the two positions, such as structuration. These theories tend to fall to one side or the other of the hierarchy, for example in the way that structuration "takes for granted the continuity of the institutional structures of a social totality."[294] The theorization of undecidability here is not to advocate an abandonment of the problem; rather, "taking seriously the undecidable question…can make the respect for the historicity of all possible grounds its 'central presence'—thereby to destabilize and render open to question all claims to absolute foundation."[295] This answer recalls

[293] Ashley, "Powers of Anarchy," 113.
[294] Ashley, "Living On: Border Lines," 276.
[295] Ibid., 278.

Derrida's critique of structuralism in which he urges neither a privileging of the "play" of difference, nor a nostalgic valorization of stable centres or origins. but rather enjoins his readers to "conceive of the common ground…of this irreducible difference" so that attention might be turned toward some new, "as yet unnameable thing" appearing on the horizon.[296]

Ashley's privileging of an irreducible relation constitutes its own account of the boundaries of international order. Ashley concludes that international politics "is a practice of the inscription of the dangers…and the mobilization of populations to control these dangers—all in the name of a social totality…that is never more than an affect of the practices by which total dangers are inscribed."[297] The mutual dependence of structure and agency, or Man and war, constitutes an account of the boundaries of international politics and thus of a domain within which modern Man can aspire to freedom as autonomy. These aspirations are expressed in what Ashley calls "paradigms of sovereignty" which are expressed in a variety of forms.[298] These can only ever be carved out from the irreducible difference of structure through processes that are always partial and never complete.

As demonstrated in this chapter and in Chapter 1, however, a conception of the boundaries of the international as irreducible, reciprocal, or undecidable relations between parts and whole is shared by many other theories of international politics, not least those of Waltz and Bull. What Ashley misses, however, is the way all three positions express the undecidability of structure in the questions they pose about the relation between structure and its parts. As we will see in the next chapter, this undecidability is expressed in the systematic unity that is said to characterize international and world order. These limits are also present in poststructuralist (and, as we will see

[296] Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," in *Writing and Difference*, Allan Bass, trans., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).
[297] Ashley, "Living On: Border Lines," 304.
[298] Cynthia Weber, *Queer International Relations*, (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2016).

in the next section, more recent, poststructuralist-inspired work) work aimed at articulating "transversal struggles" that produce alternative constructions of human being and political authority not reducible to the system of states.

The way to stay attuned to this historicity of being, to avoid making a decision on the agent-structure aporia, according to Roxanne Lynn Doty, is by attending to "the intrinsically open-ended and ambiguous nature of practice."[299] Doty argues that practices are always signifying practices, in that they produce meaning, and that these significations always contain a "surplus" that escapes the determination of either willful subjects or social and political structures.[300] Both Doty and Ashley insist that, far from limiting possibilities for academic research, this conception of practices enables diverse forms of theoretical and empirical scholarship. For both thinkers, this research moves away from 'why' questions to ask 'how' questions that inquire into "*how* the undecideable gets decided and what consequences this has for the lives of people who struggles against naturalized meaning."[301] The emphasis that Ashley and Doty place on 'how' questions and the indeterminacy of practice are the elements of the agent-structure debate that have been most explicitly taken up in more recent work that employs the concepts of assemblage, network, and complexity to theorize international politics. Though this work draws on novel concepts and develops a range of alternative approaches, the problem of structure and the conception of order that underlie it remain present across these diverse literatures.

[299] Roxanne Lynn Doty, "Aporia," *European Journal of International Relations* 3 (1997): 375.
[300] Ibid., 377.
[301] Ibid., 388.

Assemblage: Complex Collectives

Theories of international politics that employ the concepts of assemblage, actor-network, and complexity have proliferated since the structure-agency debate of the 1990s. These theories draw on concepts developed in the Actor-Network Theory (ANT) of Bruno Latour, theories of assemblage that draw on the work of Deleuze and DeLanda, and complexity theory, which is often identified in international relations with the work of James Rosenau and the 'post-international' school.[302] These theories are generally employed in relation to international politics under the banner of practice theory[303] and international political sociology.[304] As much of this literature notes, none of these approaches represents a single, unified approach, but rather a "family resemblance" of theories linked by some shared ontological premises, theoretical emphases, and methodological preoccupations.

What unites these approaches, however, is a notion of structure as arrangement. Compare, for example, Waltz's definition of structure as an arrangement of parts with Manuel DeLanda's. DeLanda book *Assemblage Theory*, which is influential for the approaches surveyed below, defines assemblage through its French analogue *agencement*, which refers to "the action of maintaining or fitting together a set of components, as well as to the result of such an action: an ensemble of parts that mesh together well."[305] Moreover, "the diagram of an assemblage, according to DeLanda, consists of "an ensemble in which components have been correctly matched together [and] possesses properties that its components do not have."[306] Like Waltz's

[302] See James Rosenau, *Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990. Emilian Kavalski, ed. *World Politics at the Edge of Chaos: Reflections on Complexity and Global Life*, (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2015).
[303] Bueger and Gadinger, *International Practice Theory: New Perspectives*, (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2014).
[304] Didier Bigo and R.B.J. Walker, "International, Political, Sociology," *International Political Sociology* 1 (2007): 1-5.
[305] Manuel DeLanda, *Assemblage Theory*, 1.
[306] Ibid., 5.

model of structure and Bull's model of system, DeLanda's theory of assemblage articulates a model of structure as an irreducible arrangement of parts.

These studies also share the aim of tracing "transversal lines" across the dualisms around which the social sciences have conventionally been organized. In terms of international politics, this means tracing processes and collectivities linked in ways that exceed the distinction between the inside and outside of states, the private and the public, democracy and authoritarianism, and state and non-state actors. In doing so, these studies identify conflicts and solidarities that fall outside the ambit of conventional disciplinary boundaries. These approaches tend to emphasize process and relations, the socially embedded nature of knowledge practices, an attention to technologies and materiality, a distributed conception of agency, and a focus on the indeterminacy and contingency of practice. Such approaches have inspired a significant range of work that has succeeded in making visible links between objects, forces, ideas, individuals, and technologies that previously were hidden by inquiries that began with the presumption that such connections were either impossible or irrelevant.

What unites this diversity of scholarship, however, is a shared conception of order that characterizes these assemblages, networks, and collectives. Like critiques of the agent-structure opposition, these approaches share a view of order as an irreducible relation between a whole (whether collective, assemblage, setting, or network) and its constitutive parts. Despite their differences, this work shares a concern with how to chart the relations between various collectives and their component elements in a way that preserves the way these elements are both independent from, yet inextricably related to, the whole of which they are a part. This concern with the assembling of collectives and with the relation between collectives and their constituent elements means that these discourses bring with them many of the problems related to structure and agency.

Although Bueger claims that ANT promises "liberation" from "the agency/structure dilemma,"[307] the questions posed in the literatures that draw on ANT, assemblage theory, and complexity theory pose similar questions and propose similar solutions to the question of the relation between parts and whole. Best and Walters draw attention to these similarities in their introduction to a special issue on ANT and IR, writing that "the idea of the actor-network itself embodies a productive tension, putting structure and agency into an intimate relationship in which the network is made up of actors who, in turn, are effects of the network."[308] While these approaches operate on the basis of a distributed conception of agency that grants agentic power to a wide range of objects, forces, and phenomena, the arrangement of these things still have effects that "both enable and constrain human activity."[309] In a similar fashion, Bousquet argues that complexity theory can enrich the agent-structure problem with "new avenues to conceptualize the relationships between individuals and emergent social formations without reducing one to the other."[310] Put differently, theories of assemblage, network, and complexity all encounter the problem of structure and attempt to articulate a 'middle way' solution.

This dynamic can be found in empirical research that employs the concepts of assemblage, network, and complexity. Bueger, for example, in his study of the "counter-piracy assemblage," examines the relation between the assemblage and the controversy that arose over the specification of the territory to which counter-piracy measures were to apply.[311] Bellanova and Fuster, in their study of EU aviation security technologies, elaborate the relations between what they call the

[307] Christian Bueger, "Actor-Network Theory, Methodology, and International Organization," *International Political Sociology* 3, 1 (2013): 338.
[308] Jacqueline Best and William Walters, "'Actor-Network Theory' and International Relationality: Lost (and found) in Translation," *International Political Sociology* 7 (2013): 332.
[309] Best and Walter, "International Relationality," 333.
[310] Antoine Bousquet and Simon Curtis, "Beyond models and metaphors: complexity theory, systems thinking, and international relations," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 24, no.1 (2011): 52.
[311] Christian Bueger, "Territory, Authority, Expertise: Global governance and the counterpiracy assemblage," *European Journal of International Relations* 24 (3): 614-637.

"bodies-scanners setting" and the bodies of travellers that enter them.[312] And Jonathan Luke Austin describes the way that torture norms cross states boundaries in order to map the ways that "comprehending any local atrocity requires a global mapping of the subjectivities, social and discursive practices, material objects, and stores of knowledge, which made the act of violence possible."[313] These examples are indicative of the concern these approaches have with the problem of structure in the way their research questions are posed as a matter of studying the relation between a whole (assemblage, network, setting, or field) and one or several of its parts. While these studies identify assemblages that connect heterogenous parts which cross the conventional boundaries that have guided social science research for generations, they exhibit the same conception of order—as the ordering of relations between wholes and their parts—that has animated the human sciences since their inception.

Contrary, then, to Latour's claim that ANT "says nothing about what the shape of what is being described with it," the very questions that ANT asks about the relation between diverse assemblages and their elements does indeed suggest the shape of these collectives: wholes irreducible to their parts. Studies that employ these structural metaphors certainly demonstrate the way that particular spatio-temporal orders are produced through contingent relations between heterogenous elements, but these particular orders are grounded in a universal conception of order, one in which order consists of irreducible wholes of parts. Bueger and Gadinger's claim that "the advantage of such [structural] metaphors is their genuine openness to the various possibilities of

[312] Rocco Bellanova and Gloria Gonzalez Fuster, "Politics of Disappearance: Scanners and (Unobserved) Bodies as Mediators of Security Practices," *International Political Sociology* 7 (2013): 188-209.
[313] Jonathan Luke Austin, "Torture and the Material-Semiotic Networks of Violence Across Borders," *International Political Sociology* 10 (2016): 5.

orderliness,"[314] thus misses the way that these particular orders are grounded in a single conception of order *per se*.

These approaches inform scholarship that traces transversal links between collectivities that extend across conventional lines, collectives of anti-piracy, of finance, of border technology, of migration, and of transnational guilds, to name only a few, there is one collective that consistently escapes the scholarly attention of this work—the political collective called the international. This is significant because, notwithstanding this silence, the international remains the canvas, so to speak, upon which these analyses trace their maps. The practices, assemblages, collectives, networks, and guilds traced by these authors remain *international* practices, assemblages, collectives, networks, and guilds. Even in the case of complexity theory, the literature that seems most willing to think about the international as a whole, the international is taken as a given object to which theories of complexity can simply be applied. As Bousquet writes, "complexity can offer new perspectives on a problem that has been central to IR theory: how to conceptualize the international system."[315] To call the international a system, however, is to affirm an account of order as structure common to concepts like assemblage, network and complexity.

This silence on the question of international order has been noted in the context of international political sociology, the field in which the concepts of assemblage, network, and complexity have taken deepest root. In the introduction to the recent Routledge handbook on IPS, Pinar Bilgin and Peter Burgess write that "One…blind [sic] of IPS…as it crystallized in this handbook is the 'international,'" and both Burgess and Sankaran Krishna note in their contributions to the volume the way that the international as an object of study remains

[314] Bueger and Gadinger, "International Practice," 456.
[315] Bousquet and Curtis, "Beyond Models and Metaphors," 50.

undertheorized.[316] "The notion of transversal lines…seeks to identify procedures for thinking about continuities and change in ways that do not ultimately rely upon claims about essentialist or transcendental causalities, or simplify everything into a form of 'order.' It demands instead that we think about process, change and flows."[317] The problem my analysis points to here, however, is that 'order' and 'process' are not necessarily as antithetical as this passage makes them out to be.

Efforts to bring assemblage theory into the discipline of international relations are admirably sensitive to the difficulties of such interdisciplinary acts of translation.[318] Heeding warnings articulated at the outset of international political sociology,[319] Best and Walters are clear that they seek to avoid "the import syndrome…that has kept the theoretical balance of trade of IR perpetually in the red."[320] Rather, they propose a sociology of translation in order to "establish relationships of equivalence between ideas, objects, and materials that are otherwise different."[321] What is surprising about theories of networks, assemblages, and complexity, however, is not how alien they are to the problems, debates, and concepts that characterize discourses of international politics (like structure/agency), but how smooth, or even superfluous, such acts of translation appear to be.

[316] Pinar Bilgin and Xavier Guillaume, "Introduction," In *Routledge Handbook of International Political Sociology*, (London: Routledge, 2018), 10.
[317] Tugba Basaran, Didier Bigo, Emmanuel-Pierre Guittet and R.B.J. Walker (eds), "Transversal Lines: An Introduction," In *International Political Sociology: Transversal Lines*, (London: Routledge 2017), 1-2.
[318] Xavier Guillaume, in *Reassembling International Relations*.
[319] Bigo and Walker, "International, Political, Sociology," International Political Sociology 1 (2007): 1-5.
[320] Best and Walters, "International Relationality," 333.
[321] Ibid.

Structuring International Politics

Across debates defined by oppositions between tradition and science, structure and agency, and along the lines of novel metaphors of structure such as network, assemblage, and complexity an analogical account of structure holds sway: a reciprocal or irreducible relation between parts and whole. The effects of this account of structure are evident in both the way that oppositions in the discipline divided along mechanical and organic lines are themselves divided along the same lines as well is in the explicit abstract accounts of system and structure given by Bull, Waltz, and more recent theories of assemblage, network, and complexity. Further evidence lies in the way that such debates usually conclude in the affirmation of a relation between parts and whole, whether through a conception like structuration, *différance*, or practice. My argument is that the repetitive quality of these debates is a sign that instead of either wishing them away or articulating another account of the balance between structure and agency or a system and its parts, an analysis is required of the answers such a theory of structure common to these disputes provides to questions that are treated as up for debate in discourses of international politics.

Despite this common way of posing the problem of international politics as one of relations between parts and whole, international politics is still overwhelmingly linked to assumptions, ontologies, methods, and political claims linked to seventeenth century classical science. This form of identity can only account for the identity/order of the international if the international is read as anarchy/absence of community. Insofar as the international is considered a whole that has a relation with its parts, it cannot be a whole based on the mechanical model, or as based on identity as self-identity. My aim here is not to suggest that such associations are ill-conceived or that such assumptions do not remain influential in the discipline. Rather, it is to suggest that a different view is also profoundly influential in the way international politics is understood as a problem.

Debates over structure in international relations, in the form of the question of the relation between a whole and its parts, are enabled by an analogical conception of order. To the extent that the problem of the international is posed as a problem of structure, the international system already provides an answer to the form of that relation, one in which the international and its parts are constituted by an irreducible relation in which they are neither wholly identical nor wholly separate from one another. The international, on these accounts, is already implicitly a theory of what Derrida calls the 'structuring of structure' or of what Giddens terms 'the duality of structure,' as well as of assemblage, network, and complexity. Posed as a problem of structure, the international already serves as an answer to the problem of the relation between structure and agency. Insofar as the international is considered a system, and insofar as the problems of international politics are posed as questions of a relation between parts and whole, it is a political order that expresses the structuring of structure—a view of structure as relations of difference. The concept of an international *system* in this sense already gives an answer to the problem of structure that debates in international relations continue to treat as a question: the proper account of the relation between parts and whole, whether taken to be states and states-systems, citizenship and humanity, or local and global.

Chapter 4

Kant's domestic analogy: International and Cosmopolitan Right

This chapter reconsiders the problem of the domestic analogy in Kant's political writings. I argue that Kant's political thought is characterized not only by what Hedley Bull calls the domestic analogy—that is, an analogy between individuals in a state of nature and states in an international system—but also an analogy between international order—which Kant conceives as a system—and the globe, which Kant theorizes through the figure of the sphere. The analogous form of order displayed by both systematic unity and the figure of the spherical globe—a reciprocal relation between parts and whole—rather than an expression of a 'view from nowhere' or a utopian ideal, is a response to the inevitably finite and conditioned character of human experience. I trace the role of this account of order in Kant's writings and its expression in subsequent international politics literatures by linking the account of systematic unity articulated in the critical philosophy to Kant's account of the problem of international order. I do so by examining Kant's claim in *Perpetual Peace* that cosmopolitan right can be understood *by analogy* with international right. This analogy suggests that for Kant, a system of states is an answer to—rather than an expression of—the problem of the domestic analogy. This poses a challenge to contemporary critiques of both Kantian political philosophy and international political order, which tend to be grounded on the very problems to which Kant's account of international order and the figure of the globe are meant to be answers.

While Kant's critical and political writings have historically been read in isolation, many commentators now highlight the close relationship between Kant's critical and political projects. Scholars have identified several structural isomorphisms between Kant's conception of reason and his thinking on politics that demonstrate how the relation between the critical and political writings

reflect Kant's struggle with problems that cross the boundary between philosophy and politics.[322] On these readings, "international relations is not a set of problems that [Kant] merely addresses," but is, rather, "continuous with his project of critique."[323] The reading that follows approaches the relation between the critical and political writings similarly, as related elements in a broader philosophical-political project. This is not to insist on any kind of completeness or consistency in Kant's *corpus* but rather to show how the appeal to a particular kind of unity works to figure difference in relation to both universal reason and international order. This conception of unity appears in the third *Critique* in relation to the teleological judgment of natural organisms, but also, as we will see below, in relation to the systematic unity of reason outlined in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.[324] The unity expressed by both nature and reason, according to Kant, display an identical relation between parts and whole, one that is reciprocal or irreducible.

Kantian ambivalences

While Kant is variously read "as advocating federalism, a world government, a League of Nations-type security system, and outright pacifism," debates on these topics are split between what Hurrell calls the "statist" and "cosmopolitan" readings of *Perpetual Peace*.[325] Kant's oscillation between hopes for the possibility of a cosmopolitan world order beyond the state and state-system and significant doubts about such a possibility lends itself to contradictory readings. While Kant is most frequently employed in support of liberal claims about a cosmopolitan world community, he

[322] Williams, "Kant's Critique of International Politics"; Hutchings, *Kant, Critique, and Politics*, 29-30, 112.
[323] Franke, *Global Limits*, 68.
[324] For the role of systematic unity in Kant's philosophy, see Hans Saner, *Kant's Political Thought*, translated by E. B. Ashton, (Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1967); Nicholas Onuf, *World of our making: rules and rule in social theory and international relations*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989); Paul Guyer, *Kant's System of Nature and Freedom*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
[325] Andrew Hurrell, "Kant and the Kantian Paradigm in international Relations," *Review of International Studies* 16 (1990): 183.

is also read as a thinker who affirms the limits of sovereign states and the inevitability of violence amongst them. This double reading of Kant in IR is by now quite familiar, and commentaries on the ambivalent way Kant has been taken up in the discipline now seem almost as common as interpretations that either affirm Kant's account of the limits of the sovereign state or its transcendence.[326]

The latter take Kant's political writings to offer plausible solutions to the problems of conflict between states. Among these are scholars who argue that the positive link Kant draws between republican constitutions within states and peaceful relations between them is borne out empirically and thus works as a practical guide to the perpetuation of world peace.[327] Advocates of the peacemaking potential of inter- and supra-national organization for the promotion of peace similarly draw on Kantian political philosophy for inspiration.[328] Others, like Hedley Bull, emphasize Kant's conception of cosmopolitan right and its attendant focus on the individual as a ground for a peaceful world politics.[329] Contemporary theorists of cosmopolitan democracy and world society, moreover, persist in employing Kant as a guide for their visions of world order.[330] Whether as a result of democratic constitutions, international law, or international organizations, Kant's account of a world of free and equal subjects, whose freedom is guaranteed by state law,

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[326] Kimberly Hutchings, "The Possibility of Judgment: Moralizing and Theorizing in International Relations." *Review of International Studies* 18, no. 1 (1992): 51-62; Hurrell, "Kant and the Kantian Paradigm"; Michael C. Williams, "Kant's Critique of International Politics," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 25, no. 1 (1992): 99-119; Jens Bartelson, "The Trial of Judgment: A Note on Kant and the Paradoxes of Internationalism, *International Studies Quarterly* 39 (1995): 255-279; Mark F. N. Franke, *Global limits: Immanuel Kant, international relations, and critique of world politics*, (Albany: SUNY Press, 2001); R. B. J. Walker, *After the Globe/Before the World*, (London: Routledge, 2010): 160-163.

[327] For example: Michael Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 12, no. 3 (1983): 205-235 and Michael Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 12, no. 4 (1983): 323-353; See also Bruce Russett and John O'Neal, *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations*, (New York: Norton, 2001); cf. Beate Jahn, "Kant, Mill, and Illiberal Legacies in International Affairs," *International Organization* 59, no. 1 (2005): 177-207.

[328] Daniele Archibugi, "Models of International Organization in Perpetual Peace Projects," *Review of International Studies* 18, no. 5 (1992): 295–317.

[329] Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society*: *A Study of Order in World Politics*, (New York: Palgrave, 1977), 24-40.

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is, according to these thinkers, one of the progressive historical developments of a liberal democratic world characterized by peaceful relations among individuals and states.

As a second group of scholars insists, however, this is only one side of the story Kant tells about possibilities for peace on earth. F. H. Hinsley, for example, argues that Kant's dreams for peace reach no further than a federation of states, one characterized not by substantive political unity, but by laws and institutions shared by sovereign states. Kant's solution to the problem of international conflict is, in Hinsley's view, to enable the constraining power of law absent a unified political order. Gallie, likewise, argues that Kant, despite being "the first internationalist, was also one of the most steadfast 'statists' in the history of political thought" and thus "saw the task of creating a worldwide international order within a very long historical perspective."[331] The kind of federation Kant envisions, according to Gallie, is not a unified political order but a loose "confederation" or "partnership" limited by the principle of state sovereignty.[332] Kenneth Waltz, similarly, emphasizes the frankness with which Kant acknowledges the difficulties involved in imagining a peaceful international order given the "crooked wood" of human nature from which such an order must be crafted. On this reading, Kant is not a herald of peace but "gives us a deeper appreciation of the causes of war and the immense difficulty of doing anything about them."[333] For Hinsley, Gallie, and Waltz, Kant's program for peace primarily indicates that any semblance of peace achieved among states will necessarily be hard-won, fragile, and precarious.

Others read the tension between statist and cosmopolitan interpretations—as well as Kant's own uncertainty regarding the fate of world politics—in the context of his critique of metaphysics. These emphasize how the structure of Kant's philosophical system gives rise to the limits

[331] W. B. Gallie, *Philosophers of War and Peace Kant, Clausewitz, Marx, Engels and Tolstoy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 21.
[332] Gallie, *Philosophers of War and Peace*, 25.
[333] Kenneth Waltz, "Kant, Liberalism, and War," *The American Political Science Review* 56, no. 2 (1962): 331-40.

expressed in realist and idealist positions. On these accounts, the domestic analogy reflects the dualism expressed in Kant's distinctions between nature and freedom that structure the inevitably finite and conditioned character of earthly life. Jens Bartelson, for example, argues that the way reflective judgment manages the tension between nature and freedom (or understanding and reason) suggests that "the perpetuality of perpetual peace…[consists]…in the fact that the movement toward its realization is without end."[334] As Kimberly Hutchings explains, "Kantian critique is premised on both the limitation of reason and the assumption of the capacity of reason to transcend that limitation in the process of critique" and should thus be understood "as a paradoxical political practice rather than as a failed or successful metaphysics."[335] The oscillation between war and peace and between international and world expresses a concept of the world—and by extension a world politics—as an ideal both necessary for the construction of international order and impossible to achieve. According to these accounts, Kant is a theorist of the ultimate inextricably of peace and war, of violence and progress.

Attention to Kant's domestic analogy is also present in debates over colonialism, race, and empire in Kant's critical philosophy, political thought, anthropology, and geography.[336] The dualism considered to be at the heart of Kant's domestic analogy is identified with colonial knowledge and political practice.[337] According to Gayatri Spivak, Kant's "axiomatics of imperialism" are grounded in a conception of Man as split between noumenal and phenomenal,

[334] This formulation is also found in Mark Franke, *Global Limits: Immanuel Kant, international relations, and the critique of world politics*, (New York: SUNY Press, 2001); Geoffrey Bennington, *Kant on the Frontier: Philosophy, Politics, and the Ends of the Earth*, (Fordham University Press, 2017).
[335] Hutchings, *Kant, Critique and Politics*, 1.
[336] For important recent contributions to these debates see: Katrina Flikschuh and Lea Ypi, *Kant and Colonialism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) and Stuart Elden and Eduardo Mendieta, eds., *Reading Kant's Geography*, (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011).
[337] Cristina Rojas, "Contesting Colonial Logics of the International: Toward a Relational Politics for the Pluriverse," *International Political Sociology* 10 (2016): pp. 369-382; Zeynep Gulsah Capan, "Decolonising international Relations?" *Third World Quarterly* 38:1 (2017): 1-15.

which introduces a system "that operates in terms of an implicit cultural difference" through which Europeans are accorded privileged access to universal reason. The authorizations of violence expressed in Kant's political thought are thus distributed unequally on the basis of a conception of humanity as Man that subordinates or excludes the majority of the earth's inhabitants. In international relations, postcolonial critiques point out the way that Kant's domestic analogy expresses what Errol Henderson calls a "racist dualism" which locates white Europeans at the top of a racial hierarchy that justifies attempts to order or domesticate supposedly 'disordered' peoples and states.[338] These scholars point to the way that conceiving of international order in terms of a pre-civil condition masks the racial, civilizational, and cultural hierarchies that characterize international order today. The analogy between the state of nature and so-called 'primitive' societies authorizes attempts to order or domesticate the supposedly disordered international realm.

In all these literatures, Kant's international political thought is understood to be organized primarily around the domestic analogy. This reading features in a wide variety of literatures in intellectual history, philosophy, political theory, and international relations that is united in understanding Kant's formulation of the problem of international politics in terms of the domestic analogy, that is, the view that relations between states are analogous to those in state of nature among individuals and thus must be overcome by the institution of some form of civil society. These analyses emphasize Kant's reliance on a Hobbesian theory of the state and state of nature in posing the problem of international and cosmopolitan right.[339]

[338] Errol A. Henderson, "Hidden in plain sight: Racism in international relations theory," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 26, no. 1 (2013): 71-92.
[339] E.g. Bull, *Anarchical* Society, 253. Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 207-225.

There is ample textual evidence for this reading. Among states, Kant writes in *An Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*, there exist "precisely the same evils which formerly oppressed individual men and forced them into a law-governed state," and these evils "must force the states to make exactly the same decision…as that which man was forced to make…in his savage state."[340] Furthermore, in the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant argues that international right requires the establishment of "a federation of peoples in accordance with the idea of an original social contract" in order to overcome the "*condition* of war (the right of the stronger)" that exists between states.[341] In *Perpetual Peace*, moreover, Kant claims that "people who have grouped themselves into nation states may be judged in the same way as individual men living in a state of nature, independent of external laws."[342] On this account, the problem of international politics is identical to that of domestic politics, and requires individual states to unite into some kind of civic whole.[343]

However, as Chiara Bottici points out, there are also good reasons to doubt the claim that Kant's understanding of the international relies on the domestic analogy conventionally understood. At times, for example, Kant suggests that the problem of the international must be understood in different terms than in relation to individuals before civil society. Much like Hobbes,[344] who suggests that states do not face an identical set of dilemmas as individuals, Kant

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[340] Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose," in *Kant: Political Writings*, 2nd ed., edited by H.S. Reiss, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 47.
[341] Immanuel Kant, "The Metaphysics of Morals," in *Kant: Political Writings*, 2nd ed., edited by H.S. Reiss, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 164-5.
[342] Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch," in *Kant: Political Writings*, 2nd ed., edited by H.S. Reiss, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 102.
[343] While there are many disagreements about the kind of international order Kant envisions, there is now general agreement that in Kant's view a world state is neither possible nor desirable.
[344] There is a growing literature on Hobbes' international thought, and in particular the ways it remains unpredictable in relation to conventional accounts of a state of nature as pure war/absence. Bull, *The Anarchical Society*; Sharon Anderson-Gold, "Philosophers of Peace: Hobbes and Kant on International Order," *Hobbes Studies* 25 (2012): 6-20; Silviya Lechner, "Hobbesian Internationalism"; William Bain, "International Anarchy and Political Theology: Rethinking the Legacy of Thomas Hobbes" in *Political Theology and World Politics*; Prokhovnik and Slomp, *International Political Theory after Hobbes: Analysis, Interpretation, and Orientation*, Palgrave.

also distinguishes the problem of international politics from that of a 'state of nature' among individuals. The uniqueness of the problem of the international is evident in *Perpetual Peace,* where Kant argues that "while natural right allows us to say of men living in a lawless condition that they ought to abandon it, the right of nations does not allow us to say the same thing of states. For as states, they already have a lawful internal constitution, and have thus outgrown the coercive right of others."[345] In *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant writes that "a state of nature among individuals or families (in their relations with one another) is different from a state of nature among entire nations, because international right involves not only the relationship between one state and another within a larger whole, but also the relationship between individual persons in one state and individuals in the other or between such individuals and the other state as a whole."[346] Here, the problem of international right has to do not with isolated individuals cut off from any kind of collective community, but relations between states in the context of a larger political whole.

Furthermore, while Kant argues that an international federation must be established on the basis of a social contract, he adds that "this association must *not* embody a sovereign power as in a civil constitution, but only a partnership or confederation."[347] Kant explicitly excludes the possibility of a world state in favour of what he calls the "negative substitute" of a federation of states. And finally, Kant refers to the relationship between international and cosmopolitan right as analogical, writing in *Perpetual Peace* that the maxims of cosmopolitan right "are easy to formulate and assess on account of its analogy with international right." On this view, international order cannot be achieved in an analogous manner to order within states, and thus Kant cannot be said to be a simple advocate of the domestic analogy.

[345] Kant, "Perpetual Peace," 104.
[346] Immanuel Kant, "The Metaphysics of Morals," 165.
[347] Ibid.

Given the textual evidence for both positions and the apparent tension between them, the question becomes, as Bottici remarks, "how this can possibly be so."[348] Most commentators follow Gallie in reading Kant as "*par excellence,* the philosopher of sharp antitheses and unbridgeable dichotomies"[349] and point to the dualisms that populate Kant's writings as an explanation for the ambivalences that characterize his political thought.[350] Bottici, for example, suggests that Kant's ambivalence is a result of the difference between the certainty of abstract philosophical justification and the "contingency and multifaceted variety" of empirical phenomena.[351] Thus, "while at the level of philosophical justification of a principle we can expect knowledge that is certain, when moving to the application of such a principle we…cannot expect the same degree of certainty."[352] On this view, it is the gap between is and ought that explains Kant's ambivalence regarding the ultimate political ends of Man.

The alternative view outlined in this chapter is that the ambivalence of Kant's political writings as well as their reception in international relations is rather a result of Kant's *answer* to the problem of the relation between is and ought, between abstract concept and empirical sense rather than an expression of those problems. Most commentators take Kant to be posing the problem of international politics in terms of an analogy between states and individuals, but these analyses neither take Kant's own conception of analogy into account nor consider the political writings in the context of the idea of systematic unity present in Kant's account of both reason and nature in his critical philosophy. My aim is to show how Kant's accounts of organic life, the

[348] Chiara Bottici, *Men and States: Rethinking the Domestic Analogy in a Global Age*, translated by Karen Whittle, (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2009), 61.
[349] Gallie, *Philosophers of War and Peace*, 12.
[350] R.B.J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Kimberly Hutchings, *Kant, Critique and Politics*, (New York: Routledge, 1995), 30-3; Bartelson, "Trial of Judgment," 255-279.
[351] Ibid.
[352] Chiara Bottici, "The Domestic Analogy and the Kantian Project of Perpetual Peace." *Journal of Political Philosophy* 11, no. 4 (2003): 403.

systematic unity of reason, and the figure of the spherical globe display an analogous form of order, one that involves a reciprocal relation between parts and whole.

A Proportion of Concepts: Kant's Analogy

The use of a systematic account of unity also aligns with the way Kant considers international and cosmopolitan right in analogical terms. The difference between international and cosmopolitan right is usually understood on the basis of the view that the subjects of the former are states while the subjects of the latter are all individuals of the human species. After outlining the nature of international right in *Perpetual Peace*, however, Kant writes, "as for cosmopolitan right, I pass over it here in silence, for its maxims are easy to formulate and assess on account of its analogy with international right."[353] When the relationship between them is treated on the basis of analogy, analogy is taken to mean either an identity between two things or a set of similarities and differences.[354] Kant does not provide many clues to the meaning of the explicit analogy between international and cosmopolitan right found in *Perpetual Peace*. Moreover, the details of Kant's own conception of analogy are rarely considered in studies of Kant, even those that focus on the domestic analogy. By taking Kant's own conception of analogy into account, however, a different picture emerges of the relationship between international and cosmopolitan right. To begin, then, it will be helpful to be more specific about what is meant by analogy in the sense that Kant understood it.

[353] Kant, "Perpetual Peace," 128.
[354] For the former, see Katrin Flikschuh, "Kant's sovereignty dilemma: A contemporary analysis," *Journal of political philosophy* 18, no. 4 (2010): 469-493. For the latter, see Chiara Bottici, "The Domestic Analogy and the Kantian Project of Perpetual Peace." Journal of Political Philosophy 11, no. 4 (2003): 392-410.

Though Kant's comments on analogy display ambivalence about its value as a form of reasoning,[355] a relatively coherent account of the concept can be found across Kant's writings,[356] one that in large part reflects similar uses of the term in the natural philosophy of the eighteenth century and a tradition of philosophical speculation on living beings whose origins are often identified in the work of Aristotle.[357] It is against a certain common usage of the concept, however, that Kant defines analogy in its specificity. "Cognition according to analogy," he writes, "surely does not signify, as the word is usually taken, an imperfect similarity between two things, but rather a perfect similarity between two relations in wholly dissimilar things."[358] This passage expresses a central feature of Kant's conception of analogy: identity of relation. Analogy does not involve a comparison between two things in terms of their similarities and differences but enables new knowledge by presuming that relations between elements are identical in things that are otherwise wholly unlike one another.

Also unique to Kant's conception of analogy is the distinction between mathematical and philosophical analogies, which mirrors key distinctions in Kant's work: between quantity and quality and between constitutive and regulative principles. Though both forms of analogy enable the synthetic unity of appearances, they do so in different ways; in mathematical analogies, the identity of relation is established perfectly, whereas philosophical analogies inevitably admit a degree of error. Mathematical analogy, otherwise known as proportion, refers to "formulas that

[355] In his lectures on logic Kant refers to analogy, along with induction, as "crutches to our understanding" (287, 232). He seems to have seen the helpful side of crutches.
[356] John J. Callanan, "Kant's Concept of Analogy," *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 16, no. 4 (2008): 747-772.
[357] Or earlier. See G.E.R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966); Hein Van Den Berg, "Kant and the scope of analogy in the life sciences," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 71 (2018): 67-76.
[358] Immanuel Kant, "Prolegomena to any future metaphysics that will be able to come forward as a science," in *Theoretical Philosophy after 1781*, edited by Henry Allison and Peter Heath, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 146-7.

assert the identity of two relations of magnitude."[359] These formulas are such that "if two members of the proportion are given the third is also thereby given, i.e. can be constructed."[360] Mathematical analogies are what Kant calls constitutive, because they enable the construction of concepts *a priori*,[361] without reference to empirical intuition. For example, if one knows that 1:2 :: 4:*x*, it can be inferred that *x* equals 8. Kant refers to this kind of analogy in the lectures on metaphysics when he explains that "analogy is a proportion of concepts, where from the relation between the two members that I know I bring out the relation between a third member, that I know, to a fourth member, that I do *not* know."[362] Analogy, in this sense, concerns the identity between relations present in two objects, such that a fourth term can be inferred from an identical form of relation. In mathematical analogies, two quantitative relations are compared, which means the analogical inference can be made with apodictic certainty.

Proportion works differently in relation to concepts, however, because concepts lack the precision and certainty of mathematical formulae. Philosophical analogies, Kant explains, concern "the identity of two…qualitative relations, where from three given members I can cognize and give *a priori* only the relation to a fourth member, but not this fourth member itself, although I have a rule for seeking it in experience and discovering it there."[363] Philosophical analogies are regulative because they cannot provide the certainty and exactitude of mathematics; while they can be used to infer the existence of a fourth term and its relation to a third term, the fourth term cannot be determined in its specificity. Only the *relation* between this fourth member and the third can be inferred, as in the formula *a*:*b* :: *c*:*d*. They thus enable not the concepts that are the

[359] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 297-8 [A179/B222].
[360] Ibid.
[361] John J. Callanan, "Kant's Concept of Analogy," *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 16, no. 4 (2008): 747-772.
[362] Immanuel Kant. "Lectures on Metaphysik L" In *Lectures on Metaphysics*, translated and edited by K. Ameriks and S. Nargon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 99 [28:292].
[363] Ibid.

conditions of possibility of experience, but the *a priori* synthesis of these concepts, what Kant calls the combination of appearances. Kant gives an example of this kind of analogy, writing that

> By means of such an analogy I can therefore provide a concept of a relation to things that are absolutely unknown to me. E.g., the promotion of the happiness of the children=*a* is to the love of parents=*b* as the welfare of humankind=*c* is to the unknown in God=*x*, which we call love: not as if that unknown had the least similarity with any human inclination, but because we can posit the relation between God's love, and the world to be similar to that which things in the world have to one another.[364]

Philosophical analogies thus work to bridge the gap between the known and the unknown by the inference suggested by an identity of relation. Analogy makes no claim on any specific similarity between its members, but that of an identical relation between two elements; it is the proportion between the elements and not the elements themselves that are the subject of the analogy.

If Kant draws an analogy between international and cosmopolitan right, then, the question is what kind of relation it is that is shared by both international and world order. And the answer, which is found in both the critical and political philosophy, is a reciprocal (irreducible) relation between parts and whole. It is this kind of relationship that describes the relation between the order displayed by the systematic unity that characterizes international order and the order displayed by the geometrical sphere—the globe. This kind of relation is present in what Kant calls systematic unity, or purposiveness, and it is also present in the figure of the sphere.

[364] Kant, "Prolegomena to any future metaphysics," 147 [4:358].

The systematic unity of Nature and Reason

Systematic unity appears in many contexts across Kant's writings—it informs his conception of a system of philosophy, his philosophy of history, his theory of race, and his conception of the purposiveness of organic life. Recognition of the significance of systematic unity for Kant's thinking as early as the first *Critique* is now common in philosophical commentaries on Kant.[365] The concept appears in this text in response to the dilemmas that finite reason inevitably faces when attempting to solve cosmological problems, that is, to think absolute totality. Systematic unity is Kant's answer to the problem of the simultaneous necessity and impossibility of thinking the totality of the world. The world is a thing-in-itself, unknowable to human reason, and any claim to knowledge of the totality of the world is therefore dogmatic. World, therefore, can only be a regulative concept for Kant, because of the view that human knowledge is always conditioned, that is, limited in space and time. Knowing a world, or totality, involves knowing the relation between a conditioned series and the unconditioned that acts as its guarantee. However, attempts to determine such a relation result in a series of irresolvable antimonies that for Kant render a complete system of philosophy impossible.

There is, however, "a third moment" that involves a "provisional choice between the two conflicting parties" on the basis of the interest of reason. It is in the practical interest of reason to act as if the world is finite, because the position that the world is infinite "renders the completion of an edifice of cognitions entirely impossible"[366] while the understanding "wants to have something from which it can proceed with confidence,"[367] What Kant suggests as a remedy is that philosophers, when faced with such problems, might profit from proceeding somewhat less

[365]Jennifer Mensch, *Kant's Organicism*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013); Catherine Malabou, *After Tomorrow*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).
[366] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 502 [A474/B502].
[367] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 501 [A473/B501].

philosophically. For "even though for a philosopher it is very difficult to assume something as a principle without being able to give an account of it, or even to assume concepts into whose objective reality there can be no insight, there is nothing more usual for the common understanding.""[368] Kant thus suggests that there is a regulative principle of finite unity that can respond to the simultaneous impossibility and practical necessity of knowledge of the world as a whole. For "human reason is by nature architectonic, i.e. it considers all cognitions as belonging to a possible system, and hence it permits only such principles as at least do not render an intended cognition incapable of standing together with others in some system or other."[369] While the world in itself unknowable, a regulative concept of a finite whole can be supplied in its place: systematic unity.

The ideal of systematicity is present in Kant's account of the architectonic of pure reason in the first *Critique*.[370] "By an architectonic," Kant writes, "I understand the art of systems. Since systematic unity is that which first makes ordering cognition into science, i.e. makes a system out of a mere aggregate, architectonic is doctrine of that which is scientific in our cognition in general."[371] Systematic unity, then, for Kant, is the kind of unity capable of grounding a science. This function is particularly evident in the distinction Kant makes at the end of the first *Critique* between scholastic and cosmopolitan philosophy outlined in the Transcendental Doctrine of Method. Here, Kant likens the epigenetic growth and development of biological organisms to the historical development of reason from dogmatic immaturity, to youthful skepticism, to mature critique. It is the transition from the scholastic mode to the cosmopolitan mode that for Kant would signal the transformation of metaphysics into a systematic science.

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[368] Ibid.
[369] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 502 [A475/B503].
[370] For a helpful analysis see Mensch, *Kant's Organicism*, 125-8.
[371] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 691 [A832/B860].

Before the critical enterprise, philosophy, according to Kant, operated on the scholastic model, which seeks the logical perfection of a body of knowledge. On this model, knowledge is gained through the accumulation of new information, that is, by the addition of new knowledge to an existing aggregate of knowledge.[372] Cosmopolitan philosophy, on the other hand, takes philosophy as "the science of the relation of all cognition to the essential ends of human reason."[373] In a system of philosophy, "the whole is therefore articulated (*articulatio*) and not heaped together (*coacervatio*); it can, to be sure, grow internally (*per intus susceptionem*) but not externally (*per appositionem*), like an animal body, whose growth does not add a limb but rather makes each limb longer and fitter for its end without any alteration of proportion."[374] On this model, any number of additions can be made to a systematic whole, as long as the relation between the elements remains proportionally identical. What this means, as Ypi explains, is that "a discipline can therefore be considered a science not merely in virtue of the availability of a series of cognitions…but thanks to the organic relationship of its parts with each other and to the role each occupies in the system."[375] Any addition to a systematic body of knowledge, then, is not judged on the basis of its content, but of its conformity to the existing set of relations among its elements. It is not what these additions *are* that matters, but that they are 'internal' to the system, that is, do not exceed the existing relations that obtain among its elements.

The ideal of a calculable, reciprocal, systematically unified relation between parts and whole informs Kant's ideal of a system of philosophy. The value of such an ideal, for Kant, is that, in the spirit of the critical project, it permits the determination of the boundaries of human reason

[372] Lea Ypi, "The Problem of Systematic Unity in Kant's Two Definitions of Philosophy," Stefano Bacin et al., eds., *Kant und die Philosophie in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 773-786.
[373] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 694-5 [A839/B867].
[374] Ibid., 691 [A833/B861].
[375] Ypi, "Systematic Unity," 779.

and provides a means of distinguishing scientific knowledge from error and illusion. In the preface to the second edition of the first *Critique,* Kant explains that he has found little to alter in the text given that the organization of pure speculative reason in the manner of

> a truly articulated structure of members in which each thing is an organ, that is, in which everything is for the sake of each member, and each individual member is for the sake of all, so that even the least frailty, whether it be a mistake (an error) or a lack, must inevitably betray itself in its use. I hope this system will henceforth maintain itself in this un-alterability. It is not self-conceit that justifies my trust in this, but rather merely the evidence drawn from the experiment showing that the result is effected the same whether we proceed from the smallest elements to the whole of pure reason or return from the whole to every part…while the attempt to alter even the smallest part directly introduces contradictions not merely into the system, but into universal human reason.[376]

The reciprocal relation between parts and whole introduced by a system of philosophy can ground scientific knowledge not only because such interconnection means that any gaps in knowledge are immediately noticed, but because new knowledge is guaranteed through its relation to the system of existing knowledge.

This vision of a perfectly reciprocal relation between parts and whole is also found in Kant's description of a completed system of metaphysics. As Kant explains in the introduction to the second edition of the first *Critique*:

> The unity of the end, to which all parts are related and in the idea of which they are also related to each other, allows the absence of any part to be noticed in our knowledge of the

[376] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 120 [B xxxviii].

> rest, and there can be no contingent addition or undetermined magnitude of perfection that does not have its boundaries determined a priori.[377]

The value of systematic unity for philosophy is evident here in the way that a perfectly reciprocal relation among parts and whole both enables philosophical investigation from universal to particular and from particular to universal. Doing so, Kant claims, is the means by which philosophy can root out error and thereby give itself a scientific grounding.

Kant's most explicit consideration of the regulative idea of systematic unity is found in his third critique, the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. In this work, Kant is concerned with the relation between theoretical (pure) and practical reason, that is, the form of reason that deals with the realm of freedom, and the form that deals with the realm of nature. In Kant's view, knowledge requires the application of concepts from one realm to the other, yet the means by which thought could mediate between such strictly distinguished realms had yet to be elaborated. The answer, according to Kant, is judgment, "the faculty for thinking the particular as contained under the universal."[378] This form of judgment, in which particular things are subsumed under a given universal law or principle, Kant calls determining. At times, however, it is necessary to make judgments in situations in which only the particular is given and no universal is present. In these cases, it is not determining judgment, but what Kant calls reflective judgment that is required, which moves from the particular instance to a general rule.

The universal principle that must be presumed in order to make reflective judgments is purposiveness. That is, for things in nature which cannot immediately be understood as particular instantiations of universal laws, one must assume an end that gives unity and purpose to the object

[377] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 691 [A830/B860].
[378] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, edited by Paul Guyer, translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthew, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 66-7 [5: 179].

in question, so that it can be understood in relation to a unified whole. The kind of objects that require this kind of judgment, according to Kant, are what he calls "organized beings," that is, biological organisms. Reasoning about life, in Kant's view, requires reflective judgment, since the complexity of living beings cannot be explained completely by any *a priori* law, that is, cannot be explained mechanically in the manner of the natural sciences of the day. For "it is quite certain," Kant thinks, "that we can never come to know the organized beings and their internal possibility in accordance with merely mechanical principles of nature, let alone explain them."[379] Thus, while Kant encourages the use of the methods of natural science based on a mechanical conception of nature as far as they prove useful, such methods can never hope to provide a complete account of living beings and therefore must be supplemented by teleological judgment that conceives of organisms as purposive beings.

Kant ascribes several characteristics to organized beings that arise from the way they display (or, more precisely, must be thought to display) a relation between parts and whole. Organized beings are not simple aggregates of their parts, as in mechanical structures, but express a relation that cannot be reduced to their parts or the relations between them. Kant illustrates the point using the example of the mechanism of a clock, explaining that unlike the clock, for the organized being, "its parts…are possible only through their relation to the whole. For the thing in itself is an end, and is thus comprehended under a concept or an idea that must determine *a priori* everything that is to be contained within it."[380] Unlike the mechanism of nature, organized beings can only be cognized in relation to their end, that is, the unity toward which their development tends. Organized beings cannot be explained by mechanical relations between their parts alone, but only by considering the way these parts relate to a whole that is not reducible to them. However,

[379] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 270-1 [5: 400].
[380] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 244 [5: 372].

this is far from an organic view in which the parts are determined by a whole that exists over and above them.

Rather, the relation between parts and whole in the case of organized beings, according to Kant, is one of mutual cause and effect, in which parts and whole are simultaneously the means and ends of one another, a relation that Kant calls reciprocal. The reciprocal relation between parts and whole characteristic of organic unity has consequences for relations of cause and effect, because unlike linear, mechanistic causality, the parts of an organized being are "combined into a whole by being reciprocally the cause and the effect of their form. For in this way alone is it possible in turn for the idea of the whole conversely (reciprocally) to determine the form and combination of all the parts; not as a cause…but as a ground for the cognition of the systematic unity of the form."[381] The causal priority of mechanistic explanation in which causes precede effects is supplemented by a kind of causality in which a given being or process cannot be understood independently from the end which unifies the parts which precede it. This transforms relations of cause and effect such that any part of a given system can be considered a cause of the whole in the same manner as the whole can be considered the cause of the parts.

Organized beings are, in this sense, "self-organizing,"[382] in that they cannot be explained completely with reference to external causes; rather, they carry within them the principle of their immanent self-constitution. In this sense, what Kant calls a reciprocal relation between parts and whole is as an irreducible relation, in that no account of the parts, no matter how complete, can provide an account of the whole, and no account of the whole can be complete absent an accounting of the parts. Rather, Kant explains, "in such a product of nature each part is conceived as if it exists only *through* all the others, thus as if existing for the sake of the others and on account of the

[381] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 245 [5: 373].
[382] Ibid.

whole, i.e., as an instrument (organ)…that produces the other parts (consequently each produces the others reciprocally)."[383] Purposiveness, for Kant, thus consists of a relation between parts and whole in which neither exists independently of the other such that an organized being is considered both end and means, both cause and effect of itself.

Rather than a claim to knowledge, purposiveness is the principle that must be thought in order to achieve knowledge, to ground the systematic unity of science. Philosophical analogy, on this account, is a mode of reasoning that enables knowledge and judgment despite the impossibility of total knowledge. Their shared status as responses to the problem of Kant links philosophical analogy to reflective judgment, that is, judgments made when knowledge of the universal is impossible.[384] This requires making a judgment *as if* there were a universal principle providing the kind of unity that enables scientific knowledge, a strategy that also informs the *Critique of Practical Reason*.[385] The kind of unity given by such regulative principles is called by Kant systematic or purposive and consists of an irreducibly reciprocal relation between parts and whole. It is this kind of unity, I argue, that characterizes international order in Kant's political writings.

Crucially, as in the case of philosophical analogy and the systematic unity of reason, the purposiveness of biological organisms is a regulative rather than a constitutive principle. The difficulty with a regulative concept of unity, however, is that it is unity that regulative principles are responsible for supplying. If absolute totality is beyond the bounds of reason, however, the question remains as to the *kind* of unity given by regulative principles, in which parts are combined in a reciprocal relation with a whole. The regulative consists not simply of the teleological

[383] Ibid.
[384] Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Logic*, translated and edited by J. Michael Young, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 626.
[385] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, Andrews Reath, ed., Mary McGregor, trans., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

principle, but the form of unity expressed by such a principle. Given that regulative conceptions of unity are only approximations of totality, what is the form of the totality that they approximate? Since regulative principles operate at the limits of human reason, what acts as the regulative principle for the kind of whole of which systematicity is only an analogy? It is Kant's response to such difficulties to which we turn in the following section.

World as Sphere: The Idea of the Regulative

Kant's political writings rely on a conception of the earth as a sphere, and it is to this figure which Kant refers with the concept of world in the political writings.[386] The significance of the spherical globe for the political life of Man and its relation to international order are evident in Kant's theory of international and cosmopolitan right, which are, as both Kant himself and recent commentators affirm, inextricable from the geographical conditions of the earth.[387] These conditions cannot be known through world travel and empirical investigation. As Kant writes in *Physical Geography*, "more is needed for knowledge of the world than just seeing it. He who wants to profit from his journey must have a plan beforehand, and must not merely regard the world as an object of outer senses."[388] It is the analogical relation between the whole of reason and the whole of the world that leads Kant to suggest both that transcendental reason and the earth itself are best understood through the figure of the sphere. As Franke explains, "for Kant, both reason and the geographical unity of the earth must be understood to describe the same political realities and necessities."[389] Human knowledge, according to Kant, is necessarily earthly knowledge.

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[386] Sean Gaston, *The Concept of World from Kant to Derrida*, *(*London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 18-28.
[387] Franke uses the term "Kant's geopolitics" to highlight the close relation between the spherical globe and Kant's political philosophy; See also David Harvey, "Cosmopolitanism in the *Anthropology* and *Geography*," in *Reading Kant's Geography*, edited by Stuart Elden and Eduardo Mendieta, (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011), 267-284.
[388] Immanuel Kant, "Physical Geography," in *Kant: Natural Science*, Eric Watkins, ed., Lewis White Beck et al., trans., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 445 [9: 156].
[389] Franke, *Global Limits*, 130.

Kant's answer to the problem of the impossibility of complete knowledge of the world as a whole is a regulative concept of the world as a geometrical sphere—the globe. Given that we cannot know the world as a whole, Kant argues, it is in the interest of reason to act as if transcendental reason and the whole of the earth are geometrical spheres. The sphere is the model of an ordered whole characterized by a calculable relation between parts and whole that permits the kind of mathematically certain relation, which, for reasoning beings on the actually existing planet, can only ever be a distant hope. The kind of order expressed by systematic unity is a philosophical analogue of the perfect unity expressed by the geometrical sphere.

The advantage of the figure of the sphere, according to Kant, is that it permits the identification not only of the *limits* of human reason in relation to the world, but also its *boundaries*. That is, it enables consideration not just of limits to knowledge of the world from a given subjective position, but the limits of *any* human knowledge of the world in general. And it is the boundaries of reason, according to Kant, and not its limits, that are the legitimate subject of critique, a procedure "whereby not merely limits but rather the determinate boundaries of it—not merely ignorance in one part of another but ignorance in regard to all possible questions of a certain sort—are not merely suspected but are proven from principles."[390] Thinking reason as a whole opens up the possibility of determining not just the limits of the reason of individuals in particular places and times, but the conditions of possibility of human experience of the world in general. Hence, Kant imagines that "our reason is not like an indeterminably extended plane, the limits of which one can cognize only in general, but must rather be compared with a sphere, the radius of which can be found out from the curvature on the area of its surface…from which its content and its boundary can also be ascertained with certainty."[391] To determine the limits of reason is to

[390] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 654 [A761/B789].
[391] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 655.

identify the limits of one's finite experience in relation to the external field composed of an infinite number of objects, while to determine its boundaries is to identify the immanent limits of reason, the limits reason cannot overstep in any time or space. In short, a sphere enables knowledge of the whole from a determinate part within that whole, that is, knowledge that does not require an unconditioned view from 'outside' as its guarantee.

As in the case of reason, thinking the earth as a sphere yields knowledge that would otherwise be out of reach by enabling a reciprocal relation between parts and whole such that one can obtain knowledge of the whole from a determinate part, and vice versa.

> If I represent the surface of the earth (in accordance with sensible appearance) as a plane, I cannot know how far it extends. But experience teaches me this: that wherever I go, I always see a space around me in which I could proceed further; thus I cognize the limits of my actual knowledge of the earth at any time, but not the boundaries of all possible description of the earth. But if I have gotten us as far as knowing that the earth is a sphere and its surface the surface of a sphere, then from a small part of the latter, e.g. from the magnitude of one degree, I can cognize its diameter and, by means of this, the complete boundary, i.e. the surface of the earth…and although I am ignorant in regard to the objects that this surface might contain, I am not ignorant in regard to the magnitude and limits of the domain that contains them. [392]

Imagining that the earth is a geometrical sphere enables thought to move from partial knowledge to knowledge of the whole. For Kant, the sphere is a model for enabling knowledge of the world from inside that very world, without having to step beyond the bounds of reason. In other words, the figure of the geometrical sphere holds out the possibility of a total knowledge that does *not*

[392] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 653 [A759/B787].

rely on a dogmatic 'view from nowhere.' For Kant, however the figure of the spherical globe is a response to the consequences of the position that a view from nowhere has never been and will never be available to the creature he calls 'Man.' The sphere is a machine for the production of immanent knowledge—knowledge of the world as a whole that comes from within that world.

Attending to the relation between parts and whole shared by both the sphere and systematic unity provides clues as to the relation between the two in Kant's writing. As we have seen, both systematic unity and the geometrical sphere are ordered by a reciprocal relation between parts and whole. The difference between them lies in the specificity of the relation they express. While systematic unity cannot determine its content with the precision of mathematical analogy (what Kant calls proportion), such a determination is possible in the case of the sphere. What this suggests is that systematic unity and the geometrical sphere are philosophically analogous. This implies that on Kant's account, the relation between the quantitative and the qualitative is itself qualitative and the relation between the regulative and the constitutive is itself regulative, that is, the two are related by philosophical analogy. At the boundary between quantity and quality, the relation between the constitutive and the regulative, is reversed: the mathematical perfection of the sphere works as the regulative idea of systematic unity.[393] Put another way, if systematic unity is for Kant the form of the regulative idea, the geometrical sphere is what could be called the idea of the regulative; it is the model of order which the systematic unity of Kant's international politics emulates.

[393] I am thus in agreement with John Zammito's position that Kant's epigenetic (that is, based on the systematic unity of organic form) theory of the birth and development of reason "incites a fundamental erosion of the boundary between the constitutive and the regulative, between the transcendental and the empirical," though not with his conclusion that this makes Kant a philosophical naturalist. See John Zammito, "Epigenesis in Kant: Recent Considerations," in *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science* 58 (2016): 85-97. For a critique of Zammito, see Catherine Malabou, *Before Tomorrow: Epigenesis and Rationality*.

International relations in the historical present

The analogy between the reciprocal relations among parts and whole that characterize a system and the mathematical relation among parts and whole enabled by the geometrical sphere suggests a different reading of the problem of the domestic analogy in Kant's political writings than that currently dominant in international relations, political theory, and philosophy. Considering the political writings in the context of the idea of systematic unity present in the first and third *Critiques* suggests that Kant's ambivalence with respect to the domestic analogy is consistent with a single account of the problem of international order that stems from a diagnosis of the political situation at the time of Kant's writing. Rather than either the synonym or antonym of world politics, the relation between international and global order is conceived by Kant as analogical. The international system displays the kind of unity characteristic of the world as a whole. By identifying the significance of this kind of unity for Kant's framing of the problem of international right, I argue that Kant understands international order not by analogy with individuals but by analogy with the world as a whole imagined as a geometrical sphere—a globe.

One of the primary conditions imposed by the spherical globe on human political life, in Kant's view, is its finitude. "Since the earth is a globe," Kant writes in *Perpetual Peace*, "[men] cannot disperse over an infinite area, but must necessarily tolerate one another's company."[394] Contrary to the understanding of the earth as an infinite plane, in which people could disperse indefinitely, the globe produces a set of limits on human activity in general, and not only within the conditions given by a particular juncture in space and time. In *Metaphysics of Morals,* Kant explains that "through the spherical shape of the planet [Men] inhabit (*globus terraqueous*), nature has confined them all within an area of definite limits. Accordingly, the only conceivable way in

[394] Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch," in *Kant: Political Writings*, edited by H.S. Reiss, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 106.

which anyone can possess habitable land on earth is by possessing a part within a determinate whole in which everyone has an original right to share."[395] Finally, Kant writes that "all nations are originally members of a community of the land…a community of reciprocal action (commercium), which is physically possible, and each member of it accordingly has constant interaction with the others."[396] In all these cases, the form of finite unity represented by the figure of the globe—the earth conceived as a geometrical sphere—enables a reciprocal relation between parts and whole, a relation whose philosophical analogue is the systematic unity of international order.

Though Kant employs the concept of system sparingly in the political writings, the significance of systematic unity for Kant's thinking on politics is nevertheless evident throughout.[397] It is through a view of unity or wholeness, according to Kant, that order and regularity can be discerned amid what otherwise would seem a series of purposeless particularities. By looking at events "*on a large scale*," Kant explains, "confused and fortuitous" individual actions can be interpreted in relation to a greater plan of nature. Kant gives the example of birth, marriage, and death statistics, as well as weather, as instances in which what appear as senseless individual events, when examined with an eye to the whole, reveal ordered and predictable patterns.[398] This same logic is evident in the way Kant justifies his universal history with reference to the distinction between aggregate and system, writing that

[395] Immanuel Kant, "The Metaphysics of Morals," 172.
[396] Kant, "The Metaphysics of Morals," 172. For the effect of this theory of reciprocal action on property law, see Jeffrey Edwards, "'The Unity of All Places on the Face of the Earth': Original Community, Acquisition, and Universal Will in Kant's Doctrine of Right," in *Reading Kant's Geography*, 256.
[397] For a discussion of Kant's conception of system in relation to international politics, see: Ewan Harrison, "Waltz, Kant and systemic approaches to international relations," *Review of International Studies* (2002): 143-162; Martin Weber, "Keeping It Real? Kant and Systemic Approaches to IR: A Reply to Harrison," *Review of International Studies* 29, no. 1 (2003): 145-150. Here I side with Harrison over Weber in understanding Kant's conception of international order in systemic terms However, Harrison's aim of revitalizing a systemic approach to international relations, à la Waltz, is different from my own, which is to interrogate the political limits of systematic unity.
[398] Kant, "Idea for a Universal History," 41.

> it is admittedly a strange and at first sight absurd proposition to write a history according to an idea of how world events must develop if they are to conform to certain rational ends…And although we are too short-sighted to perceive the hidden mechanism of nature's scheme, this idea may yet serve as a guide to us in representing an otherwise planless *aggregate* of human actions as conforming, at least when constituted as a whole, to a *system*.

Kant's universal history involves making political judgments in relation to history considered as a systematic unity, which thereby gives order to the otherwise confused play of human events. As in the critical philosophy, systematic unity in the context of the philosophy of history is a regulative idea rather than a claim to knowledge about the trajectory of human history itself.[399]

The continuity between Kant's philosophical and political projects becomes evident when political tracts such as *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* and *Perpetual Peace* are read in light of the regulative idea of the purposiveness of nature developed in the third *Critique*.[400] The significance of this purposive or systematic idea of the order of nature for the political writings is such that Molloy suggests *Perpetual Peace* can be understood as a kind of "sequel"[401] to the third *Critique*. As Henry Allison explains, "far from being a mere popular or occasional piece, *Perpetual Peace* stands in essential connection with the third Critique and its systematic concern with an *Übergang* between nature and freedom."[402] The unification of nature and freedom is for Kant not just an intellectual exercise but rather the subject of a historical process

[399] Remarks on these notable features of Kant's political philosophy can be found in Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?" and Jens Bartelson, "The Trial of Judgment."
[400] These can be found in Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings,* Edited by H.S. Reiss, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
[401] Sean Molloy, *Kant's International Relations: The Political Theology of Perpetual Peace*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 51.
[402] Henry E. Allison, "The Gulf Between Nature and Freedom and Nature's Guarantee of Perpetual Peace," in *Essays on Kant,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 226.

the success of which depends on the development of specific forms of political order, namely the state and international system. Kant's philosophy, and political philosophy in particular, must therefore be interpreted in relation to Kant's own observations of the historical moment and their meaning for the possibility of a wider historical trajectory. I thus situate Kant's writing on the problem of international politics in relation to his own diagnosis of contemporary political developments regarding international order.

Attention to the question of order lends weight to this description in the *Critique of Judgment* of a cosmopolitan whole that takes the form of a system of states. In *Idea for a Universal History*, Kant describes the relationship between the problem of relations between individuals within states and the problem of relations between states themselves. The former, Kant argues, is "the most difficult and last to be solved by the human race" yet "subordinate" to the latter problem because "it cannot be solved unless the latter is also solved."[403] For Kant then, international politics is a problem prior to domestic politics; the problem of political life at the level of the whole must be settled before political life within states can be determined. Kant links teleological judgment and political order in the appendix to the third *Critique* where he positions Man as the "ultimate end of nature here on earth, in relation to which all other natural things constitute a system of ends."[404] Fulfilling its role as the ultimate end of nature, for Kant, requires the full development of Man's capacities, which is possible only within the proper form of political order. "The formal condition under which nature can attain this final aim," according to Kant, is a universal civil society, for which "even if humans were clever enough to discover it and wise enough to subject themselves willingly to its coercion, a cosmopolitan whole, i.e., a system of all states that are at

[403] Kant, "Idea for a Universal History," 47.
[404] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 295-6 [5: 428].

risk of detrimentally affecting each other, is required."[405] The kind of cosmopolitan political order Kant imagines here expresses the organic unity characteristic of organized beings in which parts (in this case states) are unified in relation to an irreducible whole.

This kind of unity is also present in Kant's account of international right, which concerns relations between states in the context of a nascent international order that the state-of-nature analogy is meant to explain. After all, in Kant's view, "the peoples of the earth have entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to a point where a violation of rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*."[406] It is the beginnings of an international order in Europe that allows Kant to imagine "a great political body of the future…Although this political body exists for the present only in the roughest of outlines, it nonetheless seems as if a feeling is beginning to stir in all its members, each of which has an interest in maintaining the whole." The problem of international right, unlike the state of nature between individuals, is not a matter of establishing unity among states, a process which Kant's claims has already begun, but of thinking about relations between states in the context of that unity. While in today's contemporary discourses of international relations the terms 'system of states' and 'cosmopolitan whole' are generally treated as opposites such that 'system' expresses diversity and cosmopolitan whole a unity, here, the kind of cosmopolitan order Kant envisions expresses a unity *given* by its systematic character.

Man's exit from the state of nature is thus not yet achieved with the establishment of an international order not because the international is a sign of the absence of political community, but because the boundaries of that community have not yet spread to encompass the globe. As Kant puts it, "there is only one way in which states can emerge from a lawless condition of pure

[405] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 290 [5: 422].
[406] Kant, "Perpetual Peace," 107.

warfare. Just like individual men, they must renounce their savage and lawless freedom and thus form an international state."[407] In this sense, for Kant, the move from independent states that relate to one another in relation to a common political community, however minimal, which is the subject of the classic domestic analogy, has already happened. In the section of *Metaphysics of Morals* that deals with international right, Kant cites "the assembly of States General at the Hague in the first half of this century" as an example of the presence of the kind of international political community capable of approximating a cosmopolitan whole.[408] The analogy between states and individuals, on this reading, performs the same function in relation to the international as it does in classical political philosophy in relation to civil society in that it functions as a retroactive explanation of a diagnosis of the present.[409] The 'state of nature' to which the international is a remedy is already considered overcome by the 'civil' condition introduced by the systematic quality of international order.

In this sense, the international, even in its most rudimentary form, for Kant is a remedy to the problem of an uncivil condition between states. The 'state of nature' between states is already considered overcome by the 'civil' condition introduced by the systematic quality of international order. The problem of international right, unlike the state of nature between individuals, is not a matter of *establishing* unity among states, a process which Kant claims has already begun in his own time, but of thinking about relations between states in the context of that unity. The analogy between states and individuals, on this reading, performs the same function in relation to

[407] Ibid., 105.
[408] Kant, "Metaphysics of Morals, 171. The editors' footnote to the passage notes that while the specific events to which Kant is referring are unknown, The Hague was the site of a number of peace treaties in the latter 17th and early 18th century, including the Treaty of the Triple Alliance (1688), the Concert of the Hague (1710), and the Treaty of Peace between Spain, Savoy and Austria (1717).
[409] For an analysis of this logic in relation to Hobbes and the international, see: R. B. J. Walker, "Hobbes, origins, limits," in *International Political Theory after Hobbes*, Raia Prokhovnik and Gabriella Slomp, eds., (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 168-188.

international politics as it does in classical political philosophy in relation to state sovereignty. That is, it functions as a retroactive explanation of a diagnosis of the present. Kant's account of international right concerns relations between states in the context of a nascent international order whose existence the domestic analogy is meant to explain. Rather than a description of relations between states in an international system, Kant's domestic analogy is an account of what must have been the case *prior* to the emergence of a system of states.

However, to say that an international and world politics are analogous in terms of the kind of order that they display is not to say that they are identical. So what is the difference between them? I argue that Kant envisions this difference between international and cosmopolitan right not in terms of the form of political order, but in terms of its scope. The nascent international community, on this account, becomes cosmopolitan by growing until it encompasses the entirety of the globe. The development of Man's capacities requires that the international political order established among European states "will gradually spread further and further by a series of alliances" such that "the whole will gradually spread further to encompass all states."[410] Kant's international state "would necessarily continue to grow until it embraced all the peoples of the earth."[411] The culmination of universal history, the cosmopolitan whole that constitutes a universal kingdom of ends, is not a change in political order, but a spread of the form of the systematic unity of the international over the entirety of the globe. Just as Kant's account of the irreducible relation between parts and whole expressed by the sphere is expressed in Kant's view of the political consequences of the global condition of Man, so the relation between parts and whole expressed by systematic unity central to the critical philosophy is expressed by the international political order. An exit from the state of nature among states is thus not fully achieved with the

[410] Kant, "Perpetual Peace," 104.
[411] Ibid., 105.

establishment of an international order not because the international is a sign of the *absence* of order, but because the boundaries of that community have not yet spread to encompass the globe. The international system, here, even in its earliest forms, is the solution to the uncivil condition that obtains among relations between states. This suggests a new formulation of the problem of the domestic analogy in international politics. Rather than an unwarranted application of domestic principles to the international sphere, Kant's domestic analogy lies in the way he conceives of the international as ordered—that is, unified—in a manner analogous to that of the world—the spherical globe.

"A particular kind of league":[412] Kant's domestic analogy

My argument throughout this chapter has been that the animating analogy of Kant's conception of international order is not that between individuals in the state of nature and relations between states, but that between the systematic unity of the international and the unity of the geometrical sphere—the globe. More specifically, as I have argued, the form of order that characterizes the international, for Kant, is an irreducible relation between parts and whole, a form of order Kant associates with the self-organizing capacities of biological organisms and the systematic unity of reason. To the extent that much contemporary scholarship in international relations and elsewhere is carried out on the basis of the relation Kant sets out between sphere and system, Kant's domestic analogy has significant consequences for theories of international political order, global politics, and critical alternatives.

First, this analysis provides an alternative explanation for Kant's contradictory mobilization with regard to international politics. This ambivalence is not a result of the domestic

[412] Kant, "Perpetual Peace," 104.

analogy, which for Kant is a problem *prior* to the emergence of a system of states, but of the systematic unity through which Kant conceives of international and cosmopolitan right. The reciprocal or irreducible character of the relation between parts and whole lends itself to analyses that privilege individualist or holist interpretations of Kant's account of international politics. Interpretations of this order that fall along the realist and liberal lines outlined in the introduction thus represent the limits of an account of international politics that understands order to be, to use Kant's language, synonymous with systems rather than aggregates.

Second, it shows the way many debates on international order take place on the terrain of a single account of order: systematic unity. Despite this commonality, international politics is conventionally linked to assumptions about space and causality found in seventeenth century classical mechanical science and linked to modern state sovereignty. What my analysis demonstrates, however, is that rather than mechanistic ontology, Kant's conception of international order is grounded in an organic, or purposive, conception of order found in eighteenth century natural philosophy. Rather than an external explanatory source of international political phenomena, answers given to questions about the nature of organic life, the order of the natural world, and the movement of organisms through time by European natural philosophy are already influential in theories of international order.

To the extent that Kant considers international order in systemic terms, this model operates, however implicitly, on a normative conception of order that takes as its model the mathematical precision of geometry. The geometrical sphere, in Kant's account, works as the model of ordered perfection which systematic wholes—whether organized beings, transcendental reason, or the international system—emulate. The boundaries of a systematic order are thus determined by Kant in relation to error or deviation determined by an ideal of perfection expressed by mathematical

proportion (or ratio). The limit of difference, on this model, is not identity but proportion, that is, reciprocity between parts and whole. This suggests that efforts to pluralize or broaden the international through the addition of previously unacknowledged subjects or objects does little to affect the limits of an international order whose boundaries are determined with reference to a systematic conception of unity.

Critiques of the structuring effects of the figure of the globe in modern political thought are often made on the basis of a gap between the concept of the globe and the earth as it really is. It is the abstraction of geometry from the actual conditions of the world and the false universalism that follows from such abstraction that, for these thinkers, make the globe a problem. For Franke, for example, the problem with the ideal of thinking reason and the earth as geometrical spheres is that such a figure express the stasis and uniformity of Newton's account of absolute space and thus cannot account for contingency and change.[413] Bruno Latour similarly argues that the spherical globe is a conception of the earth that exhibits "'the view from nowhere,'"[414] at the expense of the particular ecological conditions that sustain planetary life. As we have seen, however, for Kant the figure of the spherical globe is a response to the consequences of the position that a view from nowhere has never been and will never be available to the creature called 'Man.'

This conclusion has similar consequences for critical scholarship on Kant and on international politics broadly. What it suggests is that to the extent that critiques insist on the particularity of the universalizing pretensions of Kant's account of international order, they articulate problems to which Kant's account of systematic unity and the sphere are already a response. Tully, for example, recommends understanding Kant's regulative ideal as a "critical

[413] Mark F. N. Franke, *Global Limits*, Chapter 3.
[414] Bruno Latour, *Down to Earth: Politics in the New Climatic Regime*, Catherine Porter, trans., (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018), 68.

ideal: as one form of organisation of the political field among many others, rather than the framework in which alternatives are evaluated."[415] Yet in Kant's case, the frame of the spherical globe is precisely a response to the problem that any framework cannot but be one of many.

One potential avenue of research in this direction is the potential for the above analysis to contribute to debates over the role of racism and imperialism in Kant's thought, which is largely divided between those for whom these elements are incidental to Kant's politics and those for whom they are constitutive. Attention to the systemic form of order by which Kant conceives the international links his philosophy to theories of organic growth and generation and to a specific conception of the relation between individual races and humanity as a whole.[416] In this sense, theorizing Kant's domestic analogy is a step in the direction of what Denise Ferreira Da Silva calls a "critique of the metaphysics of race."[417] Such inquiries target the conditions of possibility for racial knowledge by moving from the 'how' to the 'what' of race, that is, to its 'onto-epistemological' function in political discourse.[418]

Perhaps the most notable dimension of Kant's analysis of international politics, on this reading, is the way that, whether international order is understood in statist or cosmopolitan terms, theories of international order begin as if Kant's highest ambition for humanity—a global system of states—has already been achieved. To the extent that international order is theorized in systemic terms, whether of the realist or liberal, systemic or societal, scientific or traditional varieties, scholars of international relations have accepted Kant's answer to the problem of perpetual peace.

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[415] Tully, *Public Philosophy in a New Key Vol. 1*, 18.
[416] Lea Ypi, "Commerce and Colonialism in Kant's Philosophy of History," in Katrin Flikschuh, and Lea Ypi, eds. *Kant and Colonialism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 99-126; Philip R. Sloan, "Performing the Categories: Eighteenth Century Generation Theory and the Biological Roots of Kant's A Priori," *Journal of the Philosophy of History* 40, no. 2 (2002): 229-253.
[417] Ferreira Da Silva, Denise, "Notes for a Critique of the 'Metaphysics of Race,'" *Theory, Culture & Society* 28, no. 1 (2011): 138-148.
[418] Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

Whereas Kant writes as if perpetual peace may come about in the future, discourses of international politics proceed as if what is described in perpetual peace has already occurred. While Kant's analysis looks forward to the global spread of European interstate order, current analysis looks backward at what is understood as a completed process—the 'expansion' or 'globalization' of international society. The end of Man, only a future possibility for Kant, is the starting point of international relations today: a global international political system. The story of this process, known in international relations as the expansion or the globalization of international society, is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Globalizing the international: The genesis of world political order

In a discipline often characterized as fragmented, plural, and diverse, the story of the expansion of international society exercises an outsized influence as a unifying frame that explains what has been called "the universalization of the nation-state"[419] or the globalization of the European system of states.[420] As the origin story of the present world political order, what John Hobson calls the "big bang" of international relations,[421] the expansion narrative serves as "arguably the only effective and generally accepted grand narrative that prevails" in the discipline.[422] While for Kant the development of a world political order is only a regulative idea, a guide in the absence of certain knowledge, for contemporary scholars, the globalization of international political order is established historical fact. The significance of this grand narrative in the context of debates on world order comes from the way the genesis of world political order is considered synonymous with a transition from imperial to an international world order, from natural law (law of nations) to positive international law, and a world of many 'local' political orders to a world of one—the global international system.

As Tim Dunne and Christian Reus-Smit write in the introduction to their recent edited volume *The Globalization of International Society*, many contemporary political debates "assume the global political order wrought by this transformation" of the world into a "universal order of sovereign states." [423] While the globalization of international society is presented in Hedley Bull

[419] Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 1.
[420] Christian Reus-Smit, "Struggles for Individual Rights and the Expansion of the International System," *International Organization* 65, no. 2 (2011): 207-245.
[421] John Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
[422] Richard Little, "Reassessing the Expansion of International Society," in *System, Society and World*, ed. Robert W. Murray, (E-International Relations Publishing, 2015), 19-24.
[423] Dunne and Reus-Smit, *Globalization*, 18.

and Adam Watson's *The Expansion of International Society* as a realization of enlightenment European values in the form of the transformation from an imperial to an international world order, many others argue that the establishment of a world order on the basis of formal sovereign equality indicates neither the end nor the absence of relations of domination, colonialism, and empire in world politics.[424] These debates respond to the opportunities and dilemmas presented by the political unification of the earth in the form of a global system of states. Critiques of the expansion narrative are thus a foundational element of debates about the character of contemporary world order. While critiques of international equality are made along the lines of the distinction between the ideal of formal equality and the actual relations of hierarchy, what I point to in this chapter is the ideal that is embedded in the prior account of world order on which these debates are premised.

The story of the expansion of international society is linked to a broader set of problems related to the persistence of teleology and hierarchy in theories of international politics, despite substantial critique and no shortage of alternative visions of human political community. These critiques attempt to correct the way the expansion story reproduces a universalizing philosophy of history of which, in Chakrabarty's words, "Europe remains the sovereign, theoretical centre."[425] Critical historical research has produced a more complex account of the globalization of the European system of states that is attentive to the significance of peoples, processes, and political communities outside Europe, but, as I aim to show below, maintains the basic premise that the development of a global international society is synonymous with the development of world political order.

[424] Siba Grovogui, *Sovereigns, Quasi-Sovereigns, and Africans*, 1994; Branwen Gruffydd, Jones, ed., *Decolonizing International Relations*, (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006); Phạm, Quỳnh N., and Robbie Shilliam, eds. *Meanings of Bandung: Postcolonial orders and decolonial visions*, (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).
[425] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

It is this account of the political unification of the planet and the theory of order which enables it that are the subject of this chapter. Even the critical accounts of the globalization of international society that have appeared in international relations over the last several decades, I argue, reproduce Bull's distinction between an aggregate and systemic world order that links the expansion of the international to the genesis of world order which expresses a claim about the novelty of the global system of states as the first world political order in history. Consequently, the distinction between a world of many political orders and a globe coextensive with a single, international political order is also marked by a profound disjuncture reminiscent of Hobbes' account of Man's miraculous entry into civil society from a state of nature. Furthermore, to the extent that such accounts are guided by Bull's distinction between an aggregate of local orders and a systematically unified world order, they are unable to explain such a transition in historical terms without transforming the global international order from the *explanandum* of the globalization of international society to its *explanans*. As a result, I demonstrate in what follows, to the extent they rely on Bull's articulation of the difference between and aggregate and a systemic world order, histories of the globalization of international society in international relations resemble the structural theories of international politics that they disavow and naturalize the international system as the only possible form of world order.

World Political Order

Bull and Watson's influential edited volume *The Expansion of International Society* inquires into the processes by which the European system of states becomes an international political system coextensive with the surface of the globe. This process, according to Bull and Watson, takes place over five centuries, beginning in the late fifteenth century and ending with the universalization of

sovereign equality expressed in the UN Charter in 1945.[426] In Bull's view, a systematically unified world political order first emerges from what Daniel Green calls "the frenzied phase of English imperial expansion and conquest that saw much of the world suddenly come under European control after 1870."[427] While this initial world political order is characterized by European political domination, on this account, struggles for equal sovereignty, racial equality, economic justice, anti-colonial revolution, and cultural liberation bring the expansion process to its completion.[428]

As Bull and Adam Watson explain in the introduction to their volume, the culmination of the expansion—the political unification of the world in the form of a global international system, first occurs when the disparate political communities of the world are united in a single international political system. Before the expansion of international society, according to Bull and Watson's introduction to the *Expansion*, "the world was not organized into any single international system or society, but comprised several regional international systems (or what we choose to call international systems, with some danger of anachronism)."[429] This systemic interconnection that produces a world political order is not simply a matter of economic or technological interconnections, but a political unification that is not reducible to them. Crucially, for Bull, "it was the expansion of Europe that first brought about the economic and technical unification of the globe, just as it was the European dominated international society of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that first expressed its political unification."[430] This political unification, as we

[426] Bull and Watson, "Introduction," 6.
[427] Daniel M. Green, "The nineteenth century liberal tradition and the English School historical narrative," *Journal of International Political Theory* Onlinefirst (2020): 1-19.
[428] Hedley Bull, "The Revolt Against the West," in *The Expansion of International Society*, in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, eds., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).
[429] Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, "Introduction," in *The Expansion of International Society*, in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, eds., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 1.
[430] Bull and Watson, "Introduction," 2.

saw in Chapter 1, is described by Bull with reference to the distinction between an aggregate and a system.

As Bull writes in *The Anarchical Society*, the development of a global international system means that that "order on a global scale has ceased to be simply the sum of the various political systems that produce order on a local scale, it is also the product of what may be called a world political system."[431] The distinction between a world comprised of a multitude of political orders, be they empires, states, or proto-international systems, and a global international political order is marked in this sense by the distinction between an aggregate and a system by which Bull defines order in general. The globalization of international society, on this account, also marks a transition from a natural law understanding international order (law of nations) to positive international law. As Bull puts it, while "natural law theorists from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries described an international society that was global in extent, even if they also recognized an inner circle of Christian or European states," the recognition of the independence of non-European political communities "could not be said to have been endorsed by a universal system of positive international law and did not reflect a universal international society that actually existed."[432] The crucial difference between a European, or regional international system and a global one when it comes to world order is the difference between an aggregate of political units and a positive, systematically unified political order.

The historical accounts included in *The Expansion* thus depend on a set of prior conceptual distinctions articulated by Bull in *The Anarchical Society*. To the extent that contemporary debates build on or critique initial scholarship on the expansion, they too are subject to the effects of Bull's influential concepts. "*The Expansion*," Dunne and Reus-Smit explain, "is built on a very

[431] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 19.
[432] Bull, *A Universal International Society*, 124.

distinctive set of conceptual foundations that lead Bull and Watson to read the history of today's global international society in a very particular way. Many of these concepts receive very little elaboration in *The Expansion* itself and are drawn instead from key works in the English School corpus, particularly Bull's *The Anarchical Society.*"[433] Rethinking the conventional narrative of the expansion thus does not only require alternative, more nuanced historical accounts but also a revision of the conceptual distinctions which limited the "sociological imagination" of the original text.[434] As Dunne and Reus-Smit emphasize, these interventions not only produce novel empirical data but also revise several of Bull's key conceptual distinctions. As I show in the next section with reference to Bull's conceptual apparatus (in particular the distinction between aggregate and system) explored in the Chapter 1, these revisions remain beholden to key elements of the account of international and world order in *The Anarchical Society.*

Expansion and Globalization

Despite its eclectic composition and its sensitivity to the uniqueness of the post-colonial (i.e. post-1945) world order, a consensus has emerged among scholars of the expansion in international relations that *The Expansion* as a whole presents a narrow, one-sided account of the globalization of international society that portrays the European system of states as the subject of a progressive history of which post-1945 decolonization is the culmination. This account has been subject to a number of critiques which suggest that the expansion narrative ultimately provides a Eurocentric explanation of the spread of the European states system that tells a story of unidirectional European expansion that largely occludes both the experiences of those outside Europe and the co-constitution of Europe and its outsides. These critiques have appeared over the last several decades

[433] Dunne and Reus-Smit, *Globalization*, 5.
[434] Ibid., vi.

in *International Studies Review*, *Review of International Studies*, *International Relations*, and *Millennium*. Tim Dunne and Christian Reus-Smit's recent edited volume, *The Globalization of International Society*, is an effort to synthesize the theoretical innovations developed by these analyses.

Iver Neumann and Jennifer Welsh sum up the critical stance toward the original *Expansion* most evocatively when they ask:

> What is the literature on international society as it stands if not an all-embracing yarn of how relations between Europe on the one hand, and the barbarians and the savages on the other, are transformed from a Hobbesian state of nature to a Grotian pastorale, ushering in the spirit of enlightenment and modernism?[435]

As a now rich and well-established body of literatures attests, this kind of account is no longer credible. Critiques of this narrative fall along two main lines, one that focuses on alternative histories of various states' entry into international society, and another that emphasizes the significance of colonialism and empire in determining the boundaries of the European system of states.[436] Both approaches highlight the significance of the 'societal' over 'systemic' factors in relation to European political expansion.

While historical scholarship on the expansion in international relations focuses on a variety of time periods, from the earliest European voyages to the Americas to the entry of states into the international order post-1989, these analyses articulate a shared conceptual innovation. Following Neumann's suggestion to turn towards a conceptualisation of entry into international society as a "relational process,"[437] a host of studies examines the entry into international society of various countries that emphasize the diffuse, complex, relational processes by which the European states-

[435] Iver Neumann and Jennifer Welsh, "The 'Other' in European self-definition: an addendum to the literature on international society," *Review of International Studies* 17 (1991): 329.
[436] Filip Ejdus, "Entry into international society: Central and South East European experiences," *International Relations* 28, no. 4 (2014): 446-449.
[437] Neumann, "Entry Reconceptualized," 470.

system expanded. This work aims to correct what Shogo Suzuki identifies as the English School's "myopic and normatively driven conceptualization"[438] of the expansion of international society by attending to what Edjus calls "the entrants' side of agency."[439] Slovakia's entry, for example, is "multi-stage" and "chronologically layered" process that required contact with "multiple power centres" within Europe,[440] while Russia's exemplifies a "mediated expansion" that demonstrates the way the standard of civilization operates within the state system as well as between the states system and its outsides.[441] Others point to the way that China's diplomatic practices, from its entry into international society in the late nineteenth century to its role in the reconstruction of international order after the first world war, evince not "a passive 'response' to the Western 'impact'" but rather that "China actively participated in the reconstruction of the post-war international order."[442] Colas, meanwhile, considers the role of pirates, privateers, and corsairs in the development of international society from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, describing the process as "a dialectical relationship between barbarism and civilization" that is characterized as "highly uneven, protracted and conflictual."[443] This theme also appears in global history in Andrew Phillips' critique of vanguardism, which concludes from a study of the strategic use of

[438] Shogo Suzuki, "Japan's Socialization into Janus Faced European International Society," *European Journal of International Relations* 11, no. 1 (2005): 137–64.
[439] Filip Ejdus, "Entry into international society: Central and South East European experiences," *International Relations* 28, no. 4 (2014): 448.
[440] Jozef Batora, "Lost in *translatio imperii*: Slovakia's layered entry into international society," *International Relations* 28, no. 4 (2014): 456.
[441] Turan Kayoglu, "Western Eurocentrism in International Relations Theory," *International Studies Review* 12, no. 2 (2010): pp. 193-217. Filippo Costa Buranelli, "Knockin' on Heaven's Door: Russia, Central Asia and the Mediated Expansion of International Society," *International Relations* 28, no. 4 (2014): p. 818-19.
[442] Yongjin Zhang, "China's Entry into International Society: Beyond the Standard of 'Civilization,'" *Review of International Studies* 17, no. 1 (1991): 15.
[443] Alejandro Colàs, "Barbary Coast in the expansion of international society: Piracy, privateering, and corsairing as primary institutions," *Review of International Studies* 42, no. 5 (2016): 841-2.

local intermediaries by colonial powers that "world politics has been defined by hybridization—not homogenization—for the vast majority of the modern era."[444]

A second body of literature seeks to correct the way that standard accounts conceive of expansion as a primarily intra-European process, thus ignoring the ways that European identity was constructed through relations with an outside 'Other.' As Neumann writes, "European international society was, from the very start, dependent on having internal and external Others in relation to which it could self-define."[445] Furthermore, "a focus on the expansion of international society occludes the experience of being expanded upon – the focus directs attention only to one side of the social relation in question."[446] This literature is critical of standard accounts of international society for ignoring colonialism and seeks to correct this oversight through showing the tensions between the principles of equality and reciprocity that existed within the European states-system and the relations of hierarchy and inequality that existed between Europe and the rest of the world.

Despite these substantial historical revisions, the literature on expansion remains accused of reifying a particular conception of international society, reproducing a Eurocentric narrative, and affirming a universalizing philosophy of history. Though they have added much richness and depth to the expansion narrative, these relational or syncretist approaches, as Kaczmarska notes, largely reproduce many of its key elements.[447] As I aim to show in this section, this results from the way expansion narratives continue to rely on the same basic conceptions of system and society found in Bull's work. As Dunne and Reus-Smit acknowledge, *The Expansion* "consists of a series

[444] Andrew Phillips, "Global IR Meets Global History: Sovereignty, Modernity, and the International System's Expansion in the Indian Ocean Region," *International Studies Review* 18 (2016): 62-77.
[445] Iver Neumann, "Entry into International Society Reconceptualised: The Case of Russia," *Review of International Studies* 37 (2011): 465.
[446] Neumann, "Entry Reconceptualised," 467.
[447] Katarzyna Kaczmarska, "Reification in IR: The Process and Consequences of Reifying the Idea of International Society," *International Studies Review* (2018), 13.

of interlinked empirical narratives, structured and informed by an a priori conception of international society, one drawn largely from Bull's earlier writings."[448] This concept, as explored in Chapter 1, is grounded on a systematic unity that marks the genesis of order as such and distinguishes order from disorder. As such, to tell the narrative of the expansion of either the international system or society, or as a development from system to society, is to gloss over the key distinction that Bull makes in *The Anarchical Society* between an aggregate world of local political orders and a systematically unified world political order in the form of a global international system.

The key conceptual move that organizes *The Globalization of International Society* is to distinguish between the original account of the *expansion* of international society and the contemporary critical study of the *globalization* of international society. Insofar as it falls along the lines of the distinction between international system and society (as explained above), this distinction is related to the distinction between aggregate and system that Bull uses to mark the emergence of world order. To explore some of what is at stake in the difference articulated at this point—between a world of many political orders and a world of one—in this section I draw an analogy between theories of biological growth and generation found in eighteenth century European natural philosophy and scholarship on the expansion of international society. What these literatures have in common, I argue, is that they understand order—whether displayed by a biological organism or international political order—in systemic terms. Moreover, both literatures contend with the question of how to understand the transformation of mechanistic order into systemic or organic order. In eighteenth century natural philosophy, this question appears in the context of the transformation of inanimate matter into living organisms; in twentieth century

[448] Ibid., 28.

international relations it appears in the context of the transition from a world that is the sum of local political orders to a single international political system coextensive with the globe.

The distinction between expansion and globalization is summed up by Dunne and Reus-Smit as follows:

> The conventional narrative about the 'expansion' of international society is a story of 'European' international society expanding outwards to encompass the globe through processes of imperialism and decolonization…the story we tell in the following chapters is one in which international society was, from the outset, profoundly influenced by encounters, engagements and interactions between European and non-European peoples, producing a global international order that is culturally and politically far more complex.[449]

Expansion presents a vision of the development of world order as a 'scaled-up' version of the European system of states that develops internally rather than through an interplay of internal and external identities, forces, and processes. Globalization is a catch-all term for the variety of critical accounts of the development of European international society in relation to the political communities and economic forces that traversed the wider world, such as those surveyed above. As seen in the earlier survey of contemporary critical literature on the expansion, the distinction between expansion and globalization is analogous to the distinction between international system and international society.

The authors of *Globalization* survey four approaches to the study of world order—two systemic (material) and two societal (social)—in order to distinguish their own approach. The first approach explains the globalization of international society through a materialist account of imperial geopolitics and great power rivalry. The second materialist approach is the world systems

[449] Dunne and Reus-Smit, *Globalization*, viii.

theory of Immanuel Wallerstein and Christopher Chase-Dunn in which decolonization is driven by capitalist economic expansion. However, as the authors explain, and as we saw in Chapter 1 in relation to Bull's account of order, it is impossible to identify a completely asocial international order, regardless of how materialist the analysis is. On the side of the social, in the authors' typology, lies the Stanford School's theory of the global spread of the state form as the effect of the diffusion of norms related to a culture of modernity.[450] The final, societal approach is the expansion of international society approach championed in the Bull and Watson volume. This approach has the advantage of being a 'thicker' sociological account than that of the Stanford School, but without the limitations of its linear, universalizing form.

Epigenesis and world order

The globalization approach develops a more complex story than the one contained in the *Expansion* volume. Richard Devetak and Emily Tannock develop their version of the approach with reference to language from embryology. There is "no reason to assume" the global system of states "was the organic product of an embryonic European society that expanded itself unchanged on a supine globe."[451] Rather than the Whig history of the expansion, with a globalization approach "the story that emerges is…one…where global international society emerges epigenetically as the complex of rules, norms, and institutions…that emerged historically through unanticipated adaptations and integrations driven by a multitude of encounters, interactions, and transactions

[450] Meyer, John W., John Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco O. Ramirez, "World society and the nation-state." *American Journal of sociology* 103, no. 1 (1997): 144-181. Otherwise known as the World Polity School, these scholars use a sociological approach to trace the emergence and spread of international norms of diplomacy and administration through the diffusion of "cultural scripts" that they argue signal the emergence of a world society.

[451] Richard Devetak and Emily Tannock, "Imperial Rivalry and the First Global War," in Tim Dunne and Christian Reus-Smit, eds., *The Globalization of International Society*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 128.

among originally separate regional international societies and their states."[452] These references to epigenesis and embryology evoke debates on biological generation in relation to which Kant developed his critical and political philosophy.[453] Locating epigenesis and its analogy with the globalization of international society helps emphasize what is at stake in the distinction between the two approaches in relation to claims about world order.

Eighteenth century European theories of organic growth and generation are divided between two major approaches: preformation and epigenesis. Preformation, rooted in divine order and intervention describes a process of development that is linear, pre-determined by the complete form of the organism at birth, and thus a completely internally driven growth in size. Epigenetic models, on the other hand, represent organic growth as a non-linear, contingent process driven by a relation between the organism and its environment. Epigenetic theories of biological growth and generation provided an account of organic life in a manner often characterized as a 'middle way' between mechanical and preformationist biological explanation.[454] Epigenetic theories consider organic life as occupying a kind of mid-point between necessity and contingency, innate and acquired characteristics, and internal and external sources of order and causation.

This can be illustrated through Kant's influential purposive or teleological account of biological organisms, which are modelled on epigenetic theories of his day. The benefit of a theory of epigenesis, according to Kant, is that "it considers nature, at least as far as propagation is concerned, as itself producing rather than merely developing those things that can initially be represented as possible only in accordance with the causality of ends, and thus, with the least

[452] Ibid.
[453] Anthony C. Genova, "Kant's epigenesis of pure reason," *Kant-Studien* 65, no. 3 (1974): 259-274; Ina Goy and Eric Watkins, eds., *Kant's Theory of Biology*, (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2014).
[454] Phillip R. Sloan, "Performing the Categories: Eighteenth-Century Generation Theory and the Biological Roots of Kant's A Priori," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 40, no. 2 (2002): 229-253.

possible appeal to the supernatural, leaves everything that follows from the first beginning to nature." In Kant's theory of epigenesis, organisms are products, rather than educts, that is, they exhibit a self-organizing, reflexive capacity; individual organisms, and organic life more broadly, contains immanent principles of self-constitution.

The reciprocal relation between parts and whole, means and ends, and cause and effects means that "self-organizing" beings can only organize themselves in relation to their environment. As Morris puts it, in Kant's account of epigenesis, an organism "closes itself as a system, but only through its relation to outside particularities, to places."[455] The significance of environment to epigenetic theories of development is also evident in the distinction Kant makes between germs (*Keime*) and predispositions (*Anlagen*) to describe human development and racial difference.[456] Germs are given at birth, innate features of a given organism, but they are not fully determining. Rather, these germs are generic to the species, and are modified by the predispositions whose manifestations respond to their environment. As Genova explains, "epigenesis was essentially the notion that a complex adult organism is the biological product of a progressive differentiation over time of a comparatively simple embryo in the context of an appropriate environment."[457] Understanding the process of growth and development thus requires an examination of the relation between an organism and its environment.

Mechanistic and organic theories of generation of the time were divided by Kant into two broad categories: *generatio aequivoca* and *generatio univoca*. The former, in which he included spontaneous generation and hylozoism, named the idea that organic life originates from inorganic

[455] David Morris, "The Place of Organism in Kantian Philosophy: Geography, Teleology, and the Limits of Philosophy," in *Reading Kant's Geography,* edited by Stuart Elden and Eduardo Mendieta, (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011), 174. Morris's description of the analogical relation between the way organisms and reason work through and Kant's dialectic of reason stepping beyond its own bounds in order to determine its limits may sound familiar to readers for its similarity to Foucault's interpretation of Kant's philosophy of limits in "What is enlightenment?"
[456] Stella Sandford, "Kant, Race, and Natural History," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 44, no. 9 (2018): 950-977.
[457] Genova, "Kant's Epigenesis," 264.

matter, which was a feature of mechanistic explanations of biological generation. The main theories of birth and generation outlined here, preformation and epigenesis, are varieties of *generatio univoca*, that is, they are articulated as alternatives to the view that life can arise from inorganic matter. These two approaches to explaining generation illuminate one of the primary differences between mechanical and organic theories. While the former posits the source of life as external to the organism and multiple, the latter posits a unified form internal to the organism and present from the first instance. In short, epigenetic accounts of embryos and their growth and development are premised on the *impossibility* of a transformation from an aggregate to a system.

As varieties of *generatio univoca*, preformation and epigenesis are both based on organic or systemic theories of order that are developed in opposition to enlightenment mechanical accounts that explain biological life in mechanistic terms, that is, as aggregates. While the epigenetic account differs from the preformationist one, it does not differ with respect to the theory of order at its foundation. As John Zammito explains, for Kant, "all organic form had to be distinguished from mere matter."[458] Epigenesis and preformation alike, then, were alternatives to prevailing mechanical theories of biological growth, generation, and reproduction that imagined organic life arising spontaneously from 'dead' matter. Put otherwise, these theories were premised on the impossibility of the disparate parts of an aggregate combining into a systematic whole. Despite their differences—preformation describing growth in a linear, deterministic fashion and epigenesis as a non-linear, contingent relation between an organism and its environment—both accounts of organism share an account of organic form articulated as an opposition to Newtonian mechanism.

[458] John Zammito, "'This inscrutable *principle* of an original *organization*': epigenesis and 'looseness of fit' in Kant's philosophy of science," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 34 (2003): 73-109.

The difference between theories of the expansion and globalization of international society can be understood along the lines of preformationist and epigenetic theories of organic growth. Like preformationist theories of embryonic development, the original expansion narrative conceives of the growth of the system of European states as expanding in a linear, deterministic fashion with little consideration of states, peoples and processes outside the system. Like the preformed embryo which simply grows in size, this version of world order is simply an "up-scaled" version of the European system of states. And like epigenetic accounts of organic growth, theories of the globalization of international society tell a narrative that is nonlinear and contingent, in which the states-system develops in relation to its environment. What this analogy demonstrates, I argue, is that just as preformationist and epigenetic theories are premised on the perceived impossibility of mechanical explanation of biological phenomena, historical theories of the expansion or globalization of international society that begin with a systematic conception of international political order are unable to explain the difference between an (aggregate) world disorder and a (systematically unified) world order as conceived by Bull and subsequent literatures on international society.

The lesson that can be drawn from the analogy between these approaches and the earlier debate in natural philosophy comes from the way that preformationist and epigenetic theories are responses to the limits of mechanical explanations of biological phenomena. Both preformationist and epigenetic theories of embryonic development are premised on an absolute separation between an aggregate and a system. Analogously, accounts of both the expansion and globalization of international society literatures are premised on an account of order that marks the impossibility of a transformation from an 'aggregate' world disorder to a systematic word order. Both expansion and globalization (or societal and systemic) approaches to the expansion of international society

represent alternatives to the possibility of explaining the emergence of a system from an aggregate. Insofar as they rely on these terms in the form they are given by Bull, accounts of the globalization of international society, whether grounded in global history or historical sociology are unable to explain the transition from a world of many political orders to a global international system.

The analogy between preformationist and epigenetic theories of birth and generation and theories of the expansion and globalization of the international system suggest that Bull's distinction between world order and disorder cannot be explained in historical terms, without producing an account of international structure similar to that of Waltz. As will be shown in the following section, this difference is not a matter of one political order being transformed into another, but of a move from a world in which one account of causality, change, and identity rules to one in which another kind of order holds sway. In this sense, the change marked by Bull is not one characterized only by a gradual historical evolution, but also by a profound disjunction reminiscent of Hobbes' account of Man's miraculous entry into civil society from the state of nature. To extend the organic analogy, this is to go from asking questions about the limits of mechanistic explanation and the origin of organic form to asking about the qualities of specific biological organisms. Positing the existence of a world order originally thought to be the *result* of the expansion process *as its origin* reifies an account of world political order through a theory of structural permanence comparable to that of Waltz. In terms of world order, this is to switch from asking how a multiply ordered past world becomes a singly ordered present one to asserting that, in relation to its systematic unity, the world of today is the way the world always was—that there has only ever been one world order. It is this difference that is glossed over in historical accounts of the expansion narrative that work on the basis of the concepts of system and society. The same

problem attends Dunne and Reus-Smit's revision of the relationship between the concepts of international and world political systems.

World Political System: From *Explanandum* to *Explanans*

Contributors to Dunne and Reus-Smit's edited volume respond to the limits of historical explanations of the globalization of the international system by studying its development in global terms. Only by understanding the world as an already-ordered whole, the argument goes, can the process of the globalization of the European state-system be studied without excluding or rendering subordinate other peoples, actors, and processes that are surely connected to that process. These accounts, however, erase the distinction between a world of many political orders and a world of one, thereby transforming the global international system from *explanandum* to *explanans*. Historical approaches grounded in the concepts of system or society are unable to explain the development of a systematically unified world political order from an aggregate world order, because they rely on an account of order (system) whose creation they are meant to explain. As a result, these histories exhibit structuralist characteristics difficult to distinguish from those they typically disavow, such as the structural realism of Kenneth Waltz.

The global approach to the history of the European system of states built on Bull's own conception of the world political system is what Dunne and Reus-Smit mobilize in their critique of the expansion narrative. The authors point out that while Bull admits that "international society emerged and globalized within a broader world political system" by which "[its] evolution is profoundly affected,"[459] he and other scholars of expansion fail to "consider the long-term constitutive effects of the world political system on the development of international society."[460]

[459] Dunne and Reus-Smit, 34.
[460] Ibid., 32.

By contrast, the globalization approach locates international society within a long history of interactions with outside political, economic, and social actors within a broader world order, interactions which are constitutive of international society itself. The authors theorize global international society as "a distinctive governing assemblage" which has "evolved over the course of the past five centuries within a context of and through interaction with, a shifting panoply of individuals and institutional actors, coalescing around diverse social and political assemblages, each of which has constituted a distinct locus of social and political power—a world political system."[461] In my view, however, this critique is premised on an understanding of the world political system that departs significantly from Bull's and that misses the significance of the concept in relation to world order for Bull: its novelty.

One of the key elements of Bull and Watson's original text, as the authors confirm, is its attention to the novelty of the global character of contemporary international order. As they put it, "Bull and Watson recognized the uniqueness of the global order of sovereign states produced by post-1945 decolonization."[462] According to Dunne and Reus-Smit this novelty is a consequence of the *division* of the entire surface of the globe into separate states: "Never before had the entirety of the globe been divided up into such states."[463] This account, however, is at odds with Bull's formulation of the concept of a world political system which, as we saw in Chapter 1, is made on the basis of the difference between an aggregate and a system, that is, between disparate states, and an international system. In Bull's influential formulation, "the first global political system has taken the form of a global system of states" which is a result of the expansion of the European states-system that becomes global in scope at the end of the nineteenth century. This expansion,

[461] Ibid, 34.
[462] Ibid., 3.
[463] Dunne and Reus-Smit, *Globalization*, 3.

Bull explains, "is chiefly responsible for the emergence of a degree of interaction among political systems in all the continents of the world, sufficient to make it possible to speak of a world political system."[464] The global character of this political order, as outlined in Chapter 1, lies in the way it links various local political orders into a systematically unified whole. According to Bull, it is the world prior to the globalization of international society that is characterized by political division. What marks the genesis of world order, for Bull, is not a novel form of division but a novel form of political unity: the global system of states.

For Bull, then, the wider set of processes that exist within and around the world political system can only develop *after* the emergence of what Bull considers the *first* world political system, the global system of states. While Bull does argue that "the state-system has always been part of a wider system of interaction in which groups other than the state are related to each other," he adds that "all that is in any sense new or recent in the world political system of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is its global or worldwide character; and, of course, it is only in this recent period that the states system itself has been worldwide."[465] To examine the historical development of the European system of states as an element of a positive (in the sense of positive law) world political order, would be, on Bull's definition of world political order, to project backward into history a world political condition that is only characteristic of the planet since the late nineteenth century. While it is surely possible to imagine the world as a single order at any given point in history, such an order is substantively different from the positive, systematically unified political order Bull identifies as the *result* of the globalization of international society.

The way a global international system is transformed from the explanandum of studies of the expansion of international society to its explanans is exemplified in chapters by Jennifer Welsh

[464] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 20.
[465] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 268.

and Adam Phillips in the *Globalization* volume. Both Welsh and Phillips are explicit about their use and revision of conceptual claims made initially by Bull. Welsh's article aims to "adjust the frame of reference from the narrower notion of European expansion, which misrepresents the relations between West and non-West, to the global interplay between states, regions, and civilizations."[466] Welsh writes that "the core question is…less 'who became part of international society and when', and more how various entities fit within a global order at different points in time—an order which contained elements of both system and society."[467] In referring to system and society, Welsh evokes the two major elements of Bull's version of the contemporary "anarchical society." As we saw in Chapter 1, however, the global political order of which system and society are elements does not arise for Bull until the end of the nineteenth century. If a global anarchical society is present even at the beginning of the expansion process, the difference that the expansion narrative arose to explain—between a world of multiple political order and a systematically unified global order—is glossed over. The global quality of the present international order—the quality that marks its novelty, according to Bull—is posited as a condition that brings about the globalization of the European system of states.

Similarly, Andrew Phillips builds on Bull's claim that "the states system has always been part of a wider system of interaction in which groups other than the state are related to each other,"[468] to argue that while "from the late fifteenth century, Western Europeans undeniably spearheaded a qualitatively higher increase in global interaction…they did so off a foundation of pre-existing hemispheric interconnections."[469] Phillips demonstrates the way that "Before

[466] Jennifer Welsh, "Empire and Fragmentation," in Tim Dunne and Christian Reus-Smit eds. *The Globalization of International Society*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press), 146.
[467] Welsh, "Empire and Fragmentation," 147.
[468] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, p. 268. This passage is cited by Phillips on p. 43.
[469] Andrew Phillips, "International System," in Dunne and Reus-Smit, *The Globalization of International Society*, 2019.

European international society spearheaded early modern globalization, it had itself first been constituted through an earlier wave of Afro-Eurasian hemispheric integration."[470] However, after explaining the way international systems are part of a broader world system, Bull adds that "all that is in any sense new or recent in the world political system of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is its global or world-wide character; and, of course, it is only in this recent period that the states system itself has been world-wide."[471] If the expansion of the European system of states is explained with reference to a global political system, the key difference articulated by Bull in his theory of international order—between a world of multiple political orders and a world of one—is difficult to explain. By studying the development of the European states system as an effect of a broader set of dynamics of a world political system, Welsh and Phillips add to our historical understanding of the development of European system of states but are unable to explain what makes the present international system more 'global' than any previous—the question that spurs investigation into the globalization of the European international system.

The consequence of this approach, however, is that the difference Bull's expansion narrative claims to explain, between a world of many political orders and a world of a single, positive political order, is eliminated. On this account, the development of a global international political order is explained with reference to the prior existence of a global international political order. In order to theorize this global interplay, the contributors to *The Globalization of International Society* posit the historical existence of a condition that is said to be the *result* of the expansion process—a condition of political unity expressed by an international political order that is both systemic and societal, coextensive with the surface of the globe. Returning to the origin of global international society seems to land us back where the inquiry began: in a global international

[470] Ibid., 43.
[471] Bull, *Anarchical Society*, 268.

order (system) described as an anarchical society. The order that is said to be the result of the globalization of international society is posited as its origin; the answer to the question of the origin of global international order becomes global international order.

While many of the contributors *The Globalization of International Society* rely on this conceptual move to ground their historical accounts, the result is that the distinction between 'world order' and 'global international system' is erased. Welsh, for example, explains that:

> There is currently a substantial category of non-UN member states in the international system, which includes Taiwan, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Palestine, Abkazia, South Ossetia, and Kosovo. These territorial units are not universally recognized as sovereign, yet in many cases they have governmental structures responsible for conducting foreign policy.[472]

Here, despite lacking formal membership, these states are still considered part of a global international system. The lack of formal recognition of a given state is not considered to threaten the 'global' status of this order, because it is understood as an already accomplished systematic unification that makes the global political order irreducible to its component parts (in this case states).

What for Bull is a historically specific, positive political order becomes the eternal form of a world order in which change is measured only through differences in its arrangement. As a result, world order is transformed from the *explanandum* of literature on international society into its *explanans*. Erasing the distinction between order and disorder on which accounts of the globalization of international society are based results in a theorization of global order in terms of a structural permanence that is difficult to distinguish from Kenneth Waltz's paradigmatic account

[472] Welsh, "Empire and Fragmentation," in Dunne and Reus-Smit, *Globalization of international Society*, 163.

of international structure. The projection of a hybrid (system and society) global order like the present one projected back into centuries may differ in content but not in form from Waltz's position, criticized for decades, that "the anarchic character of international politics accounts for the striking sameness in the quality of international life through the millennia."[473] Given the difficulties of distinguishing between system and society noted by scholars of international society (and analyzed in Chapter 3), histories of the international that begin with a global international system tell a story historical change, but also of structural permanence.

Conceiving of the global international system as the *explanans* of historical-political phenomena, past or present, changes profoundly the kind of questioning available to students of international politics. The novelty that provoked the questions of Bull and earlier scholars of expansion—the sense that the global international system of the late 19th century constituted the *first* world political order—is displaced in favour of the notion that the global international system is only the latest iteration of the long history of world order. The form that this order takes among these post-Bull authors, however, is of the global international system that is understood to be "very young."[474] The question of the globalization of the international system transforms from one about the transformation of a world that consists of an aggregate of local political orders into a single world political order into one that concerns ordering, that is, the arrangement of an existing world political order. The consequences of the conceptual changes made by scholars of the globalization of international society are to reverse these sequences, such that the globalization story becomes one of the emergence of a plural (international) order from the unity of a world order and transforms the global system of states from the *first* world order to the *latest* world order.

[473] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 66.
[474] Dunne and Reus-Smit, *Globalization*, 18.

The point is not that this alternative understanding is unconvincing, but that it is at odds with the 'global' nature of the modern international system as understood by Bull and subsequent scholarship. If the distinguishing feature of the current world political system is its 'global' character, these approaches are unable to answer the question of the difference between before and after the globalization of the European system of states. If global political order in part explains this globalization, it is not clear what it consists of, since it is precisely the now-global condition of the previously local or regional international political system that the expansion process purports to explain.

Conclusion

Scholars of international relations are increasingly turning to biology and the life sciences for guidance on questions about order and authority. Nicholas Rengger, for example, claims that the life sciences offer international theory "very specific solutions *both* to the question of universal and particular *and* to the question of order."[475] More recently, Duncan Bell has suggested that "in the coming years mainstream IR theorists are increasingly likely to turn to the biological sciences for inspiration and intellectual legitimacy."[476] As biology takes the place of physics as the 'father' of the natural sciences, in Bell's view, international relations scholars will increasingly look to biology to explain international political phenomena. These suggestions and predictions have arguably been borne out by the scholarship in the widespread influence of complexity science in IR, as well as more explicit theories that draw on resources in the biosciences.

[475] N.J. Rengger, *International Relations, Political Theory, and the Problem of Order*, (London: Routledge, 2000), 196-7.
[476] Duncan Bell, "Beware of false prophets: Biology, human nature, and the future of international relations theory," *International Affairs* 82, no. 3 (2006): 496-510.

As I have shown here, however, the explanatory schema that characterize eighteenth century European natural philosophy are also at work in accounts of the globalization of the international system. The distinction between order and disorder upon which large swaths of the literature on international politics depend appears much earlier in European natural philosophy. Organic metaphors and insights from the life sciences, in particular a theory of organic order, are *already* central to contemporary theories of international politics; they provide answers to the kind of problems which Rengger and Bell imagine they might solve in the future, and have done so at least since Kant. Moreover, these enlightenment formulations remain foundational to the modern life sciences. As Genova argues, the modern biological theories "can be loosely construed as versions of what Kant recognized as epigenesis" in relation to their struggle to shed the metaphysical residue of teleology and their assumption of the continuity of organic structure throughout biological development.[477] Far from being answered by more sensitive scientific instruments or more comprehensive concepts, modern biological theories remain indebted to the attempted solution to the problem of biological growth and generation that vexed European natural philosophy.[478]

Though they have added much richness and depth to the expansion narrative, critical historical accounts of the globalization of the international reproduce Bull's distinction between order and disorder. For Bull, the difference between a world of many political orders and a world of one is the difference between a mechanistic and a systemic (or organic) order. Thus, to the extent that they rely on Bull's conception of order, even critical accounts of expansion at least

[477] Anthony C. Genova, "Kant's Epigenesis of Pure Reason," 267.
[478] This is the case even for 'outdated' theories of preformation. For some of the powerful contemporary resonances of preformationist thinking, see Clara Pinto-Correia, *The Ovary of Eve: Egg and Sperm and Preformation*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). As Stephen Jay Gould notes in the Foreword, "leading preformationists [were], ironically, defenders of the general mechanistic attitude that modern science now honors" (xv).

implicitly suggest that the globalization of the international is synonymous with the difference between world disorder and world order. Though Watson insists that "there is no abrupt gulf or revolutionary dividing line between the European state system and the present global one,"[479] this is difficult to reconcile with the way Bull conceives of the difference between a world of multiple political orders and world political order in such stark terms. As I have shown above, the concept of system, in this literature, expresses the difference between order and disorder, and thus cannot account for that difference, which is what the expansion narrative purports to do. Existing critiques of the expansion narrative thus appear as stories of either a transformation from a multiply ordered past to a single, systematically ordered present, or of a world order characterized by structural permanence.

[479] Watson, *Evolution*, 277.

Boundaries of world order

In his study of systems and international politics, Robert Jervis writes that "the basic ideas of systems do not come readily to mind and so often are ignored," and laments "the habit of even accomplished systems theorists of lapsing into simpler ways of thinking."[480] My own view is rather the opposite. The problem of the metaphysics of order implied by the concept of system is not unique to Hedley Bull and the literature on international society. The systemic quality of the international is a truism that is presumed by many accounts of international politics. Thinking about international politics in terms of the problems, questions, and concepts that arise from a consideration of the consequences of systematic unity is second nature to most scholars of international relations (including the author). The questions and answers enabled by this analogy of order, in my view, need to be made less familiar, which means becoming more familiar with the way this analogy of order works to sustain claims to political unity, the stakes of such claims, and the boundaries between order and its opposite that they affirm. The above analysis therefore represents a small effort to point toward a broad set of problems related to the way discourses of international politics express an implicit account of the boundaries of world order. This account of order common to theories of international politics already provides answers to questions which are treated as matters of political controversy within the discipline of international relations and far beyond. At a minimum, this suggests that the effects of the form of order expressed by system on studies of international politics are too significant to ignore on pragmatic grounds.

In Chapter 1, I argued that, while international order is posed as a problem in many ways (as a lack in need of repair, as anarchical or hierarchical), the effects of the account of order by which a present international is judged as all these things have gone relatively unexamined. As a

[480] Robert Jervis, *System Effects*, 4-7.

result, the primary insight of Bull's critique of the domestic analogy—that the international expresses a unique form of order—has gone unrealized. I develop this critique through an analysis of Bull's distinction between order and disorder that informs subsequent analyses of the distinction between system and society in theories of international politics. The critique of the domestic analogy, I conclude, requires a closer look at the way international order is understood in the most basic sense as order, that is, as a unified (global) whole.

In Chapter 2, I examined the problem of the domestic analogy in its most explicitly political terms, as a problem of moving from an international politics to a politics of the world. I argue that in posing state sovereignty as the obstacle to a truly universal world politics, literature on the problem of world politics misses the consequences of Bull's critique. While these efforts aim to develop a universality that is not a hegemonic imposition of a particular order, they miss the way that the international already works as an answer to that problem. This links the problem of world politics to the problem of composition, or how to think a whole that is both many and one.

Chapter 3 examined this problem in the context of debates about structure in literatures on traditional versus scientific approaches, the relation between structure and agency, and contemporary metaphors of structure such as network, assemblage, and complexity. I argue that these debates are premised on an account of structure analogous to the idea of structure as an effect of relations of difference developed by post-structural critiques of structuralism. As a result, figures on either side of these debates, such as Bull and Waltz, are read both as structuralist and anti-structuralist thinkers. Moreover, most theories of structure, including those of Bull and Waltz, articulate a relation between 'structure' and 'agency' or whole and parts that reproduces an account of structure as an irreducible relation between parts and whole. Attention to the way the problem

of structure is posed in international politics reveals an analogical account of structure across the human sciences that provides a specific answer to the relation between unity and diversity.

Chapter 4 locates this account of structure in Kant's concept of systematic unity through an analysis of the problem of the domestic analogy in Kant's political thought and its reception in international relations. I argue that, despite being read as a classic exemplar of the analogy between states and individuals, Kant's domestic analogy consists in his implicit claim that the international is ordered in a manner analogous to the world as a whole. As a result, Kant's conception of an international system is better understood as an answer to, rather than an expression of, the problem of the domestic analogy.

Chapter 5 examines critical approaches to the globalization of international society. I argue that these approaches reproduce Bull's distinction between order and disorder through which the emergence of a global international system is theorized in *The Anarchical Society* and subsequent literatures. As a result, what was originally the *explanandum* of the expansion narrative—the transformation of a world of many political orders to a world of one—becomes the *explanans* of a global international system.

Systems, in various forms, have been posited in many contexts as an alternative to the classical mechanics inscribed in political thought by the principle of state sovereignty and the figure of the globe. What the present study demonstrates, however, is the way that familiar theories of international politics are *already* systems theories. Along with the analogical relation between systematic unity and the geometrical sphere, this casts doubt on the notion that systemic theories of order, relation, or change are likely to offer alternatives to the basic form of an international order conceived as a system of states. Rather than an alternative account of political order, the

concept of system enables the international and the globe, understood as a geometrical sphere, to be thought as coextensive.

This analysis also makes a case for reading Kant anew as a geopolitical thinker. By looking at the question of order, my analysis demonstrates the influence of a particular image of the earth—a geometrical sphere—on imagining possibilities for political order on a planetary scale. This reading of Kant thus suggests that the problem of world politics and efforts to develop a critical geopolitics are closely linked in their shared concern with the question of the relation between planetary unity and political order. There are also implications for critiques of the structuring effects of the figure of the globe that are made on the basis of a gap between the concept of the globe and the earth as it really is. These critiques suggest that the abstraction of geometry exhibits an objectivizing 'view from nowhere' at the expense of the particular ecological conditions that sustain planetary life. As we have seen, however, for Kant the figure of the spherical globe is a response to the consequences of the position that a view from nowhere has never been and will never be available to the creature he calls 'Man.'

What this suggests, in my view, is that studies of power, political authority, and the legitimation of violence on a world scale must include the foundational scientific and philosophical accounts of order that give form to knowledge. Questions that have been constructed for a long time as very distant from the quotidian and exceptional violences of political life will come to be increasingly salient and contested. Answers to questions that have long since been considered settled will seem increasingly less so and increasingly less the proper domain of any particular discipline, tradition, or science. Crucially, these questions are not independent from the philosophical claims about mathematics discussed above. This link between specific theories of

mathematics and mathematical formulations and the depredations of racial thought have been powerfully connected, for example, by recent scholarship on the politics of race.[481]

Early modern European debates about space, moreover, show the ambivalence with which what is widely acknowledged as the foundation of Kant's critical philosophy—a Newtonian conception of absolute space as infinite, uniform, and infinitely divisible—was treated in his early reflections as a real question to which answers were far from forthcoming. Kant's pre-critical works demonstrate his struggle to reconcile the infinite divisibility of absolute space with the existence of beings that are irreducible wholes. The irreducible wholes that preoccupied Kant in his early reflections on space are Leibniz's monads, but the organized beings of the third *Critique* in my view pose similar challenges. Kant claims that individuals' intuitive sense of direction (above/below, right/left, in front/behind) demonstrates the existence of space independent of the relative position of objects to one another. This kind of knowledge, such as the position of words on a page or stars on a star chart, "would be of no use to us unless we could also orientate the things thus ordered, along with the entire system of their reciprocal positions, by referring them to the sides of our body."[482] As one introduction to this essay of his points out, however, "such considerations…far from suggesting the absolute nature of space, tend rather to establish its subjective nature."[483] These considerations appear in the twentieth century conflicts between Cantor and Poincaré over the question of the mind-independence of mathematics.

Suggestive in this regard is the relation between quantity and quality implied by the analogy between systematic unity and the sphere, as I outlined briefly in Chapter 4. To the extent

[481] Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Siba Grovogui, "An Abbreviated Postcolonial Account of the Archives: Reconsidering the Unified Fields in the Human and Social Sciences," in Malik, Sheira and Isaac Kamola, eds., *Politics of the African Anticolonial Archive*, (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 17-36.
[482] Ibid., 368.
[483] Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant Theoretical Philosophy, 1755-1770*, Walford D. and Meerbote R. (eds.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: lxx.

that the order displayed by systematic unity and the sphere represents the difference between qualitative (philosophical) and quantitative (mathematical) analogy, the analogy between the two is itself qualitative, because systematic unity can never achieve the perfection of mathematical certainty and precision. As a result, the relation between them can only approximate the kind of order expressed by quantity—the distinction between quantity and quality is not so distinct. This is to say that Kant's purposive order undoes the distinction between the constitutive and regulative, quantitative and qualitative.

The implications of these questions are central to contemporary debates on world order in which Kant remains a central figure. The implications of the indistinction between cause and effect, parts and whole is for John Zammito an indication that Kant's is a naturalistic philosophy.[484] Others, however, point to the critical potential of Kant's epigenetic theory of reason,[485] or the possibilities enabled by a deconstructive reading of Kant that detects a theory of infinite relation at the roots of Kant's political thought.[486] To the extent that these and future readings aim to productively refigure (rather than escape) Kant's epigenesis of reason or the relational character of his political thought, they will have to contend with the way Kant's epigenetic theory of human development, and the conception of systematic unity that informs it, arise from a figure of Man whose similarities and difference are explained through the category of race. Indeed, as Stella Sandford has recently shown, Kant's conception of systematic unity originates in his early attempts to reconcile empirical human diversity with the doctrine of monogenesis, that Man ultimately originates from a single source.[487] In this sense, Kant's racial thinking, which, according to

[484] John Zammito, "Epigenesis in Kant," 2016.
[485] Catherine Malabou, *Before Tomorrow*.
[486] Geoffrey Bennington, *Kant on the Frontier*.
[487] Stella Sandford, "Kant, Race, and Natural History," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 44, no. 9 (2018): 950-977.

Bernasconi, works as an enabling condition for most modern theories of race, is inextricable from the kind of order Kant imagines is displayed by the international.[488]

When it comes to the character of the order of what we might call a world, it is difficult to improve on the advice of Bull that "it is better to recognise that we are in darkness than to pretend that we can see the light."[489] It is precisely this dilemma to which the systematic unity of the international order works as an answer. At a time when calls for re-articulations of the relation between human unity and diversity are becoming more frequent and more urgent, whether they include the need to theorize a new form of universality in response to existential threats such as climate change, or the need to guard against universalisms that limit or erase political difference, alternative responses to this dilemma will have to reckon with the analogy of order expressed by system and the boundaries that such an analogy sets on possibilities for world order.

[488] Robert Bernasconi, "Kant as an unfamiliar source of racism," *Philosophers on race: Critical essays* (2002): 145-66; Robert Bernasconi, "Kant's Third Thoughts on Race," in Stuart Elden and Eduardo Mendieta, eds., *Reading Kant's Physical Geography*. See also E. C. Eze, "The Color of Reason: The Idea of 'Race' in Kant's Anthropology," *The Bucknell Review*, 3, no. 2 (1995), 200-242.
[489] Bull, *Anarchical Society*,

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