

The Constraints of Change: Deconstructing the Westphalian Narrative in Theory and Practice

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This paper explores the relationship between the Westphalian narrative and change in world politics, and in particular how it promotes certain state-centric futures while oppressing alternative possibilities. The discipline still has an uneasy relationship with history, particularly when it comes to long-term historical change or epochal transformations (Lawson 2010). Part of the reason, this paper argues, has to do with IR's most fundamental and untouched premise: the historical view that locates the origin and essence of contemporary international system (the object of study of IR) with the order constituted by sovereign territorial states claimed to be formed in Europe by the so-called "Peace of Westphalia," or the Westphalian narrative. Since it is not so common to see the "Peace of Westphalia" as a watershed moment in world history outside of the discipline, such difference in historical views imply that there is a certain systemic, structural cognitive bias built into the study.

This does not mean that the Westphalian narrative has been accepted uncritically. Rather, the so-called "myth of Westphalia" has been routinely criticized by both IR and non-IR specialists. Starting off with Stephen Krasner's (1999) critique of the sovereign state model as "organized hypocrisy," such body of critical literature can be categorized into two groups: descriptive and normative critiques. First, "descriptive critique" attempts to rectify the cognitive bias by replacing the historical description of the "Peace of Westphalia" with a more genuine origin. Representative of such an approach are the works by Andreas Osiander (2001) and Kinji Akashi (2009). While these studies achieved great empirical results with their detailed studies on the historical formation of the sovereign state system, it has not impacted the framework in which IR analyzes contemporary international relations. Second, "normative critique" points to the fact that a biased historical view is ingrained in the formation of the discipline. Typical of this type of critique are the works by Justin Rosenberg (1994), Benno Teschke (2003) and John Hobson (2004). Compared to the first approach, this group actively promotes change in the analytical framework of existing IR,

but because their perspective of critique is exogenous, it tends to be marginalized in (or externalized from) the discipline through the process of the mutual co-constitution between IR as a discipline and international relations in practice. Seen from the existing scholarship, this can lead to the judgement that it is just another closed analysis based on an (minor) alternative view of history.

Nevertheless, critiques by the “myth-busters” have not led to an overhaul of the discipline, with its development premised on the Westphalian narrative. The reason why it does not touch the core of the discipline or has much impact on the discourse of actually existing international politics, is because at least for mainstream IR the Westphalian narrative is not about the accuracy of historical facts *per se*, but a useful story to introduce the subject matter, or in other words, a myth. Myths function not by being a historical fact, but by the validity of the world in which the myth explains its formation.

This function appears on two levels. First, IR to begin with limits its object of analysis to contemporary international relations (and thus has no interest in history), and the Westphalian system is understood as a model essentially unrelated to the historical realities of the “Peace of Westphalia.” On this level, the Westphalian system is akin to the market concept in Economics, where “Westphalia” is simply a label attached to the pure abstract model. The reason why “descriptive critique” is inadequate stems from this first level.

On the second level, the Westphalian system is not an exogenous analytical model, but is validated by reference to the Westphalian narrative in actually existing international relations (as the subject matter of IR), and by the construction of international relations with the Westphalian system as its norm, within the cognitive framework premised on the analytical model. In a way, the Westphalian narrative is performatively functioning as a myth—while being constructed at the same time (Yamakage 1994). Here, myth-busting, rather than a principally exogenous move on the first level, is political. That is, replacing the Westphalian narrative with an alternative historical interpretation leads to an intervention into the (re)construction process of norms within the actually existing international relations.

Yet on this second level, which mostly corresponds with the “normative critique,” existing critiques have not made substantial impact on mainstream IR. There are two interlinked reasons for this. One reason is that on this level, the critique does not go beyond the realm of historical *interpretation*. And the other (more substantial) reason stems from the performativity of the Westphalian narrative. On this level, different from the first, mainstream IR does have interest in history. Yet historical interest here lies in how the “Peace of Westphalia” (or the Westphalian system as symbolized by the treaty) was referred to in the construction of international relations that exist today, rather than how contemporary international relations developed from the “Peace of Westphalia” as a fact. Precisely because it was historically constructed, the importance is placed on the (inter-)subjective meaning of the event rather than its objective history. And if the Westphalian narrative is real on the dimension of meaning, then myth-busting is forced into the (meaningful but secondary) question of “why did such understanding of history that lacks historical objectivity end up with a strong normative validity?” with the validity of the Westphalian narrative as a norm itself reaffirmed. Hence historical critique of the Westphalian narrative runs into the limits

of constructionism.

In order to critically break with such discursive closure of the discipline, and to start thinking about epochal historical transformations, this paper proposes to go beyond the question above and instead asks: “what are the political effects produced by such understanding of history that lacks historical objectivity but ends up with a strong normative validity?” (i.e., to move from empirical studies (back) to critique). To put it another way, to open the question on the construction of the Westphalian narrative *within* the discipline towards the question about the process of mutual construction *between* the discipline’s subject and object. For this purpose, this paper distinguishes between “Westphalia as a disciplinary narrative” and “Westphalia as civilizational norm,” and between the “dimension of emergence” and the “dimension of function” of the Westphalian narrative. On the first, Westphalia as a disciplinary narrative is a historical view internalized within IR, which conceptualizes the object of study as the Westphalian system. By contrast, Westphalia as a civilizational norm is a historical view that is part of the normative framework of (actually existing) international relations that provides the context in which the discipline was formed, with the Westphalian disciplinary narrative internalized. On the second distinction, the “dimension of emergence” of the Westphalian narrative points to the historical reconstitution of how a particular view of history was constructed, whereas “dimension of function” refers to the theoretical analysis of the structural bias that gets imposed on the perception of reality through such constructed historical views. Put it more simply, the former is the reconstitution of “what happened,” whereas the latter is the analysis of “what was suppressed (which otherwise could have happened).”

If existing critique mainly targets the disciplinary narrative, or to a lesser extent on the norms, what this paper proposes is an endogenous, genealogical approach (Foucault 1991) that analyzes the Westphalian civilizational norms, disciplinary narrative, and the interplay between the two, adopting a method that comprehensively critiques how the Westphalian narrative emerged and functioned in both international relations as a phenomenon and as a discipline.

Crucial here is to acknowledge that the disciplinary machinery of IR is also part of the phenomenon of international relations, constructed through the realities of historical developments of modern international relations and in turn constructing that reality. IR did not emerge before international relations took shape, but was rather produced by the phenomenon, whereas the academic field produced then further constructed international relations. Thus the aim of the analysis is to see where the comprehensive critique will lead to, through the observation of the “interplay between the two distinctions,” mutual relations between the emergence and function of Westphalian civilizational norm/disciplinary narrative as a discursive closure, by broadening the scope from merely focusing on the emergence and function of the disciplinary narrative of Westphalia in IR (as in most critiques of the myth), to include the emergence and function of Westphalian norms both before and after the formation of the discipline. This is important in shedding light into the relationship between IR and history, particularly why it is difficult to deal with historical change in IR.

In order to better tackle the co-constitutive nature of the Westphalian narrative and how it constrains change, this paper chronologically analyzes the emergence and function of the

narrative in three steps: Westphalia as a civilizational norm, Westphalia as a disciplinary narrative, and the interplay between Westphalian norms and disciplinary narrative after the birth of the latter (or, the discipline of IR). The first section examines the emergence and function of Westphalian civilizational norms and how it led to the prioritization and structuralization of sovereign states over other entities. Drawing on Krasner's notion of "cognitive script," the section traces how the normative framework that standardized sovereign states developed, and identifies how the script affected actors in different ways, often privileging Western sovereign states. This section shows why sovereign states are still the dominant actor, and why (despite the flourishing of non-state actors) epochal transformation is hard to come by in actually existing international relations.

The second section looks at how the disciplinary narrative of Westphalia is deeply embedded in the structure of IR and why the arguments of the "myth-busters" fell short. It identifies the theoretical aporia of IR as the accumulation of inconsistencies between the determination to focus on sovereign states and inter-state relations on the one hand, and increasing importance of non-state actors that forces the discipline to "graft perspectives" and "extend domains" on top of its state-centric core to respond to such realities on the other hand. This section shows why alternative historical possibilities are difficult to even imagine, and why we only talk about historical change of the past or the future, but never the present.

The third section analyzes the co-constitutive function of the Westphalian narrative, and the interplay between Westphalian civilizational norms and the disciplinary narrative. It identifies the function of the disciplinary narrative of Westphalia and what was suppressed through the abstraction, naturalization and substantialization phase. Not merely an academic development, however, these three phases also correspond to the historical evolution of international relations in practice. Hence, the analysis comes to a full circle, with the disciplinary narrative of Westphalia derived from the normative framework of Westphalia, which in turn functions to discipline actually existing international relations with the sovereign nation-states as the dominant actor, promoting certain state-centric futures while oppressing alternative possibilities. In this way the feedback loop of the Westphalian narrative contributes to the maintenance of hegemony in terms of appropriating the operation, maintenance and revision of the "interpretive authority" of history. Conclusion follows.

1. Westphalia as Civilizational Norm

The first step in unpacking how the Westphalian narrative constrains change is to examine the normative framework of (actually existing) international relations that prioritizes sovereign states over other entities. Westphalian norms provided the historical preconditions for the disciplinary narrative of Westphalia in IR, and exploring how it emerged and functioned (and is functioning now) is crucial in understanding why sovereign states remain the dominant actor (and why other actors are considered only secondary) in international relations today.

A useful starting point to examine this is what Krasner (1999, 2001) calls the "organized hypocrisy." According to Krasner, the Westphalian sovereign state model, based on the principles of autonomy, territory, mutual recognition and control, has never been an

accurate historical description with violations much more enduring characteristic. Thus, for Krasner (2001: 19; emphasis added) “The sovereign state model is a *cognitive script* characterized by organized hypocrisy. Organized hypocrisy occurs when norms are decoupled from actions.” Yet where Krasner falls short is to acknowledge that in performing this cognitive script, the binding force of “organized hypocrisy” can vary, depending on whether the actor is also involved in writing and directing of the script or just genuinely acting it. Here, a paradox emerges whereby small Western and non-Western countries without an “interpretive authority” on Westphalian civilizational norms (i.e., access to the script’s writing and directing process) tend to strictly adhere to the script compared to the Western great powers with such authority.

In contrast to such paradox, this section traces how Westphalian civilizational norms as a “cognitive script” developed and shaped sovereign states (and the modern international system; the dimension of emergence) and its political effects (dimension of function). For this purpose, this section highlights the performativity of Westphalia as a norm through political practices that constitute the sovereign state and the modern international system (Adler and Pouliot 2011; Salter and Mutlu 2013).

1.1 European Expansion and the Normative Framework of Westphalia

The historical development of the modern international system, with its origin in the Treaty of Westphalia and developing within (Western) Europe based on common interests and values, before being expanded globally through European imperialism, has been well documented in IR (Bull 2002; Bull and Watson 1984; Buzan 2014). Usually contrasted with the multilayered, heteronomous order of medieval Europe (Ruggie 1983), this historical narrative puts 1648 as a watershed moment in which sovereign states became the dominant actor in the early modern world, a nature of international relations that persists today.

A quick survey of world history will remind us, however, that there were multiple practices that fell outside of the Westphalian narrative even after the “Peace of Westphalia.” Westphalia as a civilizational norm had not yet been canonized as the regulating norm for diplomatic actors, not even state actors, in early modern (sixteenth to eighteenth century) Europe, as the idea of the universal monarchy was not yet eradicated. In addition, traditional order in East Asia with China at its center was rooted in a very different worldview (script) and system of practice compared to its Westphalian counterpart. China and the surrounding entities were bound together by multilayered cognitive scripts consisting of *cefeng*, *chaogong* and *hushi* (Kawashima 2012: 453-56). First, *cefeng* was a form of mutual recognition between China and its neighbors, where the latter sent missions to the former to be recognized. Second, *chaogong* (tribute) was a form of relationship that combined ceremonial rituals (diplomatic relations) and trade (economic relations), with the surrounding countries paying homage to the Chinese emperor as a vassal and bringing souvenir as tribute, while the Chinese emperor gave them gifts in return and enabling trade. Third, *hushi* was mutual trade without ceremonial rituals (*cefeng* or *chaogong*). Western countries as well as Japan fell under this category. In East Asia, therefore, a Sino-centric hierarchical order based on ceremonial rituals was established, with actors literally performing the “script.”¹⁾

The contested origin of Westphalian civilizational norms is even clearer when we look at the multiple “deviations” within early modern Europe. Evidence of such deviances can be found in the fact that mercenaries and pirates still played an important role and that sovereign states did not hold a monopoly on legitimate violence well into the eighteenth century (Thomson 1994: 10-11). In addition, the concentration of “state deaths” in Europe even after the formation of the international society implies that the distribution and function of Westphalian norms were different between Western great powers and its smaller counterparts (Fazal 2007).

Transformation of Westphalian civilizational norms from one of the many systems of practice to emerge as the dominant normative framework came with the birth of the modern world and nineteenth century international relations. While there are disagreements over the factors that enabled the rise of the modern world, there is basic consensus that the turning point from the early modern to the modern world came somewhere in between the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century (Pomeranz 2000; Bayly 2004). With 1800 as a historical juncture, the scene was set for Westphalian civilizational norms to spread to the rest of the world.

Barry Buzan and George Lawson (2015) identify industrialization, rational state-building and ideologies of progress as the factors that fueled the “global transformation” from the early modern to the modern period. Accordingly, international relations in the nineteenth century could be understood as a process where the West effectively utilized the fruits of global modernity that emerged as a result, overwhelming other regions in the process. Although the military power of European states underpinning the rapid spread of Westphalian norms was undeniable, emerging “civilizational” consciousness within Europe and the diminishing of respect towards other regions have also played a part. For instance, Michael Adas (1989) points to how the self-awareness of its superiority in science and technology has shaped Europeans’ relationship with non-Western peoples of Africa and Asia, particularly from the late eighteenth century to the nineteenth century. For Adas, even though science and technology (and machines as its embodiment) as the measure of men can also be seen during the so-called age of exploration, it was only after the industrial revolution that the attitude of measuring societal progress through the relative merits of ships, tools and weapons has taken hold. Such attitude of seeing rational societies solely based on science and technology as progressive and modern, while dismissing alternative organizing principles as inferior, led to the so-called “standards of civilization” where only civilized states qualified for equal relations.

This shift in Europe’s place in the world can also be traced in Asia (particularly in East Asia). Even after the rise of Westphalian civilizational norms, non-European regions in the early modern world operated under multiple systems of practice, with Portuguese and Dutch merchants (early arrivals in the region) following local Asian scripts to connect with the rulers. This changed by the mid-nineteenth century, with the “Western impact” (East Asia’s encounter with Western imperial powers) and Asia’s internal dynamics. The tension between Japan, an early adopter of international law (cognitive script based on sovereign states), and China which sought to maintain the traditional order including its tributary relations with Korea, continues up to this day in the form of territorial disputes.

It must be noted that such expansion of international society did not usher in a society of equal sovereign states straight away. The diplomatic, legal and bureaucratic practices that governed relations between sovereign states simultaneously determined the boundaries that separated them as a member of the international society and other entities. The result was a dual-faced order of a civilized world of equal sovereign states, and a barbaric world of hierarchical (and therefore “pre-modern”) Other (Keene 2002; Simpson 2004; Anghie 2004). Structuralization intensified, with international law (coded form of the Westphalian play-book) applied to the former, while existing systems of practice was rejected (apart from a small group of countries accepted as junior members) with colonization kicking in for the latter. In this way, the expansion and privileging of political practices that make up sovereign states, and the intensification of structuralization excluding any other forms of practices, resulted in the spread of Westphalian civilizational norms as the sole legitimate set of practices around the world by the early twentieth century.

1.2 The Political Effects of Westphalian Civilizational Norms

The problem of Westphalian civilizational norms as a cognitive script is not just for the history books, however, since it still imposes a structural bias that disciplines actors and inter-actor relations today. Here, structural bias can be defined as the “structural force that promotes political practices constituting sovereign states, while discouraging other forms of practice.” For instance, views that identify states as the sole provider of security, or assert that diplomatic relations should be secular, are a codification of such structural bias. In a similar vein, Turan Kayaoglu (2010: 194) criticizes the Eurocentric and ahistorical nature of the Westphalian narrative built into IR, concerned that it will reinvent the framework of normative hierarchy that existed historically. Westphalian narrative is problematic, since it brings back the idea of normative hierarchy, wherein “Western states *produce* norms, principles, and institutions of international society and non-Western states lack these until they are *socialized* into the norms, principles, and institutions of international society.”

While providing a useful avenue into the critical inquiry of the Westphalian narrative, Kayaoglu’s argument has its limits. The first problem is to frame the structural bias solely in terms of the West/non-West binary. It is certainly true that the non-Western world was forced to strictly adhere to the cognitive script, as seen by the emergence and development of Westphalian norms above. Yet there are also instances where the non-Western elites have appropriated the normative framework of European origin to achieve independence, or to establish an authoritarian regime. In this sense, the problem is not Eurocentrism *per se*, but the instruments of structural violence that operates in the background. The second issue with Kayaoglu’s argument is to assume that structural bias disciplining such actors and inter-actor relations mainly apply to historical cases. Unequal function of the structural bias also operates in between different states, states and non-state actors and different non-state actors.

Westphalian civilizational norms as cognitive script produces this structural bias, and the ability to access its contents is what this paper calls the “interpretive authority” of history. Interpretive authority of history can be defined as “the ability to influence the actual operation of the normative framework of Westphalia and the norms, rules and practices that

derive from them.” Crucial here is that the binding force of “organized hypocrisy” can vary depending on whether the actor is also involved in the writing and directing of the cognitive script (i.e., possesses interpretive authority) or is just genuinely performing it.

To continue with the metaphor of scripts, the distribution of such “interpretive authority” can be categorized into three groups: “playwrights,” “directors and senior actors,” and “junior actors.” “Playwrights” are the thinkers and practitioners of Western great powers that have historically shaped the Westphalian playbook, while “directors and senior actors” and “junior actors” are the politicians and diplomats, lawyers and academics that have sustained sovereign states and the modern international system by repeatedly performing (practicing) the movements and lines inscribed in the script. However, whereas the “directors and senior actors” are typically elites from Western great powers, “junior actors” are elites from small Western or non-Western countries. And since the “playwrights” and “directors and senior actors” are usually from the same theatrical company, they can demand certain changes or go off the script, while the “junior actors” are expected to stick to their lines. For this reason, while Krasner conceptualized “organized hypocrisy” as the gap between the script and action, this is only applicable to the Western great powers (playwrights, directors and senior actors).

This distribution of interpretive authority also influences its function. First, on the operational level, only actors that have the interpretive authority can operate a double standard on norms. Second, on the level of revision, those that aspire “post-Westphalia” are limited to Western countries. Furthermore, through mutual reference with the disciplinary narrative, Westphalian civilizational norms make structural bias (which it produces) invisible. This is because IR “scientifically” verifies the cognitive script mainly performed today as the sole legitimate narrative, effectively erasing its history and political nature, and as a result blocking other scripts from serious consideration. As such, a feedback cycle emerges where the disciplinary narrative dressed in scientific legitimacy strengthens the normative framework of Westphalia which in turn confirms political practices associated to the sovereign state (which actors with the interpretive authority approves) as the only game in town. This kind of “invisibilization” mechanism is the political effects of the Westphalian narrative. Here, Westphalian civilizational norms/disciplinary narrative is determined as the only authentic historical interpretation, while those that do not fit neatly gets marginalized or relegated to the realm of exception. As a result, diverse historical possibilities that could have materialized are closed down, while suppressing things that do not conform to the Westphalian narrative.

How does structural bias produced by Westphalian norms work in reality? The asymmetry of the distribution of interpretive authority operates in three relations: between European and non-European worlds, between sovereign states and non-state actors, and between different non-state actors. The first relationship is between the European world where Westphalian civilizational norms and the norms of international relations overlap significantly, and the non-European world where such overlap is limited. Take Japan as an example. Since the arrival of the “black ships” of American Commodore Matthew Perry in 1853, the story of Japan, faced with an international order dominated by Western great powers, frantically pushing ahead with the “modernization” of its economy and military via

the Meiji Restoration, and ultimately joining the ranks of the great powers by the early twentieth century is a familiar one to any Japanese. What Meiji Japan confronted was a complex and multilayered reality of East Asia where the “international order” based on relations between sovereign states overlapped with the “imperial order” consisting of relations within empires (Sakai 2007). For Japan, “Western impact” materialized in the form of unequal treaty with the West and subsequent efforts to revise it; Japan therefore studied Westphalian civilizational norms as a cognitive script carefully and was always conscious of and performed the role of a “proper” modern state. And such asymmetry still operates today, through the production of norms that underpin the political practices that make up sovereign states, such as human rights and democracy.

Needless to say, structural bias does not operate solely on the West/non-West dimension. The second relationship is between sovereign states and non-state actors, and here the asymmetry deepens. Communities bound by ethnicity or religion and stateless people are denied of their existence, with pressures to assimilate, and even suppressed if the arbitrary borderlines (set by European imperialism) cut through their area of residence. In this sense, the declaration of the invalidity of the Sykes-Picot agreement that redrew the Middle Eastern map to what it is now by the Islamic State was symbolic (Cheterian 2014).

Third, asymmetry also exists among non-state actors. For instance, majority of state-sponsored students choose to study in a higher education institution in one of the Western great powers from the nineteenth century onwards because they are acutely aware that only people with the proper rules of behavior are allowed a seat on the table. And this is not about the distant past. While the importance of global civil society or global governance as a space for non-state actors like NGOs is often stressed, it is rare for the voices of the global south to be heard within the hegemonic struggle of the global civil society (Germain and Kenny 2005).

2. Westphalia as Disciplinary Narrative

The second step in examining the relationship between the Westphalian narrative and change is to examine the disciplinary narrative of Westphalia that narrows our understanding of international relations to sovereign states and inter-state relations, leaving epochal transformation to the distant past or the far future (not a subject matter for IR). In contrast to the myth-busters, it highlights how the Westphalian narrative is deeply ingrained in the disciplinary structure of IR, which leads to inconsistencies and contradictions in the field while resulting in a restrictive view of international relations in practice.

2.1 Westphalian Narrative in IR and the “Third Assumption”

As defined in the introduction, Westphalian narrative is a historical view that locates the origin and essence of contemporary international system (the object of IR) with the order constituted by sovereign territorial states claimed to be formed in Europe by the “Peace of Westphalia.” This can be further broken down into two perceptions of history: first, as a historical assumption concerning the birth date and event (birthplace), that the constitution of the world as the modern sovereign state system was born in Europe in 1648, and second,

as a historical assumption concerning the historical process in which the international system as the contemporary constitution of the world was formed, through the expansion of this modern international society to the entire world.

IR basically accepts these two assumptions about history, regardless of their theoretical positions or whether they agree with them or not. Surveying common textbook accounts, there seems to be two patterns of reception. The first pattern inherits both the first and second assumptions, whereas the second pattern places a reservation on the first assumption but does not deny the second. The former can be termed “strong Westphalian narrative,” while the latter can be labeled “weak Westphalian narrative” in the historiography of IR. By contrast, anti-Westphalian narrative can also be distinguished into two patterns. A “weak anti-Westphalian narrative” accepts the birthdate but denies that the subsequent historical development amounts to the expansion of the European international order, whereas a “strong anti-Westphalian narrative” denies both assumptions.

A history of reception of the Westphalian narrative within the historiography of IR can be divided into three stages. The first stage is the period where IR increasingly accepts the narrative by endorsing the second assumption but not explicitly drawing on the “Peace of Westphalia” as a reference point. This roughly overlaps with Leo Gross’s paper (1948), perceived by some myth-busters to be the origin of the myth, to Richard Falk’s (1969) work that transformed the Westphalia conception from a historical concept to an analytical construct (Schmidt 2011: 613), from the end of World War II to the 1960s and 70s. The second stage is the period when the “strong Westphalian narrative” explicitly emerges, with the first assumption increasingly incorporated as evidence to reinforce the validity of the second assumption and the disciplinary assumptions that will be discussed below. Critique towards the first assumption in the form of interdependence theory and studies of non-state actors notwithstanding, this was a period where the priority of state actors, especially within the neo-neo debate, was confirmed at least within mainstream IR. The third stage is the period when reservations were again placed on the first assumption, but the second assumption was maintained. This roughly overlaps with the end of the Cold War to especially the 21st century.

What this brief summary shows is that while the myth-busters were busy demolishing the first assumption they were in fact maintaining the second, and therefore have not destroyed the myth completely. In a way, the myth-busters were criticizing the “strong Westphalian narrative” from its “weak” variant. By contrast, argument that affirms the first but rejects/places reservations on the second assumption (accepts the Westphalian narrative on Europe but points out that sovereign state system on a global level was formed through an interaction between various entities both West and non-West, rather than a simple expansion of the Westphalian system) is hardly available within IR and can be found outside of the discipline such as in the studies of global history. Furthermore, a genuine anti-Westphalian narrative of denying both perceptions is nowhere to be found. Why is this the case? It is because an important common understanding exists in IR that is seemingly related to the two assumptions but is not explicitly connected to them.

With regards to the relationship between history and theory, the work of myth-busters like Teschke (2003) and Akashi (2009) focused on the first assumption. That the first

assumption has lost its validity in light of the historical facts, and more as an “invented tradition,” is increasingly becoming a common view. Yet while skeptical to the first assumption, most attempts to tackle the issue, such as to move the birthdate backward or forward, or to propose alternative dates to test its validity as a benchmark (Buzan and Lawson 2014), only reinforce rather than disrupt the second assumption. There is also a kind of defiant judgement to argue that since there is a need for a benchmark, why not just make it Westphalia (Takayama 2010); and either way this must have been the experience of most IR scholars teaching first timers to the discipline.

An important problem arises from this observation: theories of IR can be ahistorical and still be sustainable, for better or for worse. In other words, even if the two assumptions are overturned, it is still possible to argue that “regardless of the origin, location, or how it developed, the basic rules of contemporary international relations do not change. Therefore, even if the first and second assumptions are overturned, IR as normal science will not be affected.” This means that even if both strong/weak Westphalian narrative as the prevailing historical orthodoxy are deconstructed, or even more if the two assumptions are completely abandoned, it could still be argued that the premise of the discipline remains solid. The scope of the myth-buster’s argument does not reach this position.

What remains after the disciplinary narrative (based on the first and second assumptions) is refuted by historical facts, is what can be termed the “third assumption,” which states that: “international relations studied by the discipline of IR, in the first instance, is about the relationship between modern sovereign states. And while other actors exist and play an important role, the most important actor is the modern sovereign state, and the most important relationship is those between modern sovereign states.” While the Westphalian narrative is considered to offer an explanation into the existential basis of modern international relations, it does not *directly* provide evidence to the validity of the third assumption. Westphalian narrative seems to historically assure the legitimacy of the third assumption, but this assumption is the premise of theory building (or the rules of the game), and in the sense that it is the current rules of disciplinary knowledge of IR, it can hold strong legitimacy—whether the rules of the game was born in 1648 or not, or expanded globally from Europe or not. This ironically leads to the conclusion that it can produce an effect of IR spreading as a global discipline despite lacking any historical foundations.

This third assumption refers to the Westphalian disciplinary narrative because the more IR achieves autonomy as a field of study, the more it attempts to historically reinforce its academic independence. Such actions amount to an invention of a “myth,” insofar as it uses history solely to authenticate the validity of its methodological process from the position of presentism. The problem, more than the Westphalian narrative being a myth, is the fact that IR is only linked to history through a “myth.”

Drawing on this third assumption enable IR scholars to argue that they do not need to fundamentally change their day-to-day research and teaching, even while accepting the myth-buster’s claims. Specialization and subdivision of the discipline leads to an uncritical acceptance of the third assumption as the rules of the game (production of research outputs, reproduction of researchers), enabling them to adhere to the rules while engaging in research or education, while dismissing concerns such as: why do the rules of the game exist;

why is the study of IR determined by such rules; why is IR bound by such premise; or how it should be studied instead.

The Westphalian narrative thus appears within IR immediately as the first and second assumptions. They seem to provide the third assumption with the historical grounds for further pursuing the studies. It underpins the argument that since the modern international system exclusively covers the globe in today's world, and because the modern international system is the object that human beings should control in order to solve global issues and achieve a better world, IR that studies it plays an important role. In this sense, the disciplinary narrative of Westphalia provides the historical foundations as to why IR needs to exist as an academic field studying international relations.

Yet a structure exists where the third assumption does not get automatically overturned, even if the first and second assumptions are rejected. In a way, therefore, it acts as the disciplinary norm of IR. As long as the third assumption determines the world today, therefore, IR can exist as a self-driving field of study, premised on the third assumption. What this means is that if the validity of the third perception is undermined, the validity of IR as a field of study will also be undermined. At a minimum, if the third assumption fundamentally changes, the self-evident basis of IR as a field of study will also be lost. Thus, the reason that the myth-busters' arguments did not lead to an overhaul of IR was because of their preoccupation with overturning the first assumption and their relative indifference to the second, and because they did not think about the linkage between the first and second assumptions and the third.

By relying on this third perception, IR places three centrism at the core of its discipline (Shibasaki 2015). First is sovereign state centrism, the second is inter-state relations centrism, and the third is power-politics centrism. As it is commonly understood, what underpins these three centrism is the concept of sovereignty/anarchy. Sovereignty provides the ultimate evidence of the qualitative difference between sovereign states and other "non-state" actors thus backing the first concept, and as a corollary the second concept is underpinned by anarchy. And the third concept is almost automatically reasoned as a corollary of both sovereignty and anarchy.

2.2 Historiography of IR as an Annotation to the Westphalian narrative

Examining the historiography of IR through the analytical lens of the previous section, the following hypothesis emerges. IR is a field of study that originally developed in line with the third assumption, which will be left intact even if the disciplinary narrative of Westphalia is stripped away. Whether accepting or denying that fact, it developed as a discipline with the premise of identifying sovereign states as the most important actor, acknowledging that international relations is first and foremost about inter-state relations, and maintaining that the center of analysis is solely on international relations with inter-state relations at its core. Such assumption, however, has not been explicitly acknowledged from the beginning. It has gradually taken shape through IR's continuous self-contemplation and verbalized.

Given this hypothesis, all theories and doctrines of IR can be conceived of as a history of interpreting and assessing the third assumption and the resulting three centrism.

Historiography of IR is a history of the changing deviation of assessments of the third assumption. It could thus be argued that there is only one theory and thought of IR, and all historiographies of IR are an annotation to the Westphalian narrative. However, IR today includes numerous analysis of actors other than sovereign states. This means that the object of study or domain is expanding. Despite this, the discipline still maintains the domain setting based on the original purpose and perspective: sovereign states as the most important actor and sovereign state relations as the most important relationship (Shibasaki 2015).

This can be termed the “grafting” of perspectives and the “extending” of domains. Grafting perspectives is to add perspectives with practical purpose of solving global issues in IR, such as the eradication of poverty or inequality, stopping human rights abuse and discrimination, multicultural and multiethnic coexistence, prevention of ecological degradation and the pursuit of sustainability. Yet IR as a “theory” has always prioritized the statist perspectives over these ones. No evidence nor reason changed this priority, and opportunities for such change were simply swept aside. Extending domains is to incorporate the thinking and actions of various actors or social forces that are vital to solving global issues, such as IOs, MNCs, NGOs, civil society organizations and individuals that are typically grouped together under the banner of non-state actors. Transnational or global governance, or networks of cooperation that transcend boundaries are representative of these actors. By having such a structure, the primacy of IR’s original purpose and perspective was never overturned—no matter how many purposes and perspectives were grafted on, or multiple domains of analysis were extended. What did such grafting of perspectives and the extending of domains bring to the study of IR?

IR has continuously grafted perspectives and extended domains even while based on the third assumption, which means that the discipline has increasingly become inconsistent throughout its “development.” While originally established as a field of study that limited its domain to inter-state relations, IR now includes a vast array of relations that goes beyond borders on a global level. Such expansion of perspectives and domains has pluralized and overcrowded theories in IR, while the debates go on leaving contradictions and inconsistencies unresolved.³ This is the theoretical aporia of IR.

The expansion of perspectives and domains proceeds by not overturning the priority of the third assumption, rather than by reconfiguring them, and therefore only treated through “graft” and “extension.” The myth-buster’s arguments that criticize the Westphalian disciplinary narrative, are essentially forced to go in circles in front of this wall of priorities—what is needed is to face and confront this wall.

3. Co-constitutive Function of Westphalia

The third and final step in unpacking how the Westphalian narrative constrains change is to examine the interplay between Westphalian norms and disciplinary narrative, particularly after the birth of the discipline of IR. Rather than an academic exercise of marginal value, understanding the emergence and function of the Westphalian narrative is important because of its co-constitutive function: both the norms and disciplinary narrative of Westphalia mutually (re)strengthens the state-centric system, marginalizing the prospects

of change in international relations. This completes the cycle of promoting certain state-centric futures while oppressing alternative possibilities as outlined in the first two sections. With this regard, this section identifies the function of the disciplinary narrative of Westphalia and what was suppressed through the abstraction, naturalization and substantialization phase. Not merely an academic development, however, these three phases also correspond to the historical evolution of international relations in practice.

3.1 Abstraction Phase

“Peace of Westphalia” consisted of the participation of heterogeneous and diverse entities such as kings, lords and autonomous cities, and thus far off from being made up of equal and homogeneous sovereign states. The norms confirmed at the meeting echoed *de facto* norms among the heterogeneous and diverse entities and did not necessarily lead to the creation of new norms with territorial sovereign states as its standard. Seen in this light, regional order within Europe remained “medieval” after Westphalia, and at best part of a long transitional period to the modern state system.

Another important point is that during this period a sort of continuity prevailed between the regional order of Europe and its non-European counterparts. Continuity here consisted of two meanings. One was the persistent interaction mediated by the global circulation of bullion (esp. silver bullion) that existed between Europe and the outside world during the early modern period, and in this sense, it was not a closed system (Frank 1998; Subrahmanyam 2005). The other was that early modern Europe, compared to other Eurasian regions during the same period, retained a high degree of political plurality and decentralization, whereas in terms of the forms of imaginaries of world order as the basis of diplomacy, it followed common grammar—imaginaries of world=empire—with non-European regions.

Yet if there was no deep divide between early modern European and non-European worlds, and if the order that actually existed in Europe was far off from the “sovereign state system” modeled in IR, then it could be argued that the Westphalian narrative has edited the history of actually existing “international relations” through systemic abstraction. This is because it is formed by truncating almost entire aspects that early modern European and non-European worlds held in common, and aspects that early modern Europe and today’s world do not share.

To see history by omitting aspects that are different to the present world is usually called anachronism. In doing so, aspects that are omitted are filled with presentist imagination, and thus this process of abstraction is accompanied by a rewriting of the past rather than a simple erasure. In the Westphalian narrative, the fact that various actors other than sovereign states were participating in the Peace is neglected and imagined as if only territorial sovereign states gathered to mutually recognize each other’s sovereignty. Here, because sovereign states of the contemporary world (source image of its imagination) are also nation-states, it also involves an implicit rewriting of the past to include sovereign nation-states (or at least its prototype) as constituting the European regional order in the early modern period, going as far back as 1648. In essence, this insertion of the nation to the past produces the effect of systematically suppressing non-nation entities (both representational and actual). This is the problem of the Westphalian narrative in the first phase.

Nation as a political concept did not exist in 1648. It is, however, certainly true that the nation evolved into a political concept in the historical context of Europe. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to rigorously identify why and when the nation was introduced as a political concept within the context of international relations, it can still be confirmed to be at least after 1763 and before 1842.

1763 was the year that the Treaty of Paris was concluded as a peace treaty of the Seven Years War. The Seven Years War can be located as the last of the preceding European dynastic wars centered on the hegemonic aspirations of France. Inter-dynastic wars leading up to the Seven Years War unfolded within the early modern order in a sense that dynasties still fought for territories as feudal properties. On the other hand, with the relative importance of the war fought in the colonies increasing, it was also a process where the spatial imagination as the basis of the early modern order showed increasing signs of strain (Armitage 2013).

The two popular revolutions that followed the Seven Years War (American Revolution in 1776, French Revolution in 1789) involved different European countries, but it also involved factors that went beyond wars as an extension of dynastic relations. This was because the subjects of war went beyond the scope of traditional dynasties that framed the spatial imagination of “international politics” until then, in terms of space or legitimacy. “International politics” transformed from inter-dynastic relations to relations between territorial states with the citizen as the sovereign—inter-*national* politics in the true sense of the word—only after that point. In this sense, 1763 was the year that the last war without the nation as a political concept in Europe ended.

1842 was the year that the Treaty of Nanjing was concluded as a peace treaty of the first Opium War. Particularly from a Chinese vantage point, it is probably difficult to identify this treaty itself as a watershed moment in its entry or participation to “modern international relations.”³⁾ Yet from a European point of view, the treaty meant the disappearance of the civilizational Other to modern international relations, since China was the last high civilization with the possibilities of relativizing the superiority and universality of the European modern civilization. Consequently, therefore, it first recognized in principle the universal applicability of the “European system of international law.” Furthermore, its actual application became a springboard for developing the logic and technology of control in correspondence to the degree of “civilization.” It is possible to argue that in the Treaty of Nanjing, the Europeans treated China equally as a concluding party in an inter-state treaty (although there was of course the asymmetry between the winner and the loser), but that also meant that they did not treat China as a civilized country according to their standards, let alone to think of China as qualifying for a nation (Cohen 1984).

In any case, the crucial point is that what is termed “civilization” here is a singular form of civilization i.e., the modern civilization. That is, the plurality of civilization has been erased from “international politics.” And the barometer of assessing such singularity was the existence of a “nation” as the sovereign (Armitage 2013). The nation concept, in its early adaptation, was often accompanied by the term “historic nation” (Wallerstein 1995). History here stands for the historical development towards modernization, retroactively assessing the past to distinguished itself (modernized societies) from those that have not yet

modernized. In other words, the criteria of assessing the degree of “civilization” was configured by those that perceived themselves to be a “civilization,” monopolizing its definition and interpretation.

As numerous historical studies suggest (cf. Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), nation accompanies an “invention of tradition” function that revises history to retroactively install its existence, but the Westphalian narrative intellectually institutionalized such function that flowed into the realm of “international politics” by erasing the historical origin of the introduction of the nation concept to the international relations context, and instead substituting it with the invented origin of the “Peace of Westphalia.”

3.2 Naturalization Phase

The second logical step is the naturalization phase, which treats the expansion of international relations constituted by national sovereign state as a natural development, the telos of history. As a logical step, this and the first step are two sides of the same coin, but historically this step is located closer to the present in which the canonization of the Westphalian narrative proceeded, since it involves a slightly more complex reflective process than the first phase.

If international relations constituted by sovereign nation-states are to be termed the Westphalian system, anything close to the model that covers the entire world did not arrive until the last third of the twentieth century. This is because colonial empires had aspects that stepped out of (or brought in inconsistencies internally) the logic of the Westphalian system. In the nineteenth century, the spatial coverage in which the Westphalian system applied was still confined to the European world. To put it the other way around, the non-European world was not assumed to be a nation.

The nineteenth century worldview based on the degrees of “civilization” was reflected in the disciplinary organization of advanced social science (itself functionally interwoven with nation-state building) of that era. Immanuel Wallerstein (1991) calls this the “nineteenth-century paradigm,” and summarizes it as following. First, the world is structured in three layers, following the axis of “degrees of civilization.” Modern state is nation-states that have achieved modernization. High civilization is societies that have writing and a unique metaphysical system with great social and technological achievements (great empires or grand architectures) in the past, whereas primitive society is societies that typically do not have writing and have not achieved universal psychological, social and technological achievements like those of the high civilizations. Modernization has either not started or stopped in ancient times within the two layers apart from the modern state. Therefore, history as a corollary of the process of modernization is irrelevant.

By contrast, a sharp dividing line is drawn between the past and present in modern societies. That is, a separation between pre-modern societies and societies that have achieved modernization. Modernization is understood to be a progress of society through functional differentiation, so disciplines were created to respond to functionally differentiated sub-systems i.e. state, market and civil society for those societies that have achieved modernization. History, institutionalized amid the reorganization of universities by the modern state in the nineteenth century, was handed with the mission of tracing the process of achieving mod-

ernization as the history of the nation.

Coverage of the Westphalian system was initially limited to the modern state. This did not change through the so-called long nineteenth century (1789/1815-1914/17). True, not to mention the Treaty of Nanjing, there were instances where Westphalian institutions such as treaty relations were applied at the interface of modern and non-modern states (high civilizations and primitive societies). Yet these inclusions were rather a mere formality. Not simply because these treaties that “opened up countries” were “unequal treaties,” but because the perception that these were treaty relations, (later) idealized as the Westphalian narrative, was only shared by the Europeans. By contrast, for non-Europeans the perception to interpret treaty relations within the logical framework of the traditional regional order—more precisely in the imaginary worldview constructed within such traditional order—persisted on a deeper level.

Heterogenic worldviews that emerged within the interface of European and non-European worlds was one-sidedly painted as the geographical expansion of the Westphalian system within the Westphalian narrative. That is the extension of the retroactive oblivion though the process of abstraction mentioned above, but what made such oblivion possible was the naturalization process of nation-building that followed.

Naturalization of nation-building is a process whereby a mode of thinking that argues that building nations as a political community rather than confined to the unique historical conditions of Europe is a developmental process that should be universally realized by all societies around the world, proliferates globally. Naturalization phase of the Westphalian narrative proceeded with this naturalization of nation-building in combination to the preceding abstraction phase. The historical starting point of this process can be symbolically located in 1917/18. That is, this process started with “self-determination” becoming a new principle in international relations, through Lenin’s “Decree on Peace” and Wilson’s “Fourteen Points” (Mayer 1967; Wallerstein 1991).

It must be noted that self-determination during the interwar period was not global in its range. Self-determination proposed by Lenin and Wilson was both implicitly intended for nations in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire and not applied to Africa nor Asia. Coverage of the nation concept as a unit of self-determination became global after World War II, symbolically during the periods between the UN Charter (Article 1(2)) in 1945 and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in 1960 (Ignatieff and Gutmann 2001). It is certain that by this time the norm that all nation on earth has the right to be ultimately independent has permeated the international society, and the normative framework that portrays the ultimate independence of all people as a nation to be a universal historical goal was established as a result.

Yet while this naturalization of nation-building from 1917/18 to 1945/60 ran in parallel with the delegitimation process of colonialism, it also kept intact the asymmetry between Europe and non-Europe. This is particularly evident in the system of international trusteeship inherited from the mandate system under the League of Nations to the trusteeship system under the United Nations (Igarashi 2016). International trusteeship generally denotes an administering of certain region by an international organization, but this involves an intervention into the region in question by an international organization consisting of

sovereign states, with the purpose of (re)building a state with substantive governing capabilities in an unstable region. This is a geographical extension of the logic of the sovereign state system, and at the same time betrays this very logic since it inevitably leads to the violation of the sovereign territory of that region. What was utilized to legitimate the contradiction was the “standards of civilization.” That is, the achievement of civilization from a Western standard became the conditions to grant sovereignty to the state. The disciplinary narrative of Westphalia, in its narrowest meaning, took on the function of suppressing the *others* of the purported universality of the European system of international law during this transitional period.

Such process of naturalization of nation-building affected the nineteenth-century paradigm. To start with the conclusion, the nineteenth-century paradigm persisted as the basic framework even though its internal dividing lines were blurred as a result of this process. The discipline of IR was inserted into the nineteenth-century paradigm during this dual process, created in the midst of this fluctuation of the internal division of the paradigm.

The relativization of spatial division of the nineteenth-century paradigm not only led to the flattening of the subject matter of each discipline, but it also led to spatial re-division of disciplinary objects as a sort of counteraction. That is because, within the process of naturalization of nation-building many of the “modern states” in question continued to be colonial empires that exceeded the frame of nation-states in its purest sense, or what Shinichi Yamamuro (2003) calls the “nation-empire.” And it was none other than IR that was inserted into the nineteenth-century paradigm as the study of nation-empires. Within the naturalization phase, IR started out as a study that examined relations among societies on different stages of modernization from the position of early adopters of modernization i.e., nation-empire as a modern state under the nineteenth-century paradigm. That the origin of *Foreign Affairs* lies in the *Journal of Race Development* launched in 1910 is indicative of that fact. This also explain why IR, particularly in its early stages during the interwar period, did not include any reference to the “Peace of Westphalia” in its disciplinary core.

As Yamamuro defines, nation-empires were contradictory states with its legitimacy framed by the logic of the nation but were actually empires maintaining colonies; and such contradictions were only dissolved by colonies becoming independent as nation-states. Although IR initiated as a study of nation-empires that was arranged towards “international relations constituted by equal sovereign states” in parallel to the process of dissolving the contradictions of nation-empires, IR created a discursive space that traced the world constituted by “civilized” states from the inside. Conversely, this functioned to remove the residuals of the naturalized concept of nation from the perception of international relations. In other words, IR functioned as a discursive space that retroactively applied the Westphalian narrative expanding outside, while confirming the expansion of the Westphalian system from the inside.

On this point, one point to add is the problem of history in IR. Naturalization of the nation relativized the spatial division of the nineteenth century paradigm but did not immediately affect its temporal axis. In other words, while the disciplinary divisions of labor that separated the world into “modern states,” “high civilizations” and “primitive societies” in the twentieth century collapsed, a new fault line was redrawn between History that

reconstituted the pre-modernization social realities and other social scientific disciplines (Political Science, Economics, Sociology and closer to the present also Anthropology). Overlapping with the tension between nomothetic and idiographic epistemology (Wallerstein 2004), the division was strengthened institutionally as well as methodologically (Wallerstein 1991). In this context, IR was created as a “social science” discipline, whereas “historical” research was marginalized. This further weakened the motivation to step outside of the view of tracing from the inside of the world constituted by sovereign nation-states and cast a historical eye on such constitution of the world itself. In this sense, naturalization of nation-building and the ahistorical nature (presentism) of IR are two sides of the same coin (Bachand and Lapointe 2010).

3.3 Substantialization Phase

After the 1970s when decolonization was mostly achieved in many regions, with the real world edging closer to the Westphalian system at least in form on the one hand, and with cognitive space constructed where the outside of the world of sovereign nation-states was erased, through the naturalization effect of nation-building with IR as discourse as the main site on the other hand, the Westphalian system became understood as substantial. Furthermore, not only has the reality been reconstructed to fit the model, but through the presentism of IR as social science pointed out earlier, it also resulted in a cognitive framework that sees reality retroactively as if “international relations” was Westphalian from the past. This is the Westphalian disciplinary narrative that has been argued in this paper.

Within IR as a discourse, there are no logical grounds for objectifying the substantialization of the Westphalian narrative. On the other hand, international relations in reality are not completely Westphalian nor can its origin be reduced to the “Peace of Westphalia.” That is, we have never actually lived in a genuine Westphalian system. Hence, the idea of “post-Westphalia” referred not only journalistically but also academically, is only realistic in a mere rhetorical sense (since we cannot overcome what was non-existent). What needs to be examined is how the disciplinary narrative of Westphalia can determine such rhetorical function.

The end of the Cold War had a big impact on IR. It did not, however, lead to the abandoning of the Westphalian narrative. This ultimately rested on the understanding of how it ended. The view that sees the end of the Cold War itself as an end of something lacks the clue of answering the question why IR was unable to predict it in the first place. This is because it interprets the end of the Cold War as a change in the rules of the game, as an exogenous moment of transformation of the object of IR. As previously mentioned, the Westphalian narrative retraces the object of IR from the inside, through which our perception is confined to a discursive closure. From such a perspective of understanding the end of the Cold War as a point of singularity in time, it is only possible to consider what comes after the Westphalian system as an extension of the Westphalian narrative. By doing so it might be possible to superficially make oblivious the Westphalian narrative as a “paradigm of the past,” but we lose the clue with which to historically objectify the narrative.

The end of the Cold War was indeed an “end,” but what actually ended with the end of Cold War should be understood in the context of a systemic process rather than an

unexpected event. That is, the decreasing validity of the thinking of modernization with the nation as its normative unit (Wallerstein 1995). During the Cold War, both the United States and the Soviet Union as superpowers bitterly opposed one another ideologically, but particularly seen from the third world—outside of the naturalization phase of the Westphalian narrative—they were players of the same game i.e., export competition of modernization models (Westad 2007). In this sense, the model/route of modernization proposed by the two superpowers followed a common grammar. The end of the Cold War was an event that can be located within the process of how such game was losing its validity. A crucial point with regards to the Westphalian narrative is that such “developmentalism” and the naturalization of nation-building went hand in hand.

As noted earlier, politically the nation was a concept that expressed the qualification of social groups with the ability to modernize. Whether the American or the Soviet type, actors that undertake modernization based on the advocated models were assumed to be nations (in this sense, the origin of the Cold War system goes back to 1917), and nation-building was an inevitable part of modernization. Yet from the 1970s onwards, such developmentalism as inseparable from nation-building gradually lost its validity. This was because many of the newly independent countries up to the 1960s were placed in conditions of underdevelopment on the one hand, and because the transformation from economic growth based on national solidarity to neoliberal economic policy started with the impasse of the welfare state becoming evident in Western advanced countries on the other hand.

Ironically then, just when the conditions for retroactively hypostatizing the Westphalian narrative were created, with the reality edging closer to the Westphalian system, and with many colonies becoming independent as nation-states (no matter how fictitious it may be), the very ideal of the national sovereign state as the driver of modernization has started to become out of date. Yet by being inside the Westphalian narrative, the acknowledgment of this stillbirth was postponed within IR. 1989 was indeed an endpoint in terms of terminating such postponement, but the perception of what had ended with such termination diverged. That is, where it should have been an end of postponing the perception that the Westphalian narrative lacks a corresponding reality, it turned out to be located as the end of the (fictitious) Westphalian system that was substantiated by the Westphalian narrative.

The end of the Cold War added a new dimension to the functions of the Westphalian narrative: interpretive framework of the “limits of the Westphalian system”—a framework that locates the end of the Cold War as the beginning of the end of the Westphalian system, and interprets the change thereafter as the post-Westphalian system. Through this framework, the Westphalian system that retroactively became the ideal type of “international relations” in the naturalization phase, was substantiated as the actual past that started to be transcended with the end of the Cold War. The Westphalian narrative thus constituted a discursive closure in which the end of the Cold War is used to erase the constructivity of the Westphalian narrative.

An important frame of reference for the “end of the Cold War” as an event discourse was the “end of history” thesis. Francis Fukuyama (1989) argued for the universality of liberal democracy as a goal for all nations. The triumphalism in Fukuyama’s argument has been

roundly criticized. Yet he did not simply argue that liberal democracies are universal as his critics put it, but rather pointed out that the problem of post-Cold War international relations was going to be one of controlling the fault line over the universality of liberal democracy. He called this fault line the tension between the “post-historical world” and the “historical world,” arguing that international conflict would arise between the world where the universality of liberal democracy is shared with the national sovereign states literally ending its historical role, and the world where such “end of history” does not emerge naturally, and as a result explicitly or implicitly alienated from the construction of liberal democracy by national sovereign states (Fukuyama 1992).

Fukuyama’s “post-historical world,” in a sense that national sovereign states have ended its historical role, can be considered as the “post-Westphalian” world. More precisely, in the context of international relations, “history” that was assumed to have ended in the “post-historical world,” was actually “history” imagined inside the Westphalian narrative. That is, the “end of history” discourse can be seen as a symbolic part of the post-Westphalian discourse, as a cognitive framework that interprets international relations as the friction between the Westphalian and post-Westphalian worlds.

The arguments of neoconservatism that ideologically underpinned American unilateralism from 9/11 in 2001 to the Iraqi war in 2003, further pushed the theme of transcending the Westphalian system (in a form of a political program) by seizing on these normative changes (cf. Kagan 2003). Peaking in 2003, neoconservatism itself declined with increasing criticisms towards the Iraqi war, and its influence has diminishing with the end of the Bush administration; yet the cognitive framework that states that “a systemic change has occurred to the norms of international relations” formed during the period from the end of the Cold War to the Iraqi war did not change, and the view that equates the limits of the Westphalian system with the end of the Cold War was never relativized. In this way, the Westphalian narrative was performatively used to interpret the event, which led to retroactively substantializing the history of constructing the Westphalian system up to the end of the Cold War.

As a result of this substantialization, the transformation of the normative framework of international relations that surfaced with the end of the Cold War took on a rhetorical frame of “transcendence of the Westphalian system.” On the other hand, functions of the Westphalian disciplinary narrative survived beyond the end of the Cold War via this rhetorical framework. That is, on the one hand, the goal was no longer to simply become a national sovereign state and is pushed beyond the transcendence of the international society segmented by such states. On the other hand, even states that were recognized as sovereign states, if a grave infringement of human rights emerged (whether the state in question failed to maintain governance or because the state itself was committing the abuse), was intervened by the international society. In other words, the “standards of civilization” that were projected on the temporal axis during the Cold War—with the temporal axis disappearing from the cognitive framework with the “end of the Cold War”—was now projected on the spatial axis. In this way, the Westphalian narrative continues to survive functionally by fiction of the Westphalian system transcending reality. The essence of the function lies in the maintenance of hegemony as a cognitive power in international society through the

monopoly of the “standards of civilization.”

Conclusion

This paper examined the relationship between the Westphalian narrative and change in world politics, and in particular how it promotes certain state-centric futures while oppressing alternative possibilities. Although the so-called “myth of Westphalia” has been routinely criticized by both IR and non-IR specialists, such critiques by the “myth-busters” have not led to an overhaul of the historical foundation of IR, since it overlooks the interplay of the narrative in both theory and in practice that also prevents (and/or distorts) our understanding of change in world politics. By analyzing Westphalia as a civilizational norm, Westphalia as a disciplinary narrative, and the mutual co-constitution between the two, this paper attempts to shed light on the constraints of change in both theory and practice and how it reinforces one another. Crucial here is that the discipline of IR is constitutive of the “reality” of international relations in which it seeks to understand.

Yet it is also important to note that the expansion and diffusion of both Westphalia as a civilizational norm and as a disciplinary narrative are not necessarily linear. This is because the historical narrative on both of these levels are a myth in some ways, and for every effort to make them the norm, there have always existed (and will continue to exist) worldviews that cannot be totally overwhelmed by them. Needless to say, the various, continued efforts to deviate from such co-constitution is the normal state of affairs in world politics. What this implies is that the Westphalian narrative itself is not eternal and is open to change.

Notes

- 1) Such complex, multilayered relations are conventionally theorized as the “tributary system” (Hamashita 1997; Zhang and Buzan 2012). By attempting to criticize the exaggeration of the “treaty system” brought in by the so-called “Western impact” (Westphalian civilizational norms), however, this conceptualization in turn may be attaching too much meaning to *chaogong* and needs to be considered with caution.
- 2) Conversely, this is the inevitable reason that the debates superficially seem “rich” and “diversified.” See also Dunne, Hansen and Wight (2013).
- 3) It is doubtful if they acknowledged it as an “unequal treaty” at the time of conclusion (Okamoto 1999; Hakoda 2012).

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変化の制約：理論と実践における ウェストファリア史観の脱構築

本論文はウェストファリア史観と世界政治の関係、とくにそれがどのように国家中心の未来を促す一方でオルタナティブな可能性を抑圧するかについて考察するものである。所謂「ウェストファリアの神話」は国際関係論の内外の研究者によって、その史的妥当性（記述的批判）あるいは学問分野の中心に組み込まれた歴史的視座（規範的批判）の側面から幾度となく批判されてきた。しかし、そうした「神話破壊者」による批判は国際関係論の史的基盤を全面的に見直すには至っていない。なぜなら、それらは世界政治における変化に対する理解を妨げる（あるいは歪める）ような、理論と実践における史観のインタープレイを見落としているからである。ウェストファリア史観の相互構築とそれがどのように変化を制約するかについて論じるために、本論文では文明規範としてのウェストファリア（主権国家を特権化するような国際関係の規範的枠組み）と学知としてのウェストファリア（国際関係論に組み込まれたウェストファリア体制に注目する歴史的視座）を区別した上で、どのように国際関係論が、それが理解しようとしている国際関係の「現実」をも構築してきたかを明らかにする内在的、系譜学的なアプローチを提示する。

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