WENDT'S THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION TO SECURITY STUDIES: THE AGENT – STRUCTURE PROBLEM

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Abstract: The agent-structure problem is at the core of almost all social sciences' interest. The problematization of this issue in security studies emerged with social constructivism, particularly with Alexander Wendt's thought. By presenting Wendt's basic theoretical assumptions derived from his understanding of structure and structural theory which emerged as an attempt to eliminate the shortcomings of individualism and structuralism, this paper seeks to establish a theoretical contribution to security studies. Finally, this paper concludes that the division of structure into ideational structure, material structure, and structure of interests, attitudes toward the co-constitution and co-determination of agents and structure along with the scientific-realistic assumption of the (causal) significance of unobservables and emphasis on the importance of change not only play an important role in explaining security phenomena and processes, but may also contribute to a more accurate prediction of the dynamics of security reality, challenges, risks and threats, as well as the behavior of the most important security actors.

Keywords: Wendt, structure, agent-structure, scientific realism, social constructivism.

INTRODUCTION

The agent-structure problem is addressed by all social sciences and represents a starting point for exploring the phenomenon of the social world in a certain way. Determinism cannot be the solution to this problem, nor can it be a condition (in the way it is commonly conceptualized), since it emphasizes the ways in which structure and culture shape the social context within which individuals act, but neglects individual capacities (Archer, 2003). By attempting to reconceptualize the notions of agency and structure, theorists seek to find common threads of conflicting ontologies in order to discover the origins of social action – whether the individual's behavior and actions are independent or restrained and governed by structures (institutions, norms, ideologies, traditions) (Ilić, 2016: 148).

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Therefore, it is essential to provide an answer to the question of whether the causes of social phenomena and processes should be sought in individuals, their subjective beliefs, desires and intentions or in the social structures that govern the behavior of those individuals (Ilić, 2016: 152). In the first case, the explanation of social action starts with agents, while in the second case it focuses on the causality of structural factors; consequently, the agent-structure problem is usually referred to as a theoretical discussion of these two views, which at first glance seem completely opposed.

In the context of explanatory implications, international relations theories usually start from recent philosophical discussions within sociology and social theory, proposing a metatheoretical framework based on the dynamic conception of interdependence between interpretative, random agents, and a structural context defined both in terms of enablement and restraint (Carlsnaes, 1992).

Constructivism occupies the middle ground between rationalist and poststructuralist approaches to the study of international relations, taking a structural ontological starting point (according to many theorists). What is common to all social constructivists is that they start from the basic ontological assumption that agents and structures are interconnected. Although positivism and its static view of international reality was initially heavily challenged and criticized by constructivism, a division into theorists who remained faithful to the postpositivist approach (the critical school) and theorists who clung to the positivist direction (conventional or soft constructivism) was created within it over time (Ilic, 2016: 161).

Due to its importance for all social sciences, and consequently theoretical reflections on international relations, this issue has been the subjet of the veriety of criticism – from being "confusing and unproductive" to representing a significant barrier to critically-oriented international relations theories (Klotz & Lynch, 2006). While some theorists believe that constructivists have not answered this question by reaching a conclusion of reciprocal constitution, which is necessary to overcome the "unnecessary" epistemological division by focusing on ways in which empirical research can lead to the very essence of the problem (Klotz & Lynch, 2006), others believe that the existing gaps in international relations theories can be filled solely by focusing on the ontological differences that construct the theoretical framework by integrating this approach with the approach in social theory (Wight, 2006).

Emanuel Adler argues that constructivism is "interested in understanding how material, subjective, and intersubjective worlds interact in the social construction of reality," and that, "instead of focusing solely on how structures constitute agents' identities and interests, he also seeks to explain how, in effect, individual agents constitute these structures "(Zlatanović, Lipovac, 2014: 187, as cited in Adler, 1997: 322). Nicholas Onuf explains it as follows — structure exerts influence on agents by being often influenced by natural or social phenomena that we can see or we are unable to see, but to which we, as agents, respond by putting them in the institutional context. In this case, it is about "the institutionalization of structure" by agents (Onuf, 2013: 7). David Dessler, however, places particular emphasis on scientific realism in explaining these issues, arguing that the "gap" between scientific philosophy and practice may be filled by a model of international structure based on the principles of scien-

tific realism, or by considering its implications for structural research design in international relations theories. He concludes that the agent-structure debate has the capacity to produce integrative structural theory as well as the ability to bring about changes to the international system peacefully (Dessler, 1989).

One of the most fruitful constructivist approaches to solving the agent-structure problem is Alexander Wendt's approach. Based on Wendt's understanding of structure and structurational theory as a proposal for resolutving this problem, this paper seeks to examin the theoretical contribution of Wendt's approach to security studies. A critical examination of the explanatory potential of Wendt's thinking in security studies demonstrated that adopting a scientifically realist starting point, respecting the ideational aspect of structure and emphasizing the co-constitution and co-determination of agents and structure and the role and importance of processes in considering the agent-structure problem, undoubtedly represent a step forward in relation to the settled views of the (one-sided) solution to this problem by members of dominant theoretical directions. In summary, Wendt's addressing this socially significant problem seems to be one of the brightest examples of the need to study security phenomena using discourses of different paradigms, due to the "multidisciplinary nature of the field of security studies" (Lipovac, 2013: 441).

WENDT'S IDEATIONAL STRUCTURE

According to Wendt, social constructivism is not only close to idealism but also to structuralism and holism. Starting from the premise that "structures have effects irreducible to agents" (Wendt, 2014: 122), Wendt devoted a significant part of his work to dealing with structures. Without being defined as such, Wendt argues that the structure of any social system contains three elements — material conditions, interests, and ideas. Although related these elements are also in some sence distinct and play different roles in explanation. Yet, for analytical purposes, Wendt treats material structure, structure of interests, and ideational structure as separate structures. In doing so, however, he notes that these elements are always articulated and equally necessary to explain social outcomes, in other words, "without ideas there are no interests, without interests there are no meaningful material conditions, without material conditions there is no reality at all" (Wendt. 2014: 122). In the end, for any given social system there is just structure, in the singular (Wendt, 2014: 123). In this sense, the task of structural theorizing ultimately must be to show how the elements of the system fit together into some kind of whole.

Starting from idealism that Wendt explicitly advocates, that is, its key premise that people act toward objects (including each other) on the basis of the meanings that those objects have for them, knowledge occupies a significant place in Wendt's thought. Moreover, he views the ideational aspect of social structure as "the distribution of knowledge", which is a broader phenomenon than the distribution of interests and general beliefs and expectations, including "not only a belief but a good portion of desire" (Wendt, 2014: 123).

In this way, Wendt classifies certain knowledge into private and shared. However, especially with regard to the agent-structure problem, Wendt places an emphasis on a subset of social structure, socially shared knowledge or cul-

ture (knowledge that is both common and connected between individuals, in other words, shared in society). Culture, in this sense, can take many specific forms, including "norms, rules, institutions, ideologies, organizations, threat systems, etc." (Wendt, 2014: 124).

Wendt's observation that international relation's debate between constructivists and rationalists about culture actually portrays a broader controversy within social theory between holist and individualist approaches to the question of how agents relate to the structures (ideational or material) in which they are embedded is significant (Wendt, 2014: 125). While individualists and holists agree that agents and structures are somewhat interdependent, they disagree on exactly how. Individualists claim that structure can be reduced to the properties and interactions of agents, while holists claim that structure has irreducible emergent properties (Wendt, 2014: 125). Finally, concerning the agent-structure problem, Wendt takes a synthetic position that combines elements mainly from structuration theory and symbolic interactionism[2].

THREE DISTINCTIONS: LEVELS, EFFECTS, AND THINGS

However, before presenting his version of structuration theory, that is, his solution to this problem, other significant conclusions that Wendt draws about structure should also be taken into consideration. To develop this (middle) position, Wendt makes three distinctions – "between two levels and two effects of structure on two things." The two levels are micro and macro, where microstructures refer to structures of interaction and macrostructures refer to what Wendt calls structures of multiple realizable outcomes (Wendt, 2014: 125). Applied to culture, this leads to a distinction between common and collective knowledge. These two effects discussed by Wendt are causal and constitutive, and the two things are behavior and properties, where properties refer to agents' identities and interests.

According to Wendt, all three distinctions concern the way reality is structured and to that extent the ontological dispute about structures and agents ultimately is an empirical debate, with rationalist and constructivist social theorists simply interested in various aspects of how reality is structured (Wendt, 2014: 126). Wendt maps his argument in a matrix form[3].

In explaining the different views of rationalists and constructivists, Wendt states that rationalists tend to be interested in micro-level structures and within that the causal effects of structure on behavior, while constructivists tend to be more interested in macro-level structures, and within that the constitutive effects of structure on identities and interests. As the primary value of constructivist understanding in relation to the rationalist, Wendt points out the analysis of constituent effects at the micro level, especially at the macro level, in their approach to culture (Wendt, 2014: 127). It should be noted that Wendt

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[2] Wendt points out that, in designing his own theory, he drew on ideas from Giddens (1979, 1984), Bhaskar (1979, 1986), Sewell (1992), as well as Mead (1934), Berger & Luckmann (1966), Stryker (1980), and Howard & Callero (1991).

[3] By presenting this illustration, as he states, he does not intend to review the literature with solutions in social theory to discuss agents and structure, but to suggest different ways in which theorists may ask questions regarding structure. *Figure shown in Social Theory of International Politics by A. Wendt* (2014: 126).

develops his own distinction between micro and macro levels of structures with reference to Kenneth Waltz[4], pointing out some problems with his understanding of structure[5].

INDIVIDUALITY *PER SE* AND THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF INDIVIDUALITY

Considering the above issues, Wendt's attempts to explain how agents and structure can be mutually constituted and codetermined (the latter signifying a causal relationship versus constitutive relationship), or, in a nutshell, how a synthesis of individualism and holism is possible. In this light, Wendt's undoubted contribution to this issue is the distinction between "individuality *per se*" and "the social conditions of individuality". Individuality *per se* pertains to "those properties of an agent's constitution that are self-organizing and thus not intrinsically dependent on a social context." Wendt argues that these types of properties are essential to deliberate action, and, even when caused by society, they exist independently of them. Finally, Wendt finds this aspect of individuality in individualism (Wendt, 2014: 158). On the other hand, the social conditions of individuality refer to "those properties of an agent's constitution that are intrinsically dependent on culture." Wendt links this aspect of individuality with the claim that culture constitutes agents, which he finds in holism (Wendt, 2014: 158).

Wendt sees the importance of distinguishing between individuality *per se* and its social conditions as a way of realizing that a relationship between agents and structures can be both independent and dependent, that is, causal and constitutive. In other words, this distinction "resolves the apparent paradox by showing that two types of qualities are involved in the constitution of agents, social and self-organizing qualities" (Wendt, 2014: 159). From this point of view, the moderate forms of individualism and holism are not incompatible, but merely point to different constituent qualities of individuality, that is, pose different questions. Wendt argues that the problem arises with radical forms of each ontology, "when someone says that intentional agency is merely self-organizing, or nothing but an effect of discourse" (Wendt, 2014: 160). Recognizing both is essential to a better understanding of each.

PROCESS

Finally, an indispensable term in Wendt's considerations of structure is process. Thus, although both agents and structures are of equal importance, they are mutually constitutive and codetermined; however, structure exists (has effects and evolves) only because of actors and their practices. All structure is "instantiated only in process" (Wendt, 2014: 160). Wendt argues that the dependence of structures on agency and the social process is both constitutive and causal. On the one hand, according to Wendt, "the distribution of knowl-

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[4] For more information on the micro and micro levels of structure thematized by Waltz, see Waltz, 1959 [2001].

[5] According to Wendt, the problem lies in the fact that Waltz does see two levels of structure rather that in Waltz's "materialism" (Wendt, 2014: 127).

edge in a social system at any given moment exists only in virtue of actors' desires and beliefs", and "if culture only exists in virtue of desires and beliefs, it has effects, in turn, only in virtue of agents' behavior" (Wendt, 2014: 161). On the other hand, social structures also depend on agents and practices in a causal sense. Constitutive analysis, however, has an "intrinsic static" and it tells us what structures are made of and how they can have certain effects, but "not about the processes by which they move through time, in other words, about history." (Wendt, 2014: 161). However, he states that "structural reproduction too is caused by a continuous process of interaction that has reproduction as its intended or unintended consequence" (Wendt, 2014: 161).

Wendt concludes that, in both a causal and constitutive sense, structure is "an ongoing effect of process", while at the same time "that process is an effect of structure" (Wendt, 2014: 162). There are two levels of analysis (micro and macro), which are structured and instantiated by process, in his view. There are no structures without agents and no agents (except in biological terms) without structures, in other words, "social processes are always structured and social structures are always in process" (Vent, 2014: 162). In doing so, he revisits the culture, claiming that "knowledge shared in society plays a key role in interacting relatively predictable over time, creating homeostatic tendencies that stabilize the social order," in other words, "culture tends to reproduce itself, and indeed must do so if is to be culture at all" (Wendt, 2014: 163).

In summary, Wendt believes that cultural structures are complex in both their nature and effects and so sets out a typology based on three distinctions: 1) between the two levels on which they are organized, the micro and macro levels, manifested as common and collective knowledge respectively; 2) between their causal and constitutive effects; and 3) between their effects on behavior, identities, and interests. He notes that the analyses of these different modalities requires different types of structural methods, but in analyzing any of them, it is essential to show "how cultural forms articulate with and give meaning to material forces, and how the latter in turn constrain the former" (Wendt. 2014: 165). Again, it may be useful for analytical purposes to distinguish between material structure, structure of interests, and ideational structure, but in the end a social system has only one structure, composed both of material and ideational elements.

AGENT-STRUCTURE PROBLEM

Following the presentation of Wendt's key views regarding structure, an account of the agent-structure problem itself is presented. In his article *The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory* (1987), Wendt starts from two theories that have had a strong influence on contemporary academic discourse about international relations – neorealism (Kenneth Waltz) and world system theory (Immanuel Wallerstein). While both theories provide structural explanations of how states behave in the international system, that is, although they are both based on structural analysis, their understanding of system structure is, in Vent's view, significantly different. On the one hand, neorealists define international system structures in terms of "observable" attributes of their member states, and consequently, they define the explanatory role of these structures in individualist terms, as "constraining the choices

of existing state actors" (Wendt, 1987: 335). "World-system" theorists, on the other hand, define international system structures in terms of "fundamental organizing principles of capitalist world economy which underlie and constitute states," and thus they understand the explanatory role of structures in structuralist terms as "generating" state actors themselves (Wendt, 1987: 335)

However, Wendt's primarily interest is to critique the conceptions of structural theory which he finds in each of them, and to use this critique to motivate the development of a new approach to structural theorizing about international relations adopted from the work of the aforementioned structuration theorists in sociology. Wendt argues that this approach, in turn, requires a foundation in realist philosophy of science (or "scientific realism"[6]), arguably the "new orthodoxy" in the philosophy of natural sciences, though largely unacknowledged by political scientists (Wendt, 1987: 336).

The agent-structure problem, according to Wendt, actually presents two interdependent problems, one ontological and the other epistemological (Wendt, 1987: 339). The first and more fundamental problem concerns the nature of both agents and structure, and, since they are both mutually implicit, their interrelation. In other words, the question concerns what these entities are (or, in the case of social structures, whether they are entities at all) and how they are interconnected. Essentially, Wendt believes that there are two basic approaches to answering this question – by defining one unit of analysis as an ontologically primary (basic) unit, or by giving them an equal and therefore irreducible ontological status. Depending on which entity is considered primary, these approaches generate three possible responses, which Wendt defines as individualism, structuralism, and structuration (Wendt, 1987: 339). Neorealism and world system theory mean individualism and structuralism, both of which ultimately diminish the importance of one unit of analysis in relation to another. Neorealists reduce the states system structure to the properties and interactions of its constituent elements, states, while world-system theory reduces states (and classes) as agents to reproduce the demands (needs) of the capitalist world system (Wendt, 1987: 339). The structuralist approach, on the other hand, seeks to avoid what Wendt calls "the negative consequences of individualism and structuralism" by giving agents and structures an equal ontological status. Consequently, it allows the use of agents and structures in explaining some of the basic properties that, in terms of effects, they have on one another. In other words, it leads to an understanding of agents and structures as 'co-deterministic' or 'mutually constitutive' entities (Wendt, 1987: 339).

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[6]   By scientific realism Wendt means "a philosophy of science that assumes that the world exists independent of human beings, that mature scientific theories typically refer to this world, and that they do so even when the objects of science are unobservable" (Wendt, 2014: 43) . "The core of scientific realism," in Wendt's opinion, "is opposition to the view … that what there is in the world is somehow dependent on what we know or believe" (Wendt, 2014: 46). Finally, realism is "a philosophy of science, not a theory of society," and as such "does not answer, first-order, empirical questions". In other words, realism "makes it possible to conceive of states and the state systems as real and knowable, but it does not tell us that they exist, what they are made of, or how they behave", - "this is a job for social scientists, not philosophers "(Wendt, 2014: 47).

ARGUMENTATION

Thus, Wendt attempted to identify significant differences between the theorists' understandings of neorealism and the "world system," and to link these differences to their different social ontologies. He also attempted to demonstrate that, despite these differences, neorealism and world-system theory share a common, underlying approach to the agent-structure problem, that is, they both attempt to make either agents or structures into basic, primitive units, leaving each of them unable to explain the properties of these units, and therefore to justify their theoretical and explanatory claims about state action (Wendt, 1987: 349). The obvious implication of this argument is that neither state agents nor the domestic or international system structure that constitutes them should be always treated as given, or basic, primitive units. International relations theories should be capable of providing the explanatory leverage of both (Wendt, 1987: 349). Wendt points out that this does not mean that an individual research endeavor cannot take one unit as primitive, because scientific practice has to start somewhere. However, this means that what is defined as primitive in one research endeavor must be at least potentially problematic (or function as a dependent variable) in another, that is, scientists need theories of their primitive units (Wendt, 1987: 349). Notwithstanding their apparent aspirations to be general theories of international relations, the individualist and structuralist ontologies of neorealism and world-system theory preclude the development of such theories. In contrast, a structurationist or structural approach to the agent-structure problem would contribute to the development of theoretical accounts of both state agents and systemic structures "without engaging in either ontological reductionism or reification" (Wendt, 1987: 349).

According to Wendt, the agent-structure problem originates in two truisms about social life, which, he believes, underlie almost all social scientific inquiry. The first truism represents the claim that "human beings and their organizations are purposeful actors whose actions help reproduce or transform the society in which they live," and the second is that "society is made up of social relationships, which structure the interactions between these purposeful actors" (Wendt, 1987: 337-338). Taken together, these truisms suggest that human agents and social structures are, in one way or another, "theoretically interdependent or mutually implying entities" (Wendt, 1987: 338). Thus, Wendt argues that the analysis of social action invokes at least an implicit understanding of the individual social relationships (or "rules of the game") in which the action takes place, just as the analysis of social structures somewhat invokes some understanding of the actors whose relationships make up the structural context (Wendt, 1987: 338). From the above, it can be concluded that both the properties of agents and those of social structure properties are relevant to explanations of social behavior. In fact, both neorealism and world-system theory use the properties of both state (power, interests) and of systemic structures (polarity, unequal exchange relations) to explain states' behavior, although they do so in different ways.

Believing that all social scientific theories embody at least an implicit solution to the agent-structure problem, which "situates agents and social structures in relation to one another" (Wendt, 1987: 337), Wendt acknowledges that these solutions help theory's understanding of, that is, that structural

analysis has a relative explanatory importance. However, while advocating very different understandings of structural theory, Wendt argues that the neorealist and world-system solutions to the agent-structure problem are, in at least one respect, very similar and that this similarity creates a common fundamental weakness in these theories as structural approaches to international relations. (Wendt, 1987: 337). Wendt concludes that structural theory, in turn, is a response to these weaknesses.

ONUF ON WENDT'S STRUCTURATIONAL THEORY

For the purpose of explaining Wendt's theory, Nicholas Onuf refers to what he regards as a prehistoric debate, that is, Waltz's opposing to reductionism on the ground that the unintended consequences of states' behavior produce irreducible structures that have impacts on behavior. Onuf concludes that this unambiguous claim gave Wendt an opportunity to introduce the issue of structure from a scientifically-realistic point of view (Onuf, 1998: 239), with two goals in mind: to demonstrate the inadequacy of both Wallerstein and Waltz's version of structuralism and to propose a theory of structure as a substitute for structuralism in general. He also concludes that Wendt believes that Waltz was not actually a structuralist at all, as he defined himself, but an ontological individualist. On the other hand, he states that Wendt found Wallerstein's world-system theory to be too holistic (Onuf, 1998: 240). Onuf proceeds to discuss Wendt's central claim regarding structure – that capacities, even the existence of human agents, are in some way necessarily related to a social structural context, that is, they are inseparable from human sociality. For Wendt, structuration theory is analytical in nature rather than substantive. In other words, it represents what he would later call metatheory, more precisely a theory about theory (Onuf, 1998: 241). Wendt concludes that structural theory addresses the types of entity to be found in the social world and their relations. According to Onuf, Wendt offered four essential assumptions on behalf of structuration theory.

First, unlike individualists, structurationists accept the reality and explanatory significance of irreducible and potentially unobservable social structures that generate agents. Then, unlike structuralists, structurationists oppose functionalism and emphasize the need for a theory of practical reason and consciousness that can account for human intentions and motivation. Furthermore, these oppositions are reconciled by joining agents and structures in a dialectical synthesis that overcomes the subordination of one to the other, which is characteristic of both individualism and structuralism. Finally, structurationists argue that social structures are inseparable from spatial and temporal structures, and that time and place must therefore be incorporated directly and explicitly into theoretical and concrete social research (Onuf, 1998: 241-242).

WENDT'S CONTRIBUTION TO SECURITY STUDIES

The absence of a single, generally accepted conception of the agent-structure relation has spawned a variety of conceptualizations of the relationships across the social sciences, each reflecting the particular philosophical and

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practical commitments of its parent theoretical discourse. In this sense, Wendt states that even his own adoption of the terms "agents" and "structure" is not theory-neutral (Wendt, 1987: 338). Despite their many differences, however, "the agent-structure, parts-whole, actor-system, and micro-macro problems all reflect the same meta-theoretical imperative — the need to adopt, for the purpose of explaining social behavior, some conceptualization of the ontological and explanatory relationship between social actors or agents (in this case, states) and societal structures (in this case, the international system)" (Wendt, 1987: 338-339).

In addition to the fact that he is considered the theorist who introduced the agent-structure problem as such into the field of international relations, in attempting to resolve the agent-structure problem Wendt's most significant contribution is undoubtedly his thesis on the co-constitution and co-determination of agents and structures. Thus, unlike the generally accepted view in international relations theories that agents and structure are ontologically independent, with one necessarily having primacy over the other (that is, each is an effect of the other), Wendt argues that both agents and the structure have an ontologically equal status from the beginning. His structurationist approach avoids the weaknesses of both individualism and structuralism by considering agents and structures as "co-determinants" and "mutually constitutive" entities. With a slight redacted Giddens' claims, or rather, application to the field of international relations, the greatest advantage of Wendt's understanding in relation to the understandings of his predecessors (but also some contemporaries) is embodied in the "conceptualization of both entities from the start as ontologically dependent upon the other, by conceptualizing agents in terms of the internal relationships (structure-related relations) that define them as such, and by conceptualizing social structures as existing only through the medium of the agents and practices that they constitute "(Went, 1987: 360).

However, Wendt points out that the causal and constitutive effects of culture on agents can be exerted only on their behavior, on their properties (identities and interests), or on both (Wendt, 2014: 144), which can be questionable because it then means that, ultimately, there is behavior that is not directed toward particular interests (or in accordance with a specific identity), that is, the possession of certain identities or interests does not necessarily entail changes in behavior towards them. In this case, he was criticized for his imprecision in defining concepts, which, in principle, is insignificant in relation to the contribution he has made – his initial assumption about the simultaneous constitutive and causal influence of the entities.

Further, the essential contributions of Wendt's structuration theory, in relation to individualism and structuralism, are reflected in the acceptance of the reality and explanatory importance of irreducible and potentially unobservable social structures that generate agents, the opposition to functionalism and the emphasis on the need for a theory of practical reason and consciousness relevant to human intentions and motivation, by combining agents and structures in a dialectical synthesis that overcomes the subordination of one to the other, as well as the claim that social structures are inseparable from spatial and temporal structures, and that both time and place must therefore be incorporated directly and explicitly into theoretical and concrete social research (Wendt, 1998). It is therefore important to point out the contribution Wendt made by

introducing scientific realism, as a step forward in understanding and further explaining what unobservable entities in the real state of affairs have, at least in understanding structure as unobservable, yet causally significant.

Wendt's division of the structure into material conditions, interests and ideas for analytical purposes is also very important. The division of these elements also makes it easier to see their different roles in explaining specific social outcomes. At the practical level, such a division has certain advantages; however, the way Wendt explains their necessary existence in each structure is quite confusing. The central part of the claim that "without ideas there are no interests, without interests there are no meaningful material conditions, without material conditions there is no reality at all" (Wendt, 2014: 122) is questionable, and since material conditions themselves exist and will exist regardless of anyone's or any interests. Therefore, it is more appropriate to explain his primary idea in that, on the basis of certain interests, material conditions are used as resources, that is, interests cannot be realized without the use of those material resources.

Wendt's distinction "between two levels and two effects of structure on two things" (Wendt, 2014: 125), that is, the separation of behavior from identity and interest, in the analytic sense, is of particular importance. Although in reality they are inextricably linked, they are clearly distinct. Therefore, the possibility of analyzing them separately may certainly contribute to a deeper understanding of security phenomena in practice. By studying the structure at the macro level, its micro level (for example, a certain state), and the mutual influences between them and the behavior and identities and interests of its agents, mutual co-determination and co-constitution, in Wendt's lexicon, can be clearly seen.

Finally, the role and importance of the process in the agent-structure relationship emphasized by Wendt is certainly an advantage, especially given the infrequent tendency to consider exclusively static phenomena as constitutively and causally significant in addressing security reality, but also in international relations in general.

CONCLUSION

Finally, based the above issues, it may be concluded that the range of practical implications of Wendt's reflections on agency and structure on security is very broad. The attitude toward the co-constitution and co-determination of agency and structure enables the inclusion of a large number of unjustifiably neglected variables in the analysis of security reality. In other words, by accepting the view that agency and structure in this context are mutually dependent, but necessarily different entities, makes it possible to overcome the usual one-sided approaches to exploring the "origins" or causality of social and thus security action.

Taking the simultaneous constituent and causal effect of agents (primarily the most influential security entities at the national, regional and global levels) on structures, as well as structures (national, regional, global) on agents into consideration, one can see the potential contribution to predicting the dy-

namics of security reality and specific security challenges, risks and threats, or, on the other hand, a contribution to predicting the behavior of security actors.

Additionally, the contribution of scientifically realistic assumptions about the importance of unobservable entities goes beyond the scope of agent-structure problem. When discussing security phenomena and processes, we usually have unobservable but causally significant phenomena and processes in mind; as result, this approach seems most suitable for addressing any issues in security studies, which is applicable to any research endeavor in this field.

Wendt's emphasis on process seems particularly important for security issues, since almost all dimensions of security reality are characterized by marked mutability, that is, the possibility of transformation. Specifically, states, national identities, interests or interstate relations, and other issues directly related to the security field are commonly regarded as given, permanent, and immutable, and this is precisely the contribution of Wendt's novelty which he introduced by stressing not only the possibility but also the importance of change.

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