

Individual experiencing of states

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Abstract. The author argues that the international context provides an apparent environment for the individual experiencing of the state as a distinctive unitary and cohesive actor with its own intentionality and personhood, social relations and coercive resources, manifested not only by actions and force, but also through symbols, figure of speeches and other allusive forms capable of affecting human identity. As a direct personal observation, individual experiencing of states contains an inner, phenomenological plan, though it is not a solipsistic process and depends on people's shared meanings. Conventional perception of states as anthropomorphic actors regards relations between states as social or interpersonal relations, thus causal attribution and social expectations affect individual experience of states. Being primarily a common-sense phenomenon, individual experiencing of states has a wide-ranging effect on both 'conventional' and 'conceptual' understanding of international relations. In perception and explanation of international politics, real political developments are often overshadowed by observable, experiential, common-sense causations.

The state as a perceived phenomenon

Alexander Wendt rightly pointed out that no one can 'see' the state and international politics does not present itself directly to the senses.¹ However, not only ordinary people, but also many IR theorists and practitioners perceive the state as 'the main actor of international relations',² that is, as a player whose actions or behaviour can be defined or detected by observers. This can be done through anthropomorphic comprehension of the state as a corporate or collective entity. In other words, it is hard to realise the state as an actor or the state's purposive actions and interactions without its anthropomorphic conception.

Wendt takes 'actor' and 'person' to be synonymous and examines the state as a socially constructed person. According to Wendt, when people constitute states socially as persons, they become real for them. He points out that collective thinking is impossible without the thinking of individuals, but it is not reducible to

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¹ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 5.

² Graham Evans and Jeffrey Newnham, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 512.

the latter.³ So people constitute the state as a corporate person and that person/actor cannot exist without the individuals who constitute it. However, argues Wendt, this does not mean that the state can be reduced to its members. But how can we link an individual and a state, if the latter is a product of social consciousness? Wendt himself gives a clue to approaching the individual level of examining the state, by distinguishing the collective and individual levels of subjectivity and connecting the latter with the phenomenon of individual experiencing. He points out the importance of overcoming ‘a subject-object dualism – that the reality of state persons is separate from the observers who study them’.⁴ Analysing the narrative theory of state subjectivity, he remarks that ‘At the individual level subjectivity is more than just a narrative – it is also the *experience* of a narrative’.⁵ Wendt refers to Hall’s argument, according to which the actual experiencing of the state’s emotion (anger) is done by individuals.⁶ However, Wendt argues that states are persons in the full, conscious sense and they have their own – collective – subjectivity. This is not an ‘*ersatz*’ subjectivity, in which individuals experience a state’s emotions on its behalf.⁷

The state as an individual is a defining characteristic of the individual experiencing of the state. In other words, no person can individually experience the state without perceiving it as an anthropomorphic entity. We can analyse the state as an abstract object, but it cannot be experienced as a nonfigurative concept. As an object perceived by the individual in everyday life the state becomes part of a person’s *life-world*⁸ – ‘the world as immediately or directly experienced in the subjectivity of everyday life’.⁹ The state needs to be experienced in order to be part of the individual’s life-world.

‘Experience’ may be defined as ‘direct personal participation or observation; actual knowledge or contact’¹⁰ or as ‘Direct, observational knowledge of the world’.¹¹ Thus the individual’s direct personal observation or actual knowledge of the state can be regarded as *experiencing the state*. Direct personal perception can also be viewed as phenomenological¹² or phenomenal experience.

In everyday life people tend to experience states as anthropomorphic beings – as entities with their own self, intentions, behaviour and character. The existence of states is a fact of people’s life and consciousness, so states become part of the individuals’ life world. The state may be an abstract notion for a scholar, but for ordinary individuals states do exist in their everyday life as real, perceptible entities, in the same way as people, animals, mountains, trees, business organisations, football clubs, theatres, music and so on. People create the state as means of political and legal settlement, but once created, the state becomes real for people. Thus we consider or analyse states as real and independent objects. However, states are not just objects,

³ Alexander Wendt, ‘The State as Person in International Theory’, *Review of International Studies*, 30:2 (2004), p. 304.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

⁸ The concept of life-world (*Lebenswelt* – *German*) was introduced in phenomenology by Edmund Husserl and developed by Alfred Schutz, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jurgen Habermas and others.

⁹ *Britannica*. Available at: <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9048206/life-world>.

¹⁰ *Collins English Dictionary*, 6th edn. (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 2003), p. 576.

¹¹ Ted Honderich (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 261.

¹² Phenomenology focuses on the study of conscious experience.

they are subjects too, since they can act, interact with people and other states, set up and pursue their own goals, enter war and make peace. So we can approach states as both objects and subjects. But how can people judge the subjectivity of states – their ‘consciousness’ and ability to ‘perceive’ reality? Obviously, it is much easier to draw a conclusion about other people’s subjectivity, since they can demonstrate their feelings, speak about perceptual experiences, express thoughts, realise relations. In the case of states this is more complicated: on the one hand, we know that states do exist, act, organise their behaviour as active subjects just like persons, but on the other hand, we do not have the same evidence of states’ consciousness as we do with individuals. Here the use of *language*, phenomenal *signification* and the mechanisms of *social perception* act as additional instruments to complete the process of anthropomorphising the state. As a result, the state occupies its place in people’s everyday reality as a phenomenon which is understandable and more or less predictable, just as mythological personages – gods, animals and other animated entities with people-like subjectivity. Ultimately, state anthropomorphism, as a shared experience, becomes a common-sense phenomenon.

Dealing in everyday life with various aspects of domestic and international reality, any individual develops his or her personal understanding of states, their behaviour and interactions. This personal account of states occurs as a conventional – simplified, ordinary, habitual, customary phenomenon. Such everyday understanding of states and their relations is based on people’s common sense, defined as ‘the set of general unexamined assumptions as distinguished from specially acquired concepts’.¹³ Unlike conceptual (conceptualised, theorised) understanding of the state and international politics, the conventional paradigm is *experiential* by nature. Undoubtedly, political, social, cultural and other macro factors play a significant role in any individual or micro level comprehension of the state. At the same time, we can speak about individual differences in understanding states, based on the personal experiences of the observers.

Conceptual and conventional understandings of states and international relations interpenetrate and affect each other. Ordinary people and politicians may employ some ideas and concepts derived from IR scholarship, and no existing theoretical schemes in the study of international relations are free of common sense. Spegele, for example, named classical political realism as ‘commonsense realism’ because of its ‘ordinary’ understanding of international relations.¹⁴

However, political science and most international relations theories primarily take an ontological¹⁵ approach to the state. The state is viewed as ‘a distinct set of political institutions’,¹⁶ or a ‘set of institutions, dispositions and territory’,¹⁷ and so on. In an ontological sense, the state is a multi-plane structure with a particular set of territorial, political, legal, administrative, ethnic, historical, economic and other objective attributes. As an ontological entity, the state has different structures or

¹³ *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: American Heritage Publishing Co. and Houghton Mifflin, 1969), p. 269.

¹⁴ Roger D. Spegele, *Political Realism in International Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹⁵ Ontology focuses on the study of being, existence or reality.

¹⁶ Iain McLean and Alistair McMillan (eds.), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 512.

¹⁷ Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 32.

structural units, such as government, parliament, the army, and so on. The structural units can be more or less consolidated or fragmented. Each structural unit has its function, such as providing security, education, and justice. The structures and functions have temporal characteristics; for example, the election of a president for four or five years, the timing between the creation and ending of institutions, and so on. *Structural, functional and temporal* parameters of statehood are mutually important in their existence.

Obviously, some IR scholars may call into question the value of an anthropomorphic approach to states. Buzan, for example, writes about the state's lack of anthropomorphic coherence.¹⁸ As he notes, the tendency to draw analogies is supported by a number of similarities between individuals and states: both are sentient, self-regarding, behavioural units with definable physical attributes, exist in a social environment with units of the same type, and share what might be called a human essence, the individual by definition. At the same time, according to Buzan, they have some formidable differences, such as physical dissimilarities, little resemblance between territorial 'bodies' of states and human organisms. He points out that states are largely fixed in one position, their demise does not necessarily result in the death of their component parts, and *vice versa*, they have neither a standard life-cycle which progresses from birth to death, nor a reproductive requirement. Buzan concludes that the state is a significantly different type of actor from the individual, so the analogy between them carries too many flaws to be used safely. However, 'Socio-political centrality and military power make the state the dominant type of unit in the international system despite its lack of anthropomorphic coherence'.¹⁹

Indeed, we cannot talk about state anthropomorphism in the ontological sense, as it would occur separately from the observer. Anthropomorphic perception of the state requires the individual's phenomenological transformation of the separate parts, actions, events and other manifestations of what we call state institutions and representations, into a congruent picture. This process involves the observer's inner work. Thus, in a phenomenological sense, the state as an actor emerges, in Edmund Husserl's words, as an *inner experience*. Perceiving consciousness, in Merleau-Ponty's words, *imposes meaning* on the state. Imposition of meaning is a process of phenomenological or experiential signification.

In everyday life, states become apparent as entities inseparable from people's common sense. Common sense links individual and collective day-to-day experience and depends on both social and personal practices, meanings, values, attitudes and reflections. It 'contains innumerable pre- and quasi-scientific interpretations about everyday reality, which it takes for granted'.²⁰ As Berger and Luckman point out, daily life presents itself as a reality interpreted by men and subjectively meaningful to them as a coherent world.²¹ According to Kelly, people act like scientists, who observe events and formulate personal constructs to put phenomena in order and interpret them; these processes are psychologically channelled by the ways in which

¹⁸ Barry B. Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd edn. (Harlow: Pearson Education, 1991).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

²⁰ Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Book, 1979), p. 34.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

a person anticipates events.²² The same phenomena occur when the individual deals with the different aspects of the functioning of the state: each person constructs his or her individual actuality of the state as a corporate agent and generates a personal meaning of this collective actor. In term of personal meaning, Germany is not quite the same thing for any two Germans, nor Egypt for any two Egyptians; also, any two Germans would perceive Egypt differently, and any two Egyptians would comprehend Germany in different ways. At the same time, any personal meaning of the state is influenced by shared meanings, so Germany, Egypt or any other countries contain collectively-developed senses or significations.

The state is a significant factor in people's everyday reality, the object of their common sense consideration. Berger and Luckmann note that common-sense interpretation of everyday reality can be done within phenomenological brackets.²³ According to them, the reality of everyday life is filled with objectivations and a specific case of objectivation is signification, that is, the human production of signs.²⁴

Ontologically, states as whole entities are not unitary actors, but phenomenologically or as directly perceived and subjectively meaningful phenomena, they do appear as corporate persons capable of acting and interacting. At the individual level of perception, the state-actor emerges as an anthropomorphic phenomenon elaborated with the observer's personal participation. In other words, from a common-sense perspective, the state-actor is not a reality, which exists separately from the individual observer: the conventional mind takes part in inner construction and signification of the state as a purposive being. Obviously, the process of individual signification or attribution of meaning to the perceived object is affected by social norms and shared values and individual subjectivity and intersubjectivity mutually affect each other. Thus, an incident at the border between two states can be seen by the representatives of one side as an intentional assault, while the other side can interpret the happening as a casual and insignificant episode.

The anthropomorphic sense of the state, being naively reflective, gives some comprehensible explanation of reality, including international relations. An anthropomorphic perspective allows individuals to put state affairs in a simply understandable frame and helps to detect some attributes, which make direct observation possible. Hence, the state as a conventional anthropomorphic phenomenon emerges as: (1) *a holistic entity*, which functions as an integrated formation; (2) *a behavioural unit*, which emerges as a purposive actor; (3) *a personified substance*, which has its own persona and selfhood; (4) *a figurative body*, which is manifested in metaphoric, mythic or symbolic forms; (5) *a power structure*, which contains coercive resources; (6) *a social being*, which comes into sight by the individual's social perception, and (7) *an identifying form*, which participates in the formation of the individual's identity.

The study of individual experiencing of the state can contribute essentially to understanding the state, since individual and collective consciousnesses are mutually interpreted and do not exist without each other. Individual observers of international relations are not just witnesses, but also participants in these relations, because international actors conduct themselves taking into account the spectators – states, organisations, social groups and individuals. States cannot be recognised as fully

²² George Kelly, *Principles of Personal Construct Psychology*, vol. 1. (New York: Norton, 1955).

²³ Berger and Luckmann, 'The Social Construction of Reality', p. 34.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

fledged actors in the international arena without the acceptance of their statehood or state-status by other states – collective-observers. The individual observer's account of the state as an actor is part of a state's social construction and it constantly interacts through common sense with collective observers' account of the state. Collective and individual observers' accounts of the state are supported by each other, interpenetrate and amplify one another. No collective account of the state exists without its presence and interpretation at the individual level, and no individual level of understanding of the state matters in IR without its 'corporatisation' or grounding in collective consciousness.

In the contemporary world, millions of people directly perceive state affairs through the media and gain their own individual understanding of international politics. Conventional images of states become part of international politics. Politicians and diplomats cannot ignore this aspect of international relations and have to maintain conventional international politics. What is more, any individuals involved in international relations, including politicians, diplomats, scholars, journalists and others, have their own everyday and conventional experience of states which affects their perception and decision-making process. International relations and international politics can exist as a concept and can be constructed conceptually, but practical diplomacy cannot avoid conventional phenomena, including common-sense experiencing of states.

So in order to understand international relations, in addition to political, geopolitical, social, security, military, economic, ideological and institutional factors, we need to consider how individuals experience states – as a holistic, personified, behavioural, figurative, power, socially perceived and identifying phenomenon.

The state as a holistic phenomenon

The individual's holistic perception of the state is based on configuration of gestalt-structures²⁵ grounded in common sense. Construction of a gestalt form comprising a figure and background is a basic function of human perception. Individual perception of the state is also structured and the state as a holistic figure stands out against the background of the rest. Just as an image of a known person forms in an individual's mind, even from perceiving merely a fragment of his or her face, people are inclined to generalise fragmentary images or actions associated with the state and attribute them to the whole statehood or unitary state-actor. Thus a tourist or businessman coming to a foreign country may draw far-reaching conclusions about the whole state or the nation from the behaviour of, say, just one customs officer at the airport. Someone working abroad may get a sense of his or her entire homeland just from a quick glance at a photograph of a native street. A person who was unhappy about a judge's decision in court may experience anger at the whole state; a mother whose son was killed by a soldier of the enemy state may hate the entire state; and the student who spent a couple of years in a foreign university may admire the entire host country.

²⁵ Gestalt (*German*) – 'form'. A unified phenomenon that is greater than the sum of its parts. The structure of a gestalt is based on associative elements.

Individual experience of the state and its behaviour is a holistic experience. It is an experience of some integral whole or cohesive actor, which has individuality and behaves according to its own interests, motives or goals. We may deal with various aspects or parts of the state reality: with its institutions, representations, regulations, and so on, and that would present the ontology of statehood. In strictly ontological terms, the state is not entirely a unified entity or, especially, an actor. For instance, a person may, during the course of a day, meet a parliamentarian, get a letter from a local tax office, listen to radio news on a government's social policy and speak to somebody about his retirement plans; in fact, he may deal with various, often not directly connected, aspects of statehood. The person, who is part of a state system, may have very little idea about the political structure of that state or not even know the name of the head of state or government. At all times however, he or she would tend to experience the whole state. If a foreigner visiting Britain had a problem with the Virgin train between London and Manchester, he or she would tend to perceive this particular issue as not simply a private company's problem, but as a problem related to Britain. Things such as British beef, Scotch whisky, French wine, German beer and Belgian or Swiss chocolate are in fact generalised phenomena with clear gestalt qualities.

We may assert that one state has attacked another, when actually, only a battalion of armed forces of the first has attacked an army unit of the second. Early on the morning of 22nd June 1941, part of the German army attacked the Brest fortress on the border of the Soviet Union; however, this action was considered by all as aggression of one state as a whole towards another entire state. To take another example of the formation of a gestalt connected to the behaviour of the state: in the mid-1960s millions of Americans protested against the war in Vietnam and on that issue there was no national unity in the United States. Nevertheless, all perceived the war as that of the United States, rather than that of the American government and army; people now remember this war in the same way: the US-Vietnam war. As Manning notes: 'If France is the victor it is France indeed – not simply the people of France'.²⁶

Traditionally, one way of presenting the wholeness of a society or state is to consider it as an organism. Rigney notes that the image of a living organism is the single most influential biological metaphor in social theory.²⁷ The founders of geopolitics, Ratzel,²⁸ and Kjellen,²⁹ regarded states as living organisms which are born, grow and die. In Kjellen's opinion, the state as a living creature is an organic conglomerate of geographical, economic, ethnic, social and administrative components. Wendt compares states with super-organisms, rather than organisms.³⁰ Social, political and international theories also widely use theatrical metaphors and analogies,³¹ and the 'actor' model is more behaviouristic by nature than the

²⁶ C. A. W. Manning, *The Nature of International Society* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1962), p. 42.

²⁷ Daniel Rigney, *The Metaphoric Society: An Invitation to Social Theory* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), p. 17.

²⁸ Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904) – German geographer, founder of Geopolitics.

²⁹ Rudolf Kjellen (1864–1922) – Swedish political scientist and politician, the originator of the term 'geopolitics'.

³⁰ Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory', p. 306.

³¹ Raymond Cohen, *Theatre of Power: The Art of Diplomatic Signalling* (London: Longman, 1987); Rigney, 'The Metaphoric Society'.

‘organism’ model. As Holzner³² notes, an organism is a concrete physical–biological entity, whilst an actor is a source of a pattern of action. According to Holzner, it would be absurd to refer to states, armies or industrial firms as organisms: in certain respects, they must be treated as actors, and are in fact treated so in everyday discourse and by law. Holzner remarks that an actor must also be treated both as object and subject, and the most fundamental determinations of a collective actor involve legitimisation of its boundary and position in time.

As Wight points out, the state is more than the sum of the individuals in it.³³ But ontological analyses can not conceive this wholeness of the state and always tend to pick up only some elements of it. So as a political analyst, Wight comes back to the necessity of ontological consideration of the state, pointing out that ‘In the final analysis, state activity is always the activity of particular individuals acting within particular social contexts’.³⁴ However, whilst consideration of the separate institutions, parts and functions of the state creates an ontological angle for analyses, considering the whole state as a unitary actor requires a rather more phenomenological perspective. The latter enables holistic experiencing of the state as an integrative, unitary and cohesive entity.

The state as a personified phenomenon

Individual experiencing of the state as a distinctive entity partly occurs through its personification.³⁵ The state, as an actor in the international arena, is viewed as a personage with a particular character (democratic or totalitarian, religious or secular, industrial or agricultural, rich or poor, and so on) and self. Wendt distinguished three types of state personhood: legal, moral and psychological and considers states ‘only as psychological persons, since this is how they are treated in most IR scholarship’.³⁶ Ontologically states are not persons, but phenomenologically individuals make them such. An individual experiencing the state is experiencing the state’s distinctiveness, selfhood. Self is primarily a social-psychological phenomenon. Self as ‘the totality of all characteristic attributes, conscious and unconscious, mental and physical, of a person’,³⁷ might also be the self of a state. A person can identify himself or herself with that self, and this *state identity* is different from national, social or political identities. If constitutions or other important legal documents set up an ontological self-concept of states, people attribute psychological selfhood and related phenomena such as self-awareness, self-concept, self-esteem, self-regulation, self-enhancement, self-deception, and so on, to states, when they experience them as distinctive actors or entities.³⁸

³² Burkart Holzner, ‘The Construction of Social Actors: An Essay on Social Identities’, in Thomas Luckman (ed.), *Phenomenology and Sociology* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1978).

³³ Colin Wight, ‘State Agency: Social Action Without Human Activity?’, *Review of International Studies*, 30:2 (2004), p. 278.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

³⁵ Personification – ‘the attribution of human characteristics to things, abstract ideas, etc.’, *Collins Concise Dictionary*, 4th edn. (Glasgow: HarperCollins), p. 1104.

³⁶ Wendt, ‘The State as a Person in International Theory’, p. 295.

³⁷ Raymond J. Corsini, *The Dictionary of Psychology* (Philadelphia, PA: Brunner/Mazel, 1999), p. 875.

³⁸ Alisher Faizullaev, ‘Diplomacy and Self’, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 17:3 (2006), pp. 497–522.

As Manning notes, common-sense suppositions of the state as real lead to the attribution of motives to the state.³⁹ Individual observers explore the state's behaviour as a behaviour driven by the motives or interests of the state-person. According to Wendt, the state as a collective intention depends on individuals for its existence; however, not being reducible to the individuals, it has an internal, self-organising dimension. Thus, the state's inner driving forces – interests, needs, intentions, goals, motives – are perceived by individuals as 'autonomous' factors. The motivational self-sufficiency of the state does exist as people accept it and individuals acknowledge this determination autonomy, since the state's motivation cannot be reduced to personal motivation or to the sum of persons' driving forces. The motivational/purposeful aspect of statehood is key to understanding the state as a personified actor. People's keen desire to understand the sources of states' behaviour as the behaviour of important corporate persons is so powerful that it brings the phenomenon of state personification into conceptual IR too. In academic literature, we can find many references to states having human motivational qualities. Waltz mentions 'survival motives', 'aims' and 'goals of the states',⁴⁰ Donnelly writes about the state's 'natural' and 'egoistic desires',⁴¹ Hobson refers to the 'ability of the state',⁴² and so on. Brzezinski points out the varying motivations of states: 'France seeks reunification as Europe; Germany hopes for redemption through Europe.'⁴³ Jervis remarks: 'If the state believes that others know that it is not a threat, it will conclude that they will arm or pursue hostile policies only if they are aggressive.'⁴⁴ States, as Watson notes, 'feel the need to enter into a dialogue with one another'.⁴⁵ Realistic tradition in international relations theory takes for granted states as individualities or actors who struggle for survival and power in the international arena. As Sheehan points out, the idea of state personality – that like an individual, a state has a sense of purpose and is capable of rational action – is a key departure point of realism.⁴⁶ However, not only realism, but other theories of IR also utilise the idea of motivated state personality.

Why does personification of states happen not only as a common-sense phenomenon, but also in the framework of theoretical understanding of states? It seems that the presence of state personification in theoretical concepts of international relations is a sign of the individual observer's role in IR modelling. However, it is predominantly a hidden role, since IR scholarship tries to be 'objective'.

Individual perception of states tends to be emotionally saturated. Despite the fact that emotions are practically not presented in contemporary IR theories, they play an important role in common-sense understanding of international relations. This is why newspaper, journal and news agencies headlines often refer to them. Here are some examples. 'France and Arabs odd relations' (The Economist, 17 June 2000).

³⁹ Manning, 'The Nature of International Society', p. 64.

⁴⁰ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), pp. 91–2.

⁴¹ Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 49.

⁴² John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 217.

⁴³ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York: Basic Books), p. 61.

⁴⁴ Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 71.

⁴⁵ Adam Watson, *Diplomacy. The Dialogue Between States* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1982), p. 14.

⁴⁶ Michael Sheehan, *The Balance of Power: History and Theory* (London: Routledge, 1966), p. 8.

‘Germany feels laid-back about euro’ (BBC News, 14 December 2004). ‘US angry over Israeli upgrade for China’ (Middle East Newsline, 16 December 2004), ‘Russia angry at ‘dangerous’ US warhead plans’ (Financial Times, 12 May 2006).

People’s comprehension of sporting events presents another example of holistic and personified construction of states and their behaviour. Discussing football or other sports matches, people often refer not just to the actual team, but to the country as a unitary actor. This is an example of a media headline from the last European football championship: ‘Portugal beats historic rival Spain’ (Reuter, 21 June 2004). Billing provides some insightful comments on what he calls ‘banal nationalism’ related to international sporting competitions.⁴⁷

The state’s behaviour is often explained in terms of key personalities and states are viewed as whole persons.⁴⁸ A change of leadership in a country sometimes results in a change of international image for this country. As Girard notes, in the past, not countries but their leaders, kings and queens have had images, so the image of the leader was expanded to the image of the country.⁴⁹ ‘What is new today is probably that the respective images of Chirac and Blair exist, but neither can act as an accurate representation of France and Britain’.⁵⁰ The more the state itself is personified in relation to its historical, cultural and political identity, the less a change of leadership affects its anthropomorphic image.

People’s culturally defined individualism or collectivism may affect the individual’s psychological relations with the state-person: the individualistic sense promotes more independent relations between state and human personhoods while the collectivistic view supports more interdependent associations between them. Obviously, the character of relations between individuals and the state is dependant not just on cultural factors but above all on political ones. At the same time, psychological consideration of the state on the ‘horizontal’ or ‘vertical’ plane creates in people a sense of independence from or dependence on the state. That sense has a stake in forming all kinds of social – liberalistic or paternalistic – relationships between individuals and state, has an effect on understanding people’s and states’ political and economic rights towards each other.

The state as a behavioural phenomenon

What is the behaviour of a state? Buzan points out that ‘No agreement exists as to what the state is as a behavioural unit, let alone whether or not such anthropomorphic notions as life-cycle, growth, development, purpose, progress, will and suchlike are relevant to it’.⁵¹ If we proceed from the definition of behaviour as ‘the way in

⁴⁷ Michael Billing, *Banal Nationalism* (London: SAGE Publications, 1995).

⁴⁸ Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck and Burton Sapin, ‘Decision-making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics’, in *Foreign Policy Decision Making. An Approach to the Study of International Politics* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), pp. 14–185.

⁴⁹ Michel Girard, ‘States, Diplomacy and Image-making: What is New? Reflections on Current British and French Experiences’, in Alan Chong and Jana Valencic (eds.) with an Introduction by Christopher Hill, *The Image, the State and International Relations*. Proceedings from the conference on 24 June 1999: Selected papers (London School of Economics, 2001), pp. 206–6.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵¹ Buzan, ‘People, States and Fear’, p. 58.

which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others',⁵² how can we understand a state's behaviour as a unified actor or integrated entity? If one of the physical attributes of the state is its borders, how then can we speak about the 'presence' of, say, the United States in Europe or Asia? Do we mean that the USA leaves the American continent and moves to some other geographical space? Clearly not. Obviously, here it is quite another matter. A similar question comes to mind with the 'withdrawal' of one country from another, for example, Britain's withdrawal from India or France's from Algeria.

How too, is a presidential or prime-ministerial statement or a diplomatic note from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or an Embassy, or a legal act adopted by Parliament, perceived by people as the behaviour of the whole state?

Surprisingly however, in many political and international theories and writings devoted to the analysis of behaviour of states-actors, one finds no indication of how to understand the notion of 'the behaviour of the state'. It is as though there are certain self-contained subjects of behaviour with names such as France, China, Nigeria and Brazil which, much like Ivan, John, Ahmed and Sarah, enter into various relations amongst themselves. Not only conventional perception, but also the political approach to interstate relations assume that each state represents itself in the international arena as an integral and indivisible behavioural unit. Canada, for example, irrespective of its internal affairs, public opinion in the country on various issues, contradictions between different government agencies, attitudes of the population and political parties to the status of Quebec, is perceived, on the international level, as the sole commander of its behaviour. Even if a country, for example, France in the late eighteenth century or Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century, is torn apart by civil war and revolution, it does not cease to appear as an integrated behavioural entity on the international scene. The same applies to 'failed states': in spite of their almost total internal disintegration, the outside world may perceive them as unitary actors.

From a common-sense perspective, it is obvious that political systems or rules of law exert a direct influence on how the state behaves with respect to its citizens or to other states. Yet what we perceive as the behaviour of the state is always something broader than just the separate political, legal, military, humanitarian or other acts of state institutions and representations. For example, it is known that the state may have legal proceedings with other states, citizens or companies. However the statement: 'USA v. Microsoft' assumes not only some actions of the state's bodies of justice and certain lawyers, but also a psychological assumption that the United States as a complete and integral entity can behave against someone or something – in this case a well-known company.

People live within the state as it is recognised by law and common sense, and they are one of the components of the state system. The states themselves are components of the international system, which also exists according to both law and common sense. If law can clearly indicate an individual's relation to a particular state or states or international system, common sense needs to exercise 'objectivation' of the state or international realm in order to perceive it as a behavioural entity. As a result, a person typically comprehends the state as an independent body with its own

⁵² Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson (ed.), *Oxford Dictionary of English*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 148.

intentionality, interests. Manning remarks: ‘To say that the country behaves is to use a metaphor, but not more so than it is to say of a committee, or even of the electorate, that it behaves’.⁵³ In his opinion, that behaviour is of individuals only, but in terms of the relationships affected and the obligations fulfilled, they are those not of individuals but of states.⁵⁴ This perceptual transformation of the behavioural possessor is supported by anthropomorphic objectification and signification of a collective actor.

Within an ontological scheme we can discuss functions and operations of different state bodies, structural units, institutions or organisations which comprise the state. However, inner experience transforms these actions into the behaviour of an intentional, purposeful, motivated actor – a whole state. Thus in conventional thinking, as well as in some theories of international relations and in diplomatic practice, the state appears not only as a political, legal and territorial entity but also as a behavioural phenomenon. This phenomenon might be explained only in connection with other directly perceived aspects of the state, such as its holism, personification, figurativeness, forcefulness, sociality and identifiability.

The state as a figurative phenomenon

The state as an ontological entity may be described in terms of law, geography, politics and so on, and this type of language can be literal, with its clarity, or conceptual, with its more abstract categories. However, because the state is not an obviously coherent object in its ontological existence, its phenomenological ‘unification’ requires imagery; and the holistic and personified actor can be addressed via figurative language. Thus we talk about the behaviour of states using symbols, metaphors, allegories, metonymies, idioms, similes and other figures of speech.

Political language may include all three categories of expressions – literal, conceptual and figurative. But the more it alludes to the behaviour of the whole state, the more it tends to employ figurative language. Metaphors such as ‘The Great Game’ (Kipling; Hopkirk), ‘The Grand Chessboard’ (Brzezinski), ‘Heartland’ (Mackinder), ‘Clash of Civilizations’ (Huntington) and others are widely utilised in political discourse. Allegorical language is used to characterise state policy, as, for example, ‘big stick politics’ or ‘carrot and stick politics’. Allegories and metaphors are employed to create images of states, for example, ‘The Land of the Rising Sun’ or ‘The Land of a Thousand Lakes’. Political metaphors can have a considerable effect on international relations. We might refer to well-known expressions, such as ‘Evil Empire’ by Ronald Reagan and ‘Axis of Evil’ by George W. Bush, which became significant factors in world politics. Politicians, diplomats, scholars, journalists and the public commonly use metonymies such as ‘London declares . . .’ or ‘the Kremlin said . . .’ or ‘Quai d’Orsay condemned . . .’ Symbols, such as the state flag, an emblem and a national anthem are significant attributes of statehood. They also play a role in creating and perceiving the state’s image and understanding its behaviour.

⁵³ Manning, ‘The Nature of International Society’, p. 73.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

But why do people use figurative language in characterising states? Analysing metaphors in social theory, Rigney pointed out that people often use metaphors, similes and analogies in order to ‘reduce complex and unfamiliar phenomena to simpler and more familiar terms’.⁵⁵ Indeed, it is quite difficult to refer to the whole state without using figurative language. The use of language is an experience itself and it has an influence upon the perception of political events and international politics.

According to Jung, people constantly use symbolic terms to represent concepts that they cannot define or fully comprehend because there exist innumerable things beyond the range of human understanding, and that is one reason why all religions employ symbolic language or images.⁵⁶ As is well known, allegories, symbols and metaphors also serve as a specific language for the description of mythological reality. This means that when employing figurative language, people tend to mythologise the reality of the states and interstate relations. Berger and Luckmann point out that mythology as a conceptual machinery is closest to the level of the symbolic universe, in which there is the least necessity for the theoretical universe in question as an objective reality’.⁵⁷ Mythology as a conventional tool for use in everyday life opens up a convenient way to describe state affairs.

Lasswell and Kaplan argued that political myth is the pattern of the basic political symbols of a society.⁵⁸ For the state as a holistic personified and behavioural construct, mythological characteristics are also inherent. It does not mean that the state is only a myth; it means that in the conventional apprehension of the state and its behaviour, elements of mythological creation and representation can be used. Discussing possible remedies for Britain’s image, Leonard points out that it is not about visual imagery, but instead ‘we must start with the values, the stories, and the myths that make up your identity’.⁵⁹ Indeed, an individual may experience the state in a mythological framework. Thus, one state can be perceived as an idol and another as a demon. Psychologically, international relations and politics may easily be incorporated into a mythological model of the world.

Mythology, symbols and metaphors – a whole range of state imagery – are embedded into the individual’s everyday conception of the state and its behaviour. They may also serve as instruments for understanding an individual’s relationships with states. In a psychological sense, there are many similarities between the phenomena of a home state and those of a deity. Most people have deep emotional affection for their country of origin and naturally they admire, esteem, honour and adore their native land. Worldwide, nations commonly have glorified images of Motherland, Fatherland and Homeland as holy places or entities. Often these allegorical images are intimately connected with sacred symbols, mysterious forms and mythological characters.

In the mythological context, Motherland, Fatherland and Homeland relate closely to God-mother, God-father and God-parent. As the country of origin may have

⁵⁵ Rigney, ‘The Metaphoric Society’, p. 2.

⁵⁶ Carl G. Jung, ‘Approaching the Unconscious’, in Carl G. Jung (ed.) *Man and his Symbols* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1968), p. 4.

⁵⁷ Berger and Luckmann, ‘The Social Construction of Reality’, p. 128.

⁵⁸ Harold Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, *Power and Society: A Framework for Political Inquiry* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952), p. 116.

⁵⁹ Mark Leonard, ‘Rebranding Britain’, in Chong and Valencic (eds.), *The Image, the State and IR*.

feminine or masculine virtues, as do a mother or father, some nations have customised symbols of Motherland and others symbols of Fatherland, although both may be used. Displays of masculine or feminine qualities also depend on specific social, cultural and political circumstances. However, the concepts of Motherland and Fatherland are synonyms and they express one personified essence: native land. In many cultures the native land is primarily associated emotionally with Motherland, which resembles mother, and intellectually with Fatherland which, likewise, resembles Father. Both Motherland and mother are divine. Both Fatherland and father are stately. In many traditional myths, a mother gives warmth and love, and a father teaches reason and skills. An individual observer's perception of the state and his or her relations with the state are influenced by these kinds of mythological patterns.

The ways of influencing the images of the state open up many possibilities for branding states and manipulating their perception. Movies and popular film personages are among the most powerful instruments for creating images of countries and nations. As the Economist points out, 'Crocodile Dundee' transformed American perceptions of Australia.⁶⁰ Whatever image of the state – symbolic, metaphoric, allegoric and mythic – it helps to bring state affairs to people's life-world. Manipulating images of countries becomes a strategic objective in international politics.⁶¹ The easiest and most effective way to fix a human identity is to bind it to a powerful image. The image can carry legal, moral, cultural, political, social and other meanings and has an effect on the individuals' respective identities. But an effective state image primarily influences the individual's psychological identity with that state.

The state as a power phenomenon

Conventional consciousness may experience the state as a power structure with coercive resources, as a source of influence. The state is frequently associated with law, order, justice and enforcement, or, in some cases (failure states) – with the lack of these essentials. Dealing with state institutions, rules and orders, individuals get a sense of dealing with some personified authority with the ability of controlling the behaviour of people, organisations and other states. As a source of power, the state can reward or punish people materially and morally, create opportunities or obstacles for their well-being and development. The state can even pass a death sentence upon somebody and carry it out. Obviously, this can be done only through people and by individuals in the name of the state; however a perceiver experiences these kinds of coercive actions as an exercise not of human power but of the state's power. For individuals the power of the state can be a source of pride, respect or self-respect, and fear, oppression or cruelty.

The international context provides many opportunities for experiencing states as power phenomena. Speaking about international relations and politics, people often replace the word 'state' by the word 'power'. The 'great powers', a 'superpower',

⁶⁰ National Branding. A new sort of beauty contest, *The Economist*, 11–17 November, 2006, p. 79.

⁶¹ Richard K. Herrman, Image Theory and Strategic Interaction in International Relations, in David O.Sears, Leonie Huddy and Robert Jervis (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 285–314.

'balance of power' and 'power politics' exist not just as conceptual schemas or theoretical models but also as people's common sense of international relations. As an instrument of foreign policy, diplomacy contributes to the public experiencing of the state's power. People may experience a foreign country's might by seeing its embassy or ambassador's car, participating in the embassy's reception, observing diplomatic ceremonies during the official visit of the country's president, and so on. The size and magnificence of the embassy, the value and worth of the car, the cost and exclusiveness of the reception, the pomp and splendour of the ceremonies give the sense of the country's greatness and power. The power phenomenon in world politics goes side by side with the phenomenon of prestige.

As Winter notes, most often power exists as a potential force which is only rarely used.⁶² In human societies, he continues, the symbolic forms of potential power have almost completely replaced direct physical force and symbolic, potential power is usually called 'prestige' or 'reputation'.⁶³ So not only coercive actions, but also 'prestige possessions', in Winter's term, appear to be the means of experiencing power, including the state's power.

Prestige is important for both 'powerful' and 'powerless' states. During his eight years in office, President Bill Clinton made 133 visits to foreign nations, 1,302 federal officials accompanied him to Africa in 1998, and all his foreign travels cost more than half a billion dollars.⁶⁴ In a way, these 1,302 federal officials were 'prestige possessions' for the United States, its president and foreign policy. Which other country can present itself on the world stage in that impressive way? No one: it is a privilege of a superpower. Of course, a president of a superpower needs to be protected by thousands of police and security service officers during foreign trips, and visits abroad demand tremendous diplomatic and military preparation. But foreign trips of head of states of even far smaller countries also require huge labour and financial cost, since it is very much a matter of prestige.

Morgenthau described prestige as a political weapon and considered the policy of prestige as one of the basic manifestations of the struggle for power on the international scene. According to him the purpose of the policy of prestige is 'to impress other nations with the power one's own nation actually possesses, or with the power it believes, or wants the other nations to believe, it possesses'.⁶⁵ Morgenthau notes that two specific instrumentalities serve this purpose: diplomatic ceremonial and the display of military force. However, not only diplomatic ceremonials and display of military force but also economic and cultural achievements appear as evidence of countries' power. American movies, German cars, Japanese electronics, Swiss watches, Argentine tango, Russian ballet, Italian opera, Hugo's novels, Shakespeare's plays are national power factors. Nye's concept of soft and hard power is a useful tool in understanding different aspects of countries' power. As he describes it, soft power is the ability to get what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals, and hard power is the ability to use economic and military

⁶² David G. Winter, *The Power Motive* (New York: The Free Press, 1973), p. 125.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁶⁴ Demian Brady and John Berthood, *Bill Clinton: America's Best-Traveled President – A Study of Presidential Travel: 1953–2001*. National Taxpayers Union Policy Paper 104. Available at: www.ntu.org.

⁶⁵ Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Brief edition, revised by K. W. Thompson (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), p. 94.

strength to make others follow your wishes.⁶⁶ According to Nye, soft power is based on values and culture. This concept assumes that countries may possess and demonstrate both soft and hard powers and these two power sources are quite different by nature. Thus larger diplomatic service, military presence, economic activity and cultural manifestation abroad mean higher visibility and stronger influence of the state on the international stage, which can be detected on both conceptual and conventional levels.

As Manning pointed out, diplomacy is about influence.⁶⁷ It is also an art of communication and signalling full of hidden codes.⁶⁸ Jonsson and Aggestam consider diplomacy as a system of communication between governments and point out that classic diplomacy rested almost entirely on linguistic skills. According to them classic diplomatic dialogue can be seen as a system of signals, based on a code shared by the members of the profession, while in the television age, we are witnessing the enhancement of the significance of non-verbal signalling and body language. As Jonsson and Aggestam notes, diplomatic body language includes everything from personal gestures to the manipulation of military force. The symbols of prestige, power, interest and intentions such as the venue and format of negotiations and the level of delegations are aspects of diplomatic body language. This language can involve the mobilisation and movement of military hardware, especially naval forces, since they are capable of conspicuous presence and withdrawal. Diplomatic actors broadly understand and try to exploit a mixture of verbal and non-verbal communication to send desired messages to multiple audiences.⁶⁹ Indeed, in the age of mass communication, a very large audience continuously receives diplomatic signalling and a large number of individuals experience the power of states via TV and other media. International conflicts, military clashes, economic blockades, trade wars, cultural antagonism and other manifestations of international power politics also contribute to the individual experiencing states as power structures in highly emotional and biased forms.

The state as a social phenomenon

Using the mechanisms of causal attribution, people tend to interpret the behaviour of states as they would the behaviour of individuals. As is known from social psychology, individuals attribute behavioural causes to external or internal factors. Fritz Heider, Harold Kelley and other social psychologists developed attribution theory with regard to interpersonal relations. Analysing ordinary people's interpretation of human behaviour, Heider talked about 'common sense' or 'naïve psychology' – unsophisticated explanation of people's actions in everyday life.⁷⁰ We also see widespread naïve evaluation of international relations based on attribution mechanisms: state behaviour can be explained by the influence of situational

⁶⁶ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's only Superpower Can't Go Alone* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁶⁷ Manning, 'The Nature of International Society', p. 183.

⁶⁸ Raymond Cohen, 'Theatre of Power'.

⁶⁹ Christen Jonsson and Karin Aggestam, 'Trends in Diplomatic Signalling', in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 1999), pp. 151–70.

⁷⁰ Fritz Hider, *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958).

(external) or dispositional (internal) factors, depending on whose behaviour it is and also in accordance with the attitudes and beliefs of the observers.

Currently, attribution theory has mainly social psychological implications. Social psychologists study intra-personal, interpersonal, intergroup and societal attributions.⁷¹ Attribution theory can also be used in IR related studies; for example, Heradstveit has tested Arab images of the Gulf War through the attribution model.⁷² Nevertheless, that concept has not been broadly applied to the explanation of state behaviour in IR theories, though scholars can hardly totally avoid the influence of attribution phenomenon on their thinking. At the same time, in everyday life people widely use attribution schemas to explain the behaviour of states. This happens because of the anthropomorphic perception of states, viewing them as unitary, personified, purposive and forceful actors, who enter into social relations with each other.

Usually actors attribute the causes of their behaviour to situational constraints, while observers attribute causes of behaviour to dispositions of the actor.⁷³ Generally, people explain other states' behaviour by internal attribution and their own states' behaviour by external attribution. But when talk turns to the successes of a rival state, people predominantly use external attribution (things happened simply because of a situation, conditions, and so on) whereas its failures are related to internal causes (such as lack of a state policy, unwise government strategy). Counter-attribution applies to the interpretation of their own states' behaviour (success is related to internal causes and failure is related to external factors). People who oppose their own government might use different types of attribution. For instance, an American who dislikes his government's policy regarding Iraq would tend to cite the Administration's flawed political course in order to explain the United States' current problems with Iraq; whilst a fellow American, who supports US policy on Iraq, would explain these problems by appealing to external factors, such as the influence of third forces, or the actions of Saddam's remaining supporters, and so on.

An example of the 'dispositional' statement on Iraq is shown in the following note: 'As a result of its initial miscalculations, misdirected planning and inadequate preparation, Washington has lost the Iraqi people's confidence and consent, and it is unlikely to win them back'.⁷⁴ And here are 'situational' statements on Iraq: 'American troops, initially welcomed as liberators by many Iraqis, increasingly have become scapegoats for a wide variety of problems inside Iraq. In part, this was because Iraqis had unrealistically high expectations of what would happen after the regime fell'; 'Former regime loyalists initially led the insurgency, later joined by Islamic extremists, including foreign terrorists who have crossed Iraq's porous borders, and military veterans motivated by nationalism and/or xenophobia'.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Miles Hewstone, *Causal Attribution. From Cognitive Processes to Collective Beliefs* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

⁷² Daniel Heradstveit, 'Attribution Theory and Arab Images of the Gulf War', *Political Psychology*, 17:2 (1996), pp. 71–92.

⁷³ Edward E. Jones and Richard E. Nisbett, 'The Actor and the Observer: Divergent Perceptions of the Causes of Behavior', in Edward E. Jones, David E. Kanouse, Harold Kelley, Richard E. Nisbett, Stuart Valins and Bernard Weiner (eds.), *Attribution: Perceiving the Causes of Behavior* (Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press, 1972), pp. 79–94.

⁷⁴ James Dobbins, 'Iraq: Winning the Unwinnable War', *Foreign Affairs*, January–February (2005), p. 16.

⁷⁵ James Phillips, 'Building a Stable Iraq After the June 30 Transition', 2004. Available at: <http://www.heritage.org/Research/MiddleEast/bg1771.cfm>.

An individual's state identity leads to more social-psychological or interpersonal models of interpretation of the state's behaviour, that is, approaching states as personified entities. In an emotionally 'charged' context an individual may develop some strong personal sympathy or antipathy toward the states. This may be one of the reasons why politicians sometimes have irresistible barriers in accepting certain types of information about their own or adversary states. If person A believes that person B or state B is an unreliable individual, A would have a problem accepting any information about B's reliability. The theory of cognitive dissonance gives a psychological explanation of the creation by individuals of a coherent model of the world and the tendency to achieve consistency within it.⁷⁶ Accordingly, a person facing cognitive dissonance will try to reduce this psychological discomfort and achieve a cognitive consonance, that is, fitting relations to cognitions. Jervis⁷⁷ and Vertzberger⁷⁸ have studied cognitive dissonance in international politics and in the foreign policy decision making process. De Rivera⁷⁹ and Holsti⁸⁰ have described how some well-known politicians refused to consider important information which did not fit within their system of beliefs. For example, Stalin refused to believe any information about the Germans preparations to attack the Soviet Union because this contradicted his beliefs, or Hitler was increasingly annoyed by German intelligence information about the growth of American industrial and military production, so he finally ordered his aides to stop delivering this information to him and even to discuss it among his officials. Perception and action are determined by each other.

Wendt says that people constitute states socially. This means the state is fundamentally intersubjective by nature. We can say that human experience of the state is also intersubjective or socially determined, since individuals' common sense is affected by shared values and meanings. We can also stress that people constitute the state *relationally*.⁸¹ For the individual observer international relations, in fact, have a quality of social relations. In the international arena there is no such thing as just the state itself: the state-actor appears through its relations with other states, so the state is always presented as part of interstate relations. Recognition and relations emerge as the basic factors of the existence of states and relational perspective plays a role in their experiencing by individuals.

Social expectations lead to the subjective interpretation of state behaviour. People expect that in some circumstances, state A will behave in a certain way and state B will take another approach. For example, current relations between the US and the UK, and the US and Iran have different social qualities which allows us to apply to

⁷⁶ Leon Festinger, *Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1957).

⁷⁷ Jervis, 'Perception and Misperception in International Politics'.

⁷⁸ Yaacov Y. I. Vertzberger, *The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decision Making* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990).

⁷⁹ Joseph H. De Rivera, *The Psychological Dimension of Foreign Policy* (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1968).

⁸⁰ K. J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, 6th edn: (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall International, 1992).

⁸¹ According to Jackson, social actors – people and states – are 'personated' by being relationally constituted (Patrick Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or 'People are States too', *Review of International Studies*, 30:2 (2004), pp. 281–7). In a wider sense 'socially' and 'relationally' are synonymous and both Wendt and Jackson agree that if people constitutes a state as a person, then it becomes a person for them. However, there is one essential difference in their concepts of state: Wendt sees the internal, self-organising quality or dimension of state, which is not reducible to the social context, whereas Jackson does not see this.

them different socially defined terms, such as ‘friendly – unfriendly’, ‘warm – cool’, ‘honest – dishonest’ and so on. In the current situation, even if Iran and the US have some objective common interests, social expectations about their enmity may affect decision-makers and the public. It is normal international practice when a leader of a country writes a letter to leaders of other countries, sometimes even without formal diplomatic ties. However, a letter sent by the Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to the president of the United States George Bush on 8 May 2006 provoked much surprise in the world. ‘Tehran in surprise approach to Bush’, was the headline of the Financial Times on 9 May 2006. According to the newspaper, the president of Iran ‘demonstrated his capacity to surprise the world by writing directly’ to the American president. Scholars, diplomats and politicians may analyse and see different aspects of such a step by the Iranian president and of the US president’s position, but the perception of hostility between two countries certainly creates in conventional minds certain social attitudes and expectations such as a surprise. Social perception appears to be an essential element in the common-sense explanation of international politics.

Individual experiencing of states occurs through their social perception, since by perceiving states as distinctive and purposive actors, people tend to see in their relations not only political, economic and legal, but also social aspects, that is, they find interactions between states to be social or interpersonal interactions.

The state as an identifying phenomenon

Affiliation with the state causes a specific form of personal identity: an individual’s state identity. In other words, the state performs for individuals an identity-building function, and by experiencing the state, the individual becomes aware of an important part of his or her identity. People can identify themselves with the state legally, morally, culturally, politically and psychologically, so an individual’s state identity can acquire different forms. The state exerts influence upon an individual’s identity depending on its legal, moral, cultural, political, psychological and other qualities and according to the person’s attitudes and perception of these merits.

State related legal identity is citizenship. People belong to a state by birth and obtain citizenship by ‘natural’ law. However, in some circumstances the individual can change his or her citizenship and acquire a new legal status and national identity.⁸² There also exist people without citizenship and legal bond with any state, but they are comparatively few. Legal identity is tied up with official documents, mainly a passport. The absence of legal documents, which identify the individual’s belonging to a country, strongly affects that person’s official status and relationships with the states.

Individuals can identify themselves with the state as a moral person when the state is viewed in a morally defined context or as a morally sensitive or accountable actor. It is people’s moral sense of a state, which leads them to demand an apology from another state for a past deed. Making an apology on behalf of a defaulter state can reduce a moral gap between people and this state or the memory of that state. Not

⁸² National and state identities can be considered as the same phenomenon when we imply nation-state.

political or economic, but moral responsibility of states primarily affects the historic memory of individuals. Human rights violations by a state or crimes against humanity have clear moral aspects. A state, which demands its citizens inform against others and a state, which protects its citizens' privacy have quite different moral personalities and this obviously affects an individual's morally defined identity with the state.

An individual can also identify himself or herself with the state culturally if the state has clear cultural distinctiveness. However, some citizens of a particular state may be cultural dissidents or have marginal cultural habits. Some immigrants never can or wish to adopt the cultural norms of their new homeland and continue culturally to identify themselves with their native state. State culture is a corporate culture and it is hard to segregate the state and a culture peculiar to this state. Yet we encounter American culture far beyond America and Indian culture outside of India. However, one of the core characteristics of any state is its culture: a Mexican, who identifies himself or herself with Mexico, cannot be a stranger to Mexican culture.

The relation between the cultural identity of individuals, including state-related identity, and their political behaviour is emerging as a controversial topic in current public discussions. In the present situation, some observers begin to see the lack of cultural identity of migrants with the receiving state, especially in Western Europe, as a potential source of antisocial behaviour. At the same time, others defend people's right to cultural identity regardless of their legal status. One thing is clear: culture, including language, and cultural identity become very important factors in world politics. Recent recognition of the Irish language – the first official language of the Republic of Ireland – as one of the official working languages of the European Union by the demand of Ireland, despite the relatively low number of Irish speakers in this country, is an example of cultural determinism in modern international relations. Linguistic identity related to a state supports individuals' state identity as a whole, and people's stronger state identity requires a stronger cultural bond with the state.

An individual's political identity has many forms. It may become apparent through political party membership, election behaviour, participation in mass demonstrations, expression of political views, and so on. Individual identity connected to statehood as a power structure is one form of political identity. The state, in this case, is realised by the individual primarily as an actor who has political interests. Political identity with the state is especially presented in people who speak on behalf of the state, defend the state interests, and represent the state at home or abroad – statesmen, government officials, military and police officers, judges, diplomats and so on, although any ordinary citizen has some degree of it. Political crises, international conflicts, wars and other critical events and circumstances intensify people's political identity with the state. Usually individuals experience the highest level of political identity with their state during war. Patriotism appears to be one of the forms of individual political identity with the state.

However, patriotism has not only political, but emotional, psychological content too. An individual's psychological identity with the state is a rich and powerful phenomenon. It is a sense of belonging to the state, unity with it, matching the individual self with the state self. A person travelling abroad can experience a so-called ambassadorial feeling, defined by Torbiorn as 'the sojourner's perception of

himself as a representative of his home country'.⁸³ A person who psychologically identifies himself or herself with the state would see any threat to that state as a personal threat and any good to the state as a personally significant good. Psychological identification with the state often goes side by side with state personification. Thus tyrants can identify themselves with the state and perceive it as the only One who deserves solicitude. Tyrants can love their state sincerely and their devotion to the sacred state-person can be so strong that they can destroy other individuals for the sake of that One.

As is shown by Wendt and other IR constructivists, states take care of their identities and that plays a major role in international politics. State selfhood emerges as an important factor in interstate relations, diplomacy and individual-state relations.⁸⁴ Experiencing the country by living in it or somehow dealing with it gives to the individual more sense of its selfhood and better opportunity for affection towards it.

All other aspects of state personhood – legal, moral, cultural and political – have a stake in forming the individuals' psychological identity with the state. However, people's emotions – senses of pride, affection, love, passion or hatred towards states are mainly affected by relations between them and states as two psychological subjects or distinctiveness – selves.

Usually an individual's state-related legal, moral, cultural, political and psychological identities are interconnected and influence each other. Having been a citizen of a particular country, a person tends to have moral, cultural, political and psychological identities with it. However, sometimes an individual's different types of state identities may not coincide with each other: being a citizen of country A, a person morally can be aloof from it, culturally indifferent, may politically identify himself or herself with state B and psychologically sympathise with country C. A person may be granted political asylum and citizenship in another state because of the characteristics of his or her political relations with the home country. So the state identity of a person may appear as a complex, multi-dimensional and dynamic phenomenon.

The state and people affect and contribute to the constitution of each other's identities. Obviously human identity comes down not just to individual affiliation with the state. In fact, individual identity consists in many forms of identities, including ethnic, religious, social, organisational, family, and so on. State identity emerges as one of the important macro forms of individual identity. As such, by experiencing the state, the individual experiences a form of self-identity or self-experiencing. Consequently, the individual can self-attribute some psychological characteristics peculiar to those who are somehow identified with that state. Here we are dealing with national stereotypes, which play a significant role not only in the perception of representatives of other nations but also in an individual's self-perception. 'As a typical American, I am a businesslike person', 'as a real Frenchman, I appreciate genuine wine', 'we Italians are temperamental people', 'everybody in our family is punctual because we are Germans', 'like any Japanese, I never say no harshly in negotiations' – these are examples of individuals' self-stereotyping

⁸³ Ingemar Torbiorn, *Living Abroad: Personal Adjustment and Personal Policy in the Overseas Setting* (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 1982), p. 114.

⁸⁴ Faizullaev, 'Diplomacy and Self'.

sentences because they experience national or state identities and apply to themselves related social stereotypes.

The state, as an identity maker or identifier, is somewhat different in character from the state as a holistic entity, a personified substance, a behavioural unit, a figurative body, a power structure and a social being, since identity formation concerns not only personal experience of the state, but also the effect of that experience on the individual.

Conclusions

We distinguish two levels of understanding statehood: conceptual and conventional. The conceptual approach to states and international relations in general is based on theoretical analyses, hypotheses and schemes, not necessarily connected with an individual's life-world; the conventional approach is based on peoples' common sense, shared meanings and personal signification of perceived phenomena. In daily-life observation of the state, individuals rely primarily on their actual perception, not on abstract concepts. Conceptually the state emerges as an object of explicit reflection; conventionally, as a directly experienced phenomenon. However, since the state can not be represented in people's senses directly, its experience happens through an individual's direct personal observation or actual knowledge of the state as an anthropomorphic entity.

Perceiving states in everyday life, individuals attribute to them anthropomorphic qualities and this allows them to include states and their relations in common-sense actuality. Language as well as phenomenal signification and social perception are biased towards state anthropomorphism. By acquiring anthropomorphic qualities, the state becomes a conventional and customary entity. Thus, the state appears in an individual's consciousness as (1) a *holistic entity* with its integrity, comprehensiveness and cohesiveness; (2) a *behavioural unit* with its intentionality, interests and ability to act; (3) a *personified substance* with its distinctiveness, individuality, personhood and selfhood; (4) a *figurative body* with its symbolic, metaphoric and other allusive representation; (5) a *power structure* with its forcefulness, strength, might and coerciveness; (6) a *social being* with its social relations with other states and individuals; and (7) an *identifying form* with its ability to develop the individual identity. By experiencing these qualities, an individual experiences the state.

While people perceive states as anthropomorphic actors with the above-mentioned attributes, the model of the international system will have a conventional character. Broad use of anthropomorphic models in IR scholarship means that, in many ways, current international relations paradigms are still conventional and do not break away from the individual's common sense. Because experiencing the state is related to its anthropomorphic perception, the conventional mind sees international relations in an interpersonal perspective. This forms individuals' socio-psychological attitudes towards the states and their psychologically determined judgment of states' behaviour and relations.

Widespread attribution of some social qualities to relations between states shows that political and psychological factors are embodied in one another. Thus, in analysing international politics, people often apply actor-centred explanations to

negatively identified states, but observer-centred explanations to positively identified states. This means people usually put more effort into understanding countries which they already respect and love, but mostly see only external aspects of behaviours of states which they admire or know less.

Individual experiencing of the state has a profound effect on how people understand and conduct international relations. Considering state affairs in everyday life, people often unintentionally use common-sense judgements, psychological concepts and socially defined relational models in order to understand and explain international politics. International relations, in a way, appear as an area of social or interpersonal relations where the actors sort out their relationships like people around them. Moreover, any individual observer experiencing states enters into a personal relationship with the state-actor. This further complicates the individual subjectivity of states: on a personal level international relations embrace all kinds of human relations. So in daily life, world politics apparently exists as a world of human politics, and more comprehensive models of IR need to take the phenomenology and social psychology of international relations into account.

In politics, including international politics, many phenomena are based on the supremacy of the observable experience over real political developments. Experience emerges through direct perception, and perception creates subjective reality and the life-world. Even the use of language as a perceptible experience contributes to understanding and constructing political realities. People's experience of the state can be tied up with many conventions and common-sense observations. In December 1991, the leaders of Russia, Ukraine and Byelorussia, Boris Yeltsin, Leonid Kravchuk and Stanislau Shushkevich signed the Belovezhskaya Pushcha Accord, which announced the dissolution of the Soviet Union and establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Independently of real political events, structural changes and legal consequences, millions of people suddenly realised that the country where they had been living for many years did not exist any more. This happened not just because the USSR abruptly disappeared as an entity which could be seen earlier but was no longer visible. Of course, many profound political events which determined the collapse of the Soviet Union preceded the Belovezhskaya Pushcha Accord; but solely because of its observable symbolic end, for millions of people the whole state was gone for good. A person who is sitting at home but preparing to go out and thinking about what to wear can hear on the radio that the temperature outside is cold. This does not mean much, since common sense says that people do not necessarily wear warm clothes in such temperatures. However, if that person looks out the window at the people outside and sees that most of them are wearing warm clothes, this will be a definite signal of cold weather and the need to dress accordingly. Similarly, not only can politics create conventions, but conventions can construct politics.

Indeed, common-sense IR is supported by many conventions – like the existence of ministries and ministers of foreign affairs, embassies and ambassadors which sometimes or partly appear to be proof of the existence of the foreign policy of a country and even more – the existence of the country itself. This is like a small knot which indicates the existence of something that must be remembered. Symbolism is essential in common-sense IR: recognition of a country by the international community, sending and receiving of ambassadors, celebrating national holidays, having governments and envoys, going abroad with official visits – all this is

important for individuals as the perceivable indication of statehood and state affairs. Not only ordinary people, but political decision makers are influenced by these perceptible and common-sense tools of international political reality. Conventional IR is tied up with individuals' perception, which is affected by signification, social determination and causal attribution.

Here some parallels may be drawn with the famous theory of James-Lange regarding the origin of emotions. This theory states that people don't cry because they feel sorry, but feel sorry because they cry; people don't strike because they are angry but they are angry because they strike; people don't tremble because they are afraid but they are afraid because they tremble. Coming back to international relations, common sense says that the embassy of a country is set up in a foreign country because the state and its foreign policy exist. In fact, in some cases the establishment of a country's embassy in a foreign country might be conditioned by the need to prove the existence of the state and creates some direction in its foreign policy. If for many big powers the establishment of their embassies abroad is part of a policy of prestige, for many small countries it is part of a policy of existence or survival. Just as Buddha's Smile can create in an individual inner peace and joy, perceived reality can create actual reality. Not only public diplomacy and international political propaganda, but all conventional or experiential international relations can be based on the placebo effect.