TRADITION, PROGRESS AND UTOPIA: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
for award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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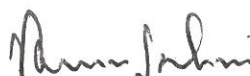**2018**

Date: 19 July, 2018

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled **"Tradition, Progress and Utopia: International Relations in Theory and Practice"** submitted by me for award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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To my father, who first took me to the library and told me stories that matter. To my mother, who taught me to remember them. For Apoorv, who always believes.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my earnest gratitude and appreciation to my doctoral supervisors Prof. Varun Sahni and Prof. Jayati Srivastava. Prof. Sahni was the guiding light for this project, always encouraging me to push boundaries, offering patient guidance, careful supervision and useful critiques. Over the past five years, he has been a mentor; nurturing me to find my own feet in the academic journey. Prof. Srivastava, who was assigned to be my supervisor at the later stage of PhD, instilled a sense of discipline into my work. Her commitment, kindness and gracious nature are worth emulating. Her comments and feedback have improved the draft immensely. During the course of my academic journey, I was fortunate to have been taught by some wonderful teachers. Prof. Nivedita Menon, Prof. C.S.R. Murthy, Prof. Rajesh Rajagopalan and Dr. Madhan Mohan who have been invaluable and indefatigable forces inspiring me in various ways. I am indebted to them for their personal goodwill, intellectual generosity, their unflagging encouragement and support.

My most general debt is to those scholars who have, in recent years, opened the discipline of International Relations to various forms of critical inquiry. Their creative reworking of International Relations has made it possible to see the discipline as something more than an ideology of the dominant powers. The thematic trio of Tradition, Progress and Utopia all speak to the issues of the relations between 'international' and 'politics'. The thinking guiding this endeavour is pluralising modes of questioning rather than disciplinary map-making. The unquenchable unruliness of questioning and the excitement of reading and thinking about possible alternatives of conceptualising the 'international' fuelled it.

I have no idea where to start in thanking the Centre for International Politics, Organisation and Disarmament, my institutional and intellectual home for six memorable years. I have benefited immensely from the intellectually rich, warmly communal, and deeply reflective environment nurtured by the teachers and students. There is a distinctive and refreshing willingness to engage with a variety of issues in the centre and, in so doing,

At the dawn of another century, in 1799, Samuel Coleridge wrote to his friend William Wordsworth to contest the widespread malaise and resignation. "*I wish you would write a poem, in blank verse, addressed to those, who, in consequence of the complete*

failure of the French Revolution, have thrown up all hopes of the amelioration of mankind, and are sinking into an almost epicurean selfishness, disguising the same under the soft titles of domestic attachment and contempt for visionary philosophes"[1]. I have not written a poem, but this endeavour is an attempt in defence of visionary impulse encapsulated by Coleridge.

A final note on gendered language: as feminist political theorists have consistently pointed out; the subject of politics is not incidentally gendered masculine. I have not tried to efface this when directly quoting. However, in my own writing, I prefer the pronoun 'she', 'her' and so on, as a very small contribution to changing the long his–'story'.

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[1] Mays, J. C. C. (ed.) (2001), *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Poetical Works* I, Volume I and II Princeton: Princeton University Press.

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Chapter One

Introduction

"I am. We are. This is enough. Now it is for us to begin."

Ernst Bloch (1923:1)

"The political task of social science is to…help define a realistic utopianism by using the knowledge of the probable to make the possible come true."

Pierre Bourdieu (1990:36)

This thesis engages with the concepts of Tradition, Progress and Utopia and the implications of studying these concepts both individually and in relation to one another for International Relations.[1] It intends to contribute towards a critical understanding of these concepts both at the conceptual and practical level within International Relations. It has a threefold aim. Firstly, drawing from other disciplines within social sciences, a genealogy of these three concepts is developed. Secondly, by foregrounding itself in literature from various disciplines, engagement with themes of decline of idealism, change and modernity is sought. Thirdly, by revisiting the disciplinary history of IR, the orthodoxy prevalent in shaping the current discourse is exposed, highlighting the importance of history and fictive imagination for further research in the discipline. This thesis postulates to move beyond the procrustean manner of approaching the pernicious challenges faced by the discipline by virtue of being in self-proclaimed silo and provide incisive insights into re-imagining the future by questioning the exalted status of the conventional theories to understand the world around us. It does so by examining the relationship between the three concepts – Tradition, Progress and Utopia – and International Politics.

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[1] Throughout this thesis International Relations (upper case) will refer to IR as an academic subject, while international relations (lower case) will refer more generally to the subject matter of world political, economic, cultural, ecological and social affairs.

Laying the Premise

The metamorphosis of the global political arena at an unprecedented pace in recent years provides a challenge for those who study international politics. The fecundity of the discipline to interpret and theorise about the 'International' requires a pedantic reorientation of approaching its subject matter beyond the exalted status of the dominant paradigms towards building a sanguine future. The mainstream international relations theorisation are protean lenses to read the world: making it intelligible by offering an array of theoretical paradigms. However, there is a need for legitimising/engaging with a plethora of insights into world politics to address the dilemmas emanating around us. The theoretical approaches in IR have putative claims with regard to a) epistemology or the nature of knowledge claims and b) ontology or fundamental assumptions about reality and these differences have significant political and ethical implications.

Before starting the peregrination of exploring these concepts, there needs to be a brief disclaimer regarding the nature of inquiry. There are two parallel processes surmised below that can be instructive in gaining alternative insights into international relations (a) the first would entail scrutinising the exalted status of the disciplinary debates that have come to define the history of the discipline and guided scholarly inquiries and (b) the second would be speculating regarding the perspicuous issues, agendas, and terminologies that are laid down by noumenal approaches. This thesis is an amalgamation of both these traditions. The prevailing conceptualisations shouldn't be constraining in defining the disciplinary boundaries. The route charted in this chapter is different as it consciously engages with and addresses the lacunae and myopic vision of the conventional theories in mapping out the world as it is but more importantly outlining the future directions for how it should be.

The underlying objective of this thesis is to engage with the politics of disciplinary framing. The veneration accorded to the mainstream theories of IR- realism, liberalism and constructivism do not follow suit to explain much of the events happening around us.

Concepts occupy a *sine qua non* status in engaging with social and political reality. They are integral in navigating the nebulous and obscure terrain of reality by mediating our understanding of reality. However, in doing so they get rearticulated through time. We map the world around us by utilising abstractions, generalisations and concepts. As Harrington (2005) aptly explains, that theory entails an extension of everyday communication about social and political issues. Our thinking emerges and rests solidly upon the traditions and structures of knowledge including religious worldviews, cultural undercurrents and ideological configurations established through time as espoused by Ernesto Laclau (1990).

The concepts of tradition, progress and utopia in this thesis are examined with the objective of a) exploring the relationship between these concepts, intricately, b) bringing forth the lesser significant aspects ignored in theorising and c) borrowing from political philosophy using these concepts to delve into the realm of international politics. The context of undertaking this study is the unrelenting debate regarding the status of the discipline of IR as an academic project/endeavour. There are significant paradigmatic differences regarding the appropriate subject matter and the ensuing methods of the understanding knowledge. The discipline is continuously challenged by a significant body of work regarding the given-ness of the nature of the concepts and the problematic assumptions guiding the research in the mainstream IR. The trio of concepts are meant for addressing the paralogisms prevalent in the field regarding the epistemological questions. These concepts provide a framework for interpreting the past, mapping out the present and enunciating the future prospects. Taking cue from Ernst Bloch's magisterial work *The Principle of Hope* (1986), this thesis seeks out to investigate some of the perennial questions facing humanity as posed by Bloch. He wrote "What is our essence as human beings? What is our past? What is awaiting us?"

International Relations as a subject stands uniquely at the precipice of consequential questions regarding war and peace, ethics of conduct, responsibility to others outside the boundaries of nation-state, production and exchange relations at the global scale, issues of identity, political theory and diplomatic practices. Various scholars have continually engaged with different concepts to understand and attribute meaning

and ascertain causes and effects of the events around the world. According to John Gerard Ruggie (1998) the pursuit of International Relations is guided by a sensibility of discovering 'what makes the world hang together'. This thesis applies the concepts of tradition, progress and utopia to yield new insights to an established field of International Relations. It is an attempt to systematically study each of the three concepts and then trace their linkages to the field of International Relations both in terms of theory and in practice. This is an exercise to acknowledge and celebrate plural theoretical diversity by using diverse epistemologies to explain and understand the multi-faceted nature of International Relations. The interdisciplinary inquiry is rendered even more relevant given the incompleteness of any analysis owing to the colossal complexity of the international system. The desirability of interdisciplinary engagement also hinges on the commonality of questions being sought after. Indeed, this thesis envisages novel interpretative possibilities by re-defining, ontologically, the way that IR discourses dispense with language and its relation to the object of study and the subject positioning; defining the field of possible objects and their own reflexivity harbouring on the relationship between subject and object.

For the purpose of this thesis, Partha Chatterjee's (1986) distinction between the 'thematic' and 'problematic' is particularly useful in explaining the interplay between these concepts and International Relations. Thematic refers to the essentialist and mainstream understanding of these concepts. It outlines the epistemic principles being invoked while justifying certain claims. The problematic, on the other hand, refers to the changing conditions and, within them, new paradigms and alternatives to describe them. The problematic describes the historical possibilities and evidence in reinstating the epistemic claims. The distinction, to put it simply, is between the discursive element and the practical component of these concepts. While attempting to theoretically evaluate the significance of the three concepts, there would be a simultaneous endeavour to understand their practical significance and changing content in International Relations.

The main focus of the thesis is in understanding how these concepts manifest in International Relations. This thesis will explore ways in which an enriched understanding of the three concepts may contribute to a better comprehension of contemporary global

dynamics. The underlying rationale suggests that a rising centrality of the terms under consideration might also lead to a profoundly revitalised IR theoretical enterprise.

There are three central questions concerning the discipline of International Relations that this thesis seeks to explore further. It seeks to probe the nature of the theoretical enterprise carried out by scholars in International Relations? How does the study of concepts of tradition, progress and utopia relate to the distinct schools of thought and the disciplinary debates? Lastly, it intends to evaluate the contribution of these three concepts to the discipline of International Relations? Critical interventions can be made into the inquiry of International Relations by being self-reflective, drawing from other disciplines and anchoring it through the concepts of tradition, progress and utopia. The putative claims made by the different theories of International Relations theories are postulated around the expository nature of the world around us. There are conspicuously visible contending frameworks centered around the question of "how one must act"? The postulates of the theories envision both action and a normative claim associated with doing so either implicitly or explicitly. Thus there is an overlapping of the empirical (action) with the ideal/normative vision of the world. To coruscate on the pandemonium of events at the global level, it is important to rise above the manichean binary and reflect on the infinitesimal quotidian consequences of our reflections about the world and the consequences they entail.

Utopia, understood as providing alternative visions and roadmaps in search of world order, is seen as the linkage between the concepts of tradition and progress. For much of history, thinkers and practitioners have envisaged a world order which would be marked by finality or an end point. Oscar Wilde posited that it wasn't worthy of glancing at a map of the world that did not incorporate utopia and that progress entails the realisation of utopias (Wilde, 1891). William Morris (2003) described the significance of 'utopian thinking' in human culture, playing a decisive role in edifying the desire for an effective and virtuous way of living. The ascendancy of Realism in International Relations theory has led to a preoccupation with reproducing/ replicating the system. As underscored by Robert Cox in his seminal piece, the emphasis is on 'problem-solving' rather than engaging critically in prospects of social change.

Recent years have witnessed a critical scrutiny in the discipline of International Relations (Lapid, 1989). An array of decisive challenges have preceded the pronounced sociological flexibility in International Relations research which has led to a robust intellectual openness in the IR domain (Latham, 1995: 118). James Rosenau (1989) rightly argues that at a moment of deep epochal turbulence, when the global order seems to be transforming at an unprecedented pace, it is important for International Relations as a discipline to reconfigure its theoretical and empirical gaze. The twenty-first century poses enormous global challenges such as climate change, nuclear proliferation and economic globalisation for humankind to deal with. Thus, it is an imperative to answer difficult questions such as how do we meet the challenges encountering humankind in this century organisationally? How should the world be organised? What type of utopias can we imagine today? And how do concrete representations or pre-figurations of utopia incite transformative action? Drawing on the concept of utopia, one of the aims of the thesis is to evaluate the history of traditional forms of authority and control, the manifest changes in the outline of governance with respect to booming institutionalisation around the world, the challenges faced globally and what the way forward might look like.

Scholastically, thinking through the concept of utopia could be the root source for critically appraising the beliefs regarding the existing structures and can be a catalyst to action. Ken Booth (1991) provides an important distinction between end point utopia and process utopia. End point utopia focuses on an imminent outline/draft, like a system of global government, whereby the path to attainment is linear and long drawn. On the contrary, the other kind, Process utopias envisage incremental reform which seems more sustainable for a better world. The efforts of world leaders to enter dialogue to mitigate conflict and risk of conflict escalation, treaties and agreements for safeguarding human rights and broadening the compass of economic justice are various manifestations of this form of utopia. A certain degree of pragmatism and practicality can be associated with Process utopianism as it is an approach to politics, in which means are the ends. The inexorable link between theory and practice can be bridged by rendering of Utopian thinking. The reclamation of utopian imagery is an imperative for rejuvenating the vapid theories of International Relations.

The mainstream International Relations theory dominated by the discourse on realism focuses on repetition and recurrence. The discipline in upholding the traditional theories presents a constricted, self-sustaining and enclosed reflection of the reality. The link between the object of inquiry- 'out there' and subject positionalities is a crucial one. The mimetic (Bleiker, 2001) approach to International politics denies understanding the relationship between signifier and signified being constructed by language games characterized by arbitrary and contingent rules. This approach is fundamentally challenged by the aesthetic turn in the discipline whereby scholarship has emphasised that political reality doesn't exist apriori (Bleiker, 2001). The location of politics is precisely the inescapable differences between the represented and representation. The reliance on a simplistic, universalized, positivist model of analyzing world events detached from the myriad ways of experiencing is detrimental for finding answers for complex, ambiguous problems.

John Shotter argues, 'reflective thinking concerning the nature of the world involves two choices- thinking of everything as static and pre-ordained based on invariances and thereby treating change as problematic or to question the given-ness of the system as a challenge' (1994: 74). For a protracted duration the enterprise of research in International relations has remained oblivious to this choice, focussing undividedly on the former possibility. In the contemporary epochal juncture, as conventional, parochial view of the state system is being challenged, there needs to be a genuine engagement with IR's exclusive focus on permanency and continuity. The thesis also seeks to analyse the concept of progress both in terms of indicating change as well as evolution of the discipline itself. The question animating the meaning of progress is crucial, whether it involves advance or degeneration, shift or corrosion of values, whether it should be applauded or abstained from in the name of continuity and tradition, grapples many International Relations scholars. Change, even if, is to be hailed, as a positive development should manifest in what form: reform or revolution? An intrinsic belief often associated with the modern idea of progress is a movement from lower to higher form of civilisation, thus marking an advance from the previous stage; indicating that all change is valuable. However, there is a growing disillusionment with the idea of progress

in the present world order with questions being raised regarding the forbearers of progress in the world today.

The third concept under analysis is tradition which implies a link or a connection to the past. However, with globalisation and modernity it has come to be seen as a narrative concept that resonates with a plurality of negotiated and re-negotiated meanings. The thesis purports to understand the role of tradition in modern society and the impact of decline of tradition as a methodology with the rise of empiricism and rationalism. The engagement with the concept of tradition will highlight the juxtaposition between accounting tradition as a source of both change and continuity. Are traditions amenable to adapt via intellectual reflection and evaluation? Through the course of this thesis an understanding of these three concepts and various issues related to them is sought.

Rationale of Focussing on Tradition, Progress and Utopia

Among the many intellectual and substantive reasons that may justify special interest in tradition, progress and utopia, three seem to be particularly pertinent to the context of this project. First, the three terms qualify, individually and together, as 'key concepts' in social theory and practice. As put by McLennan (1989: x), such concepts are ever-interesting and indispensable. Firstly, they are ever-interesting by virtue of their ability to reconfigure in face of changing realities. They are indispensable on the strength of their sustained relevance to many major theoretical undertakings. Secondly, key concepts are increasingly free-floating; they no longer belong to any single discipline. This development opens the door for new combinatory possibilities. Thus, if we want to study problems associated with any one of the three concepts, we can richly benefit from also considering the other two.

As heuristic tools, tradition, progress and utopia intend primarily to highlight interesting, substantive and theoretical intersections. Furthermore, substantive work guided by this triad need not always involve all three components; depending on specific interests, the analysis can gravitate toward one or more intersections. Moreover, the same phenomenon can be productively situated at different intersections. This is an attempt to

paint a broad picture of the development of the ideas of progress, tradition and utopia and the theories and theorists have been selected mainly on the basis of sociological interest, defined as widely as possible. For this purpose, certain texts have been marked as primary sources for the research because they are instrumental in defining the three concepts. Howard Williams (1992: 43) defines primary sources as 'the derivative sources closest to the idea/ concept intended to be examined'. The texts selected as primary resource for the research provide for direct, unmediated information about the concepts under study. They are authoritative and fundamental writings concerning the subject under consideration. For each of the three concepts undertaken for the purpose of this thesis a set of prominent thinkers and their writings are identified.

This project is exclusively confined to Anglophone traditions of thought. As Quentin Skinner (1969) points out, any study of changing vocabularies in which moral or political concepts are involved can be fruitfully pursued by examining the histories of individual linguistic communities. The focus of this project remains on western political philosophy, tracing the genealogy of these three concepts and then drawing linkages to the field of international politics. The perception of multiplicity and the pervasive theme of construction are the two dominating motifs in the current rethinking of these three concepts.

Tradition, progress and utopia as cognate concepts are explored in both theoretical and practical ways with their implications on International Relations which demarcates the scope of the project. The notion of tradition is analysed in the context of modernity and globalisation with emphasis on discursive and practical components. It is also examined within the larger debate in the philosophy of science which led to the decline of tradition with the rise of empiricism and rationalism, and its current understanding within the debate. The concept of progress is also analysed at both the theoretical and practical level. One of the components of the analysis is looking at the notion of 'change' within international relations. The second overarching theme is looking at progress within the field of international relations theory, bringing in different benchmark dates in assessing progress. The engagement with the concept of utopia is at two levels. The first is at the

theoretical level, emphasising the need to bring back utopian thinking in the theory of international relations post the first great disciplinary debate- the peripatetic tussle between idealists and realists. Secondly, the thesis engages with the prognostic approach towards the notion of 'order' and envision practical utopias in the world today.

Understanding Concepts

This thesis is a self-conscious undertaking that is concerned with the internal structure of concepts, with how these concepts relate to one another and how in turn they mark their own boundaries. The exercise is an inextricably hermeneutic and critical enterprise because it involves reflexive interpretation of these concepts. Before engaging with the compendious chronicling of the concepts- progress, tradition and utopia, one needs to answer the question: What is a concept? A concept is a unit of mental representation; an element of our cognitive apparatus. Human beings are concept-bearing animals. Through the process of conceptual development and refinement, we build our knowledge of the world. They are the edifices or foundational blocks that help in meaning/sense making. Wittgenstein (1953) defined concepts as 'meaning of words, determined by their use in specific language games.' Concepts are only analytical tools and rather than being true or false, they should be seen as useful. Herbert Blumer (1969) classified two categories of concepts as - definitive and sensitising. The first category of 'definitive' can be explained through the indicators that symbolise the fixity of the concept. On the contrary, the second category - 'sensitising' has an expansive and wide-ranging scope and can help in navigating through a particular domain of research (Blumer, 1986: 148). W. B. Gallie (1956) suggests that certain concepts are 'essentially contested' and cannot be neutral or have a settled definition. To acknowledge the nature of certain concepts being 'essentially contested' is not disavowing any engagement for comprehension but to acknowledge multiple variations and renditions to hold equal and legitimate ground.

Max Weber classified particular concepts as 'ideal types' which are mental constructs that enable to elicit valuable meaning from boundless and interminable reality. They act as expository devices; neither dissipating reality nor offering an ethical replacement (Weber, 1978:13). Concepts can be categorised as the building blocks for

social sciences. According to Goertz (2006), a concept is compounded of two levels: basic and demarcation; the prior capturing the essence of the defined object and the latter useful for distinguishing a particular concept from its cohort. Peter Hallward (2006: 141) remarks, 'a concept renders a slice of chaos available for thought.' Nicholas Gane (2009: 87), discussing Deleuze and Guattari, describes concepts as 'devices that open our theoretical imagination to things as they might be.' Concepts are not a given, but continuously produced, reconstructed and reconfigured. The possibility of concepts turning stagnant/obdurate resulting in a purblind view, condemning the reality is what Hedley Bull (1977) warns as the 'tyranny of concepts/ideas'. In the development of history of ideas, there are certain critical concepts including- utopia, liberty, progress, democracy, tradition etc. whose meaning has been ossified across time and space. The meaning of these is so deeply embedded in our present but it also impacts our thinking about the past. The pre-eminent nature of these essential concepts often results in skewing of the historical narrative to make sense of the present day meaning attached to these concepts. This is mostly explicit in the widely used categories like 'realism' and 'liberalism' in International Relations. In understanding these concepts in the present, the disciplinary history has somehow selectively chosen events and explanations to make sense of the world. This selective amnesia that impairs the discipline must be addressed by scholars of International Relations.

The most telling illustration of creating rigid silos are what Martin Wight (1978) termed the three 'Rs': 'revolutionism, rationalism and realism'. These three R's build on certain perennial questions and traditional responses, and represent three distinctive 'traditions' in the discipline of International Relations. The difference in addressing the big questions enables to make distinction between the various traditions. Each of these traditions also get type casted or stereotyped in certain ways; realists are seen as status quoists and rationalists are associated with being reformists while revolutionism is associated with a complete subversion of the existing order. Scholars and thinkers are often made to fit into these narrowly constructed traditions in the discipline. Those who don't conform and adhere to these categories of traditions are discarded as anomalies or contradictions within otherwise neatly distinct traditions.

The pre-occupation of the discipline to write its history coherently has often resulted in producing 'mythology of doctrines' and 'anachronism' (Skinner, 1969). Quentin Skinner (1969) claimed that history could be reinterpreted only if we break free from the shackles of the 'given' meaning of concepts. Following him, the Contexualist school emphasised on the symbiotic relationship between the past and the present in shaping the meaning of concepts. To understand the trajectory of history of ideas as an academic endeavour, one must locate the present in context of the inevitable role played by the past in restructuring it. The constant questioning of our inherited categories not only destabilises our accepted conceptions of ideas and narratives but also opens the possibilities for combatting as Bull (1977) termed 'tyranny of ideas'.

Quentin Skinner (1969) also cautioned us to not be beguiled by the traditional ways of reflecting about normative concepts since their current meaning is a manifestation of choices made at specific historical junctures. The values embodied in the present are therefore indicative of alternative possibilities being overlooked. Bell Hooks (1991: 149–150) similarly remarks regarding the positionality of discourse around a concept. He argues that marginality is to be viewed not only as a site of deprivation but also for radical revisionism (Hooks, 1991: 153). There are infinitesimal possibilities for the production of counter-hegemonic discourses emerging from the periphery. This opens the prospect for novel imaginaries to create the world around us.

Tradition

This section embarks upon the appraisal of the most compelling and eloquent conceptualisations of the concept of tradition drawing from sociology and social anthropology. Then it moves on to establishing linkages between the discipline of International Relations and the concept of tradition both at the thematic and problematic level. It elaborates on the tradition/modernity dichotomy and its implications for the discipline of International Relations. Another aspect under study is the linking of tradition with history and how the mainstream approaches within International Relations have been accused of being a-historical, drawing on Hedley Bull's defence of tradition against empiricism and rationalism.

The etymological roots of the word tradition can be traced to the latin verb '*tradere'*, that signifies 'handing over' (Young, 1988: 95). The generic usage of the term tradition is primarily concerned with the past. Some noteworthy examples include, 'the enduring past' (Williams, 1977: 115); 'crystallisations of the past persisting in the contemporary' (Young, 1988: 142) and 'the living fealty of the departed' (Berman, 2003: 2). According to Edward Shills (1981: 6) tradition comprises of 'anything passed down or entrusted from antiquity to the existent'.

Firstly, and most evidently, the term tradition is linked with continuity to the past and the upholding and preservation of the time honoured customary ways and organisations. In this sense of the word, tradition seeks to thwart and counteract any form of change. The prominent adage 'to turn the clock back' aptly describes the quest for repossessing the past. Traditionalists often are advocates of change, stipulating that it is conformist to earlier epoch and recessive; an aspiration towards reversing the time back to the 'Golden Age'. However, traditionalists do subscribe to pursuing a prudent approach in recognising the necessity for change for conservation of the status quo. In prescribing the need for preservation, the traditionalists in essence are defenders of the existing state of affairs or status quoists.

Edmund Burke, one of the earliest proponents of progressive conservatism acknowledged that society is founded on a contract; an alliance between the corporeal, incarnate beings and those who are no more; the dead and the living (Burke, 1790). He reasoned the cause for French Revolution to be the monarchy's obdurate obligation to absolutism. Burke emphasised that history is beyond human control dictated by 'pattern of nature' (Burke, 1790). To accommodate the changing needs of time it was pragmatic to call for early and temperate reforms than go down the path of revolution by what Burke called the 'pattern of nature', advocating reform rather than revolution.

Michael Oakeshott's contribution to the development of the concept of tradition is noteworthy. He contended that to be labelled a conservative would entail 'preference for familiar as opposed to the foreign and unknown; tested to untried, accustomed to

mysterious, tangible and habitual to alien, limited to the unbounded, the near to the distant, the convenient to the perfect, the present laughter to utopian bliss' (Oakeshott, 1962: 54). The contemporaneous is regarded on account of familiarity, a sense of awareness that prompts genuineness, authenticity, legitimacy and security. To the contrary, change is viewed as portentous and menacing. Traditions are seen as long established and habitual practices which serve as the source of stability and maintaining control.

A noteworthy effort to theorise the concept of tradition is established in the *magnus opus* of Edward Shils (1971, 1981). Shils' pursuit in order to construct a narrative of tradition accentuates the dual function performed by tradition in facilitating continuity as well adapting to change. His analysis reinstates the rationale behind the firm grip of tradition over present due to attachment to the given, convenience, accumulated experience and reinstatement of the past (Shils, 1981: 202-206). He proposes that all traditions hold a normative component judged on the worthiness of their transmission from one generation to another and it is this element that provides the potency for binding societies across time. Shils' (1981:167), analysis highlights the assimilation of traditions in threads of memory facilitating for societies to imitate the past as they change. The family, school and religion are described by Shils (1981: 175) as the three main axioms that act as custodians of traditions in modern times.

Eric Hobsbawm in *The Invention of Tradition* (1983) envisages traditions as inventions, as designed by creative planning. Mark Bevir and Rod Rhodes (2006) provide new insights to Hobsbawm's understanding of the idea of tradition. The essence of their argument is the symbiotic relationship between context and conduct or in other words, the interaction between tradition and agency. One can understand traditions as inherited belief systems held by people, allowing them to make sense of the world. However, it would be fatalistic to assume the complete power of these belief systems over human choice or agency. Human beings possess the agency to modify and circumvent these traditions when confronted with dilemmas or difficult circumstances.

In his authoritative work on tradition, Karl Popper espouses the need for traditions to carry out the business of the world with some semblance of order, predictably and regularity without which people would be 'anxious, terrified and frustrated' (Popper, 1966: 131). He considers traditions to be intermediaries between people and institutions. The presence of traditions provides individuals with the context and purpose to conduct themselves properly within these institutions (Popper, 1989: 133). In a similar vein, David Halpin, Sally Power and John Fitz (1997) highlight the normative element of tradition by revealing how traditions entail the component of 'what is' and 'what should/ought to be'; thus rendering them legitimate and timeless. Philosophical anthropologist Arnold Gehlen in his work *Man in the Age of Technology* (1957) tried to make a strong case for the existence of the need for tradition. According to him, tradition becomes a supportive substructure, an indispensable part of social and cultural life because it sets up a background of habitualised behavior which leads to a certain amount of stability and constancy (Gehlen, 1957: 47).

Piotr Sztompka (1993) draws attention to the mechanisms through which the influence of traditions is transmitted- namely the material/physical and the ideal/psychological. The material/ physical dimension entails the persistence of artefacts and arrangements created by previous generations being passed on to the present one' (1993: 57). The ideal/ psychological can be understood by probing human memory and interactions (1993: 64). These two components of tradition are mutually constitutive of each other. However, the distinction between the two elements namely material and ideal helps in understanding the relations between subjects and objects and facets that are purely inter-subjective.

David Gross in *The Past in Ruins* (2009) elaborates on two perspectives regarding the decline of tradition. The first views the decline of tradition as an unmitigated disaster, leading to spiritual and moral decay. The second perspective on the other hand celebrates the collapse of tradition as it unravels newer forms of cultural and artistic expression, allowing for individualism to thrive, something that was completely unconceivable in traditional societies (Gross, 2009: 61-66).

The first major development that led to the decline of tradition was the elevation of the empiricist methodology which comprised of obtaining true knowledge only through the means of observation and sense experience. Tradition was undermined by empiricism since the truth claims arrived at through tradition were deemed to be dogmatic by empiricists. Immanuel Kant in his essay *What is Enlightenment* (1784) advocated the reliance on reason, to unshackle oneself from the fetters of tradition to achieve enlightenment. Francis Bacon (1620) argued for individuals to rely on their senses rather than on passed ideas to comprehend the world since every tradition is a received idea; traditions are preconceptions from the past. Bacon in his utopian work *New Atlantis* published in 1627 wrote that for life to be comprehended in a new manner, one must break the hold tradition has on the human mind (Bacon, 1627: 21).

Secondly, a new mode of thought, rationalism, also emerged around the sixteenth century as an alternative to the traditional outlook. The philosophy of Rene Descartes embodied these new rationalist assumptions. Descartes placed his confidence in the operations of the rational mind unencumbered by the dead hand of the past. Rationalism, in essence, was based on the proposition that certainty could be sought only through exercise of reason. Consequently, it sought to replace the authority of tradition and establish reason as the singular mandated guide to truth and life.

The concept of tradition is therefore often juxtaposed to modernity. However, modernity is not monolithic but multivalent, hierarchised and contradictory, presenting a contested and contestable site for cultural negotiations and re-negotiations. Modernisation theorists, have long argued that modernity and tradition are only 'ideal categories'. Anthony Giddens (1991) in his account of social modernity gives prominence to the role of traditions in the process of globalisation. Similarly, Arjun Appadurai's (1996) work offers a very critical and deep analysis of modernity and globalisation. The work of several authors including Samuel Huntington (1968; 1991; 1996), Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1963), and Clifford Geertz (1973; 1983) problematize the given spatio-temporal frameworks of understanding, resulting in the disruption in the singular and coherent narrative around modernity

Arguably thus, tradition not only makes possible a better understanding of modernity, but it also lays the groundwork for critique of modernity from outside modernity. Jurgen Habermas (1987), in his 'immanent critique of modernity' accepts the basic configurations of modern life and then pushes for what he calls the completion of the project of modernity. However, no attention is paid to the critical possibilities of past traditions. The current discourse on modernity has produced multiple conditions of social change. There is a vital need to explicate the advantages of relying on tradition than focusing on displacing it in pursuit of change. Marshall Berman expressed it in *All That is Solid Melts into Air*, 'that going back, might turn out to be a way for going forward' (Berman, 2003: 33).

Another aspect to this debate is the linking of tradition with history and how the mainstream approaches within International Relations have been faulted on being a-historical, drawing on Hedley Bull's defence of tradition against empiricism and rationalism. Within the domain of International Relations, the incommensurability between science and history/tradition, is elaborated by the Second Great Debate in the disciplinary history of the subject. It is of crucial importance to recognise Hedley Bull's differentiation between tradition and science in the second great debate, claiming that science posed a threat to tradition. Those who are proponents of 'science' label tradition to be speculative 'wisdom literature' (Bull, 1972:107). Bull fiercely opposes the scientific view by maintaining the autonomy of the realm of international politics not being susceptible to being governed by laws of 'scientific' nature. He disputes the distinction made between theory and practice as separate domains and emphasises the overlap between the ambit and scope of the two, each dynamically influencing the other.

The conduct of actors in the global arena constitutes the subject matter of the discipline which hinges on understanding the inter-subjective meanings of the actions and intentions of states. The scientific approach does not explain the modulations in the patterns of state behaviour that can easily be gauged by the traditional approach due to its reliance on interpretative methods. The history of IR has mirrored a particular version of the discipline in order to legitimise the scientific image of the field. This essential need for legitimacy also helps to explain the continuous references to philosophers of science,

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such as Thomas Kuhn (1957; 1962), Larry Laudan (1977; 1984; 1990), and Imre Lakatos (1968; 1970; 1971 and 1974), in the belief that their philosophical accounts of the history of science can be directly applied to the history of IR. Yet many IR scholars seem to miss the point that philosophical accounts of the history of science are different from the actual history of science, and thus do not carefully consider whether the literature from the philosophy of science is actually relevant for understanding the predicament of IR (Gunnell, 2011).

Science has been a notion in play in IR debates since the very beginning of the scholarly study of world politics. Indeed, one could easily go back before the establishment of the study of world politics as a distinct scholarly endeavour and find 'science' playing an important disciplining role in debates about the status of international law (Schmidt, 1998: 104–106) and in the efforts of scholars of politics to distinguish themselves and their work from purely partisan political activity in the initial period of the twentieth century (Adcock, 2003: 501–506). Because of this long-standing history, 'science' remains a notion to conjure within the field of IR; it is a veritable 'rhetorical commonplace' (Jackson, 2006: 27–32), which is available for deployment within all kinds of controversies. And a powerful resource it is, too: incriminating a sample of work as un-scientific bears colossal pejorative connotations, both because of the field-specific history and because of the broader cultural prestige enjoyed by 'science' (Moses and Knutsen, 2007: 155–156).

The brief overview of the various underpinnings of the concept of tradition would enable us to develop further connections between International Relations as a discourse and practice and tradition as a cognate concept.

Progress

One of the essential and multifaceted concepts in the history of philosophy has been the idea of progress asserting the continuous and piecemeal improvement of material, political, social, intellectual, and moral conditions throughout human history with a faith in the lasting of this trend in the foreseeable future. According to Leslie Sklair (1998), the idea of progress, complemented with the expansion of science and technology in the

seventeenth century, attained prominence in the Enlightenment, reaching its pinnacle during the second half of the nineteenth century. Progress at the ideational level serves the dual purpose of not only conceptually explaining social change but also is a means for legitimising the endeavour carried out by the discipline of social science itself. Social scientists have legitimised their role as managers of societal affairs by identifying the carriers and obstacles to the idea of progress.

Plato's *The Statesman* (1578 [1997]) is considered to be the earliest contributions to the idea of progress, delineating the trajectory of mankind's progress from earliest times to present heights. Another remarkable and perhaps the most extensive works on progress in the eighteenth century was Auguste Comte's *Positive Philosophy.* According to him, human thinking had developed through millennia by passing through three phases: theological, metaphysical and the positive or scientific (Comte, 1830-42). He qualified progress in terms of intellectual advancement in human beings. The first stage was characterised by animism/fetishism or the belief in inanimate objects as possessing spirits. The second stage was marked by attributing god as an abstraction. The final stage referred to the use of observation and experiment to advance knowledge. Another significant contribution to the idea of progress is provided by G.W.F. Hegel in his *Philosophy of History* (1825). Hegel defined human history as the 'development of spirit in time' with the essence of spirit being freedom. Human beings alone possess the capacity to reason and the impulse for perfection which marks them as significantly different from other species.

Robert Nisbet's *History of the Idea of Progress* (1980) is a seminal work in understanding the concept of progress and involves the adoption of two different perspectives. The first is a vision backwards in time, appreciating the past for its prowess in having generated the way we live now. The second constitutive perspective of the idea of progress is the vision of the future. The five fundamental postulates defining 'progress' by Nisbet are: valuing the past, superiority of western civilisation, importance of economic/technological growth, appeal to reason and scientific knowledge and innate significance of life in the world around us (Nisbet, 1980: 33-36).

An open-ended model of progress defines progress as any sequential, directional change that receives a positive social evaluation (Nowak, 1990: 13). It is this reference to social values that sets progress apart from development and places it within the domain of applied social science. Nowak makes a crucial observation that because social change is often multidimensional, various dimensions may not develop in a parallel direction. He also highlights the fact that progress always demands axiological relativisation; we need to ask progress for whom and by which standards?

Similarly, Piotr Sztompka in *The Sociology of Social Change* (1993) offers a reformulated understanding of the concept of progress. The traditional view refers progress to some future end state of the process; the new understanding relates it to present conditions and defines progress as the potential capacity for self-transformation. Not the quality of what actually becomes, but the potentiality for becoming is seen as the core meaning of progress (Sztompka, 1993: 20). In other words, the progressiveness of society is measured by viability of human agency. Sztompka argues that such agency depends on five sets of factors: the traits of the actors, the properties of social structures, the features of the natural environment, the characteristics of historical tradition, and the image of the expected future (Sztompka, 1993: 45-51).

The idea of progress is so integral to post-Enlightenment political and social theory that it seems, more than any other element, to distinguish the discourses of modernity from earlier modes of knowing. However, there is a growing disillusionment with the idea of progress in the present century. This could be attributed to a number of factors including an emerging consensus amidst scholars to have reached the pinnacles of economic growth, intensifying belief in the deterioration of nature's resources and the strengthening belief in limitations of science itself. The crisis of confidence in progress has become a crisis in the explanatory power and emancipating potential of social science theory. The notion of progress has been under immense criticism from various quarters including the Popperian epistemological critique of historicism (1957), the emphasis on 'multiple modernities' by S.N. Eisenstaedt (2000), the anti-globalisation protests and the postmodernist movement challenging grand narratives.

The notion of progress is fundamentally linked to the idea of change. Change involves the wearing away of conventional patterns, erosion of embedded order and weakening of governance institutions leading to establishment of new patterns and routines in world politics (Rosenau, 1990:17). John Ruggie remarks that due to the absence of vocabulary, the discipline lacks the potential to theorise discontinuity (Ruggie, 1993: 140). Other scholars including Robert Gilpin (1981), Bruce M. Russett (1983), Fredrich Kratochwil (1994) have conceptualised change either in terms of significant social and technological innovations or achievements and trends that have shaped the course of history. Change acts as a qualifier for marking the distinction between various schools of thought in International Relations. With the end of the Cold War, there has been proliferation in the claims for new era signifying transformations at global level. There is a need to examine distinct notions of change, their application to world politics and the future vision of international relations. Some scholars have opined that the foundational trajectory of the discipline highlighted through the Great debates is about the notion of change, its interpretation and consequences (Buzan and Jones, 1981: 2). Mutability has been a contentious area of disagreement among the theorists from differing schools in international relations theory (Holsti, 1985).

Realists are cynical regarding the possibilities of transcending the recurring effects of anarchical system through learning, international institutions or sociological and technological advancement; adhering to a pessimistic view of world politics. Realists consider progress as a pragmatic assessment and acceptance of the prospects and possibilities for human moral, social, and political development. The pervasive influence of this sceptical tradition is demonstrated by the tautological suggestion that realists are realistic about the problem of progress. Realist scepticism is grounded in a philosophy of progress that is cautiously optimistic about the prospects for sustained improvement of the human condition. This tradition is influenced by a conservative distaste for experiment and change. By focussing on the diversity of state interests, differential capacity of policy makers among other variables both liberals and constructivist theorists have deviated from standard realist reliance on omniscience of security dilemmas (Adler and Crawford, 1991). Critics of the positivist approaches to IR have highlighted the

growing redundancy of the conventional conceptual categories of realist tradition-sovereignty and anarchy since they aren't consistent with the lived realities of international life.

James Rosenau (1990) was among the foremost scholars in the discipline of international relations who engaged with the idea of change. He deliberated on crucial aspects relating to change – including the criticality of time, history of ideas, the compass and extent of change (local, regional, global) and the nature of markers of change and their dependence of the arbitrariness of the analyst (Rosenau, 1990:45-63). K. J. Holsti's classical work *The Dividing Discipline: Hegemony and Diversity in International Theory* (1985) explains the key conceptualisations of change. Change is categorised and referred to as 'replacement', 'addition', 'dialectical change', and 'transformation' (Holsti, 1985: 21-27). These varied interpretations of the notion of change assist in providing an overarching understanding of the term and its manifestation in myriad ways in International Relations.

The evaluation of progress in the field of International Relations is complicated owing to a variety of reasons. There are no common yardsticks and benchmarks for measuring effectively the applicability to real world. There is inherent dynamism in the character of the discipline of International Relations which makes it a shifting target on a dual level- both as an 'object' and as a 'field' for inquiry. There are certain enduring questions spanning across space and time. Lastly, emanating from real world events, most responses in the field are political and contested, thereby making progress and inherently value-laden concept depending on the beliefs of what is regarded as desirable and possible.

Utopia

The conceptualisation on utopia begins by tracing the development of the concept drawing from English fiction, sociology and utopian studies. It then focuses on the notion of 'order' that encompasses utopia and its implications for International Relations. The last part focuses on the divide between realism and idealism; the way it has shaped the

field and the necessity to bring back utopian thinking into International Relations as a discipline.

It was at the onset of the seventeenth century that the scientific writings were demarcated from literary ones with science being perceived as the truth or representing real facts while fiction being a figment of imagination, was considered to be unreal. The pervasive fact-fiction dichotomy therefore has its roots at a particular juncture in history. It is quite fascinating to document the etymological origins of the word 'fact' that is derived from the Latin verb *facere,* implying 'imagination'; 'creation', 'invention' and 'representation'. Utopia or Outopia as a word stems from Greek and connotes 'no place' ('*u' or 'ou'* is no/not and '*topos'* denotes place) (Kumar, 1987: ixx). Krishan Kumar makes a distinction between dual traditions of utopia namely utopias entailing sensual gratification and utopias based on human contrivance (Kumar, 1987: 12). Utopias involving sensual gratification are myths demanding nostalgia towards the past or some future time often referred to as the 'Golden Age' where human life was or would be ideal and extremely fulfilling. Well-known examples are Hesiod's golden age, Eden, some versions of the Millennium, and various Greek and Roman myths. Utopias of the second kind are centred around the claim of human control of every minute aspect of social order, hence propelled by human contrivance, frequently modelled in the way of an imaginary city or place. Examples include Thomas Moore's eponymous work *Utopia*, *Looking Backward* (1888) by Edward Bellamy, *News from Nowhere* (1890) written by William Morris, *A Modern Utopia* (1905) by H.G. Wells, *Brave New World* (1932) by Aldous Huxley and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) by George Orwell.

Barbara Goodwin and Keith Taylor (1982) describe the three features exhibited by utopianism. Firstly, it personifies a sweepingly radical, uncompromising and complete denunciation of the existing state of affairs. Secondly, utopian thought underscores the latent capability for human advancement which is founded on exceeding optimism regarding human nature and sanguine assumptions about the role and competence of political economic and social institutions to ameliorate fundamental human impulses and motivations. Thirdly, utopianism surpasses the public/private dichotomy by evoking the likelihood of inclusive personal fulfilment (Goodwin and Taylor, 1982: 18).

Ruth Levitas in her work *The Concept of Utopia* has explained that Utopia is born out of a conviction and two questions. The conviction is 'it doesn't have to be this way'. The questions are: 'how then, should we live?' and 'how can that be?' (Levitas, 1990: 27) The most significant contribution of utopia is the ability to expand the imaginative horizons of human potentialities which would have deep seated impact on international politics. Utopianism is deemed to perform the dual task of being insightful about the prevailing circumstances and as an impetus for change towards a better future. Lyman Tower Sargent (1994: 13) defines utopianism as social dreaming. Ernst Bloch talks about a 'utopian impulse' founded in human potentiality to imagine beyond the lived experience and harnessing the desire to reorder the world (Bloch, 1986: 36). Lucy Sargisson (2000) describes utopianism as 'transgressive' as it intends to break away from the existing systems and unlocks novel vistas and spaces for conceptual and theoretical deliberations. Likewise, Fredric Jameson (2005) expounds that utopia is not only an abstraction or a mind-map with a futuristic vision but the germane ground for pursuing action. The underpinning theme with all these definitions is the prominence given to the creative function within utopian thought; the potency of utopian ingenuity as a useful source for socio-political inspiration. Utopias thus constitute hidden signifiers or projections of people's desires (Harvey, 2000: 195; Levitas, 1990: 124). They simultaneously both imagine and predict radical possibilities to an uncontaminated world which comprises of some sort of escapism from the current status quoist order.

The embracing of the unknown with positive conviction and anticipating its actualisation is one of the main characteristics of utopian thinking. The intrinsic sense of 'timelessness' and 'placelessness' coupled with 'perfectionism' redirects the conservative attention from the taken for granted to something original and progressive (Plattel, 1972:87). Dystopias also characterised as anti-utopias entail the inverse of utopias; in some senses they both incorporate each other. While utopias present us with a hopeful future in a positive sense; dystopias on the contrary anticipate about the future in a negative way, fearing the worst to come true (Kumar 1991). Terry Eagleton (2000: 31) puts this even better, remarking on the fact that every utopia is at the same moment also mirroring dystopia, and is a humble reminder of our boundedness as we try to break free.

Richard Coyne (1999:21) arrives at the same inference reminiscing the fact that utopia and dystopia aren't opposite but contain the fragments that constitute each other. The underlying search for order characterises most utopias. Present day international politics is typified as multifaceted interaction of concepts, ideas and principles. The exploitative conditions under globalisation, the shifting parameters of security threats and the diversity of normative aspirations represented through the formidable political forces make it very difficult to provide for an available means for upholding world order. The commencement of any analysis relating social order, either in social theory or the discipline of International Relations is based on the edifice of a clear-cut distinction between order as 'fact' or 'value' (Hurrell, 2003: 23). In the first sense social order implies stability and regularity of patterns which is contrasted to instability, chaos or lack of predictability. In the second sense social order encapsulates a purposive blueprint infused with meaning, involving a specific set of aspirations, objectives and values that lead to a particular conclusive end result.

In 1966, Raymond Aron in his influential work *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* enquired about the nature of international order in a profound way by questioning the conditions to circumvent destruction and live in a relatively well manner. Aron described living 'relatively well' in categorically minimalist terms. His definition of order meant obtaining 'the minimum conditions of coexistence' in the anarchical system of states (Aron, 1966: 42). Since states were the principal actors involved in maintaining order international global order were synonymous under his schema.

However, there have been significant changes in the character of international/global order with the booming of world economy, catastrophic impact of environmental changes and complex global governance structures mushrooming in various regions; resulting in state-centric system becoming increasingly obsolete. The present dynamics of change and statics of continuity are so arresting as to highlight a number of crucial questions that will frame our grasp of what lies ahead. What do we mean by governance on a global scale? If governance connotes a system of rule, and if it is not sustained by an organised government, who makes and implements the rules? If

ideational, behavioral, and institutional patterns interactively sustain established global orders, what causes them to change?

David Harvey's work *Spaces of Hope* (2000) encapsulates the essence he borrows from Roberto Mangabeira Unger's (1997) exposition on utopia, searching for viable options through critical engagement with the existing framework of institutions. Harvey (2000:115) elucidates the need for moving past the desire for perfect societies and instead focussing on prospects for remapping the world for promising human association. The challenge confronting scholars is to embolden self-reflective theorisations without retreating to the realist suppositions regarding the international as an anarchical and chaotic sphere, prioritising tussle for power and establishing hegemony over pursuit of order and justice. Drawing on ancient Aristotelian intellectual virtue of practical wisdom, Harvey recognised it as the pre-requisite for the state to identify its ethical-political good and to contemplate on the best possible means of achieving that good (Harvey, 2000: 142). This requires comprehensive knowledge about the actual political situation and extensive reflection on the provisions of action. However, the challenging part would involve ascertaining the best yet feasible practices for a system to function efficiently. The transformative lessons extracted from antiquity are used as models/ drafts for replication in present times (Sayer, 2000: 162–3). The failure or success of a particular project is contingent upon the specific geo-historical context in which it initially transpired. It would be interesting to interrogate the effects of similar constellation of practices in another context and explore the components required for making it feasible and successful in the future. Unger (1987:323) underlines both the context and action dependency of politically charged projects. The failure of certain projects might enable us to cast light and critically examine the descriptive and explanatory presuppositions that informed them. However, one can never be certain in entirety regarding the success under different circumstances or by relying on different set of methods.

The contingencies regarding the failure and success of a project as Unger accentuates cannot be estimated a priori (Unger, 1987:352). Thus unsuccessful projects or practices make for worthy reading exercises and bolster the chances for pushing forth new, untried models or projects and testing their workability. Coupling the knowledge

from prevailing mechanisms and projects with counterfactual reasoning could provide a leeway in resolving some of the potential problems in realising these attempts. Through conducting thought experiments, drawing lessons from history and analogical and counterfactual reasoning, the consequences of introducing new projects can be thoroughly scrutinised. It is important to take into account the available means for rendering utopias realisable. There are limitations to imagination within a given geo-historical context, however, by changing the makeup of the context, novel, concrete utopias may become a reality.

One of the central objectives of the thesis is to reinforce the vitality and necessity for utopian imagination as a constituent element of International Relations theory. Shannon Brincat explicates the trajectory of utopian thought through delineating four distinct phases in IR theory; the rise of liberal internationalists post world war I; anti-nuclear or peace propagators of the 1960s and 1970s; responses by utopianists to the 'planetary crisis' of 1980s; and ushering in of 'realistic utopianism' in 1990s (Brincat, 2009: 591). Brincat claims that one of the reasons why International Relations theory has shown resistance to alteration and discarded the capacity for transformation can precisely be traced back to the inception of the discipline during the First Great Debate between realism and idealism which led to the elimination of any sort of utopian tradition from the discipline.

As Roger Spegele suggests, the idealist-realist debate revolves around a 'what' question: 'what is international relations?' (Spegele, 1996: 12). This is a philosophical question involving a critical evaluation not merely of the nature of international relations, but of what constitutes reliable knowledge about it. Having irrefutably discredited utopianism as an alternative, realism was hailed as the solution in the aftermath of the First Great Debate. The questions relating to human freedom, notions of liberty and equality, idea of emancipation, redressal of injustice and asymmetries in world politics, concerns of inequity and poverty were considered to be peripheral to the project of International Relations, expunging them from the scope of the discipline altogether. Martin Wight's (1966:31) penetrative understanding of the lack of International Relations theory is precisely because of realist predominance in IR with their conviction regarding

interstate politics as being the 'realm of repetition and recurrence' leading to a static or cyclical interpretation of history.

E.H. Carr in the epoch defining work *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (1939) employed the term 'utopia' in two distinct ways with divergent implications. The first manner of utilising utopia was in opposition to 'realism' and in this sense it signified 'hope' or ideal that could not be fulfilled or attained (Carr, 1939: 11). The second application of the term meant utopia as antagonistic to 'reality' itself involving ideas and views that were unreal or false (Carr, 1939: 13). While deploying the term utopian, to describe the exponents of the League of Nations and champions of liberal theory it was hence unclear whether Carr was adhering to imply that their beliefs were false or whether they could not be attained. It is this ambiguity that has led to the marginalisation of utopian thinking in International Relations.

Much of Carr's understanding about utopianism stemmed from a particular interpretation of Karl Mannheim's influential text *Ideology and Utopia* (1936). Mannheim draws attention to the distinction between 'ideologies' and 'utopias' on the basis of their performatory function. He indicates that 'ideologies' aid to maintain and preserve the prevailing order while 'utopias' on the contrary challenge status quo and work towards disintegrating it (1936: 42). However, Mannheim's work was not specifically concerned with the field of International Relations and therefore it cannot be implicated that realism fits into the description of 'ideology'. Scholars in the Third Great Debate including Robert Cox (1981), Richard K. Ashley (1984) R.B.J Walker (1990) among others advocated the claim that following Manheim's typology and drawing inference from it, logically implies that 'realism' would constitute an ideology supporting to perpetuate the given order of the day while anything in contradiction to the status quo will be denigrated as 'utopian'. Manheim accorded the authority for reviewing and judging what qualified as 'utopian' lay with the 'representatives of the given order' and what their ideas about unrealisable were (Manheim, 1936: 115). This particular role has been assumed by the 'door-keepers' of IR, Neo-realists a term borrowed from Roland Bleiker. With absolute hegemony over the discipline, it is the neo-realists who decide

what passes of as proper IR and what gets excluded from research agendas (Bleiker, 2007: 112).

Within the disciplinary conceptualisation, early 1990s witnessed a significant appeal for the idea of 'realistic utopia' first proposed by Ken Booth (1990:61). Realistic utopia comprised of two components - the normative aspect derived its appeal for being grounded in reason and calling for world order while the empirical aspect envisaged to deal with the global forces at work in a comprehensive manner, not limited to the scope of realism. Booth (1990: 73) categorically drew connections between Realistic utopias and process utopianism both of which shared the embodied element of concrete and pragmatic reforms in response to present problems.

Recent developments in the discipline of International Relations have indicated a revival with the burgeoning interest in utopianism. Patrick Hayden and Chamsy el-Ojeili in their work *Globalisation and Utopia* (2009) have described utopianism encompasses the triple task of subjecting the current political structures to incisive critique, imagining unconventional substitutions for organising human societies and thwarting any attempts of foreclosing the radical possibilities either in the present day or in the future. According to their thesis, globalisation is abounding with constructive and progressive potential leading to deep seated transformation in world politics signified through International Relations theory only if we are not incapacitated by the restrictions on our imagination (Hayden and Ojeili, 2009: 130). Cosmopolitan critical theorist including Ulrich Beck (1992; 1998; 2006), David Held (1995; 2003; 2010) and Jürgen Habermas (1985; 1992), have rejuvenated the interest in cosmopolitan vision by rekindling the concept of social imaginary as a rejoinder to transformative influence of economic globalisation. Drawing on self-reflexivity, stating the politico-normative orientation explicitly and committing to the utopian desire for radical societal change, this new wave of theoretical imagination offers a glimpse of hope of salvaging utopia from those too keen in proclaiming its demise and the potential opportunities for manifesting alternative futures, transgressing the strictures of idealism and realism.

Imagination as Methodology & IR Discipline

Heikki Patomaki's (2002) beckoning for future-oriented research in International Relations comprises of a dual objective of rejecting any engagement with the orthodox past and creatively imagining prospective breakthroughs and beginnings. IR allows a particular intellectual practice with particular imaginaries and rationalities to serve as a universal reference for all IR theoretical practices with alternative imaginaries and rationalities. For both domestic exile and erasure of 'foreign' elements, the boundaries are vigorously defended with strict enforcement mechanisms to determine what does or does not constitute IR. Epistemology and methodology provide the gatekeeping function to place questions of ontology or history on the margins. In other cases, a particular classification of the international becomes the determining factor to grant entry or rejection.

Martin Wight in his illustrious essay, '*Why is there is no international theory'* published in 1966 lamented at the state of affairs in the discipline of International Relations which was characterised by 'intellectual and moral paucity' (Wight, 1966: 7). The two prodigious works pertaining to imagination in academia are C. Wright Mills's *The Sociological Imagination* (1959) and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Community: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (1983).* However, imagination remains elusive in the realm of the 'international'. The idea of empathy which, involves situating oneself in the position of others closely involves the use of imagination. There have been various attempts at defining empathy and bringing it to the centre of research within IR. Suzanne Keen's work (2007:43), explores the concept of empathy in detail delineating its meaning as 'vicarious and spontaneous sharing of affect generated through witnessing, hearing, or reading about another's condition'. The precursor to being empathetic is identification - locating oneself in place of others. It involves the use of imagination. There is a certain dynamism to events around us and one must acknowledge in all humility the unlikelihood of knowing everything. This would entail openness to explore unchartered territories and linkages by being self-conscious of the limits of knowledge and relying on imagination as a heuristic tool for understanding the world. Thus, International Relations involves forging relationships between people and their

surrounding world. Imagination and narratives can play an imperative role in expanding the boundaries of IR.

Utopianism can perform a valuable role in envisioning alternate realities thus magnifying the focus of International Relations theory. The main salient characteristic of utopian theory is its refutation of historical necessity (comprising realism's immutability thesis) and its allure to creative human agency to unshackle the present and construct a better future. This would result in liberating International Relations theory from the fictitious dichotomy between political reality and imagination. The current state of imagination is IR theory is quite abysmal with its preoccupation with positivist understanding of events around the world. Imagining doesn't necessarily imply the presence of an ideal world in opposition to empirical reality. It entails de-familiarisation with the customary judgements and perception mechanisms. Imagination, in no way seeks to represent the world, rather it is a powerful heuristic tool for recreating the world on the basis of imperceptible differences in human beings.

The Dawn of a Historiographical Turn

To understand the linkages between the past, present and future it is pertinent to delve into the history of writing and theorising about IR. Prior to delving into the subject of the great debates, it is important to highlight the burgeoning of literature in the recent past that has critically questioned the established wisdom about the trajectory of development of International Relations. Duncan Bell (2001: 123) labels the proliferating work on the history of IR as a 'dawn of a historiographical turn'. Bell ruminates about the seriousness in dealing with intellectual history of the discipline, which is being carefully studied and conceded for shaping the theoretical debates (Bell, 2001: 123). Recent surge of scholarship also openly acknowledges the indispensable link between disciplinary identity and exhibiting the image of its history (Bell, 2009; Thies, 2002). The approach of reconstructing the history of IR has been crucially relevant to tackle one of the basic research questions on the procedure of writing history of the field. Those associated with the sub field of disciplinary history, within IR, are constantly discouraged as progress being made to comprehend the intricate and multifarious nature of the evolution of the

discipline is stymied by the propagation of conventional orthodox myths and misconceptions.

There is an urgent need to acknowledge the implications of these myths for the self-understanding of the discipline. There is rampant exasperation among scholars when established names in the discipline discard the findings of revisionist history. As eminent scholar David Lake declared openly having barely any patience for the Great Debates in IR and IPE and wishing for scholars to simply carry on with the business of explaining the world we inhabit. (Lake, 2009: 48). These scholars have disdain for revisionist claims and alternative understandings of history and emphasise on the role of theorists to carry out explaining the events and processes without questioning their origins. This however presents an extremely cosmetic and surface level picture of the intricate complexities of the workings of the world.

Benchmark dates are decisive in disciplinary history for three main reasons: firstly, because these landmarks act as points of reference for the discipline's self-understanding; secondly, these dates emerge as markers for viewing by other disciplines; and, thirdly, they privilege certain events as drivers of change by fixing attention on them. The politics of highlighting and silencing is integral to the shaping of history and how we come to understand it, concentrating attention towards particular events and simultaneously downplaying others (May, 1975). Since history remains a contested site of inquiry, it is important to scrutinise and reassess the relevance of choices about benchmark dates.

Any scope of engagement with history and other disciplines of social sciences is marred by the reliance on orthodox benchmark dates in IR which lead to reinforcement of a parochial set of concerns. A revision of these dates would bolster the chances of a more fruitful engagement between IR and its neighbouring fields. For correcting historical amnesia and formulating a deeply informed contemporary agenda it is important to rearticulate and carefully reconsider the given benchmark dates.

The pivotal text *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (1990) by Martin Hollis and Steve Smith's was the initial works elucidating cogently a form of

empirical knowledge-production that was not simply a deficient or low-tech version of the hypothesis testing/generalisation approach. Hollis and Smith began with the delineation of two 'intellectual traditions' animating the production of empirical knowledge in the social sciences: one derived from the natural sciences and the other derived from nineteenth-century hermeneutics. 'Explaining' designates the first approach; 'understanding', the other. Hollis and Smith then quickly proceeded to draw a series of other distinctions that map onto this same basic division: 'outsider' versus 'insider' accounts, causes versus meanings, and preferences versus rules (Hollis and Smith, 1990: 1–7). The authors argued that these two bundles – causal outsider accounts using preferences to explain what actors do in world politics, and meaningful insider accounts using social rules to understand what actors do in world politics – were virtually incommensurable, leaving us with a situation in which there are always two separate stories to tell about any given empirical situation. The authors were also meticulous in avoiding any kind of comparative analysis of the two approaches, concluding the book with a dialogue between themselves that highlights the strengths and shortcomings of each approach in terms of the other (Hollis and Smith, 1990: 203–214).

The Aporia of Disciplinarity

James Rosenau in his acclaimed work *Distant Proximities* (2003: iv) reveals that 'the forward looking are forever condemned to be misinterpreted.' The approach to elaborating on the three concepts of Tradition, Progress and Utopia entails the following assumptions:

(a) loosening and undoing the prominence of structures of parsimony (moving away from scientific/ positivist methodology),
(b) committing to an intersubjective understanding of meaning making, and
(c) acknowledging the value-ladenness of all research and being unapologetic and explicit regarding the core values that anchor the research agenda.

Disciplinarity is always inherent in any branch of learning. In other words, how does disciplinarity manifest itself along a spatial dimension and how do local versions of IR articulate the universal? The aim is to decentre the discipline by asking questions such

as 'What is international?' or 'What is theory?' and in doing so, to expand the boundaries of IR and aim for a more open discussion of definitions. It is also important to underline that everything gets inflected locally. Theory changes as it travels to different places, given that it is always a response to specific social and historical situations. Today, with more complex and accelerated travel patterns, it has become difficult for grand theories to be effective in predicting and analysing the changes happening at the local level. There is not a stable constellation of theories that 'are' simply themselves (in abstraction, i.e., in the center) and are 'reacted to' (e.g., in the periphery), nor is this captured by a picture of local, independent realities. The particular inflections of theories have to be understood in-between the international and the local. The discipline has undergone epistemological and ontological reflexivity, and is now increasing its sociological reflexivity.

The conventional debates in international relations emerge from a specific framing of theory/problem/solution nexus or what can be termed as a problematique. The conjectural assumptions of the international problematique involve: (i) a positivist interpretation of the new natural sciences, in particular Newton's *Mechanics,* and the related idea that it would also be possible to find similar simple formulas to describe the laws governing the nature of human beings; (ii) perceptions, prospects, difficulties and crisis associated with the upsurge and intensification of *capitalism;* (iii) the pragmatic and theoretical challenges arising due to the advent and consolidation of present day *state system;* and (iv) the dilemma *of order,* which surfaced with i) to iii) and the corrosion of the of the legitimacy of the Christian Church (Rosenau, 2003: 144-56).

The 1980's witnessed the renaissance of the discipline with the emergence of the agency/ structure debate. Richard Ashley's notable essay titled 'Poverty of Neorealism' (1984) expounded on the role of structure and agency in outcome determination with sophisticated detail. Alexander Wendt's piece in *International Organization* (1987) titled 'Anarchy is what states make of it' continues to be the one of the most cited contributions. Wendt's (1991) review of Martin Hollis and Steve Smith's book *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (1990) ensued in a crucial debate between the two.

The debate led to the commencement of a fundamental inquiry into the nature of International Relations: Could engaging with meta-theoretical debates lead to new possibilities and vistas for writing about world politics in a reflective manner (Alker, 1996: 270)? Can we conceive of imaginative alternatives to tell the existing stories of the world around us? What would these alternatives entail? The standoff between Wendt (1991, 1992b) and Hollis and Smith (1991, 1992), was carried forward by Steve Smith (1994), Walter Carlsnaes (1994), and Vivienne Jabri and Stephen Chan (1996), who highlighted two contentious points of argument-i) the level of analysis problem and b) questions regarding the explanation vs. understanding polemic (Smith, 1994:56). The debate further probed the necessity for telling stories in a cause and effect pattern and the shift towards more personal, interpretative understanding of stories. Finally, the debates led to critical evaluation of the ontological and epistemological postulations articulated through the level of analysis.

Visions of World Politics: The Realism-Idealism Dichotomy

The obscuring of the utopian thinking from IR can be traced to its disciplinary history, particularly the first great debate. The theoretical inquiry into the discipline of International Relations (IR) has been exemplified by an expansive and eclectic array of alterations, disputes, exchanges and path breaking findings. One of the standard ways of evaluating the matrix of intellectual progress in the field since its inception has been through a chronological classification labelled as Great Debates. The debates comprise of the narrative that each period of germinal scholarly engagement was outlined in a manner whereby the embedded conventional theory was challenged by the emergence of a new theory. There has been an upsurge in the literature, in recent years, interrogating the veracity of claims made during the first debating sequence. The First Great Debate in the history of International Relations reveals the trajectory of international thought in the 1920s and 1930s; wherein a homogenous group of 'idealists' engaged in an intellectual tussle with the nascent generation of realists. Any engagement with the history of ideas in the discipline of IR would reveal the richness and diversity of concepts and taxonomy of ideas to explore and assess its past. Disciplinary progress involves subjecting the history to rigorous critical analysis. Despite the resurgence of interest in disciplinary past, certain

misleading benchmarks and myths prevail in the discipline. It is important to revise the foundational claims made by these benchmark dates to suitably reflect the macro-historical dynamics (Buzan and Lawson, 2013).

Karl Marx (1968 (1852): 96) suggested that everything in history repeats itself. The first time is a tragedy, the second a farce. Similar to other disciplines, IR is deeply guided by historical fabrication of lore's and narration of myths that have further consolidated the account of discipline's foundation and direction of development. These accounts of history have provided justificatory reasoning for the existing configuration and future aspirations of the discipline. A panoramic view of the discipline in its entirety would point that the realist-idealist debate in the 1920s and 1930s was the most decisive events in IR's annals. The first debate epitomises the advent of scientific thinking which served the basis for the discipline being dominated by realism in the years after 1945. IR experts and professionals have often been proficient historians of actual events in the world but have been negligent in the probing of history of ideas within their own field. Conventionally, history within IR has been the source for testing theories in the tangible world rather than inquiring the origins of the history itself. The period after 1930s was seen as a vindication for realist thought and relegation of idealist thought as obsolesce rather than viewing it as a site for interface between different ideas about the international realm.

E.H Carr (1939:27) illustriously distinguished between utopians and realists on the basis of those who regarded politics to be a function of ethics and the ones who regarded ethics to be the function of politics. This served as the most towering distinction highlighting the choice between morality and politics. Utopians espoused for the world to move in a benevolent direction, while realists took the world for its face value; as it is and rationalised their actions according to the inherent fallibility of man. For utopians perfection was an ideal that could be achieved and in the context of International Relations it manifested in the vision of world peace; devoid of any conflict and without power asymmetries acting as the primary determinant of relationships amongst countries. They believed in the malleability of human nature which could lead to persuading men to

be virtuous. Realists are attributed as sceptics as they underscore the constraints in life while utopians emphasise on the opportunities. At a subliminal level these are temperamental postures than social theories. While writing in 1939, Carr considered realists as those who comprehended the importance of power dynamics at the global level and whose opinions were disregarded during the inter war years. Utopians, on the other hand espoused incongruent views held by a diverse group of scholars all tied together by the common theme of neglect of power. Carr (1939: 44) regarded the utopian stance to be both unfeasible and gravely precarious. The following section charts the sequence of development of the initial versions of realism and utopianism and how it metamorphosed into its modern variants.

In International Relations, 'Realism' can be employed in two senses - broad and narrow. The broad interpretation of the term implies a pejorative disposition towards human nature as being fundamentally selfish. As Bertrand Russell (1945) voiced in political contexts realism is closely related to power dynamics conceived in the widest sense possible. There is an inherent pessimism regarding human improvement as the drive for glory, dominance and security leads to a natural inclination for violence. Egoism and self-interestedness of individuals trumps moral principles. At the broad scale realism applies these features to the interactions between the world of states. Change, for realists is not desirable unless it is directed towards self-interest. The foremost building blocks of international system according to the realists are states that are changing at a precipitous rate making it difficult for the theorists to account for these changes while making their predictions.

In the narrative of the first great debate realism prevailed over inter war idealists and this was one of the catalytic milestones in the history of the embryonic discipline. It is challenging to provide a detailed account of the first great debate as it never formally involved arguments being exchanged about ideational change. The comprehensive outline of this debate cannot be traced to a particular source or a singular/group of scholars rather it is presented as 'anecdotal' while being recounted by a large number of scholars. A singular, cohesive and self-conscious group of scholars who identified as

idealists never existed and projecting it as a fact can be misleading. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, Peter Wilson (1998: 2) identifies three contentious claims in the development of history of ideas as a part of the great debates narrative. Firstly, idealism existed as the dominant mode of inquiry during the inter-war years; secondly idealism faced a crisis in terms of the world war and thirdly its replacement by realism which offered a cogent and scientific explanation and accurate predictions for policy making. There have been various critiques of the disciplinary orthodoxy in recent years with scholars problematizing the first great debate on distinguishably three grounds: upholding distorted and misrepresentative conceptions of past; ex post facto construction of a coherent tradition that regulates and constraints contemporary IR scholarship (Wilson, 1998:4-6).

A brief summary of the recent critical works covering the First Great Debate corroborate the trail of its incorporation disciplinary orthodoxy spread over the last century. It outlines the procedures and practices through which this invented fiction became the accepted gospel truth. By tracing the works published in the early 1930s to 1950s, a remodelling of the first great debate is sketched out with a commentary on the retrospective impact of this literature. The parable surrounding the First Debate was propagated by various scholars as an analogue to the more contemporary developments and in doing so, they casually fortified the realism/idealism distinction. Recent scholarship has pointed out that the myth of the first great debate was created retrospectively who perfunctorily expended the story about the past to contextualise later intellectual advances. This anomaly in the shared understanding of the history of the discipline was avoidable, only if IR theorists had been more cautious about the fact that the texts referred to as part of the first great debate were also embedded in a peculiar time and were responses to a specific series of historical events.

In recent past another scholar engaging with revisionist history, Lucian Ashworth (1999), has elucidated upon the idea of the first debate as 'partial truth'. His work (2014) reiterated the argument made by Peter Wilson condemning the association drawn between realism and idealism as two contentious camps during the inter-war years. He also highlighted the existence of a divide between the realist camp in the post second

world war era on ground replicating the realism/idealism division. Ashworth (1999: 2014) among others have urged to revisit the past and identify these 'half truths' as historical errors that have been assimilated into the disciplinary trajectory.

Another compelling critique levied against the First Great Debate is its inaccuracy in explaining the role of *tradition* within IR. Ole Waever (1996) asserted the 'invention' of the great debate as a token of self-congratulation once they hegemonised the discipline post second world war. It was an effect of post adhoc ruminations by realist scholars rather than demonstrative of reality. Lucian Ashworth (1999) and Cameron Thies (2004) have elaborated on this claim by exploring the course through which realist scholars concretised the myth of the debate for serving their own selfish interests. Thies's work, was largely influenced by Brian Schmidt's critique (2001) that differentiated between two kinds of tradition - analytical and historical. Schmidt defines analytical tradition as being developed *ex post facto* by scholars who impose it on the past to gain legitimacy while dealing with contemporary issues (Schmidt, 2001: 12). It is an intellectual creation whereby a scholar coalesces ideas, themes and texts that are purposefully similar. One of the key features of such analytical tradition is its retrospective creation to functionally satisfy the demands and concerns in the present context. Historical tradition on the contrary, corresponds to the 'handing down' of cultural phenomenon (Schmidt, 2001: 13).

Another jarring critique of the story of the first great debate is directed towards its 'disciplinary function' in the larger discourse on IR. In the subsequent years, the first great debate shaped the discipline in such constrictive manner, it had an indelible impact on the theorising by future generations. Steve Smith (1999: 22) contended that relying on the pattern of great debates as an endorsement for intellectual progress, would validate newer orthodoxies by announcing 'winner' of the prevailing voice. Waever (1996) acquiesced with this characterisation, highlighting how acceptance of the notion of first great debate has led to dismissive and contemptuous attitude towards any form of critical theory, which is seen as a re-embodiment of interwar idealism not worthy of serious dialogue and engagement. Peter Wilson (1998:123) has meticulously provided a critique by elaborating in his work the linkage drawn between scholarship and progress in the

inter war years. The only thread binding these varied beliefs and view points under a singular paradigm, as idealism, was the assumption that there was potential for progressive change in international relations. According to this reading, the myth resulted in tabooing of progressive approaches by associating them with idealism, a school of thought often described using adjectives like 'woolly', impractical, other-worldly while realism was labelled as worldly, practical and depicting the truth (Wilson, 1999: 42).

The exalted fable involving the first great debate is responsible not only for reification of two main traditions of international thought but also to be blamed for the paucity of progressive research in the discipline. One of the critical arguments is critical appraisal of the role of First debate in construction of the disciplinary orthodoxy. It points out the transformation of an analytical construct that was developed to classify and catalogue past work and grant legitimacy to recent scholarship had turned into an indispensable feature of sustaining the orthodoxy by reliance from one generation to another. As a heuristic device, one needs to question the efficacy in the deployment of tools and methods like the great debates in teaching IR to future generations.

The Obsolescence of Utopian Thinking in IR: Understanding History Creation and Progress

This section scrutinises the nexus between configuring disciplinary identity, chronicling the history formation and progress by commissioning a comprehensive examination of the first great debate between idealists and realists which is the cornerstone in the progression of International Relations theory. A meticulous reading of the early period of development of International relations theory reveals the fallacy underlying the debate; the realists framed and erected the edifice of the discipline on the straw man of inter-war period idealism against which a unified and coherent realist identity was located. Thus what emerged as a distinct school of thought called idealism was in actuality the coalescing of multiple discourses stretching throughout the former half of the twentieth century. In the course of their interaction with realism, two of these became pivotal to realist identity and were co-opted into realism (Brincat, 2002). These two discourses can be identified as i) world federalism and ii) sovereignty/ anarchy distinction (Brincat, 2002-155-162). The first discourse on world federalism became tacit objective of realists

who instantaneously fashioned it as the explicit purpose of their opponents - idealists.

The second discourse involving the sovereignty/anarchy distinction occupied central locus for realists who silenced any mention of it by the idealists during the interwar years. It can be thus argued that the realist appropriation of these two discourses in course of the evolutionary trajectory resulted in triumph of realism that modelled the future course for International Relations theory per se. The neglect that ensued towards any engagement with idealism was an outcome of the manoeuvring of the discourses surrounding idealism.

The criterion for gauging and evaluating progress in International Relations theory is contingent upon constructing an account of disciplinary history by specific cohort of academicians and scholars. In effectively creating the discipline's history to mirror their victory and precedence over other competing theories, realism successfully garnered legitimacy while delegitimising other paradigms. The recapitulation of the past of the discipline offers insight into the processes through which one paradigm gained prominence while other was relegated to the realm of obscurity. This however is only fractional account of the disciplinary narrative so ingrained in the sociology of knowledge production within the field of International Relations. The appraisal of progress is indicative of a much more vital aspect while envisaging and writing the narrative of the discipline as it is closely tied to creating as well as sustaining disciplinary identity.

To have a sense of the disciplinary history, for a scholar of IR, would involve for them to have a feeling of belonging with the shared past, which in turn would influence their positionality in the discipline. To associate and label any person as realist, idealist, feminist, constructivist, post-modernist, etc. would therefore require them to be aware of the story of the discipline. Hence, disciplinary history, one's identity and progress in the field are inextricably connected for pursuing the study of International Relations. This is one of the primary reasons for the discipline being fraught with 'Great Debates' at periodic intervals. The Great Debates serve the twofold rationale of indicating theoretical progress in the academic echelons of International Relations as well as marker of a

distinctive identity for researchers situated within the discipline.

With the intention of establishing the relationship between the trajectory of the discipline, selfhood and progress an inquiry into the antagonism between realism and idealism stemming from the first great debate is mandated. With the arrival of Hans Morgenthau, George Kennan and their ilk on the academic landscape immediately post the second world war, realism was declared victorious in this debate. The incipient stages of the discipline demonstrated how efficiently realism could explain the empirical world as opposed to the idealist paradigm. This led to the forging of fierce in-group identification amongst realists and the subsequent reliance on the fabricated first great debate for maintaining a cohesive identity amongst an otherwise diverse group of scholars.

The case for centrality of disciplinary history to the practice, identity and progress of an academic discipline is made exceptionally persuasively by Dryzek and Leonard (1988). In their account of explaining the significance of disciplinary history it is important to reminisce that only one perspective is granted legitimacy which leads to disputing the validity claims made by contending theories. It is unviable to maintain a neutral stance while writing the disciplinary history since all histories are contested spaces vying for their ascendency which is reflected in the hegemony of a particular set of identities. The claims for superiority in relation to rival theories is substantiated through appealing to the narrative of disciplinary history. Dryzek and Leonard (1988:32) make a case for poor construction of most disciplinary histories without completely delving into the accounts of contending theories and a systematic evaluation of the claims forwarded by them. Brian Brian Schmidt (1994) agrees in essence with the argument made by Dryzek and Leonard (1988), offering numerous noteworthy pre-requisites that facilitate in deeper understanding of the pathway to present day International Relations. A distinction is made between 'historical' and 'analytical' tradition by Brian Schmidt (1994: 353). The first is characterised by its diffusion from one generation to another through word of mouth or customarily without inscription. The latter on the other hand is manufactured by scholars referring to functionally similar ideas, texts or genres. They are conceived to be retrospective formations governed by 'presentist' demands for validation

and justification.

Schmidt (1994: 352) warns of the genuine dangers posed by the conflation of these two types of traditions. Tim Dunne (1993) points out the vulnerability of the scholastic endeavours pursued by members of International Relations due to this conflation which is exceptionally grounded in 'great traditions'. As Schmidt (1994: 359) concurs, the realists have artificially imposed the interwar literature as belonging to analytical tradition identified as 'idealism' built on predominantly archetypal statements' that are related to the prototype of world federalism. Realists have been unsuccessful in tracing the actual lineages of scholars self-consciously and institutionally partaking in the making of International Relations' (Schmidt, 1994: 359). Realist scholars thus, have fabricated a tacit, historically erroneous tradition of 'idealism' to act as a bulwark against realist research agenda.

The revival of interest in the disciplinary history has resulted in several scholars distinguishing between insider and outsider accounts of theoretical advancement. Stefano Guzzini (2000: 150) states that the development of new theories in the discipline can be traced to the 'dual postulates', echoing the empirical world reality outside the academic community and 'structuring and substance matter of the debates that delineate the identity of a scholarly group itself'. Therefore, our conception of the discipline is enriched by considering it as a reflective arena of inquiry that has epistemological roots in the social creation of knowledge and ontological roots in the production of reality (Guzzini, 2000: 160).

Knud Erik Jorgensen (2000: 10) alludes to the prospect of substantial reliance on drawing theoretical explanations from external stimuli in the discipline of International Relations. This rendition whereby parallels are drawn between epistemological progress and external events has led to one of the most jarring consequences in terms of universal mode of theorising. The universality in terms of theorising is problematic as it eclipses the specificities relating to each context. He instead recommends relying on the 'cultural-institutional context' as an imperative. Further elaborating on his point, he seeks to draw attention towards the organisational and professional culture and its peculiarities in

different contexts and how that impacted the advances made in the discipline. According to Jorgensen (2000: 11-16) by applying this methodology in the particular example of the first great debate, it is demonstrated that there was no idealist paradigm that existed in Europe to begin with, to be superseded by the realism.

The concepts of tradition, progress and utopia are the steering motifs for the study with the broad problematique being an attempt to integrate these three into the discipline of International Relations for rendering the discipline adept in responding to the challenges presented in the current world order. The questions posed are mainly to critique and unpack the 'naturalness' of assumptions held by mainstream IR scholars that covertly underpin a status quoist understanding of international politics. Furthermore, it is an attempt to uncover the anxieties deeply embedded in the discipline that forsake a reimagination of the project of IR.

Research Questions

The thesis will address the following research questions:

- What are concepts? Are there certain terms whose meaning is essentially contested? How do we define such terms?
- How are tradition and progress, as cognate concepts, different from other related concepts like conservatism, conventions, modernity and change among others?
- Is tradition always stabilising and integrative, or can it just as well be critical and disruptive?
- Does change reflect decay or a reconstitution of the old order?
- What are the alternative possibilities of expounding social change and articulating it as transformative or signifying departure from traditional ways of theorizing?
- Is order a cyclical phenomenon such that periods of extensive conflict that foster disorder and chaos are merely transitional moments in history that are soon followed by the establishment of new, more orderly arrangements?

- Is global order based on implicit set of norms that limit and shape the conduct of international actors or does it consist of patterns and regularities that are empirically discernible?

- While tradition implies reference to a 'Golden past', progress involves moving in a forward direction— yet the two have a notion of an ideal/ utopia in mind. How does one link tradition and progress to the notion of achieving utopia?

- Do utopian imaginaries conform to a certain structure or to a precise end or do all blueprints for social and political augmentation entail a utopian character?

- Is there heterogeneity in conceptualising utopias or do all utopias entail homogenous characteristics and which political ideologies provide for the fecundity in utopian theorising?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses undergird this thesis:

I. International Relations as a discipline has been built on and reifies the artificially constructed traditions of thought.

II. By viewing International Relations as a domain of repetition and recurrence, the possibility of theorising about progress has been eliminated from the discipline.

III. There is no scope for utopian imagination in International Relations because of the pre-dominance of realism, since the inception of the discipline in the 1920's.

Research Methods

The research methodology employed for this project is post-positivist. The focus is on interpretation and application of the three concepts in the field of International Relations drawing from literary theory, linguistics and philosophy of language. The approach used is interdisciplinary and the hallmark of such a research design is assimilation of concepts and determinants from multiple fields to create an intelligible and consistent structure that advances a richer grasp of the concepts being examined. The study draws on literature

from sociology, anthropology, utopian studies, cultural studies and English fiction, to build a conceptual framework for understanding the trajectory of development of these concepts and their impact and implications for those specialising in the field of International Relations.

The research is qualitative in nature, primarily involving content analysis using primary and secondary sources. Qualitative research is a technique of investigation that seeks to develop an all-inclusive narrative/ description to apprise the researcher's perception of socially or culturally observable occurrence. This technique relies more on language and the interpretation of its meaning. Discourse analysis imparts the methods to review processes and patterns occurring across extended time periods enabling contemplation over specific trends and inclinations. The response to the nature of social phenomenon can be uncovered through following this method of conducting research. It necessitates to scrutinise and exhaustingly examine all aspects of a concept, attempting to understand the intrinsic attributes and the infinitesimal possibilities arising out of interactions with other concepts in social sciences.

Chapter Scheme

This introductory chapter one has provided an overarching view of the research, elaborates on the research design, discusses methodology and identifies the rationale and scope of the project. The objective of the chapters that ensue, and the format of their organisation is to extrapolate, fabricate and carve out a new approach of theorising about international relations.

The second chapter draws linkages from anthropology and sociology and provides a chronological account of tradition in International Relations. It also engages with concept of tradition in relation to modernity. This chapter re-examines the binary construction of tradition/modernity and the need to emphasise on tradition as a critique of modernity. It also includes the philosophy of science debate to understand the decline of tradition with the rise of empiricism and rationalism and where it stands in the post-positivist philosophy.

The third chapter deals with the various theoretical traditions in International Relations and the debates surrounding progress of theory in the field. It outlines the debates surrounding the evolution of the discipline from the beginning to its current form focusing on both the discursive and practical aspects. The chapter also evaluates the notion of change and how it unfolds in international politics.

The fourth chapter analyses how bringing back utopian imagination would lead to rejuvenation of International Relations theory. Also the notion of order which is closely linked to utopia has been explored. The chapter examines some practical utopias in world politics and the need for such visions.

The fifth chapter provides for a detailed analysis of the various inter-linkages between the three concepts of Tradition, Progress and Utopia and the revisits the disciplinary history of International Relations, while discussing the impact of meaning making and the role of fictive theories in broadening the understanding of the discipline.

The last chapter succinctly regurgitates the research questions and recapitulates the focal inferences and implications of the enquiry. This chapter revisits the arguments of the previous chapters to present a comprehensive understanding of the problematiques under consideration. Further, this chapter details the implications this study has for the field of International Relations by developing an alternative understanding. It also communicates the limitations of the study and directions for further research.

Chapter Two

Looking Backwards: Reappraising Tradition in International Relations

"The fate of humanity is founded on our understanding of the past."

Thomas Hobbes (1651: 49)

"Tradition is a guide and not a jailer."

W. Somerset Maugham (1938: 23)

This chapter commences with providing an epigrammatic appraisal of the most prominent and instrumental conceptualisations of the concept of tradition within the purview of social science. It assesses the distinctive definitions of the concept while comparing contending positions regarding its relevance and meaning over a span of time. It underlines the vital points of friction and agreement between opposing standpoints while evaluating the connection between tradition, continuity and change. The concluding segment of the chapter discusses the operative modalities regarding theorising about tradition that would simultaneously engage with concepts of modernity and tradition rather than treating them as dichotomous binaries. The concept is then transported to the discipline of International Relations (IR) highlighting the contributions of Hedley Bull (1977, 1979, and 1990) and Herbert Butterfield (1931, 1949, and 1955) in the second great debate between traditionalism and empiricism. The application of tradition in IR only reiterates the fact that in order to have new insights or directions in the field, one needs to fully comprehend the vision of the old.

The key questions being addressed in the chapter are as following: a) Are traditions merely habitual, non-reflective, patterns of behavioural responses that endure over time? What are the definitional parameters, scope and extent of analysing traditions? b) Is it possible to consider traditions as evolving and revamping themselves, thus being responsive to self-reflection and critique? and c) Can traditions be seen as a source of continuity and change?

To further facilitate the exploration of the discourse on tradition within International Relations, it is an imperative to review and analyse the literature under the broader rubric of social sciences. The chapter outlines and develops on the work of notable scholars such as Alasdair McIntyre (1984), Karl Popper (1989), Anthony Giddens (1994), and Edward Shils (1971, 1981) to probe the nature and essence of the concept of tradition and its significance within diverse social science accounts.

Etymology and Genealogy of Tradition

The chronicling of the development of the concept of tradition can be traced to the reaction against western enlightenment thought made evidently apparent in the critique by Edmund Burke (1792) in his writings. In social sciences, sociologists of knowledge (Mannheim 1971; Berger and Kellner, 1974), religion (Martin, 1978), and hermeneutics (Bleicher, 1980) laboured at various times on aspects of the problem of tradition. The concept of tradition is one of the ways social scientists understand the reasoning behind collective action, identity formation and shared memory (Coser, 1992). However, in recent times most social scientists have been either dismissive or indiscriminate in their use of the notion.

The idea of 'traditional society' is most pronounced in Ferdinand Tonnies's *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1887), which had a profound impact on contemporary German sociologists, especially Max Weber (1905; 1919; 1922). *Gemeinschaft* (community) nurtured personal ties to small groups; *Gesellschaft* (society)*,* in contrast, stimulates impersonal links to mass markets. For Tonnies, the direction of history is away from a traditional society organically united by custom and community toward a modern society impersonally connected by contracts and individualism. The most celebrated construction of a typology, apart from Tonnies's, is that of Talcott Parsons. Parsons (1949: 686-694) elaborated on dichotomies – affectivity and neutrality, particularism and universalism, ascription and achievement, diffuseness and specificity, collectivism and individualism – which are reflections of Tonnies's contrasts between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft.* The traditionalist side of the dichotomy is the personal, ascriptive half of the typology; the modernist side is the one of universalism and individualism.

Max Weber was the classical sociologist most impressed by the role of tradition in world history. Weber's writings, especially those on religion (Weber,

1905: 102-110), make an interesting argument on the vicissitudes of traditions in modern society and their consequent withering away. Traditions, according to Weber, faced a disparate competition from the twain repercussions of Western rationalisation: a capitalist economy and advent of bureaucratic organisation. Weber expected that, under pressure from a competitive market, people would discard as inefficient traditional economic practices and, constrained by bureaucratic rationality, become disenchanted with traditional beliefs. Unless a charismatic eruption breaks the structures of bureaucratic capitalism, all old traditions will lose their authority, leaving humanity in a value-sterile prison (Weber, 1905: 13). Tradition was thus perceived as an obstruction to progress, a fetter for forward movement and in opposition to reason.

Tradition – Core Definitions

The etymological roots of the term 'tradition' are derived from the Latin verb '*tradere*', implying 'handing over' or 'handing down' (Young, 1988: 95). In a brief definitional overview, tradition is essentially considered analogous to the past, with terms like 'the living past' (Williams, 1977: 115); 'lodges in the voyage across time', 'crystallisations of the past, tangible in the present' (Young, 1988: 142); 'the surviving belief of the dead' (Berman, 2003: 2). The concept of tradition is interlinked to various associations with the past and their operative recreation in the present. It connotes conventions and practices that converse with the present (Halpin, Power and Fitz, 1997: 1); iterative practices across generations (Boyer, 1990: 23). In common parlance, tradition is often mistakenly conflated and considered indistinguishable from either 'custom' or 'habit'. However, M. Young (1988) explicates on the difference between these concepts. Habit is linked to an individual's personal attribute while customs entail imitation and reiteration of social behaviour without the inertia coupled with tradition (Young, 1988: 31).

Martin Krygier defined tradition as inheritance in reference to tripartite components. The foremost element was 'pastness' since every tradition is passed on to its participants from their antecedents. The next crucial element is 'authoritative presence', the tradition even though originated in the past, needs to remain relevant in the present. It has to maintain authenticity and importance in the lives and actions of its participants in the present. Lastly, as traditions are passed on from the past to the

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current generations there needs to be an essence of 'continuity' and connection between the two epochs (Krygier, 1986: 63-67).

Although there is consensus on the broad definitional framework of the term tradition, there is enough debate surrounding the substantive content of tradition. There is an underlying tension in the literature between those who view tradition as guided by inertia and preservation of status quo and others who believe that traditions can be the driving forces for provoking change. There are scholars who have emphasised on the centrality of tacit knowledge and implicit habitual behaviour in explaining tradition like Michael Oakeshott (1962), while Eric Hobsbawm (1983) stressed on the part of rituals and ceremonies in indicating authority and wisdom passed on from one generation to another. Alasdair McIntyre (1984) focussed on the prudent use of the content of traditions in making rational intellectual claims. It is considerably clear that each of these juxtaposing views offer a significant insight into the role of tradition. It is therefore crucial to reflect on and analyse the substantive claims made by the different perspectives on tradition. The brief exposition of various ways of understanding the concept of tradition, associated with different scholars follows:

I.   *Interpreting Tradition as Tacit Knowledge*

A major contribution in understanding the meaning and significance of tradition, often associated with the conservatism is that of Michael Oakeshott (1962). For Oakeshott, tradition was not to be labelled as an academic enterprise for abstraction, rather be treated as reflections of tangible and distinct social realities (Oakeshott, 1962: 31). He considered traditions to be embodiment of concrete actions and ways of being. One of the notable distinctions drawn by Oakeshott is between traditions and ideologies. He expanded the idea that ideologies are rational doctrines whilst traditions are time honoured and widely recognised practices that cannot be rationalised (Oakeshott, 1962: 41). Tradition cannot be conflated with set of principles or suppositions. It is discerned as tacit knowledge which cannot be verbalised and is perceived as experiential and applied (Oakeshott, 1962: 43).

Following Oakeshott, many other scholars including Edward Shills (1981) have adhered to the perspective, stressing the role of tradition as tacit knowledge which cannot be imparted by articulating principles and assertions. According to

Oakeshott, it is erroneous for scholars to confound a political ideology with a tradition in political thinking. One of his insights into understanding politics of our times is to challenge the rationalism associated political behaviour; as he believed that various codes of conduct governing political sphere are taken from concrete traditions of behaviour (Oakeshott, 1962: 44). He moreover, stressed on treating traditions as pre-dispositions for continuity and for maintaining intimate relationship between the past and the present times (Oakeshott, 1962: 44). In summation, Oakeshott believed that politics cannot be prior to an established order governed by tradition, rather it is subsequent to it and flows from the arrangements guiding the order.

II. *Understanding Tradition as Continuing Argument*

Alasdair McIntyre (1984) assiduously criticises the misuse of the concept of tradition in political philosophy by conservative thinkers. He systematically demolishes the counter posing of tradition and reason as opposites, harbouring the belief that traditions thrive through habit and convention rather than rational thought (McIntyre, 1984: 221). There is also the false notion of disassociating progressive politics with tradition. McIntyre challenged the non-rationalistic nature of traditions or the dead weight associated with traditions (McIntyre, 1984: 224). He proposed the notion of 'living traditions' which evolved through contestation and continuous debate (McIntyre, 1984: 225). Karl Popper in his work *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945) is critical of conservative thinkers who believe that traditions cannot be treated rationally and argues for a 'scientific' notion of tradition, making rational comprehension of traditional beliefs and practices. He proclaims that societies devoid of tradition would be 'anxious, panic-stricken and exasperated', wanting certain regularities that bring order and predictability in the world (Popper, 1945: 31).

However, he forewarns against favouring status quo by arguing that traditions act as 'intermediaries' between the old and new and assist in making necessary changes to adapt to current times. Traditions serve as the link between people and institutions by providing individuals with the paraphernalia, certainty and direction of purpose to manage themselves functionally within institutions (Popper, 1945: 33). It is because of this enduring co-relation between traditions and institutions that Popper suggests of 'living traditions' continuing across time (Popper, 1963: 142). Institutions aren't always afflicted with instrumental motives or corrupt practices and traditions

can dispense them with an appropriate moral impetus. These traditional institutions can impact at both horizontal and vertical level in societies through encouraging mobilisation and cooperation through mitigating social hierarches.

III.   *Deciphering Tradition through Repetition*

Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger expound about 'invented traditions' in their eponymous book published in 1983. They emphasised the role of traditions in carrying forward the wisdom through reiteration (Hobsbawm, 1983: 12). According to Hobsbawm and Ranger, most of the modern concepts including the idea of nation had their roots in antiquity, thus highlighting the relationship between modernity and tradition (Hobsbawm, 1983: 19). David Halpin, Sally Power and John Fitz (1997) claim that traditions have both a substantive and normative element, laying out 'what is' and 'what ought to be'. The practice of rendering certain customs and rituals as timeless makes them incontestable and widely acceptable without subjecting them to conscious thought. This confers traditions with the ability to encounter crises and impart legitimacy to decisions (Halpin, Power and Fitz, 1997: 161).

Anthony Giddens proclaims the source of traditional authority has been its ability to reveal the truth with no possible alternatives (Giddens, 1991: 46). It was not the longevity of a practice that qualified it as traditional, rather its ability to speak truth (Giddens, 1991: 47). Giddens argues that traditional wisdom need not be functionally accurate as its truth is contained in the religious repetition of the tested practices. Tradition provides a framework of action that is built on stability which helped in providing identity to individuals. Traditions incorporates wisdom from the past which results in their continued relevance.

This has come under serious attack with globalisation with increasing 'detraditionalisation' of societies. In modern societies there is endorsement of individual choice and erosion of religious affiliation with secularisation and reason gaining prominence. Like Karl Popper, Giddens contends that the peculiar feature of modernity is that traditions no longer remain the extraneous force, rather individuals have agency to decide about traditions that serve their interests, hence they choose what to discard and what to continue (Giddens, 1991: 48).

IV. *Comprehending Tradition as the Genesis for Change* **and** *Continuity*

Peter Sztompka stresses that traditions often continue not because of conscious human agency but due to sheer passivity and inertia (Sztompka, 1993: 55). He describes dual causal mechanisms for transmission of tradition from one generation to the other. These include material/physical and ideal/psychological which have been elaborated on below:

• *Material/Physical* – this entails passing on objects, artefacts and institutional arrangements from earlier generations to the present while undergoing changes and adapting to the new conditions (Sztompka, 1993: 57).

• *Ideal/ Psychological* – this comprises of inheriting past beliefs, ideals, norms and values. Human societies are built on the dual pillars of memory and communication which play a vital role in transmission of traditions (Sztompka, 1993: 58).

Sztompka's unpacking of the two components of tradition informs us of the various elements that go into defining traditions. The material/ideal distinction also highlights the objective as well as inter-subjective dimension of traditions which is quite useful in further exploration of the implications of tradition in societies.

Shils, Hobsbawm and Oakeshott: The Tripartite Understanding of Tradition

Edward Shils: Tradition as Evolution

Edward Shils's eponymous book *Tradition* (1981) presented an extensive and noteworthy exploration on the subject matter. He analysed the history, significance and the future of tradition in his multi-faceted study of the concept. While seeking to build a comprehensive account of the relevance of tradition in social life, he vehemently countered various conservative interpretations of the concept. He defines tradition in the most basic and rudimentary sense as 'something which is transferred or passed down from the earlier generation to the present (Shils, 1981: 12). Traditions are viewed as 'organic' by Shils as he explains that they grow and evolve like organisms yet retaining their essence (Shils, 1981: 13). There is a continuum along which one can measure the symbolic and practical elements of traditions with either taking precedence over the other in different circumstances. They are crucial in providing a sense of identity and purpose for societies as they are associating link

between the past and present. The sense of continuity and the grasp of the past over present, reflected in traditions can be relegated to the following factors:

• A sense of attachment to the designated set of practices – particular rules, established procedures and mechanisms are considered to be the 'natural/instinctual ways and are onerous to be dismissed (Shils, 1981:21).

• *Expediency* – certain practices are convenient and easy to be carried forth, thus qualifying as passing on from previous to the current times (Shils, 1981: 22).

• *Amalgamation of experience* – expertise and insights inherited from history is treated sacrosanct and not discarded easily (Shils, 1981: 24).

• *Reinstituting the past* – individuals seek for intimate associations with the past for re-establishing the same through imitating the historical conditions; for example, utilising the notion of glorious past to justify current forms of nationalism (Shils, 1981: 26).

Shils also presents various contributing factors for explaining change in traditions which include:

• *Reasoning and Revision* – Traditions entail ambiguities and contradictions that are inherent within them and their continual use leads to desiring clarity. Human beings often draw on reasoning and imagination for seeking to improve inherited traditions. Creativity thus plays a vital part in contributing to enrichment of existing traditions (Shils, 1981: 28)

• *Variation in Content* – Traditions of thought subsume various entwined beliefs including notions about various structures and their assigned roles. These might get altered and transformed with changing times; thus modifying the tradition of thought itself. The progression of events in history and reflective analysis in the light of these turn of events has altered our understanding of liberalism (from minimalist to welfare state) (Shils, 1981:32).

Traditions, thus contribute significantly to social change as well as perpetuating continuity. With the advent of modernity there has been withdrawal and waning of certain traditions while others have re-emerged in reinvented forms. Shils calls to attention the notion of '*anti-traditions*'- those challenging the conventional

practices and beliefs, that have levitated in an unprecedented manner in modernity (Shils, 1981: 36). Traditions serve as an anchor for maintaining stability in social life through continuous recurrence.

Shils, drew heavily on the work of Edmund Burke who in his epochal text *Reflections in the Revolution in France* (1790) laid the foundations for conservatism. Burke considered tradition to uphold time-tested, accumulated, experiential knowledge, passed on through generations. Similarly, for Shils traditions are instructive, they inculcate certain beliefs and values that are confirmed and strengthened through past experiences (Shils, 1981:203). Shils treats traditions as 'pragmatic' occurrences that assist those following them to realise their objectives (Shils, 1981: 328-29). This pragmatic definition of tradition encompasses an instrumentalist grounding suggesting that traditions are used rationally to serve external ends.

Shils doesn't treat traditions as fossilised and believes in their potential to undergo modification and transformation (Shils, 1981: 44-45, 96). He makes a distinction between substantive and non-substantive traditions. Substantive traditions assist in maintaining the ancient wisdom through the respect of their acquired followers and heavily rely on inherited standards for evaluating the present in the light of past (Shils, 1981: 4, 21; 1975, 195-97). They bring a semblance of order and harmony in societal arrangements and are treated reverentially by their adherents. The members of various institutions carry forward different traditions. Shils notes that the 'triptych of family, school and religion' are the central custodian institutions for passing on substantive traditions (Shils, 1981: 175). Some of the prominent examples of substantive traditions include: relevance of the church and its decrees, norms surrounding sexuality, notions of monogamy and heterosexual marriage, patriotism and attachment to one's region (Shils, 1981: 21-23). On the other hand, non-substantive traditions, aim at producing change and include propagation of rationality, imbuing scientific and technological prowess, claims of emancipation and philosophy (Shils, 1981: 23, 309, 324). The main point of difference between substantive and non-substantive traditions is that the former are more rigid and less susceptible to change whilst the latter embark on the journey of envisaging an altered environment.

Another important distinction to be considered is between 'normative' and 'descriptive' traditions (Shils, 1981: 204). For Shils, the difference between these two is a matter of degree since all traditions have a normative potential engrained in them (Shils, 1981: 204). It is this normative component that makes traditions worthy of inheritance and acceptance such as religious beliefs and language usage. Shils also highlights the significance of traditions from an evolutionary perspective, elaborating that the constancy and permanence of traditions have been assimilated into the evolutionary progression of species (Shils, 1981:209). The most successfully handed down traditions adapt to the changing conditions which are conceived in terms of the social and political patterns of conduct, thus maintaining their effectiveness (Shils, 1981: 215).

Traditions have a symbiotic relationship with those who inherit them. Shils explains the role of traditions in contributing to the identities of the possessors of traditions. Traditions get incorporated in memories and get passed on from one to the next generation through reproducing themselves (Shils, 1981: 167). There are two components to the passing of tradition – thought and action; an agent utilises his memory to remember and emulates it by re-enacting the tradition. These two elements of traditions provide the adherents with the paradigms for understanding and acting in the world (Shils, 1981: 160). Shils's insights on the concept of tradition are crucial in making headway in understanding their significance in modern times.

Eric Hobsbawm: Tradition as Control

Eric Hobsbawm, in *The Invention of Tradition* (1984), opined that traditions are manipulated by the dominant social powers when they want to control the lower classes. He carefully distinguishes between a tradition, on the one hand, and customary or routine practices, on the other. For Hobsbawm, a tradition, invented or ancient, is understood as an array of practices that are ritualistic or symbolic in nature; are governed by implicit or explicitly defined rules, seeking to inculcate specific norms and values through iteration that have a continuity to the past (Hobsbawm, 1984:16).

Traditions are normative and symbolic practices in real or alleged continuity with a past activity. In contrast to customary or routine practices, traditions are deliberately inflexible. A pattern that is customary or routine may be followed as an

unexamined convention or as an efficient way to cope with recurrent tasks; in either case, the custom or routine may be changed to suit pragmatic need. A tradition cannot be carelessly practiced or altered for utilitarian reasons. In sum, Hobsbawm's way to distinguish between a tradition and a routine is to judge it as either practical or symbolic (Hobsbawm, 1984: 32-39). Hobsbawm's primary intent was to unmask 'invented traditions', those manipulations of the past which served the dominant interests (Hobsbawm, 1984: 45). What distinguishes traditional social action from other types of behaviour is the conscious self-awareness by individuals to act responsibly, with a certain moral and ethical obligation towards the past as well as the forthcoming future. The logic of traditional social action is guided by the principle of continuity, as the British political philosopher Michael Oakeshott (1962: 128-129) suggests, which is less an abstract principle than a sensibility for one's place in a social compact which extends, to paraphrase the conservative theorist Edmund Burke, from the living, to the dead, as well as to those yet to be born.

Michael Oakeshott: History, Tradition and Politics

Michael Oakeshott's analysis provides for a two-fold meaning of the term history. Firstly, he conceives of history as the 'comprehensive notional summation of the entirety of inter-related events and occurrences across time and space (Oakeshott, 1962: 119). Secondly, history is also envisaged as the 'inquiry into the happenings of the past with conclusive claims drawn from such an engagement' (Oakeshott, 1962: 121). History can thus be understood in terms of 'mode of experience' or distinct archetype of knowledge. Oakeshott in his prominent work *Experience and its Modes* (1933) delineated the 'triad' modes which included history, science and practice with aesthetics being added later to the scheme. For Oakeshott, these modes didn't solely signify standpoint positions or orientations but were fully autonomous, self-supporting categories that contributed in advancing knowledge claims within particular conditions, while being incapable of rejecting or accepting the conclusions drawn from other modes of experience (Oakeshott, 1933: 71-76).

In his subsequent work, *The Activity of Being a Historian* (1958) he further elaborated on the 'practical' mode of understanding in which external events can be comprehended in relation to one's own self (Oakeshott, 1958: 102). On the contrary, the 'scientific' mode assesses the occurrences around us independently of our relation

to them (Oakeshott, 1958: 110). The point of difference between a scientist, practitioner and a historian is that the latter perceives of experiences in the past (Oakeshott, 1958: 117). Oakeshott's work delves into the 'past/present paradox' and its implications for social sciences. According to him, it doesn't suffice that past must outlast the present for it to be considered historical, it must also be present anterior to be declared historical (Oakeshott, 1958: 119). This implies that for past to be addressed as historical past, it must prevail during the current time. The historian thus inhabits a dually veiled world whereby one can access the past only through particular enactments in the present (Oakeshott, 1958: 42).

According to this conceptualisation, the past is the product of our understanding, conditioned by present circumstances. The occurrences of the present are usually surviving remains of the past in the current period. It is important to note that the past is erected on interpretation modelled in the present (Oakeshott, 1958: 56). Since interpretation has a subjective element to it, there are diverse ways of thinking about the past. In distinguishing explanation and understanding from acting and deliberating Oakeshott seeks to remodel our notion of historical inquiry. Our notion of what history is doesn't solely rely on retrospective analysis but also in the manner of configuring the relationship between the past and present and the present and future.

Oakeshott classifies past in a dual manner – 'practical' and 'historical' past (Oakeshott, 1958: 156). The practical past comprises of the artefacts and pronouncements having outlived the past; being measured for their value for present practical purposes (Oakeshott, 1958: 162). He further elucidates that it is the stories from the past that serve as the practical guide for future action. In juxtaposition to the 'practical past' is the historical past or 'dead past' based on the notion that history can be surmised and extrapolated by moulding excerpts of documentation that do not have any context (Oakeshott, 1962: 121). History, he believes speaks to us ambiguously and inconclusively unless we find meaning and interpret the fragments of evidence (Oakeshott, 1962: 130). In consonance to Carr's (1961) interpretation regarding the role allocated to a historian, Oakeshott underscores the idea of a historian not merely being someone who assembles and gathers facts rather exercises his inference and judgement to make sense of the past (Oakeshott, 1962: 167).

The preceding discussion portends two compelling points. Firstly, history can only be navigated and understood through the historian's world of experience. Secondly and more saliently, understanding history doesn't entail recalling and re-enactment of the past but a process of translation on the part of the historian (Oakeshott, 1962: 191). Thus for Oakeshott, a glimpse of history can be provided through the eyes of the historian which is a marked contradiction to R. G. Collingwood's (1946) understanding of history. For Collingwood, history isn't an exercise involving translation, on the contrary it entails re-enacting the past by bringing it into the present (Collingwood, 1946: 69). The point of contention for both these historians is that while Oakeshott considered history as an independent and autonomous activity uncoupled and detached from the real world, Collingwood highlights how the past feeds into the present through the practical life.

For historical inquiry to regain its instrumentality in shaping our lives, we need to redefine our concerns of the past and the future we envision. For history to be involved in shaping the future direction of action, we must re-consider our notions of history. Stories are indispensable, since they are the means of venturing into history and contextualising ourselves and our actions in time. Shills, Oakeshott and Hobsbawm emphasised on their significance. A comparative exposition into these separate accounts of tradition aids in our understanding of historical inquiry and its implications for International Relations.

The Reason/Tradition Dichotomy

The Enlightenment thinkers laboured with the arduous task of denouncing the old regime, organised religion and its auxiliary traditions as they were outmoded and imperious and emphasised the rational, secular and scientific notion of progress advanced through claims like – 'dare to know', 'provoking the reliance on logic', 'invoking the spirit of questioning' (Hamilton, 1999: 25–6; Porter, 2001; Swingewood, 2000). The Enlightenment can be analysed in myriad ways – it led to a complete reorientation of politics, philosophy and science and is often referred to as the *Age of Reason.* Throughout Europe, it meant a sweeping change with questioning of traditional authority and the belief in human ability to progress through rational change. Immanuel Kant's essay *What is Enlightenment?* (1784) captures the essence of the period in the phrase '*sapere aude'* - have courage to use your own reason'

(Kant, 1784: i) While signifying a cluster of ideas and world views, it mainly revolved around identifying reason as the primary source of authority and legitimacy. Peter Hamilton posits that Enlightenment created a unique and novel framework about society, polity and human nature that defied the time-tested wisdom rooted in the traditional worldview, monopolised by Christianity (Hamilton, 1993: 23). Hamilton succinctly summarises the important axioms guiding Enlightenment which include- (i) reason as the pivotal medium for tabulating knowledge, (ii) empiricism, i.e. basing real knowledge primarily on sensory experience, (iii) scientism, (iv) universalism- the idea that there can be general laws applicable to social sciences as they hold true for natural sciences, (v) progress - advancement in human affairs through application of scientific rationality and technology, (vi) toleration, (vii) secularism - separation of the state and the church, (viii.) individualism- belief in freedom of action for individuals than collective control and (ix) dissipating the weight of customs and traditions (Hamilton, 1999: 27).

The eminent essay '*Tradition and the Individual Talent*', written by T.S. Eliot in 1919, purported that tradition symbolised past in distinction to present; the individual as opposed to the collective and feeling in converse to reason. According to Eliot, it is the sense of temporality which makes a writer acutely conscious of his contemporaneity, thus producing work in a timeless manner (Eliot, 1919: 37). The anti-thesis of tradition is thought to be reason – a binary traced back to the Enlightenment thought, whereby tradition was equated to superstition. This reason/ tradition dichotomy has been eulogised by euro-centric social sciences for centuries, relegating the non-western knowledge production as inferior and to the peripheries. A number of scholars including Shils criticised this dichotomisation and observed that scientific methods and reasoning was not acquired in vacuum but was transmitted from a generation to the next one (Shils, 1981: 92). In fact, the magnitude and influence of reason and science can be attributed to the presence of traditions. The unquestioned belief in reason and science was preceded by a similar faith in the Judeo-Christian accounts explaining origins and meaning of life (Shils, 1981: 93). Hence accepting tradition requires no more intolerance and dogmatism than scientism or rationalism. Despite their differences and variations in knowledge forms, both western science and traditional knowledge can't be essentialised into binaries as this has created a false notion of superiority towards the former which in turn has seething

effects on the future of social science. There needs to be a dialogue between the other and the unknown to deal with the complexities of modern social life instead of categorising knowledge forms into monolithic and separate approaches.

Conservatism and Tradition

The emergence of the trend towards rationalism and positivism in the social sciences in the early 1960s emulating the natural sciences was vehemently challenged by historians like Michael Oakeshott (1962). He fervently argued that the comprehension of history could be made through analysing the behavior of actors based on long-standing traditions and cited the example of the British political system, also identified as the 'Westminster model' whose survival can be attributed to deep rooted traditions like ministerial accountability (Oakeshott, 1962: 131).

The conceptualisation of tradition is considered to be pivotal for understanding conservative political thinking. The centrality of tradition to social life has been used for preserving ideas and institutions from the past. Tradition is seen as the accumulated wisdom acquired organically through experience and is considered to be virtuous to be upheld against proponents of rationalistic schemes of radical change (Burke, 1789: 13). The reverential regard for traditions by conservatives is often attacked by liberals who argue that tradition is used a ploy to defend and uphold the status quo. The various malpractices in society like inequality and hierarchy are further legitimised due to adherence to the age old traditions. While unjustifiably privileging certain practices as innate and naturally occurring, societies often tend to discount the contingent nature of traditions based on socio-political contexts and interactions. In recent times, scholars have questioned the 'naturalness' associated by conservative thinkers to traditions (Bevir, 2000: 23). This aspect of the inter-linkages between tradition and human agency are further elaborated upon by the intrepretivist turn in historical inquiry.

Mark Bevir and R.A.W. Rhodes's (2003, 2006; Bevir, 2005) postulate an innovative approach to political analysis drawing on a unique conceptualisation of tradition. The underlying foundation for their inquiry comprehends a particular association between tradition and agency. The nexus between context and conduct becomes of primary importance in discerning the impact and continuing relevance of certain traditions. They define tradition as the 'setting the milieu for individuals to

hold onto their values and carry out actions' (Bevir, 2005: 25). In this sense, traditions act as the background through social structures for mediating the beliefs and deeds of people. The labyrinth of traditions inherited across generations deeply influences the manner in which we make sense of the world around us. However, Bevir remarks that these traditions don't restrain human agency in responding to the issues faced because individuals possess reasoning to adapt to changing times (Bevir, 2005: 26). Traditions can be altered and reworked as a consequence of new circumstances; the past influences the present but doesn't control it, as agents possess the ability of reformulating and resisting the web of beliefs that are inherited. The questioning of 'given-ness' and naturalisation of certain traditions thus rejects privileging certain experiences as being true for all times to come. This post-foundationalist conception of tradition has been a serious challenge to the conventional conservative understanding.

However, Bevir and Rhodes have faced some censure for their interpretation since they believe that traditions in themselves aren't constraining for subsequent course of action. Several scholars have underscored the simplicity they adhere to while advocating that inherited contexts can be modified by human beings (Mc Anulla, 2006; Marsh and Hall, 2006). The critics believe that the past bears an indomitable weight on the present that can't be easily dispensed with. Bruce Frohnen expresses his concern regarding the malleability implied by Bevir and Rhodes and advocates that traditions are 'concrete social realities – both ideal and practical, that go beyond merely forming the background for social action' (Frohnen, 2001: 109). The foremost theme of contention between the two interpretations is that while conservatives stress upon the intrinsic embededness of traditions, treating them as natural phenomena; intrepretivists construe traditions as malleable background of beliefs that are contingent in determining the actions and values in the current times. Both these explanations are telling of the significance in intricately understanding the scope and significance of tradition in social life.

Social Sciences and the Neglected Case of Tradition

There has been a paucity in the attempts to theorise tradition, even though there have been innumerable undertakings on researching particular traditions and traditional behaviours in social sciences. Social sciences have been overwhelmed with the

emergence of modernity and are misled by its normative assumptions to ignore the enduring centrality of tradition in social life.

David Halpin, Sally Power and John Fitz lament the negligible interest in the concept in social and cultural sciences (Halpin, Power and Fitz, 1997: 3). According to Williams, there has been radical disregard for traditions in contemporary Marxist cultural thought (Williams, 1997: 115). Anthony Giddens contends that there has been an oversight in serious reflection on the nature and scope of tradition despite the close interconnection with conservative political thought (Giddens, 1994: 48). The 'protracted exile' of tradition from the intellectual discourse in social sciences is also lamented by Edward Shils who believes that contemporary academics have over subscribed to the view of peripheralisation of tradition in modern societies (Shils, 1981: 2). This compels finding explanations regarding the obvious non-existence of research on tradition in social sciences. Karl Popper maintains that the rationalist scholars have deliberately ignored the study of tradition and its influence because of their commitment to advancing social change (Popper, 1989: 120). The rationalist scholars view tradition as residual, irrational, obsolete and an impediment to progress. Traditions are seen as either ancestral restraints (Marx, 1963; Freud, 1965); immemorial habits (Weber, 1978); a ritual invention disguising upper-class power (Hobsbawm, 1984); or anything displaying continuity (Shils, 1981). Our reigning understanding of the concept of tradition both in scholarly and practical aspects, is only an embodiment and extension of the aforementioned premises.

The most revered progenitors of modern social theory- Karl Marx, Max Weber and Sigmund Freud conceptualised tradition as a constraint. Marx conceived of traditions as vestigial remains of the past, 'a hand beyond the grave', confining the living; something to be purged to move forward (Marx, 1867: 13). In a similar vein, Sigmund Freud conceptualised tradition as the voice of caution of the elders; the reprimanding older generation lived on in one's super ego (Freud, 1923: 60). Max Weber, analogously considered tradition as an enormous obstacle for the development of a capitalist ethos (Weber, 1958: 58-9; 1982: 354-5). Since tradition entailed mindless reiteration by human beings and abhorrence of creativity, it was an impediment to innovation, the primary objective driving a capitalist society (Weber, 1982: 360).

Untraditional Moderns: The Case of International Relations

This section looks at tradition/ modernity binary through an analytical and discursive lens, seeking to draw out some of the implications of studying these concepts in tandem. The section uncovers two aspects - exegetic and critical while trying to grapple with the notion of modernity.

The concept of tradition is closely linked to two ideas: firstly, the inquiry into social transformation and secondly, modernity. Robert Nisbet conceptualises social transformation 'as an identity persisting through different sequences in time' (Nisbet, 1972: 19).   The key components of social change can hence be bifurcated as: a conception of evidential difference in the circumstances or appearances; an element of sequential time and the insistence on changing of an enduring characteristic (Nisbet, 1972: 36). The notion of change encompasses a whole variety of questions in the discipline of International Relations including issues of stability, order, directionality, agential claims, indices marking change and the relationship between change and progress (Nisbet, 1972: 55).

Tradition denotes an interpretive and hermeneutical practice embodying the dual aspects of continuity and transformation. It would be erroneous and iniquitous to grasp tradition as static core of ideas and rigid set of customs handed down from the past. This widely recognised understanding is narrowly constructed, thus limiting the scope and the explanatory potential of the concept. Scholars including Eisenstaedt, 1973; Singer, 1972 and Tipps, 1973 among others have criticised the false dichotomy created between tradition and modernity treating them as rigid, mutually exclusive categories.   M. E. Smith (1982) pointed towards the fact that 'traditional' and 'modern' were interpretive rather than descriptive categories, hitherto all societies undergo changes perpetually, the 'new' continuously takes the symbolic value as 'traditional'. Most people disregard anything traditional because the concept makes one antiquarian and conjures up images that offend contemporary sensibilities. The present age is obsessed with change, improvement, with progress. To employ an expression from the French Annales school of social history, the modern *'mentalite'* is anti-traditional. The Anglo-European industrial societies have, as Patricia Crone notes, 'abandoned tradition. Its crucial concept is... progress' (Cones, 1989: 189).

Tradition is widely perceived as a shackle holding us back from the steady enrichment of what Christopher Lasch calls, 'the modern gospel of progress' (1991: 49).

There is no unanimity regarding origins of modernity with myriad accounts guiding our understanding of the phenomenon. The term 'modernity' was first employed by Charles Baudelaire in 1863, and has since been traced to the thirteenth and fourteenth century Italian city states, the Protestant Reformation of sixteenth century, the developments in scientific aptitude and adherence to reason in the following century, to the Industrial Revolution marking the beginning of eighteenth century (Arrighi, 1994; Hobsbawm 1962). Marshall Berman (1983) delineates three sequential movements of change that affected Europe beginning from the early seventeenth century, and employs the term modernity to mark the post-Enlightenment nineteenth-century phase when the term had acquired an irrefutably positive connotation. Arturo Escobar claims that the mainstream theories of modernity identify with particular spatio-temporal origins, beginning in the seventeenth century Europe with the processes of Reformation and Enlightenment and further crystallising and manifesting with the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century. (Escobar, 2004: 211). It is essential to draw the distinction between modernity and modernism as conceptually distinct categories. Scott Lash (1990) draws the demarcation by claiming that modernity entailed the economic and technological advances beginning in the sixteenth century while modernism referred to the cultural ramifications of these process dating to the late nineteenth century.

Joseph R. Gusfield (1967) argues the dichotomisation of tradition and modernity isn't merely an instance of misdirected schism but of blurred genres. The conventional accounts of the origins of modernity regard the European model as being superior and worthy of being emulated by the rest of the world. However, later accounts including that of Dipesh Chakraborty (2002) and Sudipto Kaviraj (2005) have dis-privileged the European model as being constrictive in time and space. They argue for contextualising the account of spread of modernity across the world rather than re-animating a singular model throughout history. It is crucial to unshackle the linearity associated with modernity to highlight the differentiated pace of social change. This nuanced approach to modernity doesn't discount the 'traditional' practices and instead provides for a complex and dynamic feedback chain to

incorporate the past into the present. Rather than regarding modernity as a rupture/departure; this understanding reconfigures the relationship between the two by integrating them into a symbiotic whole.

The trajectory of modernity can be comprehended through local inhabitants and institutions incorporating and adapting to cascading globalising effects, in turn producing multiple modernities (Eisenstaedt, 2000), often maintaining concurrent currents of homogenisation and differentiation. It would be erroneous to therefore consider tradition and modernity as fundamentally contrasting and separate phenomenon, signifying a break in the study of world politics.

As pointed by Walter Mignolo (2000) the global south plays an important role in constituting the current idea of modernity and hence is coeval and co-located with it. While there are spatial differences in cultural practices, social structures and technological advancements, it is critical to enquire into the emergence of these distinctions as social scientists are concerned with investigating about social change. It is incumbent upon researchers to question the centre-periphery distinction among the pre-formed spatio-temporal categories of tradition and modernity. These distinctions lead to producing teleological explanations which do not serve the purpose of social analysis. The proliferation of research on modernity has led to scholars increasingly questioning the paradigm of linear progress that distinguishes between individual self and the notion of social change (Adams, 2007; May, 2011). This implies a revamping of our understanding of modernity through incorporation of traditions; treating social change as reinventing and repackaging of old customs and practices.

The view considering modernity as a uniquely European development resulting from endogenous, self-generating civilizational attributes has been widely disputed by contemporary scholars (Jones, 1981; Landes, 1998; North et al. 2009). There has been a growing emphasis on 'entangled histories' and 'compound vectors' that coalesced to establish the pre-eminence of western states (De Vries, 2013: 46). The core- periphery model of global order was sustained through propagating a particular configuration of modernity based in the practices and processes of north western Europe during the nineteenth century. Barry Buzan and George Lawson (2013) acknowledge the global nature of origins and outcomes of modernity and

hence employ the term 'global modernity'. They choose to use the term 'global modernity' instead of 'multiple modernities' for dual rationale: firstly, the term 'multiple modernities' perpetuates a Euro-centric experience as being definitive and analytically prior to the other regional variations and secondly the concept of multiple modernities rests on internally driven modernities, mediated by cultural differences rather than highlighting the transnational linkages and affiliations that are a product of modern forms of power (Bhambra, 2013: 301–3).

Benno Teschke underlines the protracted and uneven nature of the process of modernity, repudiating the notion of singular juncture producing sharp discontinuity and discarding the distinction between modern and pre-modern eras (Teschke, 2003: 43). Modernity was a fortuitous concatenation of social forces, a labyrinth of multitudinous processes and occurrences. This sequence of events once set in motion, constituted a mode of power that had enormous transformative potential. Although the roots of this mode of power could be dated back to many centuries, it became apparent only in the nineteenth century, with the coalescing of states which reflected this configuration of power and how other states responded to this challenge. This was the principal dynamic through which International Relations was framed and operationalised (Teschke, 2003: 72).

Alterity and imparity have been a known fact of historical development, but never was unevenness experienced at this scale, intensity and in such an inescapable interdependent context (Rosenberg, 2010). The advancement of technology, revolutionising of industrial production, newer form of bureaucratic organisation coupled with a sense of cultural superiority prompted these states to exercise their advantage over those with limited access to these sources of power. These power dynamics manifested themselves in an ever-widening schism between few 'core' states and a voluminous number of 'peripheral' polities. This led to a hierarchical, core- periphery international order, with west being the epicentre beginning in the nineteenth century to the present times. However, the terms 'core' and 'periphery' are employed by Buzan and Lawson in a more holistic manner rather than the popularised notion of dependency and world system analysts which is an axial division of labour predicated on an asymmetrical exchange between a labour intensive, low profit periphery and a capital intensive, high profit core (Buzan and Lawson, 2001: 66). The

geography of capitalism is variegated with motley features and world system theorists like Immanuel Wallerstein present a homogenous view of the same. The demarcation between core and periphery is premised on the early configurations of power based on assorted factors including industrialisation, statehood and force of reason rather than just one facet of it.

According to Buzan and Lawson (2001), the nineteenth century marked the establishment of a set of dynamics that intertwined to form a powerful configuration that recalibrated the basis of international order, leading to a new epoch. This metamorphosis during the nineteenth century underpins the core aspects of international relations to date. Thus for Buzan and Lawson, the term 'global modernity' encompasses the principle features of contemporary international order and is crucial for understanding the emergence of present day international relations (Buzan and Lawson, 2001: 65). The marginalisation of the narrative of modernity leads to a partial and incomplete understanding of international relations. It is thus significant to acknowledge that modernity was asynchronous and requited, resulting from the heterogeneous connections between people, institutions and practices on a global scale (Bayly, 2004: 5; Hobson, 2004: 304).

Globalisation and the Resurgence of Tradition

The question regarding the uncoupling of tradition and modernity has become prominent due to the contradictions arising from globalisation. It is often posed as an issue of reversibility by theorists. The central question animating this discussion is whether tradition is otiose for the current milieu in a world plagued with unrelenting consumption. Three significant events led to a reinvigorated interest in the concept of tradition: the rise of East Asian capitalism, the resurgence of ethnicity in Western societies, and the revival of religion in Western as well as Eastern societies (Bell, 1980; Glazer, 1983). In light of these three developments, scholars began engaging in re-thinking of social forces, much to the benefit of the literature on tradition.

It is in vogue to use the term global modernity in the array of modern neologisms. Roland Robertson's (1992) pioneering work on globalisation underscores the unprecedented nature of modernity affecting every corner of the world. The inter-connectedness has resulted in global compression which foregrounds the new

discourse in the present age and international order (Spybey, 1996). It is necessitous while theorising on globalisation to confer social change to be 'tangible and tactile ordering of the globe in entirety' instead of evincing the uneven relationship between the first and third world countries (Robertson, 1992: 53). The period marking the rise of modern globalisation can be traced to 1870 through to mid-1920s (Robertson, 1992: 148, 179). It was during this period that was pronounced by increased global interconnections and compression that evoked the proclivity for reinventing a sense of patriotic self-identity along with tradition. Similar to Hobsbawm (1987, 1994), he considered tradition as not simply being the continuation of archaic symbols, rather it was the retrieval of different aspects of *Gemeinschaft* via contemporary reminiscence and sentimentality. Tradition is an integral part of understanding and theorising about modernity than naively considering it as a condition of the past. This has resulted in fresh perspective in addressing the role of tradition in the discourse on globalisation.

Arif Dirlik emphasises the need to overcome the teleology associated with the process of globalisation and questions the language of unity and homogenisation by underlining   difference and conflict as inevitable and integral part of the contemporary world order (Dirlik, 2003: 277). He reflects on the reversal and reprisal of traditions within the end of modernisation discourse. A singular conceptualisation of global modernity shaped by transnational capitalism abandons and omits the contradictions fostering the multiplicity and resurrecting the role and meaning ascribed to tradition in contemporary societies. The explicit waning of colonial control led to the dismissal of criticisms associated with the oppressive nature of modernity on local cultures. The unhindered capitalism has led to opening up of the world to achieve the goals of development of societies, however it is crucial to remember that global modernity has not forfeited the meaning and role of tradition. There is an unprecedented resuscitation of traditions in the world today. The revivification of traditions isn't solely derived from individual cultural claims leading to fragmentation of modernity but rather highlight the contradictions within the single globalising modernity (Dirlik, 2004: 142).

Zygmunt Bauman (2000) acknowledges the role of tradition in the age of global modernity. While writing on globalisation, he reflects on the role of tradition in the 'new world order' and whether it could replace the presumed universalising

course of modernity (Bauman, 1998: 59). In doing so, he explores the differentiating forces challenging the modernity constituted under the auspices of western dominance. This new form of modernity termed as 'liquid modernity' is superseding the previous phase of social expansion which demarcated the limits for exercising control and defined meaningful social contexts. The liquid modernity is marked by 'irreverence for space and decimation of subterfuge of time' (Bauman, 2000: 117). His approach to the role of tradition can be traced to his writings on the subject of community. In his narrative on the surging impertinence of resilience and longevity in relations binding people socially, he closely scrutinises the fortuitous meetings constituting the novel cosmopolitan identity (Bauman, 2001: 57). There is resounding similarity between his views on the waning of social arrangements that would lead to durable social relations and Ferdinand Tonnies's take on the evanescing of *Gemeinschaft*. In traditional societies like that of China, the rise of global capitalism has contributed in restoration and repackaging of old traditions to keep up with changing times (Zhao, 1997). In opening up to the potent instruments of global modernity, traditional societies have tailored their values and social relations according to the ethic of mass consumption and consumerism.

Gilles Lipovetsky (2005) describes triple features of the 'hypermodern' living characterised by superfluity, intensity and instantaneous self-gratification. Hyper modernity entails societies structured around movement, flexibility and fluidity; marked by profligacy and individual pleasure while simultaneously facing tensions and anxieties of living in a world stripped of traditions (Lipovetsky, 2005: 44). There is a constant desire and quest for self-fulfilment with lack of beliefs and principles to hold on to for assurance. This can be described as the age where the vacuous and the ephemeral are contemporaneous. There is a constant search for the rediscovery of the one's heritage resulting in commemorative activities underscoring different aspects of identity. Tradition does not rest on solid foundations and the past is handily exploited for commercial purposes. By appealing to nostalgia, the past is habitually reinvented and restated as a product for consumption or an instrument of fashion (Lipovetsky, 2005: 60). In congruence to the perspectives of Dirlik and Bauman, Lipovetsky too regards tradition being subject to manipulation in the age of hyper-modernity rather than seeing it as being continuous to the structural and institutional arrangements of the bygone period. A germane illustration of this could be cultural tourism whereby

erstwhile customs and rituals are reproduced for entertainment and market purposes (Lipovetsky, 2005: 28). This revival of traditions can reaffirm a sense of identity amongst the people; something that the modern age is devoid of completely (Boissevain, 1996: 17).

Thus, Dirlik, Lipovetsky and Bauman while theorising about modernity and social change do not discard the role of traditions and highlight the juggernaut of insatiable desires and wants under the capitalist system. They also challenge the 'end of modernity' discourse by highlighting the transitions made in the process of modernity. In a world faced with the onslaught of uncertainty and concomitant with surplus of consumption, these theorists highlight the reprisal and renovation of traditions as by-products of cultural life. Rather than considering traditions as dormant and inert, they incorporated the recovery of traditions in their analysis. It is critical to note that the commodification of traditions is not an end result in itself and the reinvigoration of traditions results in impacting societal beliefs and notions and individual idea of identity. The idea of reflexivity, which is explored further in the continuing section, imparts the possibility for granting people the agency to consciously revive and reinvent certain traditions in their endeavour to address systemic changes that ultimately impact their well-being.

The Notion of Risk, Reflexivity and Recovering Tradition

Ulrich Beck, the renowned German sociologist (1992; 1999; 2002; 2006) attributes the discussions around risk and danger in contemporary post-industrial societies whether involving terrorism, environmental catastrophes or unemployment to the unintended and unforeseen effects of modernity. He describes a paradigmatic metamorphosis from the industrial to the risk stage of modernity which he terms as 'second modernity' entailing man-made side effects of modernity, producing uncertainties leading to people coming to terms with the consequences of their actions (Beck, 1992: 31). This self-reflexivity is indicative of the latent effects of pre-established industrial systems. These new risks are as much manifestation and by-products of the functioning of the previous systems. Beck seeks to explore the critical reformist agendas in the risk-engendered late industrial societies. He envisages reformism as not only creating awareness about the unforeseen and undesirable dangers associated with industrial societies but also the inquest for alternatives. These

alternatives have to be contextualised within the attempt to perpetually find and reinvent a sense of certainty around one's individual identity and are superseding the traditional frames of immersed obligations (Beck, 1994: 14). Therefore, the metamorphosis to an atomistic and self-encountering 'way of being' indicates the perishing of tradition or an operative decoupling from it or ensuring the desired flexibility of self in undertaking various choices and attaining set goals.

Tradition is grasped as a Gordian knot, impervious to the deeply individualised context charged with new threats and risks. The process of individualisation leads to formulation of new mechanisms in dealing with societal issues, making conducive conditions for uncovering traditional ways of living to debate and general perusal. Ergo, reflexivity not only deems the pre-existing beliefs as irrelevant but also contains the potential of reshaping and redesigning them to face the obstructions created by contemporary times. The reinvention of traditions has a significant impact in understanding subject hood against the backdrop of fragmented world with competing and contrasting identities. The framing of the individual identity is impinged upon by the increasing fluidity and ambivalence surrounding us, resulting in the radicalisation of rationality and production of a reflexive, multiple self (Beck, 1994: 33).

Against the milieu of chaotic life of modernity, Beck presents reflexivity as having the potentiality to re-organise and restructure the pre-established systems of values and overcoming old beliefs. To understand the notion of meta-change it is crucial to incorporate tradition as a potent element within modernity. This has been done at a dual level, firstly with the re-envisioning of western traditions and secondly analysing the impact of reflexivity in non-western societies (Beck, 2003: 7). To deal with the dilemmas created by reflexive modernisation, Beck conjures the notion of 'cosmopolitan Realpolitik' since national interests can't be any longer effectively advanced at the national level. Through the incorporation of reflexivity in the cosmopolitan condition, Beck advocates for acknowledging diversity and the existence of 'global other' along with its traditions which can't be simply disregarded or abandoned. According to him, diversity necessitates not only interaction amongst societies but also the 'internalisation of other' and their peculiar cultural enactments (Beck and Grande, 2010: 417–419). These activities in turn help us understand how

agents respond to traditions in the current age.

The preceding analysis thus clarifies the role of tradition in modern societies as not being passively constructed and taken for granted but subject to dynamic reinterpretation and remoulding to suit the zeitgeist. It rejects the earlier notion of traditions being set in stone and being unpliable and demonstrates the rearrangement and recasting of traditions to explain social change. This is further expanded upon in the ensuing section by delving into the notion of hybridising tradition.

Multiple Modernities: The Hybridisation of Tradition & the Global South

The use of nomenclature such as global modernity (Dirlik, 2003; 2006), liquid modernity (Bauman, 2000) and hypermodernity (Lipovetsky, 2005) points to the phenomenon of capitalism, expedited mobility, individualism and consumerism. The amalgamation of these in the contemporary times has resulted in a planetary crisis riddled with extremes and debauchery. Ulrich Beck along with other scholars (2003; 2005; 2006; 2010) refers to the terms 'reflexive', 'second; and 'cosmopolitan' modernity to connote the foundational structural, organisational and societal changes accompanied with modernity.

The notion of multiple modernities (Casanova, 2011; Eisenstadt, 2000), hybrid modernities (Pieterse, 1998) cater to the entanglement of global south in the production of modernity. Eisenstadt (2000) ventured to articulate the various permutations and defined multiple modernities as the 'perpetual configuration and reconfiguration of an array of heterogeneous cultural programs'. These programmes weren't pristine derivations and symbolised the uneasiness between the demarcation of tradition and modernity. It would be obtuse to consider western model of modernity as veritable, as it was influenced both by others as well as from its inherently dynamic reflexivity. This reflexivity is not to be considered benign as the crystallisation of modernity was a product of incessant internal tensions and conflict (Eisenstadt, 2000: 12). He repudiates the notion of modernity as being a linear, reflexive transition towards a utopian future, rather considering it as politically and culturally interventionist. This portrayal of modernity is significantly divergent from the earlier models of change as it stresses upon the multiple and convoluted routes to modernity based on oscillation and conflict within societies.

According to J.N. Pieterse (1998), hybridisation is the cornerstone for comprehending multiple modernities since the plural formations in society inform the 'actually existing modernities'. He argued that the politics of the memories of class and status shaped modernity (Pieterse 1998: 80). Since different particularistic memories resulted in contested histories, it is valuable to note the inefficacy of a universal history of development. Analogous to Eisenstadt, Pieterse's concern wasn't limited to the imitating results of western modernity rather its positioning vis-à-vis the past. Hybridisation demonstrated how cultures interacted through processes of iteration and translation between the present and past elements and meanings are vicariously addressed through and to the 'other' (Pieterse, 1998: 84). This implied challenging the essentialism associated with western modernity that propagated the inadequacy of post-colonial societies in anticipating their future. In fact, these societies adapted modernisation in various ingenious forms not outlined by the conventional development model.

Goran Therborn employed the term 'hybridisation' to depict modernity as an era or a period representing a distinct framework of time period rather than focusing on the sequential development of distinct institutional forms (Therborn, 2003: 302). Through this conceptualisation, various periods in modernity characterised by re-traditionalisation were conceivable. It is productive to apprehend modernisation as a non- linear approach of enmeshments rather than as a centro-lineal path of socio-economic development. The entanglements in the path to and through modernity occurred because of the fragmentary, intermittent and spasmodic ruptures with the past which had a mutually influencing impact on the entire process (Therborn, 2003: 295). In challenging the pre-eminence of the conventional accounts on the genesis of modernity in the west and its teleological diffusion to the rest of the world, Therborn accentuates the discourse on past-present-future interrelationships and the co-existence of modernities. Corresponding to the arguments made by Pieterse and Eisenstadt, Therborn de-privileges the Eurocentric discourses on development and spread of modernity by deflating it through its application in the post-colonial context and rejecting the three worlds model. The re-conceptualisation of modernity as 'entangled' or 'multiple' is a reflection of the epistemological shift in global scholarship towards understanding history (Therborn, 2003: 293). This shift in scholarship and self- conceptualisation implies a refusal to relegate tradition to

obscurity and reinstating it as pivotal to shaping societies. Various non- western scholars including Upendra Baxi (1993), Avijit Pathak (1998; 2006) and Janet Abu-Lughod (1999) highlight the contradictions and paradoxes present in accepting a teleological understanding of modernity that relegates tradition to the background.

There is a dual narrative that characterises modernity- firstly the idea of its uniqueness to Europe and secondly its translatability to non-European contexts. The travelling dimension of modernity as an export from Europe, mutable in other contexts, is often guised as an instrument of progress. However, increasingly scholars have suggested that cultural melanges of multiple modernities aren't dictated by uni-linear motion of events through severing off the past but rather by temporal co-existence that subsumes the traditional into the modern (Lee, 2012). Multiple modernities are thus based on inter-connections and open-ended networks between the past and the present; challenging the notion of neatly distinct categories, allowing for exchanges and modifications for the creation and sustenance of different identities (Hutnyk, 2005).

The Prospects of Tradition in Contemporary Times: The Future of the Past

This section addresses the retreat from the notion of modernity as a historical, periodising concept to the parallel process of contesting and accommodating the past. Modernity does not concern with abrupt rupturing but is a state that doesn't completely transcend the past.

The preceding analysis is indicative of the myriad approaches and turns in examining the role of tradition. These varied theoretical vantage points range from treating traditions as tacit and practical to rational and discursive. Thus, patterns of status quo or transformation can be outlined through scrutinising the different components (rational or discursive) of traditions. There is ambivalence in approaching our past to appraise change and continuity. There is incongruity in our response to tradition, it is considered to be invective to be traditional in some spheres and virtuous to be modern. With the burgeoning of the culture of innovation and progress, there is little attention accorded to role of traditions. At the same time, there are some spheres where tradition reigns supreme since a continuity with the past provides for a sense of belongingness and stability, deeply shaping one's identity. With the resurgence of

religion in international politics, it is interesting to note the prevalence of tradition in world today. Marshall Berman's (1982) appropriation of Marx's phrase 'in modern life all that is solid melts into air' succinctly summarises the conflicting views on modernity. For Marx, to be modern was to live a life of paradox and contradiction. The relentless capitalist exploitation and terrifying destruction of social fabric hasn't deterred individuals from envisioning utopias, to fight and challenge the overwhelming odds and shape the world in their own vision. The experience of modernity is based on a cauldron of ideas; it leads to a dividing experience which is the loss of the old world coupled with the creation of new; decay sets the condition for construction. Borrowing on this, the next section elucidates on the contribution of tradition in the disciplinary history of International Relations.

The prevailing discussion on modernity hinges on re-evaluating the essence and substance of tradition in the background of globalisation, reflexivity and plurality. In reclaiming tradition as being central to explaining various aspects of modernity, there has been blurring of genres with the contrast between these two categories not being discerned instantaneously. The boundary between tradition and modernity has been mitigated and is constantly subject to re-imagination, termination and quiescence. By theorising modernity in the present milieu, there is detailed attention to the co-existence and fusion of the old with the contemporary. There has been a marked alteration in the conventional notions about dispossessing traditions in modernity with the introduction of concepts like hybridisation which have led to reinvention and repackaging of traditions rather than treating them as disruptive. Scholars might adhere to denote different terms for example multiple modernists choose to use hybridisation while theorists of globalisation prefer reflexivity, there is an overall consensus regarding the significance of traditions in current times. Their main focus is to challenge the linearity and irreversibility associated with social change in the mainstream accounts of modernisation theory. There are veritable efforts refuting the claims that traditions have no role to play in social change.

The emphasis in the work on modernity recently has been on extrapolating the part of individual agency in reinvigorating traditions (Adams, 2007: 39). In the process of demonstrating active consciousness to the role of traditions in theorising about modernity, these scholars have exonerated themselves of charges of apathy

towards difference (Schmidt, 2010: 519; Fourie, 2012). Since traditions are seen as vital in understanding the narrative on modernity, the approach to addressing difference highlights the creative and complex rearrangement of the past in studying social change. Thereby, tradition doesn't merely precede the modern but is co-constitutive in providing an impetus for the diversity in experiencing modernity. There have been various accounts challenging western modernity as the focal point by including non-western perspectives to the modernising enterprise. These alternative conceptualisations including theories of multiple modernities and reflexive modernity are inclusive by virtue of encompassing the experiences of the non-west and also negating the practice of centring or posturing an explanation around the west. By being cognisant of the difference in traditions in both western and non-western contexts, these theorisations are enabling in discarding the stereotypes associated with either west being non-traditional or non –west being less modern than its counterpart.

The most common stereotype associated with modernisation is to disengage with traditions and dismiss them as being superfluous in influencing any kind of social change. In recent times, there has been a marked shift from clearly establishing the distinction between modern and pre-modern to exploring the consequences of privileging and discounting tradition. It is by paying attention to the patterns of circumvention and acknowledgement of others that one can delve into the intricacies of competing memories, belief systems and customs in contemporary societies. These intricate details help in providing a critical frame of reference on the meaning and purpose of traditions in present day contexts.

The institutional and structural changes induced by the forces of modernity do not comprise of a satisfactory factor in destabilising traditions, beliefs and age -old customs. Inimical to the conventional theories, these accounts demonstrate potential connections between traditions and the quest for identity in the globalised, hybrid world. The most prominent example is the rapprochement between traditional forms of medicine and modern bio-science (Ling, 2013: 124). The binary polarisation between occidental and oriental, manifested through modern and traditional is underlined with evolutionism that is considered to be naively optimistic. Joseph R. Gusfield (1967) highlights the misplaced polarity and the accompanying fallacies in using these terms as opposites involving displacement, conflict or exclusiveness. The

potentiality of the old cannot be discounted as the transition to the modern is not irreversible, consistent and structurally homogenous. This underscores the need to question the erstwhile marginalisation of certain traditions that have made their way back to co-exist with post-traditional forms of knowledge and practices.

Scholars analysing modernity and social change are required to probe the contexts in which the past is manipulated. Certain traditions are revived or repackaged for public consumption while others are relegated to the past to be a part of our memories of beliefs and practices. The role of the self-appointed doorkeepers of traditions needs to be addressed in outlining the trajectory of passing of these practices and belief systems from the ancestors to their forbearers.

Inventing Tradition: Revisiting the Disciplinary History in International Relations

The disciplinary history of International Relations is fraught with exploring various epistemological, ontological and theoretical concerns with canonical writings shaping the discourse in the field. However, scant attention has been given to the authors and their texts being designated to particular 'traditions of thought'. This section presents the underlying historical roots to the theoretical understanding of the term 'tradition' and its different meanings and applications in the history of IR scholarship. The central claim is drawn heavily from Michael Oakeshott's (1933) argument regarding traditions being inherently 'invented' phenomenon and the purpose of their invention, whether historical or practical dictates the analysis of their contents. Michael Oakeshott provides for a nuanced understanding and historical consequences of interpreting tradition in this way and indicates the constructive involvement with the term could further advance thinking about history in International Relations. The liaison between history and IR is the core feature of the discipline and hence there is a need to address the misrepresentations and widely held antinomies that are wrongly assumed to underpin the discipline, shaping our international imagination. The eternal divide between history and IR occludes to a fundamental question of the role of tradition in the discipline.

After briefly discussing the philosophy of history in providing a theoretical grounding to the concept of tradition, the section proceeds with discussing the works of four prominent theorists Hedley Bull (1977), Martin Wight (1978), John G.

Gunnell (1990) and Brian C. Schmidt (2000) who have utilised tradition in a constructive manner in IR scholarship, thus highlighting the need for self-assessment and greater engagement with history in present day writings in the field.

The disciplinary history of International Relations has been shaped by a sequence of 'great debates' fought between opposing theoretical traditions trying to advance certain claims and challenge the assumptions of the opposite paradigm. The chronology of these debates has divided the field since its inception and has been the anchor for investigating the evolution of the discipline. One of the hallmarks of mainstream IR scholarship as noted by Ian Clark (1998) is the propensity of adhering to taxonomic classification of distinct, conflicting traditions. Recent revisionist scholarship has brought to light some significant ramifications and limitations of this pedagogical exercise by subjecting the 'traditions tradition' to critical consideration (Jeffery, 2005: 57). There has been a recent trend in questioning the cataloguing of scholars into specific, neatly distinct traditions and it is pertinent to delve deeper into the historical relationship between designating particular ideas or thinker/s to a specific tradition.

The genesis of the discipline is founded on the pervasive notion of the 'first great debate' as identified by E.H. Carr in his pioneering work, *The Twenty Years Crisis 1919-1939* conducted between realism and the idealism, the dyad pre-dominating traditions in the inter-war period during the first world war. There has been a long lineage of classifying traditions in IR beginning with Carr. Martin Wight identified three traditions underlying the discipline – realism, rationalism and revolutionism (Wight, 1978: 84); Michael Donelan (1977), listed five- natural law, realism, fideism, rationalism and historicism; Stephen Krasner (1984) demarcates regime theory into three traditions- structuralist or realist, modified structuralist, and the Grotian tradition and David Boucher (1998) divides theories of International Relations into the triad of empirical realism, universalism and historicism.

Analogously, scholars in IR have been preoccupied with constructing IR theory through canonical/ classical texts. Martin Wight addressed the absence of International Relations theory in his famous essay by arguing that the field lacked 'classics' demonstrative of the academic history of the discipline (Wight, 1966: 17). He further went on to elaborate that unlike political theory, international relations

theory was 'scattered, unsystematic and largely intractable in form' (Wight, 1966: 18). In lieu of these charges, IR scholars have responded by dedicating their efforts to create their own canon of classical works. Majority of these borrow from the field of political theory dating from Greek antiquity to the twentieth century including writings by Thucydides, Machiavelli and Kant. It is important to note that there are doorkeepers allowing for texts and scholars to be a part of a certain tradition in the first place. Thus, what qualifies as 'in' and 'out' is determined by the perception of those constructing the tradition to meet specific aims.

The deployment of 'traditions' in International Relations either as categorical tools or as canons has been levied with three main criticisms (Clark, 1998: 483). The initial disapproval was expressed by Martin Wight who articulated that the quest for traditions in the history of ideas resulted in fetishisation of categories for their sake; with writers being caricatured and pigeon holed, thus subordinating dynamism and flexibility of ideas to immutable classification (Wight, 1998: 487-488). The second sort of criticisms were put forth by Rob Walker who condemned the compartmentalisation of IR into various theoretical traditions that perpetuated intellectual conservatism and circumscribed the agendas for debate narrowly (Walker, 1993: 201). He argued that categories like 'rationalism' and 'reflectivism' and their antecedents' realism and idealism have insulated the discipline by closing possibilities for deliberation (Walker, 1993: 221).

The final and the most severe set of criticisms emanate from the writings of historians including Quentin Skinner (1969) who label the creation of traditions of thought as a prohibited scholarly exercise owing to the fact that it makes flawed presumptions about the constitutive fabric of political language (Skinner, 1969: 10). He rejects the notion of 'paradigm priority' in interpretation of ideas and points out two fallacies 'mythology of doctrines' and 'mythology of coherence' infesting historical writing that aim to impose unconvincing continuity on the history of ideas. Historians of ideas indicate the false premise for construction of traditions, based on identifying perennial set of problems. This construction gives an illusion of coherence and intelligibility both within and amongst different traditions. This provides for a starting point for the exploration of the use of traditions of thought in IR scholarship.

Despite these well-rounded criticisms hitherto discussed, the most conspicuous problem is the erratic and arbitrary usage of the term tradition itself in IR. The core argument is to recognise the thoughtless, sweeping and casual application of the term without an in-depth understanding of the actual meaning and significance of tradition. In cases where the term tradition is explicitly theorised, there isn't any consensus upon the definitional boundaries. To further illustrate, Terry Nardin uses tradition as the 'handing down of beliefs and customs from one generation to another' (Nardin, 1990: 31). On the other hand, Martin Wight defined tradition in abstract terms, identifying it to a paradigm of ideas which are held together by their logical inter-connection (Wight, 1966: 48). Conal Condren describes traditions as 'putative historical claims about socialised processes of transmission that are imbued with a sense of authority' (Condren, 1982: 33). Tradition can be employed to connote historical transmission of customs and beliefs or as vaguely coherent set of ideas. These potent conceptualisations of the term tradition stipulate the use of historical devices in navigating the discipline of International Relations. The next section elaborates on the use of tradition in IR by revisiting the notion in the works of John Gunnell and Brian Schmidt.

John Gunnell and Brian Schmidt: Reimagining Tradition in International Relations

The concept of tradition has served as a vehicle for the historical aetiology of rhetorical function in various forms. For a field perpetually consumed by identity crisis, it would be fruitful to engage with the role of tradition in charting out the future terrain of research. The most scrupulous criticisms levelled at the improper philosophical use of tradition appear in the work of John G. Gunnell (1979). Although Gunnell is making his arguments in relation to American political science, there is a strong overlap with the discipline of IR. Taking forward Oakeshott's opprobrium regarding the history of political theory, Gunnell censures the 'myth of tradition' which is the idea of grand traditions within political thought that define the history of the field. According to him, traditions are 'artificially created images in intellectual discourse that are mirrored backward to produce a semblance of unified history' (Gunnell, 1979: 112). In the Oakeshottian interpretation this would be referred to as 'practical history' that is the notion that 'grand traditions' derive their relevance from explaining modern political conditions (Gunnell, 1979: 187). They are retrospective

analytical constructions that yield a rationalised version of the past. These *ex post facto* creations work towards evoking a specific imagery in the collective psyche of the masses regarding the conditions of our age, professing to tell us who we are and how we arrived at the current juncture in history. Classical texts and other political writings are not interpreted in vacuum or as independent entities but within the context of these grand traditions. These traditions provide the frame of reference for ascribing meaning to these writings. In Gunnell's view, the traditions of political thought are myths, thereby questioning the canonical status accorded to texts from Plato to Marx in the history of political thought (Gunnell, 1979: 167). This criticism levied against the 'myth of tradition' has been transposed to the discipline of IR through the illuminating and instructive writings of Brian Schmidt.

There has been a recent turn in developing and further discovering the historiography of IR. Brian Schmidt brings to fore two significant historiographical issues of presentism and contexualism. Presentism involves writing about the history of the discipline with the purpose of making a point about its present character. Presentism involves abstracting things from the past and judging them apart from their context by making references to the present. Contexualism assumes that exogenous events have significantly outlined the historical development of IR as a field of study (Schmidt, 2000: 3). It insists that a particular text can be understood within the larger discourse. There have been various renditions of categorising the discipline into polar binaries since its emergence.

The mainstream chronicling of the development of the discipline of International Relations contain dual erroneous historiographical assumptions resulting in grave misinterpretation of the actual course of evolution of the field (Schmidt, 2000: 12). The first flawed assumption pertains to the belief that the modern academic practitioners are heirs to the classical traditions in International Relations (Schmidt, 2000: 24). The constituent theoretical traditions in IR are falsely deduced from the epics and classic works dating back to ancient Greeks and extending to the present in some immaculately coherent manner. Alastair Murray cites the example of realist tradition which is marred by continuous endeavours to create a 'realist grand narrative' with historical figures identified and affiliated to the mode of thought in an ordered manner (Murray, 1997: 156). Similar to Oakeshott's two-fold conception of

past as 'practical' or 'historical'; Schmidt distinguishes between two kinds of traditions as 'analytical' or 'historical' (Schmidt, 1998: 44). Historical tradition can be defined as a 'self-aware, pre-constituted, conventional practice of conveying ideas through a widely acceptable and recognised discursive framework' (Schmidt, 1998: 40). Corresponding to the notion of 'historical past', historical traditions even though formulated in the present, theorise about past for its own sake rather than for serving the purposes of the present.

Contrarily, analytical traditions are 'retrospectively created edifices guided by concerns and benchmarks of the present' (Schmidt, 1998: 76). Schmidt's understanding of tradition is identical to Hobsbawm's notion of 'invented tradition' whereby traditions are either consciously or involuntarily fabricated for presentist purposes. Schmidt is disapproving of the tendency in the use of traditions in IR to conflate analytical traditions as historical ones (Schmidt, 1998: 86). Emanating in Gunnell's notion of 'myth of tradition', Schmidt pursues the core argument i.e. reification of analytical constructs as traditions. It is essential to demarcate between an external and retrospectively construed tradition and a self- constituted tradition (Schmidt, 1998: 92). Of all the self-images of the discipline of International Relations, none holds more sway than the insistence of the evolution of the subject through juxtaposition of different traditions. A closer analysis of these traditions presents a complex and subversive reading of the history of the discipline.

A perspicacious account of the present would require deeper investigation into the past. The following section outlines the diffusion of the three most prominent traditions in IR theory from the eminent propagator of 'traditions approach' Martin Wight to his successor the English school theorist, Hedley Bull.

Appropriating Tradition: Reclaiming the Legacy of Wight and Bull

Martin Wight (1978) delineated three traditions – realist, rationalist and revolutionist providing the structural framework for inquiry in the discipline. His classification based on the triumvirate schematisation entailed a particular conception of tradition. Wight's understanding about the concept of tradition can be garnered from dual sources: firstly, his explicit discussion on the concept in his writings and secondly in his application of the theoretical essence to his three constructs of tradition (Wight,

1978: 104). The central premise for basing his theoretical understanding of tradition is the eternal principle of these traditions. He maintains that the ideas that have been in circulation for centuries are unchanging and can be grouped into three categories or traditions (Wight, 1978: 24).

The triple categorisation or as Wight addresses them, 'allied political circumstances' revolve around his idea of an international society and are parallel to the traditions of realism, rationalism and revolutionism (Wight, 1978: 33). Each of these traditions embody a description about the nature of international politics and provided prescriptions for the proper conduct. The realists consider international society as fictitious, describing international realm as being anarchical, a war of all against all, driven by power and greed. The Grotians consider the international society to be based on institutions such as diplomacy, international law and concert of great powers. The Kantians appeal to the idea of human morality, advocating for a revolution to dismantle the existing order and forge a community of mankind.

It is evidently lucid that Wight's primary concern was 'presentist' theorising about the idea of international society, which did not exist when the exemplars of his three traditions Thomas Hobbes, Hugo Grotius and Immanuel Kant were writing, thus resulting in his traditions being analytical in substance. These traditions are analytical in character since the parameters of the traditions dictate who would be a potential member and who would be left out. Jens Bartelson observes the nature of use of tradition by Wight had less to do with the transmission of ideas through passage of time but more with ensuring apparent coherence on retrospectively formulated categories (Bartelson, 1993: 54).

The three traditions were co-terminus with 'patterns of thought' in western political philosophy and his main concern was their endurance across spatio-temporal dimensions. He insisted that despite their distortion and diminution at times, these traditions re-emerged and reasserted their authority in history (Wight, 1978: 124). According to Wight, there are patterns of persistence, recurrence and coherence that can be accorded to ideas in international history, thus emphasising the value of these characteristics for his schematisation of international relations theory (Wight, 1978: 143). Thus theorists and their opinions can be grouped along the lines of these broad and vaguely demarcated categories in international relations theory.

The key distinguishing feature between Wight and Oakeshott is that the prior one was involved in the practice of theorising whereas the latter in historical enquiry (Jeffery, 2005: 41). The practice of theorising entails the organisation of knowledge into a system that helps explaining or understanding a specific phenomenon, thus making it a 'presentist/practical' undertaking. This leads to the extrapolation that theories aren't given or exist in themselves but are rather 'invented' by collection of a particular set of ideas around a subject matter. However, central to Wight's understanding is theorising regarding patterns in the history of political thought.

To summarise, Wight formulates theoretically analytical traditions by deploying three philosophical thinkers retrospectively with the boundaries separating these three traditions being determined by present concerns. In an Oakeshottian sense, Wight aims to re-construct a past for practical purposes of illustrating how contemporary international relations theory came to be. This tendency of converging analytical traditions with historical traditions lies at the heart of the problem in the discipline of IR (Schmidt, 1998: 67). The problem with such an assumption is that Wight tend to believe that the portrayal of these practical schemes is coeval to actual history.

Hedley Bull (1977) further builds on the classification made by Wight, i.e. equating realism, rationalism and revolutionism with Machiavellianism, Grotianism and Kantianism. In associating each of these traditions with a prominent thinker, he fostered the consolidation of the boundaries separating these three traditions. The trend of association is significantly pronounced in relation to the Grotian tradition in IR. Bull fails to differentiate between ideas of Grotius and the Grotian tradition which included the neo-Grotians whose ideas were quite distinct from their predecessors, thus conflating the two entities (Bull, 1990: 103). On the contrary, Wight maintained that while Grotians could be rationalists, the converse isn't necessarily applicable (Wight, 1978: 86). Grotianism was predominantly a category of international law that could be subsumed under the rationalist tradition (Edward Keene, 2002: 30). He went further to explain that Grotianism even though equated with Grotius, emerged with the writings of Victoria, a theorist writing way before Grotius (Wight, 1978: 192). Thus Wight, tried to present a nuanced understanding of the difference between Grotians and rationalists.

There can be dual rationale behind Bull's conflation of Hugo Grotius with the 'Grotian' tradition that can be ascribed to his conceptualisation of tradition. Firstly, he makes an attempt in seeking to draw meaningful comparison between Grotius's writings and those of twentieth century scholars in the Grotian tradition, yet this is narrowly circumscribed (Bull, 1990: 113). Both Schmidt and Gunnell point out that the most famous text by Grotius, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis,* is pre-figured by the reference to the tradition in which it is placed (Bull, 1990: 163). This leads to an inseparability between Grotius as a scholar and the Grotian tradition in general with various attempts by Bull to draw resemblances between the two distinct entities.

Secondly, Bull develops on the notion that Wight himself forewarned against the reification of the three traditions he expounded (Bull, 1990: 167). He reveals that the Machiavellian, Grotian and Kantian traditions were simply prototype models and it is only retrospectively that we have allotted these thinkers to these rigidly defined traditions. Despite these insights, Bull is credited for inventing the Grotian tradition, with his primary concern being maintaining an element of continuity rather than paying attention to the coherence of the tradition. He falls in the same temptation as Wight in locating the origins of the Grotian tradition with the work of Grotius himself and constructs a monolith pattern of thought carrying on from Grotius to the twentieth century analogous to Wight's treatment of rationalism (Jeffrey, 2005: 43).

In attempting to formulate a coherent tradition, Bull anachronistically accredits a gamut of concepts originating in the twentieth century like the international society and the doctrine of humanitarian intervention to Grotius himself, who had little knowledge about these in the context of his writings. It is important to note the significance of traditions in providing some semblance of order in a complex and protean reality. The next section delves into the possible solutions for tackling the indiscriminate and anachronistic application of the term within the discipline of IR.

Ramifications for Change and Continuity

There has been a lot of contention over the meaning and substance of the term tradition, despite the conventional understanding of iterative practices being carried across generations. The two components of inheritance and continuity form the basis for most definitional frameworks. Besides being subject to a plethora of epistemological criticisms, there are twain problems associated with the construction

of traditions. Firstly, there needs to be wider discourse and agreement on the idea of traditions being 'invented' rather than being considered as given phenomena. The second problem originates from the multiplicity in conceiving the constituent elements of traditions. According to Eric Hobsbawm, certain invented traditions which might be more recent in origin, still qualify as traditions without any impediments (Hobsbawm, 1975: 120).

He goes on to argue that 'invented traditions' are overtly or tacitly accepted beliefs and practices that imply continuity with the past (Hobsbawm, 1975: 166). However, he makes an important interjection by adding that 'invented' traditions are peculiar in the sense that their continuity with the past is largely factitious (Hobsbawm, 1975: 178). This means that Hobsbawm is suggesting that 'invented' traditions still carry the label of traditions despite their 'invented' status. He continues to refer to these two concepts - traditions and 'invented traditions' as separate entities. Alasdair MacIntyre writes about 'traditions of enquiry' as self-conscious and coherent movements of thought (MacIntyre, 1981: 66). Those engaging with these traditions are aware of the direction and debates and purposefully carry its enquiries forward. Thus he contends that traditions are marked by a sequence of reference from past to present with a certain sense of continuity (MacIntyre, 1981: 192). For him, the status acquired by traditions isn't based on their present standing but derived as an authority from the past. There is a sense of superiority with each subsequent stage of inheritance and also an increase in the validation and legitimacy of the traditions (MacIntyre, 1981: 137).

Traditions act as catalysts connecting past to the present in the history of ideas. One of the central debates discussed earlier in the chapter is regarding the nature of traditions itself and the status accorded to invented traditions. There is another fundamental point of contention regarding knowledge claims and whether we can ever really know the past (Preston King, 2013: 30). At one end of the spectrum are claims regarding all knowledge being derived from the past. The advocates of this perspective hold the belief that there isn't anything novel devised by the current generation but rather piecing together of components from the past, thus making it difficult to conclusively decide whether there was a present which was not past (King, 2013: 77). The other side of the spectrum claims that all knowledge is present

knowledge. Its exponents argue that all knowledge claims including traditions are constructions in the present, since we only have demonstrable evidence for our thinking in the present (King, 2013: 108).

There is a wide extent of historical and epistemological implications and inferences to the use of the term tradition either as a taxonomic tool or to identify a repetitive pattern of diffusion. By virtue of its inherent connection to the past, there is speculation around the origins of traditions. They demarcate boundaries of inside and outside, establishing a strong connection between these spheres.

With respect to the discipline of IR and close evaluation of the writings of Wight and Bull, the use of traditions poses some serious challenges in undertaking the appraisal of the framing of disciplinary history. The tendency of conflating analytical traditions with historical ones by pre-figuring the writings of a scholar pose the danger of anachronism. It is problematic to discuss and deliberate the issues, concerns and prospects in terms of language and concepts borrowed from another historical epoch. The construction of historical narratives can be infested by projections from contemporary period.

Conclusion

The ideas about our past remain central in shaping our engagement with the present and the course of enquiry to be pursued in the discipline. There are two possible alternatives to resolve the plethora of problems ensuing the use of 'tradition' in IR. The first proposition is the abandonment of the use of the term tradition completely which is defeatist in essence (Jeffery, 2005: 42). This suggestion would not yield the desired results since the terms of engagement in the discipline have been set rigidly over the course of its evolution and any attempt to change these would require individual gumption and initiative that could result in isolation and exclusion from the predominant methods of 'doing' IR.

The majority mode of scholarship would remain unchanged if there isn't a critical mass of scholars who start to question the 'given' nature of conducting IR. The second suggestion entails the replacement of the term 'tradition' by 'practice'. The difference of terminology doesn't preclude that similar patterns of thought won't

arise under the changed denomination. Even in Oakeshott's later works there is definitional proximity between the terms practice and tradition (Oakeshott, 1962: 54). A more important consideration is how to deal with the existing practices involving the use of traditions. One of the primary reasons for reliance on traditions is their practical convenience and the ability to impart some sense of semblance in a chaotic disciplinary enmeshment. In trying to re-modulate the use of traditions in IR, the initial step would be to practice reflexivity is assigning thinkers to a particular tradition. It is crucial in divesting from canonising IR and its accompanied traditions and re-imagine the role of these traditions in envisioning the future of the discipline.

Lastly, it is important to highlight the point of traditions being characteristically and innately 'invented' phenomena. They are the creations of present thinking, formed through retrospective linking of antecedent ideas. Scholars of the discipline need to be more explicit and critical in making these connections and linkages with the past. This entails the recognition of an intentional fashioning of a configuration of thought to ensure continuity and coherence, thus opening up spaces for critique and multiple interpretations. It is important for scholars utilising the concept of tradition to identify the necessity for doing so in either 'practical' or 'historical' manner. According to Oakeshott, Gunnell and Schmidt, 'traditional knowledge' exists in both 'practical' and 'historical' forms, characterised by specific epistemological constraints and utilised for distinct purposes (Gunnell, 1975; Schmidt, 2003). These suggestions might seem pedantic but would have immense ramifications for utilising tradition in the discipline of IR.

International Relations fundamentally is intimately tied together with history and concerned with events and processes of the past. Without an active engagement with history, there wouldn't exist a discipline termed as IR. The myopic vision of mainstream theories like realism to treat the discipline as a-historical has deeply skewed our understanding of the world and the events including the interactive patterns of states, opinions about causes and solutions to conflicts and their resolution and the techniques of making political settlements and judgements around us. A reinvigorated acknowledgment, emphasising the endorsement of self-awareness while

engaging with the concerns of the discipline of international relations must be emphasised. This historical sensitivity can lead to a better comprehension of our ambitions of relating the past to the present with its continued relevance to theorising in IR. A better awareness of historical-theoretical grounding, rooted in the disciplinary past would encourage the discipline becoming genuinely plural.

Chapter Three

Mapping Progress: Experience and Expectations in International Relations

"Any map of the world that omits encompassing Utopia isn't worthy of glancing, as it overlooks the only country humanity is seeking to land on. And once it has landed, it seeks out, sailing towards a better country. Progress implies effectuation of Utopias."

Oscar Wilde (1891: 24)

"The Victorian era, characterised by pomposity and pretense, was an age of expeditious progress, because men were swayed by hope rather than fear. If we are to replicate that, in this epoch, we must again be captivated by hope."

Bertrand Russell (1927: 15)

The idea of progress is one of the most elusive notions called to examine upon. It involves the adoption of at least two very different perspectives. The first, plainly, is a vision backwards in time, broadly flattering the past for its prowess in having generated the way we live now (Nisbet, 1980: 10). We felicitate the past for its having brought us about. The second constitutive perspective of the idea of progress is the vision forwards into the future (Nisbet, 1980: 12). Human experience encourages the making of predictions, discreet and indiscreet. Because of its practical and evaluative consideration, progress is in principle to be both a complex and contentious category of social self-understanding. Being a global category, it aims to render intelligible, the situation of societies in time, making its significance also always as much a matter of sentiment, as it is simply one of causal understanding.

Progress as a concept has various underlined meanings. Progress implies change, an evolution from the old to the new with a belief that the world is becoming better with advances in science, technology and art which has shaped most of western civilisation's vision of history. For liberals, history is a smooth ascending curve while for realists it is a vicious cycle subject to continuous repetition and recurrence of events (Elman, 2001:

xii). The questions that arise are: does history progress? Does the notion of progress entail civilisation? If history is considered to be progressive and ushers civilisation, how does one explain the rise and fall of civilisations through antiquity? This leads to more consequential questions regarding the definitional aspects of progress. Is it merely measured by the veneer of economic prosperity or are non-material components equally significant in measuring it? Are we currently facing a crisis of civilisation? If the answer is affirmative, is there a panacea for resolving the current cataclysm? More importantly, is progress desirable?

The chapter attempts the conceptual specification, clarification, and elaboration of the idea of progress - trying to reformulate it in line with contemporary theoretical debates within the discipline of International Relations. For that purpose, the chapter sets out to do the following:

- provide a critical, analytical introduction to the key ideas of the body of writers and writings on the theme of progress;
- indicate how some key ideas on progress were incorporated within the characteristic features of contemporary political and social thought;
- demonstrate the centrality of the concept of progress in making sense of International Relations and to indicate the relative lack of intellectual boundaries between disciplinary domains while engaging with the concept of progress.

Etymology and Genealogy of Progress

There has been no idea that has singularly occupied the attention of scholars in western political philosophy other than that of human progress. According to sociologist Robert Nisbet (1980; 1994) there are five pivotal postulates underlying the idea of progress:

- worthiness of the past,
- superiority and virtuousness of Western civilisation,
- merit in economic/technological advancement,

- reliance on science/reason as the definitive source of knowledge. Rationality was considered as absolute, yielding clarity of purpose and action and closely intertwined with the idea of progress.

- considering human life as intrinsically paramount and indispensable (Nisbet, 1980: 36).

The advocates of progress in western philosophy contend that the condition of mankind has ameliorated over time and would continuously keep surpassing the past. The optimism of the eighteenth century Europe created the milieu that led to the development of the foremost doctrines of progress which was carried over in the nineteenth century. Although, the pessimists co-existed along with the fervent advocators of progress across history, it was only at the beginning of the twentieth century that the notion of progress was ostracised en masse both by the intellectual community and the common masses, putting to question the very essence of the idea. The horrendous events of the twentieth century including the horror of the two world wars, the atrocities committed during the Holocaust and the ghastly nature of nuclear weaponry pushed twentieth century thinkers on the brink of rejecting the notion of progress. Since there is a compelling association between historical events and the idea of progress, the chapter shall adopt to present the overview organised by a spatio-temporal scale.

Marquis de Condorcet's incompletely printed *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* (1795) is deemed to be the embodiment of the value of progress during the enlightenment. Drawing on the spirit of enlightenment, he argued that knowledge in both natural and social sciences was the key to individual freedom and material prosperity. He conceived of the past as revealing a pattern of order, which keeps on advancing as passed on to the present, constituting the moral compass of the times. The central motif of the progressivism in the eighteenth century was rooted in the generally upheld notion that the political, economic and cultural transformation of societies was a consequence of conviction in the individual potential. As put by Immanuel Kant, 'it was man's emergence from self-imposed immaturity (Kant, 1784: 1). The ascendancy of western civilisation, spread of technology and the contemporaneous advancement in the lifestyle of common man, led to the flourishing of the progressivist

doctrine throughout the succeeding century. The disparate and overarching thinkers like G.W.F. Hegel propounding the dialectical view of history (1805) or the 'law of three stages' offered by Auguste Comte (1844), the materialistic conception of history advocated by Karl Marx (1849; 1867; 1888), Henry Thomas Buckle's conjectural history of civilisation (1857), Herbert Spencer's law of social differentiation (1876), Emile Durkheim's idea of two forms of solidarity (1895) or Lester F. Ward's conception of social telesis (1898) were all tied together through their contribution to the idea of progress.

The Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment thinkers cherished the ideal of progress, glorifying the achievements made by societies under the influence of this idea. A common misnomer in tracing the trajectory of history of ideas is to consider progress as a patently modern phenomenon, largely absent from the ancient Greek and Roman period until the seventieth century whereby it manifested in the zeitgeist of the age predominated by science and reason. This classical understanding of the evolution of progress can be associated with one of the foremost works in history however a closer reading J.B. Bury's, *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into its Origin and Growth* which came out in 1920. However, the thesis that classical antiquity was bereft of any material or moral progress has been summarily rejected by canonical texts including F.J. Teggart's anthology *The Idea of Progress* (1950); W.K.C. Guthrie's *In the Beginning* (1957); *The Idea of Progress in Antiquity* by Ludwig Edelstein's (1967) and E.R. Dodd's, *The Ancient* Con*cept of* Progress (1973).

The foremost advocator of the notion of progress in Christian thought, St. Augustine believed in a teleological understanding of history, wherein progress entailed linear movement towards an ultimate goal (Hohendahl, 2013: 246). His account suggested of a strong metaphysical component to the idea of progress. Progress entailed a premised origin containing potentialities for future improvement of mankind, leading to fixed, linear and successive stages of development (Mommsen, 1951: 348-356). The dual underlying characteristics of his contribution were: a belief in the historical inevitability/ necessity for progress and the utopian character of the final period on earth (Hohendahl, 2013: 247).

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The modern writings on progress in the eighteenth century including those of St. Simon (1825) and Auguste Comte (1830) drew heavily on the secularised versions of the aforementioned principles of historical necessity and utopian nature. The structural premises and assumptions, the pivotal element of cumulative growth, continuity in time, historical necessity and the realising of potentiality that were essential principles of the doctrine of progress from the late seventeenth century are inseparable from the Christian roots (Mommsen, 1951: 371).

The most systematic and detailed account of progress in the eighteenth century can be found in the successive volumes published by Auguste Comte, beginning with *Positive Philosophy* in 1830. The essence of human progress can be captured by the 'law of three stages' propounded by Comte. The human civilisation has evolved over the millennia by passing from a theological state which was dominated by religion, to the metaphysical stage characterised with abstract-speculative thinking, leading up to the positivist/ scientific stage where empirically tested theories qualified as knowledge (Comte, 1853: 103). In trying to comprehend the fundamental laws of human behaviour, Comte spoke about dual categorisation: one involving the study of social relationships or social statics and the other covering the principles of human progress or social dynamics (Comte, 1853: 118-123). He also emphasised on the synchronous relationship between social order and progress rather than treating them in opposition, for order can't be achieved if it isn't compatible with progress and accomplishing progress entails consolidating social order (Comte, 1853: 145).

G.W.F. Hegel's seminal work *Philosophy of History* published in 1837 came to acquire the same prominence in Germany as Comte's writings in France. In his monumental work, he proposed the idea of dialectics, elaborating that history doesn't always progress in a linear manner but rather through navigating between extremes. He insisted that human beings had an 'impulse of perfectibility' inferred from reason (Hegel, 1837: 431). Human history was defined as the development of spirit in time, with the essence of the spirit being freedom. History can be understood as the progress of freedom (Hegel, 1837: 446). John Stuart Mill in his celebrated essay 'On Liberty' published in 1859 distinguished between two different forms of societies: stationary and progressive

arguing that the freedom was the natural outcome of the laws of progress governing societies (Mill, 1859: 69-82). For Mill, liberty is the sole driver for progress in human history. The development of natural sciences provided an impetus to the inquiry on progress and the most prominent philosopher to do so was Herbert Spencer. He considered the terms evolution, development and progress as synonymous and devoted a lifetime in demonstrating the laws of progress operational through nature and human societies. He likened progress with the development of an embryo or blossoming of a flower, closely tied to the nature. Therefore, progress was not an accident but rather a necessity (Spencer, 1876: 8-9).

The idea of progress remains one of the most persuasive and hydra headed ides in the history of philosophy, stating that there has been continuous moral, intellectual, social, political and material advancement through history and the same shall endure and persevere in the foreseeable time to come (Nisbet, 1980: 4-5). Ever since the dawn of Enlightenment period, the concept of progress has been subjected to numerous velitations and debates concerning its connotations and sustainable viability. It provides the legitimacy for conducting research in social sciences, besides being the cornerstone for explaining social change. The pursuit of progress along with the appending obstacles and incentives resulted in the exalted status of theorists of social science, who asserted a self-proclaimed understanding in explanting and managing the affairs of society.

The intellectual origins of progressivism as a doctrine can be delineated to four ideal-type positions according to Robert Nisbet (1980). The first line of thought dictates that human nature can be understood as the underlying cause for progress, representing the bridge between ideal and reality (Nisbet, 1980: 123). There is a distinct pattern of ebb and flow with certain historical contexts providing the impetus while others acting as obstructions for the idea of progress to flourish (Nisbet, 1980: 124-126). The second understanding of progress posits it in relation to religion, advocating its connection to Judeo-Christian theological tradition (Nisbet, 1980: 132). The third variant traces progress to the disillusionment with the esoteric, metaphysical practices and rise of objective reasoning, advancing the claims that mortals didn't rely on Gods but were themselves responsible for improving their conditions (Nisbet, 1980: 128). The last line

of thought, drawing on Walter Bagehot's aphorism propounded the notion that there was no conception of progress in ancient times and its origins can be closely linked to the project of modernity (Bury, 1920: 33). This notion advocated a sharp break from the Judeo-Christian beliefs of redemption and millenarianism by arguing that progress was dynamic and open-ended.

The rise of modern science and technology was the required catalyst for the doctrine of progress to gain force through Enlightenment period to peaking in the latter part of nineteenth century. George Sarton, a notable twentieth century historian argued in his eminent work *Introduction to History of Science* (1931) that there is a strong co-relation between the idea of progress and civilisation. As one traces the history of ideas beginning in the primeval period, the quest for movement from a less desirable to a more desirable state of life marked the role of progress in societies (Sarton, 1931: 44). Civilisations across history have learnt from their predecessors, building on their legacy, thus to understand the nature of progress it is undoubtedly important to acknowledge the role of civilisations.

Thus to summarise, the idea of progress is multifaceted and has over the many millennia symbolised forms of human welfare, advancement in moral and scientific aptitude as well as economic development. It may have been associated with positive underpinnings like freeing institutions from the influence of the church, encouraging free thought and creative expression, spread of values of democracy but at the same time could imply the tightening of control by state and its apparatuses through surveillance, the intrusive role of information technology and newer forms of racism for the relentless ascent to global domination.

Skeptics of Progress

The arguments against the progressivist tradition can be dated back to the eighteenth century which continued to gain credence across centuries, becoming embedded in the social milieu. The proponents of anti-progressivist views laid emphasis on the permanence of human condition marked by indomitable passions leaving no scope for reform, thereby discarding the idea of human perfectibility as naive. The enduring

association between knowledge and morality is the integral component of the deliberations on progress across centuries. In the anti-progressivist critique of modern times, the past is usually revered, the loss of traditional values and hold of religion on societies is lamented and the future is considered to be bleak. The anti progressivist thinkers have criticised the Enlightenment and ensuing developments as being Euro-centric, falsely teleological and creating superficial dichotomies between tradition and modernity, equating progress with the latter.

The writings of various political thinkers beginning with the eighteenth century writings of Johann Gottfried Herder (1784), Edmund Burke (1790), and Thomas Robert Malthus (1798), Max Weber's contributions to sociology (1905; 1919), Franz Boas's writings on cultural anthropology in the initial part of twentieth century (1911; 1928) and the traditions of Kultursoziologie and Kulturphilosophie as propounded by Albert Schweitzer of Germany in 1923 criticised various aspects of the notion of progress. Post the second world war, Karl Popper's scathing epistemological critique of historicism (1957;1963), S.N. Eisenstaedt's notion of 'multiple modernities' (2000), the anti globalisation movements, and the challenge to grand narratives by postmodernist crusades are the different strands of the anti-progressivism. The sustained vehement opposition to the idea of progress by anti- progressivist tradition makes it a stimulating and engaging debate in the intellectual history of ideas.

The late twentieth century skepticism can be discerned in the writings of W. R. Inge's *The Idea of Progress* (1920); Richard Austin Freeman's, *Social Decay and Regeneration* (1921); J. A. Toynbee's *Study of History* (1934); Pitirim Sorokin's *Social and Cultural Dynamics* (1937); Freud's *Civilisation and its Discontents* (1930) and George Sorel's *The Illusion of Progress* (1969). These theorists believed that the human condition rather than ameliorating was deteriorating and were therefore skeptical of the narratives of progress. The alienation of human beings in the capitalist world is increasing man made catastrophes, both natural and human including genocides, mass migration and the holocaust which made these philosophers vary of the doctrine of progress. Theodor Adorno (1951) presented a fierce critique to Hegel's conception of dialectical progress by stressing that holocaust and fascism couldn't represent a positive

movement in history, thus laying out the tension in our analysis of history, whereby we don't pay attention to the negative (Adorno, 1951: 16,17). The other strong criticism to the doctrine came from the decolonised world with works of Edward Said (1978) and Samir Amin (1988) challenging the western model of progress being imitated by the non-western countries.

For social theorists, the growing disparagement of progress as a belief system has very specific consequences. The crisis of confidence in progress has become a crisis in the explanatory power and emancipating potential of western sociological theory. Jeffrey Alexander (1992; 2002) defines some crucial presuppositions of the idea of progress and traces their reflection in social consciousness and social theory from the period of triumphant modernity in the nineteenth century up to the present postmodernist debate. The core assumption of progress is human perfectibility- the possibility and likelihood of transforming the world for the better (Alexander, 2002: 210). The means to that end is the application of reason. The twentieth century embraces this dream of reason and all the hopes it entails. Almost immediately, however, it turned into the nightmare of reason, and violence and force began their reign instead. On the one hand, there has been uncontestable progress in many areas of life, such as in technology, science, social emancipation, and human rights; on the other, there has been dramatic regress – two world wars, genocidal murder, state terrorism, totalitarian regimes, ecological devastation, meaningless consumerism, etc. Theoretical discourse by its very nature is a form of self-reflection, a mental reconstruction of its time. The ambiguity of our century finds its expression at the level of social theory, in a taught dialogue between pessimism and optimism, reason and unreason (Alexander, 2002: 212). Science, including social science, remains as the ultimate depository of reason, carrying it forward to the next and hopefully better century.

Stefan Nowak defines progress as any sequential, directional change that receives a positive social evaluation (Novak, 2002: 231-236). It is this reference to social values that sets progress apart from sheer development and places it squarely within the domain of applied social science. The notion of progress always demands axiological relativisation; we have to ask progress for whom and by which standards (Nowak, 2002:

239)? Nowak makes a crucial observation: because social change is often multidimensional, or syndromic, various dimensions may not develop in a parallel direction (Nowak, 2002: 242). Dimensions may interact, amplifying or mutually blocking changes; they may be supportive or mutually incompatible. Such interactions may operate in an unintended and unrecognised fashion by means of latent effects. Hence, another relativisation of the notion of progress is always necessary, we must specify the dimension (level, subsystem) of society which is undergoing change. This requires complex evaluational standards. If we move from identifying progress by empirical and valuational means to explaining progress, we need theories dealing with the dynamics of social transformations (Nowak, 2002: 245).

Piotr Sztompka (2002) argues that the traditional concept refers progress to some future end-state of the process, or to some social utopia; the new concept relates it to originating, present conditions and defines progress as the potential capacity for self-transformation. Not the quality of what actually becomes, but the potentiality for becoming is seen as the core meaning of progress (Sztompka, 2002: 247). In other words, the progressiveness of society is measured by viability of human agency. Sztompka argues that such agency depends on five sets of factors: the traits of the actors, the properties of social structures, the features of the natural environment, the characteristics of historical tradition, and the image of the expected future (Sztompka, 2002: 249-251). Sztompka believes that in the long run human society exhibits a progressive tendency toward growing activism and enlarged self-transforming capacities. The rationale for such a tendency he locates in human nature, in the inherent creativeness and educability that allow for the accumulation of experiences and innovations through time.

Development, Evolution and Progress: A Play of Words?

There is an important distinction to be made between the dual categories of evolution and development. While the first implies directional change, the latter adheres to teleological change. Evolution doesn't entail a specific direction of change as per a teleological criterion, but development does so. The course of direction taken by social evolution can be based on accumulation sans any reference to a telos/ end (Ritter, 1986: 110). It is often mistaken than social evolution and social development are overlapping and co-terminus.

It is therefore imperative to distinguish between these two categories representing progress.

Sydney Hook described development to be any change having a continuous direction that results in the culmination of a phase which is qualitatively new (Hook, 1946: 16-17). In his view any qualitative and directional structural change must be labelled as development. Thomas Bottomore, on the other hand regards development as the 'gradual unfolding; the intricate amplification of details; the flowering of a seed' (Bottomore, 1994: 504). In this Hegelian interpretation, development is referred to as the teleological movement towards the fulfilment of the inherent potential (Bottomore, 1994: 78-81). This conceptualisation of development is determinative of the limits of the possible change. Social change theorised in terms of development is based on the assumption of an internally determined horizon for possibility of change according to the telos. The notion of progress is distinct from the concepts of development and evolution. Progress explicitly implies a normative underpinning while describing social change. Sydney Hook defined progress as a yardstick for measuring directional historical change from a particular vantage point reflected in terms of ideals or values to be pursued (Hook, 1946: 21). In the contemporary world order, it is essential to rely on meaningful indices of progress by understanding the limitations and assumptions posed by each of the above mentioned categories. In order to foster global thrivability it is incumbent to draw on humanistic and non-quantitative metrics of measuring progress.

The concepts of evolution and development are strictly descriptive terms, but the concept of progress is an evaluative or normative term. In summary, the definitions of these concepts are:

- Social change denotes the qualitative behavioural reformulation of the fundamental attitudes of individuals vis-à-vis their environment and societal transformation with regard to the structures shaping social action (Beard and Hook, 1946: 103-105).
- Development is indicative of the teleological move towards the gradual fulfilment of intrinsic potential (Beard and Hook, 1946: 106).

- Social evolution refers to social change that exhibits a direction, is continuous, measured and piecemeal (Beard and Hook, 1946:107).
- Progress can be understood as evaluating social change favourably according to a set criteria of ideals/values (Beard and Hook, 1946: 115).

Culture and Progress: Confronting the Ghosts of the Past

The idea of progress is closely linked with the idea of culture and tradition. It is impossible even to conceive of progress if there is no consolidated and robust cultural system. Both the image of the past and that of the possible future, as well as the conception of the developmental routes leading from the present to the future, can emerge only in the condition of stability and relative internalisation of the cultural system. The crisis of the idea of progress is merely an indicator of the crisis of a culture (Bury, 1932: 32). The theme of progress is thus inseparably linked to that of culture.

Progress is synonymous with evolution, development, and not fragmentation, segmentation, dissolution. It necessitates the inception of a culture where values are altered and remodelled, not left to be inconsequential, rendering them as illogical and futile. In other words, progress entails restructuring of social structures that create cultural foundations of society, not shunning away of bygone practices. It is the emergence of indisputable, firm reference points for collective action. We are left with the thesis that after the loss of a substantive idea of progress, we are open to cultural struggles to define and redefine its contents. According to Pierre Bourdieu, we have come to view progress as the definitional result of symbolic struggles in modern society (Bourdieu, 1972). It turns out that the notion of progress is a means by which social actors try to influence social change. It is not inherent in modernisation. It has no unequivocal validity.

The notion of progress is a way of describing and validating an emerging cultural model. It refers to a field of social conflict between actors seeking to define the direction of social change. Within social science discourse, such a theoretical idea can be found in the concept of a self- production of society (Touraine, 1977). But the range of possible notions of progress used to legitimise a cultural model of social development is not

without limits. Combining two fields of human action (nature and culture) and two cultural orientations of human action (communicative action and utilitarian action) gives us four possibilities for the practical use of the notion of progress:

(1) To restrict the concept of progress to the realm of strategic/instrumental action. The idea of dominating nature then defines the rationality of cultural practices. This is the model that permeates modern societies (Bourdieu, 1972: 142).

(2) To restrict the notion of progress to the field of moral action. Moral evolution is the privileged field of the idea of progress. This restriction excludes the relation of man to nature from the agenda of rational practice. This notion has become the model of the new humanist critique of the perversions encountered in modern societies (Bourdieu, 1972: 144).

(3) To reduce the notion of progress in both dimensions to its function in the reproduction of social systems (Bourdieu, 1972: 147).

(4) To generalise moral action across nature and culture. This implies a form of practical reason in our relation to nature that allows us to recouple technological and moral progress. This would involve changing some basic cultural conceptions of nature in order to be able to treat it according to some standards of a morally grounded practical rationality (Bourdieu, 1972: 151).

Confronting Hegemonies and Dispossessions: Undoing the Myth of Progress in Modernity

The dawn of modernity as the organisation of material life and as the ideal of a break with tradition, is a parallel development to the rise of the bourgeoisie (Sorel, 1972: 33). Thus, through the concept of progress all history can find its interpretation, but it is by means of a particular image of progress arising from the modern period of bourgeois experience that modern history is interpreted. From the myth of progress, however defined (as scientific, social, or technological progress), history derives both meaning and an immediate this-worldly, earthly purpose, replacing the other-worldly, divine purpose of history as construed by pre-modern societies (Wessels, 2006: 132).

There is, then, a close connection between the bourgeois world, modernity, progress, and historical consciousness. The urge for change became the glorification of change. Change was seen as a value in itself; a change without purpose is consequently a change only in appearance, a change in order to preserve the status quo, not a change in order to transform and generate new and more adequate forms of society. The cunning of modern reason lies in the fact that in its fight against the tyranny of totality, finality, unity, coherence, it has devised a duplicitous way of preserving by innovating. The bourgeois culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries tried to fuse the utilitarian and communicative traditions of practical reason under the heading of progress.

Technological progress and moral progress would be but two sides of the same coin. Progress, realised through science and technology, would be a means of freeing society from the limitations of nature and would thus contribute to the moral progress of mankind. This optimistic expectation of Enlightenment was based on the belief that everything that challenged traditional forms of belief, above all science and technology, contributed to the moral progress of mankind. Then, as the social thinkers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries became aware of the negative social consequences of modernisation they began to differentiate the conception of progress.

Some challenged the inevitability of moral progress so self-evident to the Enlightenment. Marx was one of the most important of these critics. Moral progress was still not at hand; it was something society still needed to struggle for. This could be done in two ways: either by imposing morality from above or by claiming a morally better world from below (Wessels, 2006: 152). Karl Marx himself was ambivalent with respect to these options. But whatever the solution proposed, the progress ascribed to the development of the forces of production remained unquestioned. The mastery of nature still could serve as a model of social progress. Only a few challenged this idea. These critics were labelled romantic. The justification of the utilitarian relationship with nature was simply too self-evident to modern society. No critique of the technological model of progress had any real chance under these historical circumstances. This situation has, however, changed. With the expansion of the ecological discourse the progressive character of our relation to nature is no longer self-evident and the rationality of that

relationship is now subject to challenge.

The notion of progress, under increasing pressure since the coming of the ecological crisis, has become the central ideological and practical concern of advanced industrial societies. The new problem posed by the ecological crisis is not simply that of survival; it is the problem of a reasonable relation to nature. One can use the notion of progress to push the disturbing disillusion about natural progress into active 'de-illusioning' (Wessels, 2006: 168).

If the idea of progress is logically linked to the image of directional process, there are several questions to be asked about its more specific characteristics. To begin with: at which phase of the process is the concept of progress anchored, or less metaphorically, which phase of the process is its immediate referent (Nisbet, 1980: 3). Three answers are possible. The first, most common in classical sociological theory, refers progress to the final outcome, result, product of the process; defined either as a comprehensive blueprint, complex image of society-to-become (typical for social utopias), or as some specific trait of society and its constituents (e.g. wealth, health, productivity, equality, happiness) (Nisbet, 1980: 3). One may speak here of progress as 'ideal'.

The second answer locates progress in the overall logic of the process, in which each stage is seen as an improvement over the earlier one, and itself further perfectible – but without any ultimate end (this would be characteristic for evolutionary notions of gradual differentiation, or adaptive upgrading) (Nisbet, 1980: 6). One may speak here of 'progress as betterment'. Finally, the third answer would relate progress to the originating mechanism of the process, emphasising the potentiality or capacity for progress inherent in human agency (Nisbet, 1980: 10). Here, not the quality of what actually becomes, but the potentiality for becoming, acquires the core meaning of progress. Not the achievement but achieving, not the attainment but striving, not the finding but quest – are the markers of progress.

The standards of progress are themselves dynamic, permanently changing, constantly evolving as the process unfolds. The needs, desires, goals, values, or any other measures of progress, are held to be modified with respect to their satisfaction or

fulfilment. They are always relative to the concrete phase of the process and never reach ultimate, final embodiment. What is strived for is changeable and variable, but the striving itself is constant. There is the variability of objects of human desire, but at the same time, the permanence of desiring. Thus the measure of progress is no longer external, but rather immanent to the process itself.

The next question has to do with the deontic status of progress: does it refer to necessities or possibilities (Nisbet, 1980: 45)? Traditional, developmentalist approaches would treat progress as inevitable, necessary, due to inexorable laws of evolution or history. And finally, one more question has to be phrased, this time about ontological substrata of progress: what is the substantive nature of this causal, generative force bringing about progress (Nisbet, 1980: 83). Four typical answers may be singled out.

The doctrine of providentialism, encountered in various schools of social philosophy locates the ultimate, moving force of progress, the agency in the supernatural order, invokes the Divine Will, providence, intervention of God. The doctrine of heroism typical of traditional historiography locates the agency in the exceptional personal endowment of great men: kings, prophets, leaders, codifiers, revolutionaries, generals etc. (Nisbet, 1980: 110). The doctrine of organicism introduces the social component, but in a peculiar way; it treats the causal agency as inherent in the operation of the social organism, in its in-built propensity for growth, evolution, development (Nisbet, 1980: 121). The origins of progress are social, but paradoxically extra-human.

People are still absent from the picture, where self-regulating, compensatory, automatic mechanisms seem to reign independently of human efforts. If people appear at all, it is only in the capacity of fully molded marionettes, unwitting executors, carriers of the preordained verdicts of history; as embodiments of productive forces, technological tendencies, demographic trends, revolutionary élan. Some of the resulting progress may be intended, but mostly it is conceived here as the unintended and often unrecognized result of human efforts, as the product of the 'invisible hand' (Smith, 1759), or the 'cunning of reason' (Hegel, 1837), or 'situational logic' (Popper, 1945).

It is only in the doctrine of constructivism underlying post-developmentalist theories that individuals with concrete socio-historical contexts are emphasised and the role of human agency is brought to light. The individual is brought to the centre of societal action, by placing emphasis on the creative ability of human potential to usher in change through the use of their agency. Such an account of agency is both presupposed and entailed by the morphogenesis-structuration theories.

To recapitulate, it is claimed that the new theoretical orientation of post-developmentalism, and particularly of morphogenesis-structuration suggests a new approach to social progress. This entails: a) an inherent potentiality rather than concentrating on the conclusive accomplishment; b) treating progress as dynamic, potent, evolving rather as abstract, absolute and universal; c) treating progress as a contingency, a historic possibility, an opportunity rather than as an inescapable, necessary, persistent tendency; and, d) treating progress as an outcome of collective and sustained human action rather than the product of divine will, relegating humans as merely passive beings with no agential control over deciding the structures they inhabit (Sztompka, 2002: 241).

This provides a framework for a radically new notion of progress. Whether we associate the origins of progress with Greco-Roman antiquity or consider it a product of modernity, it is difficult to not acknowledge the multiplicity of forms affiliated with the concept (Nisbet, 1994: 131). Thus both at theoretical and empirical levels, the various dimensions of progress present novel challenges of measurement and comprehension. With increasing criticism of Euro-centric ideas of universal reason and ideas like progress, it is crucial for reinterpretation and re-evaluation to continue its relevance in contemporary times (Allen, 2016: 54).

E.H. Carr in his seminal work *What is History* (1961) discussed the purpose of historiography: whether history was mysticism or cynicism. According to Carr, the relationship between history and progress can be explained as 'history is progress through the diffusion and transference of acquired skills from previous to the next generation' (Carr, 1961: 96). He elaborated on the process of appropriation of progress by Enlightenment thinkers, passing it on as rational, even though extensive study of modern historiography points to the fact that even though it was secularised, the concept of

progress retained some features of the Judeo-Christian teleological understanding. In the light of this claim, history is to be understood as progress towards attaining the perfect state on earth (similar to heaven) (Carr, 1961:110).

Progress can be theorised from various vantage points in the discipline of International Relations. There are three inter-related questions that could form the basis of the analysis. Firstly, what is the particular conception of progress elucidated by a theory of IR? Does it elaborate on its vision of human well being? Secondly, what are the causal factors associated with the explanation of progress, are there laws of historical development that the theory proposes? (3) Is their empirical/ normative underpinning justifying the causal account? The next section offers normative, epistemological and methodological insights into the disciplinary reality of International Relations by investigating the idea of progress.

The Optimistic Inheritance of Liberalism

The liberal understanding of progress both in intellectual and material terms is remarkably distinct from the other perspectives on international politics. In the common parlance, liberalism is often conflated with the idea of progress, however meting out this synonymous treatment is in fact tautological and detrimental in investigating the concept of progress on its own. Liberalism marked a palpable shift from the ancient times by being foregrounded in a set of modern assumptions which believed in the limitless latent and manifest potentialities. This understanding of liberalism is problematic since there is a sense of continuity in terms of passing of ideas and values from antiquity to modern times. The predicament of outlining a coherent and unified theory of liberalism also posits a challenge to explain a liberal theory of progress. There is considerable diversity and plurality in terms of acceptance of the myriad ideas which is the hallmark feature of liberalism, and rendering it into a coherent ideology thus poses a problem for IR theorists.

In popular jargon, liberalism has come to be identified as being antithetical to conservatism, and is often defined in terms of negation of other traditions. It is anomalous in IR scholarship for political realists to identify themselves as liberals, at the same time pillorying the idealism associated with liberalism as being phantasmagorical and

fictitious (Gilpin, 1987: 56).

Liberalism can't be rendered as a singular, monolithic and coherent political philosophy with incontestable core assumptions but rather be understood in terms of an amalgamation of diverse conceptualisations with an underlying ineludible belief in rectifying and ameliorating human nature. It is considered as a necessity, thus not only limiting it to the philosophical domain but at the level of practical liveable reality. The furtherance of liberalism in philosophical terms corresponded with its spread in the real world, the gradual yet steady advancement of its principles lead to the inference that there is something innate and spontaneous about liberalism (Goodwin, 1982: 33). The intellectual roots of liberal thought are variegated, drawing from the writings of Immanuel Kant and his contemporary Enlightenment thinkers, the works of political economy as emphasised by Adam Smith, leading to utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham and J.S. Mill (Holsti, 1985: 27). Progress under liberalism assumes pre-eminence because of dual reasons of its ability to deliver on the apparent promises of material and human welfare and its ability to co-opt and integrate multiple trajectories in achieving these economic and individual freedoms.

The Sceptical Inheritance of Realism

There are assorted realisms in international political theory, the unifying essence of which is increasingly difficult to specify, but continues to involve their focus on the quest for power and domination, advancing state interests either through force or negotiations and diplomacy, addressing concerns of national security and explaining the rise and fall of great powers through balance of power. But these very broad guiding concerns occupy the attention of the vast bulk of IR scholars. We hear frequently of the 'richness of the tradition of political realism' (Gilpin, 1986: 22). Realism, by dint of its pragmatic concern with the facticity of a complicated and elusive subject, is committed to a thorough philosophical scepticism regarding totalising conceptions of knowledge, visionary, and emancipatory schemes, excessive rationalism, and a priori theory (Loriaux, 1992: 405; Morgenthau, 1993: 3; Spegele, 1996: 72).

Contrary to liberalism, which is a proponent of progress in intellectual, material

and political spheres, political realism can be understood as a doctrine of scepticism. The contrast between the liberal and the realist position on progress can be presented through the liberal emphasis on 'perfectibility of human nature' through use of rationality while realists are sceptical of progress for these reasons: a) limitations of human reason and b) the structural constraints to achieving rational end results consists (Gilpin, 1986:51). Realists are themselves divided, with the classical realists emphasising on constraints presented by human nature as being 'selfish and unchanging' while the neo-realists led by Kenneth Waltz, stressed on the structural constraints acting as impediments for achieving progress.

There are various grounds for drawing distinctions between theories of IR, but in essence the focus is on the disagreement on the aspect of mutability (Ferguson and Mansbach, 1988; Holsti, 1990). The view of history as qualitative progressive advancement is juxtaposed with the enduring realities of world politics. This marked the distinction between political theory and International Relations as posited by Martin Wight in his seminal piece on the absence of IR theory (Wight, 1966: 32). Martin Wight posits the distinction between political theory and international relations theory by advancing the claim that the former is concerned with investigation of the good life which entails moral and political progress while the latter has taken to envision the international realm as characterised by repetition and recurrence (Butterfield and Wight, 1966). The pre-dominance accorded to problem solving theory as opposed to critical theory can be identified as one of the causes for neglect of human progress in IR (Cox, 1989: 43). As Wight elaborates, the international realm is assigned the minimalist task of ensuring state survival as opposed to the subject of enquiry for political theory.

It would be inaccurate and erroneous to presuppose that there is no conception of progress for realists. It is important to note that the charge made against realists is symptomatic of ideological binaries so deeply embedded in the discipline, dating back to the first great debate between the realists and the idealists, with the former shunning any visions of progress advocated by the latter as exaggerated and unrealistic to attain. It is often tautologically claimed that realists are pragmatic about the prospects of political and moral development. The disdain for change and transformation can be traced to the

suspicion regarding human intentions and mistrust of their nature. Realism is often contrasted with a liberal understanding of progress which is more optimistic in its pursuit for change and improving human condition.

It is an even bigger mistake, however, to assume that neorealism genuinely extends the sceptical heritage of realism, so far as knowledge is concerned at least. It would also be futile to the pursuit of understanding progress if the realist conceptualisation was seen negatively in contrast to the optimistic tradition of liberalism. Even though realists rely on human reason, they are sceptical about human nature in general and believe humans to be egoistic, power hungry, unchanging beings. They are concerned with the management of international affairs and conduct of relations between countries by maintaining balance of power. Thus political progress is of significance for them and they advocate for separation of morality from politics. They base their philosophy on the famous adage, 'the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must'. Realists are not negating the possibility for progress but are pessimistic about the desirability and direction of such a change in the uncontested liberal sense. To the extent that neorealism remains consistent with these views, it can credibly purport to be part of a realist tradition.

A full appreciation of the realist conception of progress is hampered by the manner in which the intellectual history of international politics has been written. Like all histories, the history of ideas is written backwards, and in the disciplinary lore of IR, liberalism is portrayed as both a relative newcomer and a distinctly modern intellectual corrective to the scepticism of realism. Academic convention and the hubris of modernity combine to form an unspoken, largely unconscious, revisionist ideology of progress. Long before Richard K. Ashley exposed neorealism as a prime example of the self-affirming character of modern IR theory (Ashley, 1986: 258), E.H. Carr warned of the propensity for ideological constructions of the social-political world to masquerade as simple common sense (Carr, 1946: 24–40). Though Carr's immediate target was the once dominant and hidden ideology of utopian science, his admonition applies equally well to the ideology concealed behind the beguiling label of scientific realism.

The one distinguishing feature characterising the different theories of International Relations is their respective conceptualisation of change. The concept of change remains marginalised and under-theorised despite its relevance to IR theory. The end of the Cold war heralded a new epoch for International Relations scholars who were trying to understand the great transformation ushered in the global context. There was a proliferation of debates surrounding competitive explanations around the nature, scope, degree and implications of change. Barry Buzan proposed that the great debates outlining the disciplinary history of IR are implicitly making arguments about the possibilities and consequences of change in world politics (Buzan and Jones, 1981: 27). Different debates, occurring at various junctures in the evolution of the discipline were grappling with establishing their version of understanding the changes happening in world politics as legitimate.

Realists adhere to certain ahistorical assumptions regarding the nature of international realm, which is predominantly anarchical, along with states pursuing their rational self interests, pre disposing them to behave in a certain manner while interacting with other states. The constant accentuation of insecurity across history through the city-states of ancient Greece, to those in Italy during the Renaissance period up to the emergence of nation states in modern times posited as the inevitable and inescapable security dilemma governs the analysis of realist thinkers. From Thucydides to Mieneke to Kenneth Waltz, these thinkers collectively held the assumption that international realm is governed by repetition and recurrence, thus being skeptical of the prospects of surpassing the effects of overarching anarchical structure either through sociological learning, mitigation by international institutions or through unit level alterations. Thus, the a-temporal historicism and structuralism along with reliance on positivist methodology makes realists pessimistic regarding change, limiting it to the shifts in balance of power between great powers (Ruggie, 1983: 273). Robert Gilpin presents this as paradoxical situation whereby the constant flux and change in world politics, still produces hegemonic wars for world domination (Gilpin, 1981: 112).

The universality and eternal nature attributed by realists to the affairs of international realm is challenged by its critics who believe that structures are conditioned

by specific historical contexts. The conceptual apparatuses and tools applied by realists including the domestic/international periphery have become redundant in the present context, thereby rendering their utility to explain international relations as null and void (Holsti, 1994; Strange, 1996). On the other hand, those advocating fundamental differences from the past are castigated for not acknowledging the continuities (Bull, 1977; Mearsheimer, 1990).

Challenging the realist hegemony, both liberals and constructivists continuously theorise regarding variability of state interests, capacity for learning and prospects for progress not stymied by the realist notions of security dilemma (Adler, 1991). The recent turn in IR has led to post-structuralist and post modernist theorist joining in the bandwagon to puncture the positivistic conceptual categories reified by realism including those of sovereignty and anarchy. These theorists advocate that these categories do not represent the concrete reality of the world in the present age. R.B.J. Walker interrogates the realist claims for being caught in the discursive vistas explaining the spatio-temporal arrangements and constitution of another era (Walker, 1993: x).

 In a similar vein, Susan Strange posits that international relations scholars often hold on to outmoded concepts and ineffective categories belonging to a bygone period, marked by relative stability and order unlike the continual metamorphosis and flux experienced in the current times (Strange, 1996: 33). The present day international realm is marked by profound and far-reaching changes, hence the need to adjust the lenses through which we perceive and theorise the world around us. The use of older conceptual practices thus puts the intellectual investigation into jeopardy, making it incumbent upon scholars to break away from the entanglements of an obsolete past; escape from the ritualistic invocations of concepts that fail to capture the reality of a different contemporary world order (Rosenau, 1990: 43).

There needs to be a overhaul in terms of refashioning and reconfiguring the conceptual equipment required to analyse the world in novel ways. The traditional categories are ontological blinders rather than facilitating understanding (Deibert, 1997: 169). There needs to be a fundamental transformation in our approach to international

politics which is in disjunction with the past practices. This has been a result of the recent turns towards being more self reflective towards theorisation. James Rosenau expounds the concept of post-international politics undergoing epochal change (Rosenau, 1997: 72). Scholars in the non-western world, particularly China, have identified the contemporary period as the game changing for conducting interactions in world politics (Sakamoto, 1994: 15-16). There are others including Rey Koslowski and Friederich Kratochwil who professed that the ending of Cold war led to a seismic shift 'of' rather than 'within' the international system (Kratochwil,1994: 215-48).

In order for rendering the world intelligible, it is incumbent to challenge the meta-narratives and grand theories that obliterate complexities, paradoxes and categorises things in order to make generalisations in a neat and coherent manner. Given that the current times are marked by increasing flux, paradoxes and fluidity, one needs to place emphasis on the lived experiences than abstractions (Ashley and Walker, 1990; George, 1995). As political theorist Seyla Benhabib remarks that the universal is almost always surreptitiously coded with the voices of the dominant. The practice of drawing generalisations is extremely constricting as it bases itself on the western experience as the most authentic and legitimate form of interacting with the world.

The passing of the western embodied experience as the hallmark for all other purposes is problematic for a field aspiring to be global and representative of the world at large. Change is ubiquitous, making it impossible for human mind to categorise the increasing complexity of world order. The only constant for theorists is their attempts to understand continuous transformation in the academic field of IR. The discipline has been invaded with a set of new vocabulary including concepts like global village, space security, borderless world, environmental interdependence suggesting the transition to a new phase of ideas, institutions and problems that are remarkably distinct from the preceding times.

The Obscurity of Progress: Challenges, Practices and Possibilities

The quintessence of progress is to trace the trajectory of progress in the past, to the present and decipher the future course of direction. What does this advance purport?

Rather than referring to binary dyads, it is important to acknowledge the multiple beginnings of global transformation. The meaning associated with progress have varied from the subliminal emphasis on the spiritual to the concretely physical or material aspects. There is an underlying dark side to the concept of progress since it has been used as a justification to promote the desirability and necessity of totalitarianism, political absolutism, racism and imperialism among other forms of domination.

The incessant desire for change, doesn't always entail positive connotations and the unrelenting human wants often tend to result in falling in the trap of these nefarious political situations. The most prominent of these is the idea of nationalism. Carleton Hayes's *Essays on Nationalism* (1926), Hans Kohn's *Idea of Nationalism* (1955), Boyd C. Shafer's classic *The Faces of Nationalism* (1972) all developed the ties between progress and its impact on the idea of the nation. Nationalism remains the centrifugal force in the modern times, acting as a pillar for increasingly impersonal and changing heterogeneous societies. The nineteenth century experienced a seismic shift, a global transformation resulting in the revamping of the international order. This overwhelming transformation involved an intricate configuration of state building and technical and scientific advancements embedded in the ideologies of progress.

There can be four categories that can be delineated from the 'ideologies of progress' including liberalism based on Enlightenment ideals, socialism as a response to the capitalist alienation of man and his search for emancipation in holistic form, nationalism and the allied notion of scientific racism (Buzan and Lawson, 2015: 117). All these ideologies also represent the evil, depressing side of progress that needs to be theorised properly. The idea of civilisational progress can be for instance, closely linked to the notion of scientific racism which legitimised the colonisation and inhumane exploitation of innumerable peoples under the garb of improving their lives (Anghie, 2004; Hobson, 2012).

Thus nationalism, racism and liberalism can be overlapping and mutually reinforcing categories in relation to the idea of progress. This can be illustrated via the example of rise of the nation states in western Europe that were contemporaneous with

the rise of industrialisation that led to the colonisation and creation of empires through state control, which in turn perpetuated racism and its brutal, long lasting implications.

The nineteenth century witnessed a change in the modes and operationalisation of power, the ramifications of which are felt even today. The idea of social change became the norm guiding this period fraught with exploitative practices at the margins and peripheries (Wallerstein, 2011a: 1). The spread of Enlightenment across Europe sought to harness change through its reliance on reason and preference to objective, scientific forms of knowledge accumulation (Weiner, 2003a: 2–3; Koselleck, 2000). The rise of empiricism with the obsession to imitate natural sciences, resulted in social scientists relying on their tools like statistical methods and date interpretation in hope of providing solutions to the social problems like poverty and hunger (Hacking, 1990: 78; Porter, 1995). The systematisation of knowledge intended to improve the human condition, resulted in distancing from the concrete reality because of the use of methodological tools that failed to provide an in-depth understanding of the conditions in actuality (Giddens, 1985: 181; Drayton, 2000; Osterhammel, 2014: 24–9).

These new techniques of professional research and knowledge collection were used both to enhance the power of states domestically (the collection and storage of information became routine tools of statecraft) and as tools for the extension of European power (where they helped to administer imperial rule) (Giddens, 1985: 181; Connell, 2007; Mignolo, 2011). During the long nineteenth century, European thinkers began to connect notions of progress to ideas of civilisational superiority, generating a linear trajectory from Ancient Greece to modern Europe in which progress was considered to be self-generating through characteristics internal to the West (Bernal, 1987). The advancement of scientific research, fostering economic exchange and promoting technological innovations encapsulated the notion of progress at the core of western states (Israel 2010: 4). On the contrary, progress outside of Europe entailed reinforcing the capitalist states' superiority through exploitation of manpower and resources and legitimacy to maintain monopoly over violence.

In this way, ideas of progress helped to constitute a tripartite distinction between

'civilised humanity' (Europeans, white settlers and (some) Latin Americans), 'barbarous humanity' (the Ottoman and Persian empires, Central Asian states, China and Japan), and 'savage humanity' (every- where else) (Hobson, 2012: 33; Ansorge, 2013: 19). By and large, Europeans respected sovereignty in the civilised world, while barbarians received partial political recognition. Thus the dispossession and exercise of power through annexation and complete extermination unmasked the vicious side of progress. A colonial matrix of power rendered non-Europeans outside the scope of historical development – from this point on, these were 'peoples without history' (Quijano, 1992; Mignolo, 2011: xv), a point made bluntly by Marx in one of his newspaper columns from the 1850s:

The history of India's past can be outlined in terms of the consecutive invasions and subjugation. The acquisition through annexation has defined its past, robbing it of any history. Various successive intruders founded their empires and built a history of a passive and docile subjects (Marx, 1853, emphasis added).

Time and again, Western observers contrasted the progressive rational restlessness of the West with the inert, passive nature of oriental despotism (Weber, 1978a [1922] and 1978b [1922]; Mann, 1988: 7–15; Aydin, 2007). The notion of progress, therefore, had a dual function of laying the foundations for the advance of European countries in diverse spheres from establishing material to intellectual superiority while simultaneously distinguishing societies according to the hierarchisation based on their civilisational status (Drayton, 2000). This led to the use of various techniques including drawing boundaries and maps to conducting censuses for rendering populations intelligible (Scott, 1999; Weiner, 2003b; Branch, 2014; Osterhammel, 2014: 24–9; Foucault, 2002 [1969]). They were also enabled by four new political ideologies of liberalism, socialism, nationalism and scientific racism.

These ideologies embodied a distinct vision of progress. They posed a significant challenge to the age-old customs, traditions and the role of religion in societies. Liberalism was associated with a series of postulations regarding progress which include: a) the autonomy of the individual based on his clams on rights; b) centrality of the market rationality governing exchange practices; and, c) constitutional democracy enshrining the doctrine of popular consent. The association of liberalism with progress served as a major rationale for the expansion of international society both during and since the nineteenth

century. For socialists, progress was linked to a materialist conception of historical development in which classes served as the primary agents of historical change.

Nationalism was progressive in the sense that it created new forms and scales of social order and political integration. More counter-intuitively, scientific racism also had a progressive element in its assertion that superior stock should command historical development. There was a close, if often unacknowledged, relationship between liberal and socialist ideas of improvement, and racist proposals to use eugenics to upgrade the biological quality of the human stock (Hannaford, 1996: 360, 370–1; Weiner, 2003a: 6; Bowden, 2009: 755–848). These ideologies conveyed an essential characteristic of modernity: which supposed progress as an inevitable, pre-ordained and targeted feature of modern societies. In the paucity of this accelerative movement, it was challenging to explain and provide justification for the inequalities created by the capitalist system.

Taken together, liberalism, nationalism, socialism and scientific racism had three major effects: first, they challenged the basic framing for how societies were ordered; second, they rationalised vast programmes of social engineering, including industrialization; and third, they legitimised both rational state-building and the extension of Western power around the world and created a western yardstick of progress.

In general terms, ideologies of progress had no single understanding of the role and extent of the market, making this a central point of contestation within global modernity. Liberals were torn over whether universal claims of rights, autonomy and self-determination could be applied, or forcibly extended, to uncivilised peoples. For their part, socialists saw themselves in direct competition with liberals over the basic direction of modernity. Nationalist claims of self-reliance competed with liberal and socialist internationalism. Scientific racism had connections to each of the other three ideologies, but fitted most easily with extreme forms of nationalism, most potently with the rise of fascism and Nazism after the First World War. It is therefore no surprise that all of the great international conflicts and rivalries of the twentieth century were conducted in the names of these four ideologies. Indeed, the four ideologies of progress that arose during the nineteenth century still retain a powerful hold on both IR as a discipline and

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international relations as a field of practice. The next section charts their emergence, assesses their challenge, and examines their effects.

Liberalism: Silenced Histories and Legacies

The ideology of liberalism is considered an amalgamation of the various sub-strands including a) allegiance to values of individual freedom, equality, universalism and respect for difference; b) pervasiveness of practices like free market exchanges, upholding of human rights, assurance towards self-determination and collective security of people by treating representative government as the model for governance (Smith (1776; 1795), Paine (1791; 1794), Mill (1859; 1861), Rawls (1971; 1993) and Nussbaum (19786; 2001; 2016). In IR, liberalism is often taken to mean cooperation via processes such as democratisation, interdependence and the spread of international organisations (Rathbun, 2010). Sometimes the term is used to denote modernity itself (Deudney and Ikenberry, 2009). Although many liberals claim a pre-history dating back to Locke, the term 'liberalism' was self consciously employed in the beginning of the nineteenth century where it came to be referred to as a bulwark against capricious monarchical power by taking recourse to the constitution (Bell, 2007: 8; Pocock, 1975; Freeden, 2005).

The latter part of the nineteenth century can be credited for liberalism becoming a living political tradition – a composite of ideas concerned with the ways in which international law, commercial exchanges and republican constitutions could transform international morality (Bell, 2007: 9–15). Although liberalism comes in many forms, in general terms it is oriented around three core ideas: the individual as the primary site for the articulation of normative claims; the market as the primary site of economic exchange; and representative democracy as the primary site of political authority (Bell, 2007: 33). In principle, these ideas are complementary: liberals favour republican polities in which free markets, sustained through private property regimes, provide the means for maximising individual autonomy. Indeed, one of the central themes in liberal thought is the notion of the harmony of interests – the idea that the world is, potentially, orderable (through relations of free market exchange and representative governance) in ways that

serve the interests of all.

In practice, the relationship between these principles is often deeply contested. First, as Gilpin (1987) argues, there is an ongoing tension between the redistributive demands of liberal states domestically and the liberalization of trade, production and finance internationally. He calls this 'Keynes at home and Smith abroad' (Gilpin, 1987: 355; Ruggie, 1982). The emergence of industrial capitalism, with the accompanying hopes and fears of revolutions, was an ongoing expression of this tension. Second, most societies combine liberal and illiberal elements: liberal markets are often embedded within authoritarian political structures and all liberal states experience competing claims between individuals and collectivities over how to arbitrate claims of autonomy, the distribution of wealth, and security. Third, there are tensions between ideas of 'negative liberty' (a 'liberty of restraint' premised on external non- interference in order to maximize individual autonomy, protect private property and foster human rights) and 'positive liberty' (a 'liberty of imposition' geared at direct intervention in order to generate the 'right' conditions for liberty to arise) (Berlin, 1969; Sorensen, 2006). Because the latter tends towards a universalising project, liberal states are often expansive in terms of their international conduct – liberalism has been used to justify both military intervention and imperialism (Armitage, 2000; Pitts, 2005; Bell, 2007).

There are four main points to note about the relationship between liberalism and the global transformation. Firstly, the French and the English revolutions ushered in a new phase of political expediency with reliance on principles of inviolable human rights, indestructible popular sovereignty and self-determination. Second is the association of liberalism with the extension of the market. Although liberal arguments for free trade predate the global transformation (Hirschman, 1977; Neal, 1990; Carruthers, 1996; Allen, 2009; Pincus, 2009), free market policies – including the reduction of tariffs, the removal of state subsidies, and the free flow of finance – only became mainstream state practices during the nineteenth century (Latham, 1997). Third, beyond the challenge presented by liberal ideas of political representation and market exchange, the idea of individuals as the primary site of normative articulation challenged the basis of aristocratic orders. This prompted the rise of humanitarianism in general, and the human rights regime in

particular (Barnett, 2011; Moyn, 2010). Fourth, liberalism was a central strand in the expansion of European imperialism.

Although the relationship between liberalism and imperialism was complex (Mehta, 1999; Pitts, 2005; Hobson, 2012), many liberals favoured an extension of imperial practices on the grounds that they uplifted the peoples of Asia and Africa (Bell, 2010). It does not require a great stretch to see the ways in which these liberal civilising missions have been reinforced either implicitly (Ikenberry, 2011), or explicitly (Cooper, 2002; Ferguson, 2004), in contemporary debates about the duties of liberal peoples to those suffering under the yoke of backward social orders, whether this is understood as a deficient (i.e. non-market) economy, a regressive (i.e. authoritarian) form of governance, or a backward (i.e. explicitly religious) culture. In sum, liberalism was intimately involved with the progressive agenda of the global transformation.

Socialism: An Alternative Reading of Progress

Nineteenth-century socialism shared a number of synergies with liberalism, most notably a commitment to progress and reason, and an opposition to dynasticism and aristocratic rule. However, socialism also provided a multifaceted challenge to liberalism. First, socialists were opposed to the ontological and normative individualism celebrated by liberals, seeing these as harmful consequences of a schema premised on private property (Lawson and Buzan, 2015: 212). Because private property was seen as a form of exploitation rather than as a means of empowerment, socialists favoured the collectivisation of ownership rather than the liberalisation of production. Second, socialists saw the basis of social order not as a harmony of interests, but as rooted in class antagonisms (Lawson and Buzan, 2015: 215). As such, progress was likely to require radical rupture rather than gradual reform. Third, socialists saw the industrial proletariat rather than the bourgeoisie as the principal agents of progressive social change (Lawson and Buzan, 2015: 218). Given this, socialists favoured universal franchise and the empowerment of trade unions and labour organisations rather than a supposedly meritocratic franchise limited by property, education or gender. Socialism was drawn from a number of sources: British political economy, German philosophy and French

radical politics (Hobsbawm, 2011: 34).

During the early part of the century, the promise of radical change was carried by insurrectionary brotherhoods such as the Russian Decembrists, the Communist League and Gracchus Babeuf's Conspiracy of Equals. Beyond these groups were friendly societies, anarchists, syndicalists, mass movements such as the Chartists and, from the 1840s, self-declared communists (Calhoun, 2012). Like liberalism, socialism came in multiple modes rather than singular form. Utopian socialists (such as Saint-Simon, Robert Owen and Charles Fourier) favoured the establishment of small-scale enclaves, such as Owen's 'New Lanark', as bulwarks against the inequities of market society. Scientific socialists (such as Marx and Engels) sought the construction of mass political parties and unions that could confront and transform industrial capitalism as a system (Eley, 2002: 27–9). The basic components of socialism as a system of thought were in place by the culmination of the nineteenth century. What was added during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries was the experience of socialism in practice. The Second World War further burnished socialism's progressive credentials. The Soviet Union emerged victorious from the war, sharing in the enhanced legitimacy that victory provided. During the post-war period, many socialist states in Central and Eastern Europe grew faster than their Western European counterparts (Frieden, 2006: 337).

Outside Europe, post-war decolonisation was deeply infused with socialism (Lane, 1996: 153–4). Even when this rate slowed in the 1970s, many states in the global South preferred the virtues of communism- relatively incorrupt political elites committed to relatively egalitarian development, including high rates of literacy, full employment and strong public health systems (Mann, 2013: 221, 363). Socialist-inspired revolutionaries took power in China, Vietnam, Cuba, Ethiopia, Afghanistan and elsewhere. By the mid-1980s, the Soviet economic model was visibly failing, while China had begun the process of reform and opening up to the market. This was followed by the implosion of the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991. Along with China's reorientation towards the market, the Soviet collapse appeared to spell the end of the socialist challenge as a political programme, if less so as a body of thought and mode of critique.

When assessing the overall impact of socialism, it is possible to discern both successes and failures. The main success is socialism's contribution to a general sense of 'sinistrism' – a shift to the left in terms of how issues of representation, equality and social justice have been, and continue to be, framed (Tombs, 2000; Eley, 2002). Socialism has also made an impact on the development of modern international order through its encouragement of revolution. Indeed, one of the principal orienting strands of international relations over the past two centuries has been the challenge presented by revolutionary socialist states such as Russia, China and Cuba. In terms of socialist failures, three are worth particular attention. First, as noted above, is the tendency of the left to splinter. Not only have socialist movements frequently been hindered by factionalism, any hope of inspiring global revolution was undercut by differences over tactics: whether efforts to inspire revolution should be centred in the city or the countryside; the Cuban preference for foco vs. the Maoist notion of a people's war[1]; debates over whether revolutions would be successful only when conditions were organically 'ripe' or whether they could be actively 'ripened' by a vanguard party, and more (Buzan and Lawson, 2015: 234). There were also considerable differences in the interpretations of Marxist thought fostered by socialist theorists and revolutionaries, from Lenin, Trotsky and Gramsci to Mao, Castro and Cabral. Such differences were reinforced by Soviet attempts to lead the socialist movement, something that rubbed up against diverse ideas of how progressive ideals should be realised. The second failure is the poor experience of 'actual existing socialism'. The Soviet Union succumbed to the inefficiencies of excessive bureaucratisation, failing as much because of its internal weaknesses as it did through international competition (Armbruster, 2010).

Over the long run, the 'possessive individualism' (Macpherson, 1962) that lay at the heart of liberal capitalist orders appeared, to many people around the world, more attractive than the collectivisation promoted by socialism. Finally, the internationalist current of socialism was undercut by the capacity of nationalism to serve as the principal

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[1] The difference between the two notions- Foco and Maoist conceptions of war is based on the difference between the importance of vanguard vs the masses. Mao ZeDong emphasised on the role of party in building people's army while Che Guevra believed in the guerillas forming the vanguard themselves (Che Guevara, 1968: 32).

form of affective solidarity within modern international society (Buzan and Lawson, 2015: 274).

Nationalism: Imagined Communities to Imperial Power Relations

The idea of a nation has been an essentially contested concept that is subject to reconsideration in current century. The central premise of this conceptualisation is that the nation is rooted in state. Nation can be defined as self-identifying groups sharing adequate cultural, linguistic, ethnic and historical ties sufficient to generate a strong sense of belonging, the 'we' feeling that results in the claims for their own polity (Mayall, 2011: 11). Within this logic, ideally all states should be nation-states, with the state becoming the container and protector of its particular national identity.

There is considerable debate within the field of nationalism studies over whether the nation pre-exists the state (nation-state) or is mainly constructed by the state (state-nation) (Rejai and Enloe, 1969; Smith, 1991; Breuilly, 1993; Sewell, 2004; Buzan, 2007 [1991]: 74–83). But while nations are modern constructions, this does not mean that they can easily overcome the hold of pre-existing affective sentiments, whether of place, kinship or faith. Despite this, national sentiments have generally come to dominate rival affective affinities. Nationalism shifts the loci of political authority from the dynastic succession based on aristocratic lineages to the common masses which comprised the nation (Mayall, 1990: 26–8). Nationalism in this sense is a nineteenth- century product. Yet, as Gellner notes, nationalism has the inherent contradiction of being an appendage of modernity while appealing to the primordial instincts like identity and sense of community for its construction (Gellner, 1992: 289). Unlike agrarian polities, which did little to promote linkages amongst their constituent communities, modern industrial states had to find ways of integrating their citizens into a coherent whole (Gellner, 1983: 8–38).

The modern idea of nationalism had its first major expression in the French Revolution, where, among other things, it revealed its potential as a source of military mobilisation. The 'nation in arms', notions of 'universal service' and the 'levee en masse' enabled the mobilisation of over a million troops and imbued these troops with a strong motivation to fight (Giddens, 1985: 224–5). The Atlantic Revolutions in the latter part of

eighteenth and the initial period of the nineteenth centuries transformed the moral purpose of the state (Bukovansky, 2002: 211). Thereafter, nationalism became closely associated with rational state- building. The conflation of people and state constituted a radical reworking of the sovereign territorial state. There was a relocation of sovereignty from the ruler to the common people with the concomitant identification of the territory by the masses rather than the hereditary privileges of dynasties. The mass movements of refugees, and the expulsions, massacres and ethnic cleansing that often accompanied these movements, became depressingly familiar features of international relations during the twentieth century due to the fortification in the territorial states. The territory became sacralised with the historical significance to the common people with the shift from the absolutist state to nation-state (Mayall, 1990: 84).

As nationalism took root and spread, particularly after 1870, it challenged the three conglomerate empires of Eastern and Southern Europe: Habsburg, Romanov and Ottoman. In the initial half of the twentieth century, the spread of nationalism (and liberal ideas about human rights and equality), along with the upheaval of the First World War, corroded first the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires, and, after the further upheaval of the Second World War, the colonial empires of Britain, France and other Western states (Buzan and Lawson, 2015: 282). Nationalism also transformed international order by establishing the nation-state rather than empires as the principal unit of international politics (Mayall, 1990; Hall, 1999; Reus-Smit, 2013), so much so that the term nation-state has become an aspirational synonym for state. It is a naturalised discourse that plays a central role in defining the terms of political identity and legitimacy around the world.

Scientific Racism: The Other Side of Progress

As noted above, nationalism is closely associated with the idea of popular sovereignty. Together, these ideas pointed towards the replacement of elite politics by some form of mass politics. This might be democracy, in which case nationalism was central to providing a demos sufficiently coherent to sustain the polity. But nationalism could also support more extreme visions of mass society, not least when it was fused with notions of

demos to generate chauvinistic understandings of political community (Mann, 2004: 102). One of the most pronounced of these expressions is scientific racism. Scientific racism is the idea that one can and should create a grading amongst individuals on the basis of biological characteristics - either tangible and concrete (skin colour) or implied in the bloodline (purity of the identity of Aryans, Jews, blacks or Chinese).

Often claims made on the basis of cultural and biological superiority are blended, the emphasis on colour and blood made by nineteenth-century scientific racists distinguished their views from the construction of civilised and barbarian found in many agrarian empires, which was premised mainly on cultural, political and/or religious grounds (Hannaford, 1996: 1-126). In its scientific form, racism grew partly out of Enlightenment tendencies towards classification and partly from European colonial encounters (Keal, 2003: 56–83). Having scientific standing based on classification schemes and empirical observation of differences in levels of development gave racist views both legitimacy and respectability, something reinforced by two developments: first, the growing technological and military superiority of Western societies during the second part of the nineteenth century (Ferguson, 2004: 196–203, 262–4); and second, the popularity of Darwin's theory of evolution, which was used to support the idea that different races represented distinct steps on the evolutionary ladder. The superficial synergy of a colossal material divide between core and periphery, the predominant whiteness of the core, and social Darwinist thinking created a toxic brew (Osterhammel, 2014: 494–5).

In basic form, scientific racism stood in opposition to both the liberal view that all people were equal, and to the view that differences among people were essentially cultural, and therefore in principle remediable. Scientific racism was not incompatible with democracy because the two could be combined if the franchise was restricted by race, as it was (formally) in apartheid South Africa and (more informally) in parts of the United States. Indeed, the simultaneity of the rise of racism and the rise of liberal ideas about human equality is an apparently contradictory feature of the nineteenth- century ideational landscape (Smaje, 2000: 8–12).

Scientific racism shared two important synergies with other nineteenth-century ideologies of progress. First, racism overlapped with the liberal emphasis on meritocracy. In its more ruthless form, liberal meritocracy allowed those with superior talent, energy and entrepreneurial skills to dominate those who were less able, and to see this as progressive (Hobsbawm, 1962: 224–62). This attitude chimed well with a racist logic that saw superior races as dominating their inferiors on grounds of merit, arguing that doing so would improve the human species as a whole. Second, racism overlapped with nationalism, especially ethno-nationalism. Since the latter part of the nineteenth century to the culmination of the Second World War, there was increasing differentiation among nations along the parameters of triumph in war, colonisation and control over overseas empires, technological and industrial development and advancement in knowledge production. These were just shrewd and deceitful was to rank countries along the lines of biological determinism (Wallerstein, 2011a: 264).

Overall, therefore, although forms of social differentiation have been used as modes of inclusion/exclusion throughout history, the deployment of scientific racism with the dividing line drawn across different races and cultures within the dominated, the interaction between polities during the interwar years and into the Cold War period, provided the basis for post war discourse about modernisation and development (Inayatullah and Blaney, 2004; Zarakol, 2011). This involved a reworking of exercising control without giving away any power or sabotaging claims of hierarchy thus ensuring continuity of old practices under a new garb of modernisation. To a great extent, IR has occluded this thematic, whether conceived as a twentieth-century discourse or as one shaped by the global transformation.

Decolonisation was one component of this process, as was the mobilisation of social movements associated with civil rights and anti racism, and the emergence of diasporas as distinct international actors. During the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, such interactions between peoples deepened, becoming an increasingly regularised feature of social life around the world. Overall, scientific racism is the most clearly unsuccessful of the four ideologies of progress inherited from the nineteenth century. The occlusion of the major role played by scientific racism in international relations is one of

the most alarming features of an IR divorced from its nineteenth-century roots. As Bell notes 'race was considered the most significant unit of analysis and formed the ontological basis for conducting research on political issues' (Bell, 2013: 1). It has been too easy, not just in IR, but in Western society generally, to blame racism on the Nazis and the Japanese, and to forget that until less than half a century ago it was part of mainstream Western thinking about world politics The neglect of racism by IR scholarship makes it difficult to comprehend the resentment felt by those peoples who were victims of it (Miller, 2013).

The revolutions of modernity remade the physical landscape of international relations with a scale and depth that marked a decisive break from the agrarian world; these very revolutions also remade the global ideational landscape. They established a package of ideologies that marked a radical change of both individual and collective identities. In the process, they set economic, political and cultural relations onto quite different tracks from those of earlier periods. They may have challenged each other, and they have varied in their success, but they are still, along with the Axial Age religions and various strands of conservatism, the main ideational framing for world politics.

Of the four 'ideologies of progress' that underpinned the global transformation, liberalism and nationalism have had the greatest influence on contemporary international society (Buzan and Lawson, 2015: 266). More generally, the idea of progress continues to underpin contemporary societies. Ideologies of progress have sustained the sense of cumulative growth, both economically and cognitively, that stand as the signal feature of the modern world (Gellner, 1988: 177). They have fuelled (mainly liberal) projects of modernisation and development as well as (mainly socialist) revolutionary movements intended to accelerate the path of modernity itself.

However, by the end of the nineteenth century, there were increasing concerns about the limits of progress. Freud (1930), Nietzsche (1887; 1889; 1908), Du Bois (1940) and Pareto (1916) all, in their different ways, highlighted the uncertainties and dislocations of modern society. Concern with unreason, which later became a central point of reference for both post-structuralist thought and revolutionary figures such as

Frantz Fanon (1952; 1961), reignited interest in affective sentiments that lay outside the modern notion of linear, directional progress. These concerns fed into strands of modern thought that were concerned with the ambivalences of global modernity. First captured in the work of nineteenth-century theorists such as Marx (1867; 1932), Durkheim (1895) and Weber (1905;1919), these ideas were rooted in concern for the limits of progress. Whether rendered as alienation, anomie or disenchantment, these theorists argued that modernity served to fracture subjectivities and reduce the cohesion of modern societies.

Conclusion

Progress is a great myth if we treat it as a law of history, as a historical necessity for all times and cultures. Progress is a utopia, if we treat it as an infallible road to a millennium, to some final state of a united mankind, free of poverty, fear, oppression, fights, and of all other dramas of human destiny. Progress is neither myth nor utopia, if we treat it as a choice of values and as a task for the creative mind and human activity, operating in this zone of human possibilities, which expands between illusory feelings of omnipotence and the despair caused by feelings of helplessness in the face of blind forces of history. Such progress is empirical possibility, not a necessity. The future is always unknown and is not guaranteed in any way. When working for progress we are guided by ideals, but we do not expect their perfect implementation; in a similar way science does not expect, that one day everything will be known, discovered, or solved (Jedlicki, 1985: 28).

The important point is that the idea of progress has its place only within the model of directional transformation, within some version of developmentalism or, more generally, transformativism, and cannot be conceived either within the organic, structural-functional theories, or cyclical theories. It is meaningless to speak of societies as progressing, that is improving, getting better, if they are seen as basically unchanging, merely reproducing themselves, or if they are seen as changing only in closed cycles. It is only together with the idea of transformation (change of, and not only change in a society), and the idea of regular pattern or directional sequence of such transformations, that the concept of progress makes any sense. This explains why recent disenchantment and disillusionment with the idea of progress is so closely interwoven with a surge of

criticism directed at major varieties of traditional developmentalism (Popper 1945, 1957; Nisbet, 1969, 1970; Tilly, 1984).

This chapter has been an attempt to show how we might think differently about IR in the light of the very real critique levelled at it by the post-modernist thinkers and the breakdown of the theoretical certainties of the Cold War era. By accepting that we need to reintegrate historical and philosophical thinking of a particular kind, in order to place the notion of meaning at the centre of our thinking, it is hoped that we can avoid both the worst excesses of post-modernism without assuming that liberal triumphalism is the only viable alternative. This can be done by accepting the non-linearity of history, and the need to reinvent ourselves constantly; in other words, the need to attempt to re-engage with being through time.

It is necessary to bring the study of history and the methods of the historian back to where they belong in IR, to the centre of our concerns, not on the periphery. IR can then once again become a discipline that does not either merely reflect what is alleged to be obvious, but neither does it have to refuse to accept what is possible. What is lacking is the energy, the existential drive to understand what history might have to teach, and not merely to be the passive objects of history. At the moment we are just rejecting all that is foundational and not seeing the lineages of meaning that have been manifest in our own century and many before it, those that posed all the questions that are now and as ever important.

Chapter Four

Failed Prophecies, Glorious Hopes: Prospects of Utopia in International Relations

'Thinking means venturing beyond'

Ernst Bloch (1986: 6)

'Utopias enclose hope for a better society. This hope characterises fortuity for a different future.'

Henri Desroche (1976: 33)

The social and political climate worldwide in the second decade of the twenty-first century, that has been dominated by a mood of collective fear regarding everything from economic anxiety, mass shootings, environmental and technological dangers and the threat of terrorism both foreign and domestic, highlights the calamitous times we live in. Is there room for hope in such times of uncertainty and fear? There has been a recent emergence of consensus regarding the absence of alternatives. This dearth in terms of viable prospects, characterises the era we live in, marked by exhaustion and fatigue, imminently leading to collapse.

This chapter seeks to explore what does International Relations as a discipline offer to deal with the protean challenges faced in the present world order. The chapter is divided into four sections: Part one provides a historical account of Utopia since its first usage to the contemporary understanding. The section also provides a conceptual analysis of the term utopia and offers a critical survey of the existing definitions and evolution of the concept across various disciplines. The chapter also engages critically with a variety of other very influential arguments that are not only antithetical to utopianism, but erroneous and dangerous. The second part focuses on the disciplinary history of International Relations, bringing forth the tussle between realists and idealists, that came

to be known as the first great debate and its lasting impact on shaping the discipline. The third part focuses on various strands of utopianism that can be effectively borrowed by the discipline of IR for making sense of the world around us. The voluminous literature on utopia and utopianism with an entire gamut of oeuvre figures makes it impossible to cover in entirety within the scope of a chapter. Consequently, this chapter draws on a host of recent and not so recent reviews of the genre as well as commentaries on its history, nature, role and function to provide a panoptic comprehension of the concept. In addition, it traces extensively the work of certain contemporary social theorists in the course of developing other aspects of analysis, notably that produced by Anthony Giddens (1994, 1989, 1991) (on 'structuration theory', 'globalisation', 'post-traditionalism', 'dialogic democracy' and the 'Third Way'), Ulrich Beck (1992, 2002, 2006) (on the 'risk society' and 'new individualism') and Zygmunt Bauman (1989, 2003, 2016) (on 'culture').

Genealogy of Utopia

It is fascinating to trace the journey of the word utopia that has come to be referred not only as a genre in literature but also symbolises a mode of thought, approach to living based on physic disposition, philosophical tradition and is illustrative of cultural phenomenon dating to antiquity way before its actual historical origins. Indeed, as pointed succinctly by Alain Martineau, 'the literature on utopia is indeed so capacious that a person's lifetime would fall short in reading and analysing it in entirety' (1986: 27). The vastness of the literature is closely tied to the extensive annals beginning with Plato's Republic in the third century BC, progressing with seminal works like *Utopia* by Thomas More *(1551), New Atlantis* by Francis Bacon (1627), *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1848) *Looking Backward* by Edward Bellamy (1888), *Walden Two by* B.F. Skinner (1948), and *Men Like Gods* by H.G. Wells' (1923) being only a specimens of the infinite and timeless collection. The miscellany of writings on utopia exhibited by these examples serves as a appropriate reason for understanding the elusivity of utopia in being defined and categorised neatly.

Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel in their pivotal work *Utopian Thought in the Western World* (1979: 13-19) define seven 'major utopian constellations' or 'configurations' or chronological 'clusters' through history. The abridged description can

be traced as beginning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with the coming of Renaissance, followed by the Enlightenment writings of Kant (1781;1784,1785;1788) and Rousseau (1755;1762), leading to the utopian socialists like Charles Fourier (1808), Saint Simon (1825) and Marx and Engels (1848), evolutionary writings of Charles Darwin (1859, 1871) and psychological interpretations of Sigmund Freud (1923; 1930).

The first written records comprising of comprehensive writings on the subject of utopia in western writings surfaced in primeval Greece. Plato's *Republic* that ordered societies into classes governed by philosopher kings in the fifth century was the earliest prominent example of utopia. For the most part of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, few names were to dominate the utopian writing, however this ceased to be the case with the burgeoning literature heavily influencing the thought and language of the times in the early nineteenth century with the coming of 'Enlightenment age'.

In the following centuries the turmoil instigated by the rise of capitalism, ushering in the age of Renaissance led to the advent of secular utopias illustrative in the work of Thomas More. It would be important to emphasise the period during the aftermath of the French Revolution, which commenced with optimism and hope with the rejection of old autocratic rule but soon slipped into widespread violence and total failure of governing mechanisms across Europe. It is during this time that intellectuals contemplated on new and old miseries brought upon them with the coming of Industrial Revolution and in this process deliberated and conceived various ideal visions for the impending times. Thus, the initial part of the nineteenth century witnessed an upsurge in utopian thinking, communities and archetypes. Charles Fourier's exceptionally intricate and compellingly imaginative work spanning from 1808 to 1828 was the towering highlight of the Renaissance period. In continental Europe, the mushrooming of utopian texts, was central to England; with Robert Owen's *New View of Society* (1813) followed by *News from Nowhere* by William Morris (1890) based on an idealised vision of medieval world, unscathed by capitalist ventures. Contemporaneously, in America, Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1890), became the most widely read treatise on utopian imagination.

The early twentieth century saw the coupling of social and technological components with the advent of utopian science fiction manifested in the works of H.G. Wells *Time Machine* (1909), *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley (1932) and George Orwell's *1984* (1945). Utopian thinking and concomitantly writing was revived in the latter part of twentieth century with the birth of the discipline of utopian studies. Tracing the trajectory of its development, one could refer to Glenn Negley's *Quest for Utopia* (1952); Lyman Tower Sargent's *Three Faces of Utopianism* (1967); Darko Suvin's influential *Defining the Literary Genre of Utopia* (1973) are some notable mentions.   Various centres dedicated to carrying out research in the field including Utopian Studies Society established in 1988; Center for Utopian Studies at the University of Bologna (1989), the Ralahine Centre for Utopian Studies at the University of Limerick (2003) were indicative of the arrival of the academic discipline.

Moving beyond the engagement with utopianism in the 1980s, there was proliferation of dystopian works with writers turning to dystopian strategies to cope with the deteriorating social and political reality. Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan in their collected essays *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and The Dystopian Imagination* (2003) elaborated on the notion of 'critical dystopias' as content that was utopian in its essence but tried to challenge the optimism of given alternatives. Thus the renewal of interest in utopian writing was over-shadowed by what Tom Moylan (2000:11) addresses as 'utopia's shadow' namely dystopia and anti-utopia. The resurgence of a pessimistic undercurrent was symptomatic of the larger milieu with collapse of the socialist state, technological advancements including the development of nuclear bomb and the ensuing mass destruction and various political and economic crises at the global level. This is quite visible in the works like Kingsley Amis's *New Maps of Hell* (1960), Chad Walsh's *From Utopia to Nightmare* (1962), and Mark Hillegas's *The Future as Nightmare* (1967).

The contemporary aversion to utopia is, to a great extent, rooted in the experience of disastrous effects of its implementation in the twentieth-century totalitarian systems. Three forms of totalitarianism – Communism, Fascism, and Nazism – were attempts at total revolution, although the element of utopian thinking inherent in them is secondary to

the revolutionary mentality driving towards the complete destruction of the present social reality in order to rebuild it in an entirely different shape. Although utopia itself does not lead to revolution, it may become an instrument for revolution; on such occasions it is transformed from a dream and a vision of a better world into a vehicle of destruction and a source of violence. Utopian visions of the class-free society or the pure Aryan nation caused deep moral erosion and strengthened irrational beliefs, considerably supported by the propaganda of the totalitarian states that used the rhetoric of such utopias. The twentieth century revolutions often won their 'fighters' and 'comrades of the road' by means of the 'utopian bite' that almost morbidly weakened the human ability to enter into a cognitive contact with reality.

Moreover, utopia proved capable of symbiosis with modern science. On the one hand, utopia, through its ability to project and design new solutions, can indicate directions for science or even affect its very results. On the other hand, a scientifically verifiable knowledge may become an element of utopia. Regarding science as a value-free area of activity makes it even more prone to entering in relationships with utopia. As scientific knowledge actually increases the power of human beings over nature, a step towards extending the scientific control over the matters concerning humans themselves appears almost a necessary consequence of the 'ethics of science,' understood as the duty to do everything our knowledge allows doing. It is difficult to overlook the fact that a separation of the plane of facts from the plane of values opens the way to an alliance of utopia and science that may lead to incalculable consequences. The revolutionary social utopias were always fulfilled in reverse, which demonstrated that implementing the ideas of a utopian is not tantamount to the accomplishment of the utopia. Social and political life, with its abundance of currents and aspirations, resists utopian tendencies to forge social life according to simplistic and abstract models that do not correspond to the real dynamics of society.

The preceding concise overview of inquiry into the trail of development of utopia provided brief overview of the canonical texts and authors, definitional and conceptual clarifications, nuances in distinguishing utopia from its antonym dystopia/ anti-utopia besides interrogating the emergence and waning of utopias at different junctures and the

precursor conditions for the same. The edifice of utopian studies is built in entirety on not just visions and ideas but also chalking the means of realising those in practice. The projection of utopias as positive, fulfilled, cooperative spaces is highly misplaced and inaccurate, since these representations are synonymous to the pastoral/ idyll rather than to utopia. Through the width of liberal political theory, writings of John Locke (1689) to John Rawls (1971;1985) have attempted to create desirable societies through positive interventions. The objective has always been to rectify and alleviate the existing conditions rather than prescribing impossible blueprints for the future.

Etymology: Making Sense of Utopia

The immense diversity of approaches, objects and scope of study are the source of the fecundity of utopian scholarship. At the same time, one confronts the enduring problem of defining the term 'utopia'. Social scientists normally defend their chosen approaches as superior to the alternatives – that is, as providing more accurate, more profound, more veridical insight into the subject matter. To the extent that our understandings have this context-bound character, it would appear that every theoretical school begins the work of social analysis anew. Utopian thought is expressed in a multitude of forms but the focus in this section is on the textual meaning of the term. Utopia originates from Greek; connoting 'no place' ('u'/'ou' signifies no, and 'topos' means place). Krishnan Kumar makes a distinction between dual traditions of utopia: those based on sensual gratification and ones grounded in human contrivance (Kumar 1987: 12). Utopias based on sensual gratification either look backwards or in future for envisioning a better quality of human life. Well-known examples include Hesiod's golden age, Eden, some versions of the Millennium, and various Greek and Roman myths. Utopias founded in human contrivance deem human ability to shape the contours of social order, manifesting in the works of Thomas Moore's eponymous *Utopia*, *Looking Backward* by Edward Bellamy (1888), *A Modern Utopia* by H. G. Wells's (1905) and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell (1949).

Barbara Goodwin and Keith Taylor (1982) describe the three features exhibited by utopianism. The first feature entails a sweeping and uncompromising discarding of the existing state of affairs. Second, utopian thinking has a positive outlook towards human

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nature and the role played by social, political and economic institutions in conditioning the fundamental aspirations and instincts; thereby stressing the potential for improvement and advance. Lastly, the dichotomy created by the public/ private categorisation is transcended by utopianism as it alludes to the prospects for individual fulfilment (Goodwin and Taylor 1982: 18).

Ruth Levitas in her work *The Concept of Utopia* has explained that 'utopia nurtures through a belief and two elemental questions. The belief is in challenging the inevitability and given-ness of a situation and the questions are: what is the alternative and how can it be realised? (Levitas 1990: 27) The most significant contribution of utopia is the ability to expand the imaginative horizons of human potentialities which would have deep seated impact on international politics. Utopianism includes being contemplative about the prevailing order of things and impelling for change towards a better future. Lyman Tower Sargent (1994: 13) defines utopianism as social dreaming. Ernst Bloch (1986: 36) talks about a 'utopian impulse' which is built on the human ability to expand the horizons Lucy Sargisson (2000) defines the main characteristic feature of utopianism as 'transgressive' implying the defiance of existing status quo for unveiling novel theoretical and conceptual spaces. Ina similar vein, Fredric Jameson (2005) dismantles the presumption regarding utopias being abstract and idealistic and instead highlights the utopian force as a stimuli for grounding activity. It is thus important to underline the creative aspect in utopian imagination that drives socio-political transformation. There is a need to erase the pejorative naïve assumptions associated with utopia and think of it as a driving force for change in modern times.

There are two important distinctions made in the field of utopian studies by Lyman Tower Sargent (1994: 72-79) which involve a) communitarianism and b) utopian social theory. Communitarianism is defined by Sargent as being illustrative of 'intentional association'. Utopian social theory can be traced back to the evolution of history of ideas. Sargent provides the quintessential undercurrent characterising with twentieth-century utopian social thought, in that he claims that is 'fictive endeavour' (1994: 22). Scholars defending the necessity for utopian thought including Karl Mannheim (1936) and Fred Polak (1973) accentuate the fact that envisioning the future in

a certain way has an enormous impact in shaping it in a given direction (Polak, 1973:5). In the latter part of twentieth century there have been various strong criticisms charged against utopian thinking most famously led by Karl Popper (1945;1957;1963). Sargent acutely points out that there has been a revival in the interest in 'literary utopia' which has garnered the most attention in contemporary times. However as pointed by Ernst Bloch (1923) utopian impulse is a contentious concept, said to be all pervasive, making every work a utopian masterpiece. The designation of various texts as utopian, could lead to diluting the usefulness of the concept; hence there is a need for distinct categories and definitions for functional utility and clarity.

Mapping Utopia

Form

Throughout history, human being have been propelled to explore the boundaries of their lived experience. Utopias are the conduit from image to its actuality. They are invariably fragments of fiction. They conceive of alternate possibilities, pushing the boundaries of the present, reinventing the schema of representation that inevitably is transformative. Even though they espouse for an ideal space; engagement with the political critique of the present remains the central motivating force for utopian writing. Due to lexical repetitions and ambiguous usage, it is pertinent to distinguish the various forms of utopian thought. There is an immanent presence of utopian impulse in the popular culture around us ranging from art to music to literature as highlighted by Bloch (1986). One must rework or delineate the various perspectives in understanding utopian writing which colloquially has come to be associated with novel writing. As pointed by Vincent Geoghegan (1987:22) the archetypal utopian model instituted by Thomas More is only one of the various manifestations of utopian thought. Following suit, Ruth Levitas (1990:43) in her systematic analysis of the genre also warns against narrowing the ambit of the concept by referring to only the literary form. One of the leading scholar of the discipline Lyman Tower Sargent (1994), has developed on utopias associated with indigenous societies as well as religious right in America. The sense of inter-disciplinarity/cross- disciplinarity leads to an acquaintance with broader traditions of historiography assigning the discipline of utopian studies a distinctive status.

Content

In attempting to formulate a blueprint for the future, writers are obligated to deal with concepts of value, courses and outcomes. The content of utopias has been subject to study from a wide range of perspectives. Some approaches are ideological. Examples are feminist and socialist approaches (given, for the sake of present argument, that feminism and socialism are ideologies). Others are specific to discipline, such as those from the fields of literary studies and political theory. Discussions of content tend to take two forms. One focuses on formulaic content, the other looks for commonality of narrative content. The formulaic approach is exemplified in the work of J. C. Davies and Krishan Kumar. This approach typically aims to distinguish the utopia from other types of wish fulfilment. Utopias are said to be political, by which is meant 'institutional-bureaucratic' and to be concerned with organisational matters (Davis 1981). They are thought to be finite and perfectible and to offer a blueprint for the ideal polity (Davies 1981; Kumar-1991).

Function

Some of the most interesting attempts to define utopianism as a body of thought focus on the area in which content and form combine to perform a particular function. It is the point of amalgamation of conceptual premises to their tangible implications. However, it could possibly elicit a schism, creating the space for destabilising political action. Utopias often emerge from realm of fantasy but are rooted in addressing the ruptures and yearnings of the present. Krishnan Kumar astutely remarks on the peculiar nature of political commentary that utopias entail which is subversive in nature, often leading to writers being labelled as political dissidents facing tough consequences for their thought. Utopia furnishes substitutes, indicating a different path, its defining feature is 'subversiveness' which stems from a diagnostic commentary on the existing arrangements of society (Kumar 1991: 87–8). Utopias germinate in the *status quo*, yet exhibit a sense of separateness in challenging the same.

It is notable that the fictive nature of utopia centred around creativity also has the potential for being transformative. Novel, the predominant expression of utopian thought

where ideas are expressed and explored through literary text is a means of political critique. Fiction in one sense shares a second order relation to the world via the mimetic logic of functional representation. For fleeting moments, utopias represent the chance for existence of another realm, purely subjective for expressing our desires and values. The discontentment with the burdensome, over bearing banality of everyday life coupled with the piquing desire for change triggers critical consciousness for utopian thinking.

The transgressive nature of utopian thought can be delineated in the following ways: a) by stepping over boundaries and demarcations that categorise and separate which might include boundaries between disciplines, or conceptual boundaries, or boundaries that establish the norms of social behaviour; b) by rendering boundaries as porous and hence devalues rigid structural distinctions and c) warranting for creation of unchartered spaces for practicing different means of relating to the world (Lucy Sargisson, 1996: 30).

Towards an Anticipatory Illumination: Critical Utopias

Oscar Wilde (1894) remarked that 'there was worthlessness in looking at a map of the world that didn't entail any utopias. In evaluating the history of ideas it is interesting to note the preoccupation of many great thinkers with the meaning of time and flow of history. Utopias mark the interaction between completed and uncompleted time - charged by the push-pull process between an idealised future and a realised past. This unique configuration results in the transformative nature of utopias. Human beings have the capacity to consciously sort perceptions and responses on a time continuum, inhabiting the present as well as the imagined. This dualism is an indispensable pre-requisite for understanding historical change. Krishnan Kumar (1991: 95) posits that utopian imagination is a necessary pre-requisite for both politics and progress, bereft of which the world would be soul-less, merely an instrument with no driving purpose or vision to realise. Terry Eagleton (2000:25) makes the distinction between good and bad utopias. The latter, according to him are indicative of wishful thinking with no basis in the actual reality while the former act as a bridge between the present and the future containing the potentiality for transformation. He indicates three transformative features of utopian mode of expression. Despite present obstructions and predicament, utopias are hoping to

substantially change the way of living in the future. They offer a radical turnover of the old in favour of the unsettling new portrayals of future. This radicalism often gets associated with the political Left or Right. Lastly, they do take into consideration the realistic means for achieving their ends. Hope, radicalism and realism are hence the three cornerstones for defining utopias (Eagleton, 2000:37).

Utopias as discussed by Ruth Levitas (1990:189) seek to probe into the question of to what end is the hope directed? She further elaborates the spaces of void filled creatively by utopian imagination. For Levitas, social dreaming, longing, and desire for change are key dimensions of the utopian, along with the hope – or, perhaps more accurately, the belief – that more egalitarian, freer ways of living are possible. Levitas's work builds on the influential utopian Marxist Ernst Bloch (1986). He also emphasises the limitations of what he calls 'abstract utopias', compensatory fantasies invested in so that the present world can be made liveable. Bloch argues instead for 'concrete utopias', which anticipate and reach forward toward a real possible future. While abstract utopias are wishful, concrete utopias are deliberate and determined (Levitas,1990:113). Concrete utopias are projected both as latency and as tendency. They represent a part of the past which they seek to recover while looking towards the transpiring future; thus making it a praxis-oriented category characterised by 'militant optimism' (Levitas 1990: 70). Everyday utopias also capture a sense of hope and potential, in that they anticipate something more, something beyond and other to what they can currently realise.

There has been a perceptible shift in the writings of utopian scholars spanning across generations with earlier generations envisaging a static notion of achieving a desired utopian end (Bauman 2003b; Shklar 1994), much of the contemporary scholarship engages with the struggles and challenges associated with executing the utopian imagination (Levitas 2007; Moylan 1986; Sargisson 2007). Lucy Sargisson (1996:21) in her pioneering work on feminist utopias discusses how utopias rupture and transform the social spaces by conceptualising radically novel ways of imagination. The underlying utopian perception is regarding the nature of social reality which isn't viewed as static or unchangeable but rather dynamic. It is this perception that results in a form of estrangement with the present, rendering the usual and the familiar as obsolete in favour

of the future. While engaging with utopian texts, one realises the construction of the world around us as much in reality as in fiction, opening up avenues for change. As Tom Moylan (1986:35) contends the juxtaposition created by utopias lies in the fact that they hold the seeds for change within themselves; thus breaking away from fixity in the nature of things.

The arrangement and organisation in terms of ordering of human communities through imagination is the question at the heart of all utopian thinking (Deleuze 1994: 147). Utopias are inherently political in nature in the sense that they critique the present, involves thwarting foreclosing of political possibilities for future and creative way of realising that which doesn't exist. Richard Rorty in his polemical text *Philosophy and Social Hope* (1999) opines that utopianism provides humanity with hope - the noblest creation of mankind and emphasises on the need for reinvigorating the utopian impulse. It is indeed a matter of miraculous tenacity that despite lost faith and senescent language utopian imagination has survived.

H.G. Wells writing in 1909 in the famous essay 'The So called Science of Sociology' mirrored similar sentiments regarding the positive evaluation of utopian imagination; connecting it to the vitality of social sciences. Wells questions the 'scientific' nature of investigation undertaken by Auguste Comte (1830), Herbert Spencer(1876) and Emile Durkheim (1895) contending that social sciences cannot dispassionately engage with 'what is' without taking into consideration what is intended to be (Wells, 191:202). He elaborates his argument by according the role of sociologists in crafting utopias, even through their avid denial and silences. Wells advocates for all knowledge to be rendered imaginatively taking two main literary forms: one of historical description and interpretation and, second, generating utopian ideas for 'exhaustive criticism' of the existing knowledge systems (Wells, 1916: 204).

Ruth Levitas (2005) taking cue form Wells' work recommended a methodological retailoring of social scientific research by basing it on utopia. Levitas claims that both sociology and utopia depict dual modalities of 'imaginarily reconstructing the society' as former brings to fore what latter does not and the latter is charged with the responsibility

of highlighting what sociology supresses (Levitas, 2005:167-72). This implies that sociology is descriptive, explanatory and holistic while being grounded in the present/past simultaneously manifesting compelling normative, prescriptive, and prospective components. Similarly, utopia is customarily visionary, normative, prescriptive, and imminent in its orientation; but is present-oriented as far as in criticising the existing framework.

Levitas goes on to suggest the need for redefining utopia in terms of 'hope towards improved manner of living articulated through a different kind of society that has the potential for realising the alternate path of living (Levitas, 2005:248). This re-worked conceptualisation fosters two important propensities. Firstly, this makes utopias permeating everywhere a likely eventuality. This ubiquity of utopias is emphasised by Ernst Bloch in his prodigious work *The Principle of Hope* (1986) where he equates utopias to 'venturing beyond'(Bloch, 1986:29). This venturing beyond is inclusive of religious visions, myths about golden ages, utopian forays into popular culture and various philosophical and social philosophy strands. This inhabitation in the future combined with hope of that which isn't present is the generative source for creativity, vigour and progress in concerns of human affairs. Secondly, the espousal of the idea of utopia as a 'perpetual and eternal' aspiration of human beings highlights the inimitable human capacity for imagination (Goodwin and Taylor 1982: 57). Rather than being transient and ephemeral, the desire for utopian imagination is deep seated in human psyche.

Jeffrey Alexander (2001: 580) claims that utopias are normative social orders that are desirable in the dual sense of thinking and action. Utopian thinking is a heuristic tool for improving the conditions rather than a static end of perfection. Michael Gardiner (2006: 2) points at the progressive vigour in the everyday encounters, making utopia a sequence of immanent potencies, dynamisms and possibilities emerging from the pragmatism of common existence. Jürgen Habermas (2002) in his theory of communicative action evokes the liberatory potential present in everyday life.

Ursula Le Guin (1974) one of the prominent feminist writers emphasises the role of imagination and storytelling as powerful means of imagining alternative realties by expanding the scope of both conceivable and feasible to achieve. She claims that utopias and dystopias are are not dire warnings or blueprints rather they are merely reminders of infinite possibilities of organising social living (Guin, 1972: 109). She further believes that utopias serve to challenge the inertias produced by existing state of affairs remaining unquestioned due to lazy, timorous mind of human beings. Thus by providing a persuasive alternatives, utopias articulate the capacity for dislodging the indolent human mind. It is a sentiment evocative of Susan Sontag (1999) and her persistence on exercising imagination to challenge the established principles and institutions, to question the permanence of the existing *status quo* and the necessity to attain freedom and justice as attainable goals. The political nature of utopias is apparent in the criticality towards the existing forms of communities in favour of what 'ought to be'. The anticipation for re-imagining the future is grounded in the inherent possibilities of the present reality.

Russell Jacoby (2005) elucidated the distinction between blueprint and iconoclastic utopian traditions as the former being extremely detailed, planned and regulatory in nature, chalking out every aspect of the future; the latter repudiate any such accuracy and meticulous planning and are often abstract and vague often driven only by cessation of current state of being. (2005: xiv). Also these distinctions bring out the normative and strategic features of utopia, making massive headway in terms of revolutionising societies and transforming politics.

Goran Therborn (2007) explicates the dualism inherent in social theory as it provides the explanatory framework for societal arrangements, yet at the same time it involves the dimension of meaning making. As Marx, famously stated in *Thesis on Feuerbach* (1888) that philosophers have for long interpreted the world, the point is to change it. However, the meaning making dimension of social theory entails a utopian dimension. There is an underlying dimension of eschatology, not only epistemology in theorising about social change as every period in history is defined by a narrative about its past and present with suggestions for a better future (Jeffery Alexander 1995: 66–67). This approach of conjoining utopianism as an integral part of social sciences was seen as

irrational, nebulous and even epiphenomenal to the undertaking of social science by twentieth century scholars including Karl Popper and Hannah Arendt because of the predominance of pejorative connotations associated with the usage of utopia.

Zygmunt Bauman (2007a: 102) noted that the subtext around 'utopia' revolved around the ensuing adjectives - fanciful, fictional, illusional, chimerical, improbable, unrealistic, 'unattainable, and non-viable. In nefarious contexts, utopia came to be linked to proclivity towards coercion and fanaticism, with sceptics attributing utopianism to twentieth-century totalitarianism (Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965; Popper 1966; Kolakowski 1978). Fredrick Jameson (2005: xi) recapitulates the situation during the Cold war when utopianism came to be synonymous with Stalinism, manifesting in the drive for perfection and uniformity even by force on the multitude of imperfect subjects. It is due to this parallel being drawn to totalitarianism, that utopia came to be seen as a pathological impairment of reason that needed to be encountered with vigorous realism, Machiavellian cynicism and pragmatic approaches to world politics (Jameson, 2005: 96).

Since the 1970s, social and political theory witnessed an overall decline of utopian narratives. Perry Anderson (2004) addressed this phenomenon as the closure of critical thinking space; Kolakowski (1990: 136, 143) called it the withering away of utopian mentality and Russell Jacoby (1999: 15) asserted that the utopia was eclipsing from the writings of the Left intellectuals with increasing emphasis on pragmatism and practicality. The demise of utopia is considered both tragic and triumphant in different narratives- its demise is lamented as a retreat of imagination, democracy, critical thought and the crucial objective of emancipation; while at the same time in different circles the demise of utopia is celebrated and welcomed as a move away from totalising and uniform thinking that had affinity towards totalitarian politics with disregard for individualism and difference.

Ernst Bloch (1986:213) used graphic terminology to elaborate on utopias being 'anticipatory illuminations' or as 'day dreams yet to be fulfilled'. Through the use of such expression Bloch illustrates how utopianism isn't a matter of human design but a pivotal component in being human itself. The day dreaming/ anticipatory illumination is a

reflection on future possibilities; moving away from the vicissitudes of everyday living. Thus utopias, in a sense, give a sense of purpose and direction for looking forward to actualising a vision. One of the contrasting distinctions made in identifying utopias from conservative projects that veneer as utopias is that, utopias are future-oriented, challenging rather than preserving the antiquated hierarchies. They radically oppose the *status quo*, instead of reinforcing it. Eileen Hogan (2010) sums it up succinctly by pointing out that utopias can't concern themselves with 'what was' since they are by characterisation progressive. However, not all past can be discarded for not contributing to utopian thinking; on the contrary the unfulfilled desires of the past could anchor critical social theory for improving the present and paving way for a better future. Raymond Williams (1983:13) discusses the concept of 'heuristic utopias' suggesting that nostalgia is a crucial element in strengthening and encouraging the feelings and structures towards a different future. He distinguishes melancholia from reflexive form of nostalgia that is centred around critical and ethical self-awareness. David Harvey (2007:32), echoing these sentiments, considers utopias being capable of opening previously foreclosed opportunities.

On the other hand, we need to beware of what Louis Marin (1984) cryptically refers to as 'degenerative utopias' – that is to say, forms of spatial play that sanitise and mythologise the limitations of the past so as to make it acceptable in the present. All forms of 'golden ageism' fall into this category. In each case, we are offered no critique of the past or existing order of things, but rather a comfortable and comforting account of a historical epoch in which its contradictory and dysfunctional features are obscured, or a neutralised assessment of the possibilities and inevitability of technological change.

Because they express competing desires for and images of the good society, utopias are inescapably political. Michael Ignatieff puts this more poetically than most, remarking that 'utopian thought is a dream of the redemption of human tragedy through polities' (1994: 19). Equally, to the extent that absolute hope transcends the world which is immediately experienced – in Vaclav Havel's words, is 'anchored somewhere beyond its horizons' (1990: 181) – its counterpart utopia always 'pushes to the limit' (Walsh,1993: 53), generating political argument as a result rather than obsequious

consensus. Consequently, utopian alternatives, as Terry Eagleton reminded us earlier, offer us an important means of taking stock politically of where we are now and of where we may want to go; that is to say, they evoke a future possibility by helping us to escape the constraints of the present.

In *Ideology and Utopia*, Karl Mannheim explains that ideology and utopia emerge from political conflict (Mannheim,1936:120). Mannheim expands on this to clarify the relationship between utopia and ideology, explaining that the disappearance of utopian thought would usher in stagnation in human undertakings turning human dynamism into inertia and man into a thing. This association between utopianism and humanness as ego-like and full of striving is where utopia takes the effect of a certain kind of scrutinising and active humanity. Utopianism works from a perspective of subversion and in this way allows us to re-evaluate what is, what could be and how it comes about (Mannheim, 1936: 136). Utopia, however, also works within ideology; since no one is able to step outside of ideology, utopia works by appropriating ideology in order to manifest its own vision. This is what makes utopia subversive but simultaneously creative, active and something that uses ideological structures to recreate its very own culture. By applying its vision onto a larger framework, utopia uses ambiguities and uncertainties as the main points from which to construct alternatives.

Fredrick Jameson (1982:289) posits that there has been a systemic, cultural and ideological bias against utopia resulting in our failure both collectively and individually to imagine utopia itself. The vocation entrusted to utopia is to revive and reawaken the utopian imagination itself. The failure of utopia reinstates the closure of representational possibilities. This leads to questioning of the significance and form of utopia in contemporary times. Jameson (1982:175) suggests for an approach of relativist pluralism which entails an intricate alterity seeking to change the present in totality through completely unexpected and transformative ways. It provides the space for each utopian imaginative alternative in the global archipelago to manifest and flourish.

Tom Moylan in *Demand the Impossible* (1986) offers a literary conceptualisation of utopia which he terms as critical utopia. This heuristic device underscores the twin

function of utopian thought- engaging in political critique of the present while simultaneously envisioning a new creation for the future. The dual sense of critical underlying these utopias is: firstly they borrow from the Enlightenment logic of critique, debunking prevalent notions and representative of oppositional thought; secondly the term 'critical' implies critical mass needed to activate the required change in terms of an explosive reaction (Moylan, 1986: 11). Even though he engages with all three components of utopia - form, content and function it is the latter that he stresses upon the most. The foundation of utopian thought is discontent; it is derived from the unfulfilled needs and desires of particular groups in society in a given historical context (Moylan, 1986: 17). He draws parallels between critical utopia and Antonio Gramsci's 'historic bloc' for political opposition against the injustices perpetuated by existing conditions.

The functional utility of utopia is that of opposition to the affirmative culture of the time; negating the existing social system by forging futuristic visions for realisation (Moylan, 1986: 21).Thus through hope, it contributes to the spaces for opposition which provoke social transformation. Moylan isn't affected by the diversity and ambiguity in contemporary writings on utopia, like other commentators and instead cherishes it as a valuable development in the field. The multiplicity and diversity of utopias is enabling for a better opposition. He also disparages utopias seen with a desire for perfection and finality. Utopias are not inadequate in themselves but treating them as blueprints is rather misleading. certain way makes them Critical utopias privilege the process of change than the final destination.

An evaluation of the trajectory of utopian thought would suggest it being continuously redefined rather than mourning its demise. It is important to acknowledge the pervasiveness of utopian thinking in our lives and a concerted effort should be made to understand it deeply. Utopianism highlights the issue of autonomy in believing that individuals can usher in change and not just passively accept the given conditions. It can be the guiding force of social, economic and political transformation. There was a widespread belief in the demise of utopia in the 1970s which has been revived by the crisis of neo-liberal led globalisation discernible in the works of Pierre Bourdieu (1998), Immanuel Wallerstein (1998), Russell Jacoby (2005), Richard Rorty (1997, 1999),

Slavok Zizek (1997) and De Sousa Santos (2005, 2006).

A recapitulation of this section would highlight that there are three contradictions inherent in any discussion on utopia - the relationship between utopia and utopianism; the connection between the future and memory and the link between individual and collective. Utopias are often expressions of an estranged perspective. Certain conventions within the body of fictional utopias enable form and style to enact this estrangement. They express dissatisfaction and articulate estrangement with the political present and are critical. Utopias are creative and imaginative: they gesture towards alternative ways of living and being. They are subversive and have transformative potential. They question the prevailing values and systems of organisation and governance. And lastly, utopias are significantly transgressive. It is apparent through their style and form, and by virtue of them blending theory, political commentary and fiction. This is also in terms of their function which is, to provoke us to think differently about the world. Hence, utopianism has a transformative function.

Utopia and International Relations - Bringing Imagination Back in IR Writing The First Great Debate Redux

The engagement with utopia as a concept is eclipsed within IR as a discipline due to the 'triumph' of the realism during its inception and the subsequent maintenance of status quo advocated by the theorists subscribing to the realist paradigm. Peter Katzenstein (1995: 14) offered an illuminating insight into the study of world politics by stating that one needs to continuously revisit the past in the light of present and inversely rethink about the present drawing on the past for answering the most challenging questions facing us in productive manner.

One of the central objectives of the thesis is attempting reinvigoration of utopian ingenuity as a central and indispensable constituent in theorising about International Relations. According to Shannon Brincat, there are four noticeable periods in the development of utopian thought: liberal internationalists during post-World War I; the peace activists or or anti-nuclear movement in the 1960s and 1970s; utopian response to the planetary crisis in the 1980s and the realistic utopianism in the early 1990s (Brincat

2009: 591). Brincat claims that one of the reasons why International Relations theory has shown resistance to transformation and change is due to the disciplinary trajectory, whereby during its inception the debate between realism and liberal internationalism led to a complete dismissal of the latter tradition from the horizon of IR.

This is also because of the binary drawn between idealism and realism. As Roger Spegele (1996: 12) suggests, the idealist-realist debate revolves around a 'what' question: 'what is international relations?' This is a philosophical question involving a critical evaluation not merely of the nature of international relations, but of what constitutes reliable knowledge about it. Realism and its associated methodology irrefutably discredited any alternative theory in the aftermath of the First Great Debate. Certain issue areas including liberty, equality, emancipation, justice were thematically relegated as utopian and purged from the schema of the discipline completely. As Martin Wight puts it, realism espouses a fixed and cyclical understanding of history, viewing interstate politics as the 'realm of recurrence and repetition' (Wight, 1966: 90).

E.H. Carr in his epochal text, *The Twenty Years' Crisis* employed the word 'utopia' in a dual sense. In the first sense, it implied opposition to reality, that is to portray beliefs and values which were false or unreal. In the second sense, it meant opposition to realism, implying aspirations, goals and policies inept of being fulfilled (Carr, 1939: 45-49). It is therefore this seemingly innocuous categorisation that caused the gravest consequences for the progression of the discipline. While describing the liberal internationalists who supported the League of Nations as utopian it is indistinct whether Carr implied their beliefs were false or their aspirations for world peace unattainable. It is this ambiguity that has led to the marginalisation of utopian thinking in International Relations. Carr based his understanding of utopia on Karl Mannheim's (1936) crucial work. Mannheim distinguishes between 'ideologies' that aided in preserving the status quo and 'utopias' that challenged the existing order by offering alternatives (Mannheim, 1936: 42).

Utopianism was epistemically grounded in the abstract and metaphysical and normatively rooted in the yearning for justice and perfection which led to its dismissal

by Carr (1939, 64). He argued that the utopian desire would lead to rupturing of the international order and disrupting of the *status quo*. Realism on the other hand, relied fully on empirical, non-ideal attributes of international system, limiting the political imagination to present circumstances. There are two critical contradictions that need to be highlighted in these central realist postulations. Firstly, the difference in the relative positioning of various states, which are ontologically, the primary actors in world politics makes it difficult for objectively assessing the possibility and desirability of events (Carr, 1939: 73). Secondly, Carr remains ambiguous on what constitutes as possible in world politics. He does not substantiate the reasons for dismissing utopianism completely, rather makes vague references to the superiority of scientific approach. One can't deduce the possibility or impossibility of events prima facie, thus rejecting change altogether is logically unsound.

Carr's analysis concerning probability of change, excludes the formidable ideational aspect of utopian imagination that can inspire change. It could be contended that there are far more favourable conditions both socially and materially for positive transformations at present than there ever existed in history. While Carr's censure of utopian thinking is widely acknowledged in the discipline, much less consideration has been paid to the appropriation of the term utopia from Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*. While borrowing heavily from Mannheim's work, Carr didn't adequately stress the dialectical relationship between realism and utopianism, emphasised by Mannheim. This neglect has been quite detrimental and problematic for the discipline, since it meant a sweeping rejection of a number of theories that were labelled as utopian and were incongruous with reality - ranging from reformist to being revolutionary. For instance, in Carr's exploration, liberal internationalists were condemned as utopian for their teleological aspiration to avert war (Carr, 1939: 87). The longing for peace led to their indictment as utopians. Not only was then peace considered to be improbable to achieve, any other normative goal that expanded the horizons of research was kept at abeyance from the disciplinary boundaries of International Relations. This included questions regarding liberty, equality, injustice, emancipation were systematically expunged from the disciplinary agenda because of the belief that they would infract the boundaries of IR. This marked the *cul-de-sac* for utopianism in International Relations.

A detailed perusal of Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia* demonstrates the contrast drawn between ideologies and utopias, with former rooted in the conceptual framework of serving to preserving the status quo and the latter operating to challenge, resist and decrepit the existing order (Mannheim, 1936: 17). The ideas that tended to eclipse and rupture the bonds of reality and prevailing structures were assigned as utopian. His analysis divulged the part played by ideologies in mirroring reality and acting to maintain the given conditions. One of the consequential insights from his analysis is how he termed knowledge as warped and distorted if it is unsuccessful in accounting for novel developments and metamorphosised realities by retaining older conceptual categories that no longer were reflective of existing conditions.

This pertains to the Neo-realism in the contemporary sense, which refuses to acknowledge the re-ordering of state system since the end of world war I. By denying any substantive developments in the field, realism relies on the hackneyed categorisation for explaining world events. Thus, refusal to accommodate and adapt according to changing times by not pandering to new methodologies and concepts is a safeguarding apparatus set by realists that keeps them from questioning their own assumptions. Their predictions hence often fail to provide a comprehensive overview which is needful under the transformed reality. Since, Mannheim's scope of work is beyond the realm of International Relations, his analysis didn't directly incriminate realism as the dominant ideology. But logically extrapolating from his typology, it can be concluded that realism constitutes the 'ideology' that reinforces the status quo, disparaging any ideas seeking to remould the same.

This position is further strengthened by claims made by Robert Cox (1981), Richard K. Ashley (1984), R.B.J Walker (1993) and others in the Third Great Debate. As Mannheim explained, it is upon the 'representatives of a given order' to classify something as utopian and what they considered to be realisable (Mannheim, 1936:47). The incongruity of an ideology or utopia with reality is decided by the privileged few, assigned to demarcate the distinction of what qualifies inevitably as utopian. This privileging function isn't thus inherent or natural but socially constructed. In the discipline of International Relations, this mantle was assumed by realists and

subsequently the neo-realists who were befittingly addressed as the 'doorkeepers' a term used by Roland Bleiker (2007: 112) – they exclusively controlled which approached would be labelled utopian and hence debarred from the schema of IR.

Mannheim's work emphasised the potential of human beings in selecting their trajectory consciously and the importance of an imperative -utopia to impel us forward (Mannheim, 136: 77). It is only through completely grasping our interests, can we transition towards them, only through probing the present possibilities can one gain insights into the past and future (Mannheim, 1936: 81).

When interpreted in this context, Mannheim's analysis crucially revamps the debate between utopianism and realism. The frame of reference is repositioned from 'subjectivity' of utopianism to the subjective implications of realism catering to the concerns of the powerful. Realism commits the ontological fallacy of assuming that the claims which are unrealisable under the present order will remain so, in any other manifestation of order, hence repudiating any probability of change. The validity of the claims is put to test by prejudiced realists in favour of status quo. Their anxiety regarding change of any kind is manifested in the labelling of every approach that defies the present logic of organisation of world order as 'utopian'.

Realists cannot tolerate the plausibility of contrarian ideas turning into reality in the near future. Mannheim locates the importance of 'transcendent ideas' in felicitating utopian imagination and espouses the value of creative thinking that produces novel and unique ways of eliminating the bounds of prevailing order (Mannheim, 1936: 92). He puts forth a 'processual view of utopianism' that clearly points to the progressive and galvanising tendencies of utopian ideas. The complicated question however, emerges regarding the concreteness of this view of utopianism. The emphasis is on the process rather than the end state which sets apart processual utopianism from blue print utopias. In the depiction of processual utopia, there isn't any requirement for a 'telos' to define the nature and scope of its impact. In fact, Mannheim believes that the deterministic nature of blue print utopias results in their ossification as dominant ideologies (Mannheim, 1936: 113). Processual utopianism entails a dual element of thought and

action/praxis equipping individuals with agency to challenge the reality without confining to any prescribed form or desired end state.

Alas, mainstream IR scholars misapprehended the implications of Mannheim's ideas and were unsuccessful in grasping the core essence by relying solely on Carr's incomplete and one-sided reading. It would be erroneous conflating Mannheim's ideas with those of E.H. Carr but it goes beyond doubt that Mannheim influenced Carr's understanding. However, his arguments against utopianism mark a significant departure from the former's conception. According to Carr, the early liberals were labelled as utopian because their perspective didn't cater to the practical needs of the time period or consider the utility of balance of power as an explanation to end conflict. For classical liberals, it was the apriori principles that governed their analysis of world politics (Carr, 1939: 212). The difficulty lay in the the teleological assumption preceding the analysis which led to envisioning of utopias without explaining their trajectory towards reality. Carr therefore designated utopianism as embryonic phase of a nascent science with the panacea suggested didn't cater to the logical inference drawn from the problem but rather a product of spiration (Carr, 1939: 237). The exuberance associated with utopianism was crushed with the advent of realism as a corrective against these visionary enterprises. Realism was seen as the endpoint of IR's maturation process, ushering in the era of imagination-less world politics.

However, ensuing realist writings have neglected the fact that Carr's criticism was misdirected towards liberal internationalists as they were side-tracked for instating their belief in 'harmony of interests' and not because of utopian imagination of a better world. He rebuked the 'harmony of interests' thesis as a chicanery intended to elevate the status of the powerful states; it was a camouflage for their vested and privileged interests in the world system (Carr,1939: 119). He was more concerned about the disintegration of the entire edifice underlying the putative claim for harmony among those who emerged victorious at Versailles rather than the professed imaginary of a utopian world.

Mannheim's dialectical approach that influenced Carr professed a complementarity between realism and utopianism, an observation often overlooked by

contemporary IR scholars. In the *Twenty Years Crisis*, Carr made the prognostic claim for the demise of utopianism, notwithstanding the crucial role it has come to play in social sciences. He overtly recognised the significance of utopianism and how social sciences would never be able to isolate themselves from it (Carr, 1939: 204). He also fleetingly mentioned the dialectical relationship between realism and utopianism recommending the latter is required for counteracting the 'barrenness of the former'(Carr, 1939: 117). He attacked utopianism for being naïve simultaneously inscribing realism as being sterile (Carr, 1939: 122). In the absence of the utopian component, Carr believed that realism would fall prey to deterministic tendencies and become ineffectual in transforming the trajectory of events (Carr, 1939: 131). He posited the necessity of utopianism for revealing the 'Spartan struggle for power' advocated by realists and to counter the improbability of an international society as merely illusory rather than plausible.

The dialectical relationship between realism and utopianism is of paramount significance to the argument that is being made here. Ken Booth (1991) has extensively probed into the ambivalence in Carr's writings on the issue. Booth asserts that Carr was a 'utopian realist' (Booth, 1991: 528) who was a proponent of extending the community beyond national borders. He saw potential in the symbiotic relationship between realism and utopianism which was a pre-requisite for effective political action. One must be wary of eulogising either realism or utopianism at the expense of the other, since one would be stifled by reality to make any substantive changes while other would be too idealistic to provide the necessary foregrounding in reality to actualise these changes. This relationship of dialecticism between utopianism and realism is grounded on an ethical and critical evaluation of the present which sees the two as complementary rather than oppositional. There is a constant juggling between the immanent and the transcendent elements since an immanent analysis sans utopia would be nugatory whilst utopia without an immanent component is void (Booth, 1991: 538).

Thus, reality and utopia are discrete yet provide significant perspectives on matters of concern in world politics. The scope and intensity of claims and promises are magnified by the antithetical equation between realism and utopianism with each offering an enhanced understanding of the international system. Therefore, the preponderant claim

regarding complete obliteration of utopian thinking in later IR works, drawing on Carr is gratuitous. For an exhaustive reading of Carr suggests the opposite as it accords a significant role for imagination in world politics to thwart the vapidity of realism. His main objection as discussed above, didn't hinge upon the 'better vision' for the world by liberal internationalists but concentrated on the 'harmony of interests' supposition that surreptitiously coded the intentions of the powerful states. He was sceptical of universal interests as they only clocked the interests of the powerful shaped by the circumstances at hand. His work then is deeply reflective and influenced by the spirit of his time. Thus, only tangentially, one can link Carr's attack on utopianism; considering his statement regarding the soundness of political thought being dependent on segments of both utopia and reality (Carr,1939: 184). He asserted that the study of politics must be concerned with not only 'what is' but what 'ought to be' (Carr, 1939:54).

Another distinguished scholar and one of prominent pioneers of realist thought, Hans Morgenthau engaged with utopianism in a different manner. In his polemical work *Politics Among Nations* (1948), he engaged with the concept of human nature in an intricate and unparalleled manner in International Relations, which he thought of as the starting point for political realism. Borrowing heavily from anthropology, Morgenthau asserted that 'politics was governed by objective laws that were rooted in human nature' (Morgenthau, 1948: 4) His nuanced insights into the domain of human nature would contribute to the burgeoning interest in theorising *vis-à-vis* the self and understanding the eclipse of idealism from the discipline. With the advent of neorealism propagated by Kenneth Waltz (1979), and its subsequent ubiquity in the discipline, Morgenthau's insights into human nature were seen as increasingly anachronistic and problematic for a rigorous and parsimonious theory building.

Morgenthau's premised his posture against realism on what later came to be noted as the 'first image analysis' by Waltz. The reasoned and optimistic imagery of human nature postulated by utopianism was counteracted by the insatiable and innate human desire to dominate and control power: *animus dominandi* by Morgenthau. He delineated the realm of politics from morality and apprised against reposing too much faith in human goodness (Morgenthau, 1948:6). He disdained human beings as being perfectible,

a view advocated in Kant's philosophy. His views are essentialist, drawing on the bio-psychological desires common to all men. IR theory according to him, was disparate from the naive utopianism which he labelled as 'prejudiced and wishful thinking' and rather emphasised focusing on the objective reality (Morgenthau, 1948:37). He merely reinstated the argument against utopianism as being 'escapist' by not dealing with reality as it is. Thus, the utopian desire for peace was trivialised as misplaced and fallacious; not fit to be executed in a world full of chaotic, manipulative and power hungry men.

Such a reductionist understanding of human nature has its genesis in Thomas Hobbes's (1651) account of 'state of nature' where life of man is 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short'. The caveat lies in Morgenthau's failure to identify the arbitrariness that taints such forms of theorising about human nature. In postulating about human nature western political philosophers have often extrapolated certain negative traits and generalised across human species. J.S. Mill's (1859) categorisation of human nature as a 'poor thing' and Machiavellian depiction of human nature as 'fickle, egoistic, cowardly and acquisitive' in his classical work *The Prince* (1532) are only case in point towards the negative attributes associated with human beings. T

he treatment of human nature as unchanging and ahistorical does not qualify as 'scientific' scholarship, something that Morgenthau espoused for. The negative connotations of human nature have been challenged vehemently by the Renaissance writings of John Locke (1689) and Immanuel Kant (1781) and more recently by the post-modernist thinkers like Michel Foucault (1961,1975). The difficulty with relying on totalising accounts of human nature is that they promote oppressive and unjust institutions. Thus generalising about human nature as essentialist, without taking into cognisance the diversity of human beings would reflect in poor theorising. Karl Marx (1848) advocated for a comprehensive analysis of historical relationships between individuals rather than basing historical analysis on the essence of human nature.

The palpable point of inquiry arising from the previous discussion is what characterises Morgenthau's conception of human nature as 'objective' rather than utopian fiction? This holds true for gauging the verifiability of the ontological features mentioned

by Hobbes of his 'state of nature' as a 'condition of war of man against man' (Hobbes, 1651:31). The reliance on Hobbesian imagery by realists is a deeply reductionist and flawed project about understanding world politics. Hobbes' use of 'universalism' which gave rise to his scepticism and political absolutism lies at the heart of the epistemological theory of nominalism (Chris Brown, 2007: 412). Thomas Hobbes's Leviathan was itself an 'ideal' rather than a reflection of reality which would analogously lead to questioning of realism's insistence on the repudiation of utopian thought. As pointed by Scott Burchill, the anthropological apriori assumptions about human nature cannot be verified or tested and hence seem to be dogmatic assertions than objective claims (Burchill, 1996: 32).

Besides, the mainstream writings on Morgenthau's contribution often omit his compelling defence of the utopian thinking while discussing the transcendental nature of nation state. Morgenthau expressed something akin to utopianism in his writings on the requirements of contemplating about ingenious and imaginative structures of organisation including a supra-national community/world state moving beyond the nation state (Morgenthau, 1948: 245). In his later works, Morgenthau emphasised the necessity of an alternative from of organisational structure to curb the endless pursuit of power by nation states which could manifest as a world government (Morgenthau, 1960;1962;1979) . This view isn't in contrast to the utopian idea of envisioning different forms of world orders, however the caveat remained in making these realisable.

The last political thinker under consideration for understanding the incipient debate between realism and idealism is John Herz, who is also considered to be one of the most prominent authorities on classical realism. In his writings, he promulgated the idea of 'realist liberalism' (Herz, 1951:56) in order to meet the new global challenges that couldn't be resolved with the realist instruments; thus accepting the centrality of balancing realism and utopia. Richard K. Ashley (1988), discussed Herz's commitment to emancipatory appeal of realism by bringing in liberal/utopian ideas. Herz advocated for order, progress and justice in international politics and an interplay between idealism and realism for approaching problems in world politics. His work grapples with reconciling the idea of autonomous, self-directed improvement with the concerns of survival for

realism (Ken Booth, 2008: 213).

This leads to a complex and nuanced understanding of these scholars who rather than being typified as fatalistic were concerned with normatively compelling challenges and mitigating international politics; thus rearticulation of their ideas is a pre-requisite for shedding new light on the disciplinary history. A deeper engagement with these thinkers and their works forewarns in labelling classical realists as 'anti-utopian' . The writings of Carr, Morgenthau and Herz indicate their disdain towards a particular rendition of idealist thought rather than utopian discourse itself. Carr endorsed the function of utopianism in balancing the sterility of realism, Morgenthau espoused for moving beyond the nation state as the only viable form of organisation; thus thinking of novel forms of world order and Herz favoured an amalgamation of realism and utopianism in his concept of 'realist liberalism'. This reveals the exigency for bringing together realist and utopian strands of thinking in International Relations for expanding the space, impact and scope of research.

Realism, as it has evolved to be in the discipline does impede the re-invoking of utopian thought in IR theory. The defining feature of realism that is the anti-thesis of utopian thinking is the centrality of 'immutability thesis' which acts as a deterrent for any change in international politics. According to the immutability thesis, human nature and social structures arising from it are natural and unchangeable, remaining the same across time and space, thus making a strong case for preserving the *status quo*. This thwarts any attempts by autonomous individuals to shape their own reality, making human agency dissipate without any purpose. Both Carr and Morgenthau provide powerful accounts for preserving the *status quo* by defining world politics as timeless and recurring by either referring to the constraints levied by the existing forces in the world (Carr, 1939) or human nature (Morgenthau, 1948).

Through a litany of arguments realists put forth the contentious claim that political communities are unalterable and cannot escape the logic of power either through human nature or immutable systemic forces that recreate similar patterns of order acting on state interests. This leads to apocryphal precluding of any such ideas that challenge *the status quo* and believe in emancipation of human beings from the existing state

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structures. Realism in its current manifestation is diametrically irreconcilable with utopianism, embodying a preference for statis with its endemic features including war, poverty and suffering that are continuously perpetuating than progress and promise for a better future for mankind.

Fundamentally, the realist critique of utopianism is based on the claim that scholars need to engage with 'what is' rather than what 'ought/should be'. The primary point of departure between these two theories is that realists conflate 'is' to an unending pattern while believing that a 'cannot' is similar to a 'should not'. This is crucial distinction since if one 'cannot' work towards change in the present context doesn't imply that it would be the case always, impelling one to give up aspirations of better world. Similarly a normative commitment to change doesn't imply an apriori ground for always doing so. As Robert Cox (1981) points out, under the hegemonic realist paradigm IR theory is preoccupied with problem solving or system reproduction. Critical theory on the other hand is normatively charged with a desire for a different social and political order other than the prevailing one, thus opening to the possibilities of social transformation (Cox, 1981: 128). Realism fosters a sense of complacency through accepting the inequities embedded in the system and by deeming the international realm as one of 'repetition and recurrence'. This total acceptance of the existing system with all its failings and flaws in order to preserve order is immoral. Since the realist paradigm has been the accepted body of knowledge providing explanation for the causation of different international events in a parsimonious manner, utopian ontologies have been long discarded from the discipline.

Jacques Ranciere (2004) suggests that utopian theory performs the function of disagreement - it disrupts the current narrative of the 'distribution of the sensible'. It recognises the arbitrariness and artificiality of the structures for system maintenance. Patrick Hayden and Chamsy el-Ojeili (2009) delineated a tripartite enterprise for utopianism involving a) critiquing the exiting political structures, b) fabricating novel possibilities of organisation and c) averting any foreclosing of potential embedded in the present for the future.

There have been efforts to revive utopianism in International Relations in recent past. David Harvey's (2000) work employs critical methods of engagement within existing institutional frameworks. He purposefully redraws the contours of possibility and desirable forms of organising societies. Scholars in IR need to engage with emancipatory themes- notions of freedom, justice, normativity in self-reflective ways moving beyond the anarchical, power hungry discourse that drives the discipline overwhelmingly.

Similarly Patrick Hayden and Chamsy el-Ojeili (2009) asserted that globalisation is abound in the prospectives for major transformations around the world and IR scholars must theorise about such possibilities. Besides, there has been a resurgence in the cosmopolitan vision evident in the works of critical theorists like Ulrich Beck (1992, 1998, 2006), David Held (1995, 2003, 2010), John Rawls (1999) and Jürgen Habermas (1985, 1992) who have challenged the limitations placed by the existing structures. These self-reflective writings have impacted the discipline, by being obvious in their normative/ethical underpinning, advocating for change and new forms of engagement and thus providing a hope for utopian imagination in a discipline where it was written off too soon. These writings have liberated the discipline from the fetters of realism's logic of historical necessity and advocacy of immutability thesis by drawing on human agency in building a desirous future. This has expanded the horizons of the discipline by transcending the distinction between reality and imagination.

Utopian Imaginaries: Past, Present and Future

Gilles Deleuze (1968) contemplated on the question of organising human societies afresh and the role of anticipation and imagination in creating that which does not exist in the present moment. This is the salient feature of utopianism as it engages with critiquing the present, preventing marginalisation of alternative ideas and voices for future possibilities. The question of anticipating world order/ newer forms of arrangements animates theorists with the widening and intensification of globalisation. However, there is scepticism regarding the death of utopia due to the narrative being hijacked by neo-liberal narratives and globalisation. The contemporary global age is characterised by a multitude of views, beliefs and ideas thus making it interesting to explore theoretical interlinkages between globalisation and utopia.

The exploitative conditions under globalisation, the shifting parameters of security threats and the diversity of normative aspirations represented through the formidable political forces make it very difficult to provide for an available means for upholding world order. The commencement of any analysis relating social order, either in social theory or the discipline of International Relations is based on the edifice of a clear-cut distinction between order as 'fact' or 'value' (Andrew Hurrell, 2003: 23). In the first sense, social order implies stability and regularity of patterns which is contrasted to instability, chaos or lack of predictability. In the second sense, social order encapsulates a purposive blueprint infused with meaning, involving a specific set of aspirations, objectives and values, that lead to a particular conclusive end result.

In 1966, Raymond Aron in his influential work *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* enquired about the nature of international order in a profound way by questioning the conditions to circumvent destruction and live in a relatively well manner. Aron described living 'relatively well' in categorically minimalist terms. His definition of order meant obtaining 'the minimum conditions of coexistence' in the anarchical system of states (Aron 1966: 42). Since states were the principal actors involved in maintaining order international global order were synonymous under his schema. However, there have been significant changes in the character of international/global order with the booming of world economy, catastrophic impact of environmental changes and complex global governance structures mushrooming in various regions; resulting in state-centric system becoming increasingly obsolete.

The present dynamics of change and statics of continuity are so arresting as to highlight a number of crucial questions that will frame our grasp of what lies ahead. What do we mean by governance on a global scale? If governance connotes a system of rule, and if it is not sustained by an organised government, who makes and implements the rules? If ideational, behavioral, and institutional patterns interactively sustain established global orders, what causes them to change?

Jeffery Alexander (2006) observed that globalisation as the new dominant imaginary is in itself a distinct form of utopian characterisation. The tripartite sub themes

associated with globalisation - economic, political and cultural have multiple underpinnings with utopian narrative. We are experiencing unprecedented changes in these three spheres - economically, the world is progressing towards free trade and freedom of choice/consumption, cost effective production technologies and enmeshing of states in an overarching economic architecture creating a borderless world. In the political sphere, there has been weakening of the nation-state as the omniscient actor at the global level with simultaneous emphasis on universal human rights, world peace and multilateral governance mechanisms. Lastly, in the cultural sphere there is increased renegotiation between spatiality and citizenship with cosmopolitan citizenship and the idea of global village becoming vogue; unhindered interaction and constant connectivity leading to sharing o diverse cultures and rich heritages.

On the contrary, dystopian imaginaries have also been associated with globalisation identifying it with the rise to prominence of multi-national corporations, profit-maximisation, increasing wealth disparity and ecological degradation. Pierre Bourdieu (1998:124) calls it the rise of new imperialism with the advent of the American century. He aspires for a 'reasoned utopia' whereby the social relations aren't guided by economics and banker's fatalism but by caring for the larger good of humanity. In a similar vein, Immanuel Wallerstein (2004) calls for restrained, thoughtful and pragmatic evaluation of social systems for unlocking potentials for human creativity. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire* (2000) upholds the possibility of a utopian manifesto by presenting a sweeping neo-Marxist vision of the coming world order. They conclusively demonstrate how capitalism sows seeds of its own demise by producing diverse antagonisms. While engaging with history, Hardt and Negri provide new conceptual categories for theorising about emerging world order.

It is therefore important to delve into the relationship between utopianism and globalisation. Utopian imagination has an inescapable role in contemporary globalised politics and the inability to recognise so will seriously handicap our understanding of current social order. Similarly, our experiences of living in a globalised world have reshaped our engagement with utopian discourses.

The underlying question for studying utopia is to gauge its role and function in contemporary politics. Much of the twentieth century resistance towards utopianism stems from the negative connotation associated with the philosophical and politically failed experiments. There is an anxiety amongst the masses to experiment, the common people are disillusioned with dreams, often dreading that another utopia would invoke a totalitarian aftermath that would crush all difference and impose singularity of thought and action. The utopian impulse seems to be completely extinguished through the unbridled consumerism, triumph of liberal capitalism, ego-centric behaviour, state surveillance and the calamitous consequences of ecological degradation and technological utopias. Utopias have been eviscerated by twentieth century totalitarianism and there are suggestions for replacing utopias with protopias. There are varied theoretical possibilities regarding utopia to be explored at this conjuncture.

Alfredo Bonanno's 'Propulsive Utopia' written in 1987 argued strongly against deferral and transcendence positing a type of utopia which is actual and in the present. The idea of propulsion is located in relation to rejecting the limits imposed by the present. He makes a distinction between movement and the structure - utopias aren't part of the existing structure rather comprise of the socially generative forces/movement for becoming something (Bonanno,1987: 38). John Holloway further elaborates this by speaking of multiplicity of interstitial movements that proliferate rhizomatically (Holloway, 2010: 11). The important point to highlight here is that utopias are open ended struggles, already in existence.

The utopian visions that have ideological underpinnings veneer excess in a masquerading manner. This shouldn't lead us to abandon utopia as it is even more necessary in current times. The transcendence and overcoming of current structures including global capitalism, war, environmental devastation, poverty require imagination of alternative possibilities. Thus utopian impulse can't be discarded for life itself to be sustained. Mannheim succinctly put that the dismissal of fact reality-transcending elements would result in banality and static-ness, decaying of human will and objectification of man himself (Mannheim (1968: 236). The transcendence of existing time and social circumstances equips us better to deal with societal collapse and

breakdown. Ernesto Laclau (1990) describes utopianism as tentative in essence and adaptable to circumstances. Any attempts to concretise utopia results in foreclosure of heterogeneity and totalitarianism. The breakdown of fascist-communist regimes has given way to newer malaises brought about by capitalism and rise of fundamentalism accompanied by their exclusionary and oppressive impact.

International politics is currently witnessing a moment of great crisis. The impracticality and impossibility of utopianism has been condemned by numerous schools of thought. But should we lament the demise of social change imaginary? Roberto Unger (1998) writing against the background of widespread criticism claiming the utopias are unrealistic and the failure in our ability to envision structural change; insisted on the importance of 'visionary' element in sustaining and directing change (Unger, 1998:29). Utopias need to be seen as a necessity and filled with alternatives while acknowledging the impossibility of an end at the same time. On the other hand, Vincent Geoghegan's (1987) 'principle of prefiguration' highlights the continuity between present and future, therefore making utopia an integrated part of the present.

There is a need to embrace the cracks in the existing socio-politico-economic systems to expand the notion of utopian spaces. Utopias are grounded and informed by non-imaginary interactions between people and places. However, would visions of future that embrace failure be captivating? Attaining closure for speculative projects is necessary to get people involved in their making. For inspiring action and motivating people towards change, it is requisite to not think about failure of utopian imaginaries. Fredric Jameson (2005: 4–5) argues, that any utopian imaginary entails a commitment to closure. This results in an impasse between pledging closure for bringing change and any realisation of the same leading to absolutist tendencies. The argument regarding the dilemma between utopian thinking and totalitarianism is about inspiring social change while escaping oppressive totalitarian systems. The movement to and away from utopia is based on individual freedom and is jeopardised by either of the undertaking.

Authors of utopian narratives often put forward a harmonious society as an ideal. However, total harmony and agreement seem impossible in a diverse society. In order to

achieve their utopian end, such narratives will have to reconcile individual freedom and social order. The endangering of human rights and democratic order makes individuals anxious resulting in conceptualisation of alternative progressive imaginaries which also perform the function of opposing the hegemonic given order. However, there is always the underlying probability of these utopian visions turning hegemonic and coercive themselves; stifling any individuality and freedom of expression. A monolithic, universal and uncontestable alternative is deeply problematic, on the same lines as living under the oppressive status quo conditions.

Within the discipline of International Relations, Realism as the mainstream narrative, has for long successfully quelled any utopian or counter-hegemonic narratives to understand political reality by luring us to believe that it was the only logical and viable explanation. There is also a belief in pragmatism and gradual, piecemeal reform and change of the status quo, something referred to as protopian progress (Michael Shermer, 2015: 13). The two distinct responses to the problems faced by international society include - agreeing to the explanation provided by realism or demanding incremental change. These two fundamentally ignore the essence of utopia in shaping transformational politics which embodies not only hope for a better future but concrete action to realise that dream. Utopias signify interstices, liminal spaces; thresholds serving as transition points between the present world and that which will come to be.

It would be therefore useful for International Relations as a discipline to draw on the insights of political theorists like Chantal Mouffe (2005) who advocates the model of 'agnostic' politics in democracies with continuous challenge to the status quo. Mouffe abhors sedimented power and believes in ontological openness of each alternative, foreclosing any possibility for reaching a penultimate ending (Mouffe, 2005:45). This approach doesn't promote any finality in providing solutions rather acknowledges the ontological discontinuity ever present in the 'social' which can be utilised for multiple contestations of the given order. The ontological rigidity in International Relations has led to reification of certain theories thus marginalising other voices regarding the 'international'. The 'utopian impulse' could be grounded in human nature (Bloch, 1986); detailed designs for the future (De Gues, 1999) or act as a navigational ambit for

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changing the present (Unger, 1987). Similarly, the discipline of International Relations can borrow from David Harvey's concept of 'dialectical utopianism' embedded in both temporal and spatial possibilities (Harvey, 2000:196). The task at hand is to open conversation at multiple levels regarding transformations and radical reimaginings of both order and freedom. Dialectical utopianism is conscious of the need for order as well as the imperative to change and manages to finely draw a balance between the two. Similar undertakings could be initiated in the discipline of IR which has been impervious to the notion of an emancipatory future because of its fixation with status quo and order.

Utopian Knowledge: Creative Epistemologies of the Possible

This section elaborates on three pivotal benchmarks of the fictive mode of theorisation that can be utilised to appraise and gauge the dynamics of contemporary International Relations, which will also be alluded to in the conclusion. Firstly, the political is perceived as the process of becoming instead of being (Fredrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1887), Ernst Bloch (1909), and Michel Foucault (1972)). Secondly, there is inquisitorial emphasis on the prevailing categories and arrangements which qualifies as the critical-theoretical undertaking. Thirdly, fictive mode of theorisation , entails viewing the world as uncompleted, on-going, open- ended and in-progress, utopian project.

One of the most vital questions surrounding utopias is regarding their definitional incongruence. This involves analysing whether utopias are self-contradictory. Utopias manifest themselves in various forms and patenting them to be logically consistent and empirically possible only narrows down the scope and meaning intended to achieve. Imagining emphasises the dimension of fantasy, of contemplation and abstraction, of drawing from a wide range of different contexts and usages to understand (but also to visualise, sense, or form) what has been, what is, and what could be. As such, imagining constitutes a mainstay of utopian writing and practice (Jacoby, 2005: 22; Moylan, 1986). It is also a quotidian aspect of the way all of us conceptualise, moving between different contexts to imagine what a term might mean; feeling or thinking about concepts in relation to others that partner, complicate, or oppose it. As such, the conceptual imagination remains on the move.

Actualisation, by contrast, emphasises the dimension of presence or manifestation, as concepts inhere within systems, structures, and other material arrangements. Yet particular concepts are not actualised in isolation. Just as imagining concepts depends on other linked terms – those that constitute the concept and place, differentiate, and oppose it – actualisation also depends on a web of social practices. Incorporating actualisation into our understanding of concepts emphasises the importance of materiality and practice.

Actualisation and imagining do not take shape as discrete separate worlds but simultaneously interconnect in multiple, complexly tangled ways. Potential foregrounds the material conditions of the present, what is actualised and evident, yet it simultaneously depends on imagining the future and what the present could become. In this way, it resonates with utopian studies' orientation toward anticipation and hope. Identifying potential, however, requires interpretation. Potential may necessarily carry with it a degree of force that shapes change over time, but potential needs to be recognised and found. In part, this is because realisation of an imagined future is contingent and uncertain; in part it is because imagining both the present and the future is speculative and open to contestation.

It is puerile and precarious to get swayed by the utopian dogma of attributing the evil in human beings to imperfect social institutions, suggesting to model better institutions, a hope which may serve as the basis for totalitarian ideologies. It is equally insidious to consider the unfeigned human nature to be invariably selfish, greedy, hostile and lustful for power and domination, denying any scope for friendship, love, trust, fraternity and sacrifice. By depicting human nature as fallible and imperfect as the 'real' expression of the true human selves, any anomaly to this behaviour is considered as deceptive. The works of Thomas Hobbes (1651), Sigmund Freud (1923;1930) and Jean Paul Sartre (1938;1943), expounded on the natural behaviour of human beings as monstrous and inevitable. The two images - one of corruptible human nature guided by greed and selfishness and second a society based on perfect institutions encouraging solidarity among individuals compel for serious evaluation of our thought processes.

One could bring to use the Kantian idiom (1781) regarding the regulative rather than the constitutive feature of human nature. Kant advocated a veritable progression of reason- an advance through the unrelenting antagonism between human need for autonomy and individualism and the reliance on social interaction for actualisation of his potential. The friction between individual freedom and sociability, one's desires and aspirations and maintenance of social order, reason and emotion are productive for understanding social systems at large. The duality of temperaments – sceptical and utopian, therefore co-exist, perpetually in conflict for overpowering the other. Both of these are required for continued thriving of human civilisation. The triumph of utopian mentality would result in totalitarian ruins while an undisputed sceptical mind-set would lead to complete stagnation and inertia of social forces. These two irreconcilable forces are therefore regulatory forces, each required for civilizational purposes.

The imagining of possible alternatives is one of the foremost functions of utopian theory. Zygmunt Bauman, stated that utopias relativise the present by undermining the fact that things are inevitable and immutable by articulating possibilities of different roadmaps (Bauman, 1976: 13). In a similar vein, Barbara Goodwin insists that the primary function of utopian thinking is to promote human happiness by distancing from the present conditions and developing alternative paths for existence (Goodwin and Taylor 1982: 207). Andre Gorz (1999) considers utopias to be significant in shedding light on the futuristic possibilities in the context of present state of affairs directing the course of action through providing various probable outcomes.

Karl Mannheim's analysis of utopia entailed the demolishing of the prevailing order substituting it with more humane and just one (Mannheim, 1979: 173). Terry Eagleton advocates that the fictional worlds of utopian writings act as a tool for enacting change by highlighting the dismal state of affairs in the world we inhabit. He puts forth the point that the possibilities one envisions as alternatives are deeply influenced by one's positionality (Eagleton, 2000a: 33). Utopias involve 'hope' and the conditionality for fulfilment of that hope drives societies towards change and betterment.

Ruth Levitas postulates that utopias help us in permeating the blank spaces both in reality and in fantasy. The vacuum is occupied by the imaginative content and creativity (1990a: 189). Lucy Sarginson holds that utopian writing fractures the established protocols and norms and in doing so create novel spaces for expressing radically different aspects of being (Sarginson, 1996: 42). They challenge the constant and immutable social reality by offering alternatives that result in the readers' estrangement with the present; distancing her from it while making the unknown and distant as a lucrative alternative.

Utopian texts are repository of rumination over human nature and its motives, failings and prospects. While International Relations has predominantly relied on the Machiavellian and Hobbesian conceptions of human nature, it would be compelling to look at the utopian conceptualisation of human nature. There is depreciatory note associated with utopianism – it is usually tainted as impractical or unendurable. Scholars such as Karl Popper (1945;1957;1962), Hannah Arendt (1958;1961), John Gray (2007) and Hans Achterhuis (2010) have warned against the totalitarian tendencies of utopian projects. Karl Popper particularly writing in *Conjectures and Refutations* elaborated on the inherent authoritarianism in utopianism with an underlying violent impulse. He criticises the notion of 'utopian engineering' which required a centralised dictatorial control for achieving an ideal state (Popper, 1957:121). According to Popper, the plurality of interests, irrationality of human behaviour and inevitability of conflict make it almost impossible to realise any utopian visions (Popper, 1957: 132). He thus proposed piecemeal changes - small and gradual progression towards a better society.

In the context of metamorphosis of modern politics there are five rudimentary changes that need to be analysed:

1. the expanding globalised world economy whose activities make it increasingly difficult for governments to control national economies within their sovereign frontiers (Bauman, 1998);
2. the upsurge in technological innovation, skill development and quantum leap in information dispersion have replaced earlier patterns of job market in an unprecedented manner (Castells, 1996);

3. the recedence of tradition and convention from public life with the unfolding of individualism whereby people identified with themselves and others in a radically different manner (Beck, 1992);

4. the disintegration of erstwhile structures which were the foundations for welfare of people in general (Giddens, 1990);

5. the emergence of ecological concerns and the increasing calls for integrating environmental politics in the democratic dialogue among nation-states (Beck, 1998).

Anthony Giddens (1990) proposes an alternative to conducting politics sighting it as example of 'utopian realism'. By 'utopian', Giddens means to draw attention to the fact that his vision is out of the ordinary; by 'realistic', he means to stress that his ideas are rooted in actually existing social processes, particularly the emergence of individualism, and related to common foundational values (Giddens, 1990: 76). Ulrich Beck (1992) emphasises the displacement of older norms and values governing individuals and holding together societies with simultaneous re-embedding into modern bonds of entanglement whose histories are enmeshed with the old (Beck, 1992:127-28).

These writings have co-opted the terminology of utopianism by their commitment to alterity and social hope. Zygmunt Bauman calls for 'collective utopias' which emerge from contemplating and choosing from a range of options (Bauman, 1992: xxv). This involves casting off defined roles and hierarchies in society with a form of generative politics allowing for individuals to exercise their agency actively towards fostering change. This position negates exclusivity and perpetuity and rather focuses on the critical spaces emanating from the fissures in the society in the present context.

Utopias stem from discontentment and continuously pursue creative endeavours towards ameliorating the given conditions. Both in thought and praxis, utopias entail creative input for materialising into reality. They resist petrifaction and provide momentum for change, giving a purpose and sense of direction to various socio-political agendas. Utopia cannot be confined to one discipline as generic expectations are but another set of ordering structures that it rejects as invalid to its reality. It is, above all, resistant to closure and it celebrates process over product. Instead of laying the blueprint

for an ideal society, transgressive utopianism occupies the contemporaneous sphere of action. In this space, creative thinking and activity is possible. Tom Moylan (!986) developed the concept of transgressive utopianism as critical utopianism. Critical utopianism is considered to be critical in dual denotation - it engages in critique drawing on the Enlightenment tradition and secondly it entails a certain weight in terms of opposition, something he borrows from Gramsci by addressing it as 'historic bloc of resistance' (Moylan, 1986:132). To conclude, transgressive utopianism can be identified with three principal characteristics : firstly, it disregards established statutes and ruptures boundaries. Secondly, it questions paradigms and thirdly, it establishes novel conceptual and political openings.

Ernst Bloch describes the 'ontology of *not-yet being*', as quintessentially disruptive to epistemologies of the obviously stated (Bloch, 1923: 212). In 'Man as a Possibility' (1968) Bloch acknowledges that we are encompassed omnisciently by possibilities and are not merely living in the present. He equates living in the present with inhabiting a prison with no leeway for liberty of imagination. The ontological realness of our reality is dependent on the possibilities emanating from the present moment and the present holds for myriad of possibilities waiting to be realised within itself. The reality contains an unfinished; not yet component which is the underlying basis for opening up the realm of possibility and constitute fictivity[1].

International Relations theory is mainly concerned with controlling fictions- from human nature to moral codes governing state behaviour whose primary aim is to foreclose possibility. Theorising in itself requires world- creating, therefore rather than discouraging fiction one must self-consciously engage in ethico-political fictive claims about the world around us. By engaging with utopias in this manner, there is always an element of the present as well as that which is on the horizon. Utopias are disruptive and creative in both text and praxis. Ernst Bloch attributes the utopian will to not strive endlessly and be content with the immediate manifestation of human creativity (Bloch,

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[1] Fictivity differs from fiction in the sense that fiction provides for future oriented roadmaps/blueprints while fictive theories seek to articulate futures through anticipatory possibilities (Susan McManus, 2005: 7).

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1986: 32). He elaborates on the 'aporias of realisation' which implies utopia containing totalising tendencies with extreme modes of realisation for altering the existing reality. It is important to highlight that metamorphosis requires maintaining and mushrooming of temporal and spatial acknowledgment of alterity and critique.

Conclusion

With the predominance of neoliberalism at the world level, its ideological contenders seem to be annihilated, thus resulting in pillorying utopianism as naïve and unsustainable. Goodwin and Taylor (1982: 207) attribute utopian theory to be channelled towards achieving human felicity. Under current circumstances, there is even more wariness and circumspection regarding the objectives of utopia. As Fredric Jameson (2005:84) puts it, utopia must be expressed in palpable and tangible ways as ever advancing without being fatalistic and debilitating. The language in which utopias are expressed hence plays a pivotal role in making them seem viable and pragmatic. Erik Olin Wright posits the need for 'real utopias' founded in the human potential, not obsess about the destination but rather forge obtainable goalposts (Wright 2005: 9).

There has been a proliferation of utopias including 'relative utopias' (Camus 1991), 'dialectical utopias' (Harvey 2000), 'open utopias' (Heller 1984), and 'iconoclastic utopias' (Jacoby 2005) which pursue in altering the configuration of the globalised world order in an unprecedented manner by challenging, defying and escaping the forces and movements that limit the existing scope of politics (Jameson 2005: 211). This therefore counters the earlier omission of fictive, normative and imaginative facets of political and social theory and embraces a reflexive, pluralistic and explicitly politico-normative mode of theorisation.

There is caution against foundationalism and determinism in these new modes of analysis with a commitment towards utopian desire for social change, emancipation and the extension of prospects for creating world order beyond the purview of realism. The new utopianism entails repudiating finality, perfection and culmination of an imagination,

rather it upholds multiplicity and fragility of transformation, remaining open to the immanent forces of the future. Thus, Bloch's appealing 'principle of hope' is still a prescriptive guide for utopias of changing times- leading for better and improved ways of living.

Chapter Five

Traversing the Terrain of IR: Building Inclusive Foundational Stories

"The lack of accord between different strands of social theory is merely reflective of the underlying ambivalence of human life; the immanent polemical discourse is a mirror to the actual reality and our endeavour as social scientists is to navigate through this."

Chris Brown (1994:224)

"We have to learn to discern the unrealised opportunities which lie dormant in the recesses of the present."

Andre Gorz (1980:24)

The discipline of International Relations reverberates with pressures, uncertainties, predicaments, incongruities and possibilities inherent in the contemporary world politics. The discipline has conventionally responded to these through construction of dichotomous frameworks for reference illustrated by the subject/object, fact/value, domestic/international, self/ other and the realist/idealist binaries pervasive in the vocabulary of the field. Besides, by centring its loci around Europe through linear progression of history, construction of universal categories and an essentialist reading of knowledge claims makes it effectively exclusionary. It is important to contextually place IR as a discursive microcosm reflective of the larger Enlightenment enterprise of presenting reality in a rational, homogenous and objective manner. The underpinning of being relevant and a legitimate exercise of knowledge production shaped the disciplinary domain of the subject. The international realm is deemed to be repetitive and recurrent due to the reliance on structural anarchy as an explanatory factor by the dominant theories in IR. This results in a myopic vision of the world, because of the emphasis placed on detachment and objectivity and logically abrogating all responsibility while theorising about the vicissitudes of the world.

Disciplinary boundaries and gatekeeping practices make IR insular from engaging critically with the myriad challenges posed by the contemporary world

order. The issues, actors and concepts appropriated as universal are surreptitiously coded in the language of the dominant. The mainstream theories administer and orchestrate the space for knowledge production, often embodying grand narratives, failing to address the complexities of the global world. There is an urgent need to move beyond the procrustean knowledge production ossified by the mainstream theories in IR to move towards rearticulating the subjectivities and diverse subject hoods that compose the 'international'.

What do we mean by 'meaning'? This chapter proclaims to create awareness regarding the schemas of representation and the epistemological, ontological and methodological consequences of following such practices. In doing so, it advances the claim for expanding the ambit of IR and the research conducted within it to include the 'differences' around us. The 'worlding'[1] practices are pre-requisite in laying the foundations of the discipline and the chapter concludes with the implications of critically evaluating what it means to undertake research in IR beyond the existing conceptualisations and categorisations leading to experiencing world in multitudinous ways. The first section of the chapter delves into expanding the meaning making processes in International Relations, while the next section outlines the role of historical narratives in shaping the discipline. The last section provides for a detailed analysis of the intersections between the three concepts of tradition, progress and utopia.

Teleology in International Relations: Making Sense of 'Meaning'

The scholars pursuing International Relations seem to have a compulsion to name time in order to create some semblance of progress. From the maelstrom of histories, they conjure periods, epochs and eras, endow them with connotation and invest them with meaning. They assert what 'then' was about, struggle to define 'now' and speculate about where contemporary trajectories might lead. The sequence of living before modernity, being modern and then transcending modernity reveals the linear logic that underlies the flow of meaning through history: one set of meanings – a

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[1] Arlene B. Tickner, David Blaney and Inanna Hamati-Ataya (2012) coined the term in IR to explore the role of geo cultural factors, institutions and academic practices responsible for creating the concepts, epistemologies and methodologies through which knowledge is produced. It highlights the relevance of positionality in terms of both producing and consuming knowledge.

zeitgeist, a spirit of the age, a 'here and now' – gives way to a successor. A new age is supposedly defined, one that follows clearly from that which preceded it. In International Relations, for example, the Cold War has given way to a somewhat more ambiguous present, yet one whose inhabitants want to define it in relation to previous configurations of geopolitics as a 'post-Cold War era'.

Some visions, and Hegel's (1805; 1816; 1835) was one of them, posit a trajectory to history – a final meaning towards which being is compulsively driven. In this teleology, history has an end. Western epistemologists and social theorists have engaged in a spate of history-ending in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Where Hegel identified its termination in the Prussian state, Fukuyama (1992) later found its expression in the apparent universalisation of the liberal-democratic model. These visions are, in other words, tied to particular 'ways in the world', inherently normative projects that express a desired configuration of knowledge, culture and morality – from which, supposedly, stems the engine of history. There is a destination in mind here, an institutional form, perhaps, that will embody the Spirit and mark its culmination.

Hegel, his follower Fukuyama (1992) and the dominant theorists of IR – particularly those working in a neo-realist mode – all find that good manifests in our time; for them it speaks to us through the trappings of the liberal nation-state, the sine qua non of modern IR. The seemingly inexorable global drift towards this institution – defined by its proponents as progress, that is as 'forward movement' in history – provides further evidence of its messianic properties. Less clearly articulated, however, is the extent to which this process relies on retro spectres; that is, hauntings from previously defined eras whose terms of reference define and constrain the possibilities of what might come after.

What emerges then, is a sense of how meaning is necessarily a relational concept, one whose contours are inextricably linked to conceptions of the past, the ambiguities of the present, and the interaction of these two in an unsure future. Meaning is thus inherently discursive and hermeneutic. The first of these teaches us that in understanding how it comes about, and the myriad forms it assumes, we must pay careful attention to the conditions of its emergence and articulation. How do power and knowledge interact to make certain meanings possible, even desirable, and

to render others 'nonsensical' or dangerous? In this sense, there is a parallel between meaning and theory, and Robert Cox's (1981) famous dictum regarding IR theory can be usefully recast as a reminder that every meaning is for someone and for some purpose. The relational quality of meaning hence requires us to read the social world (societies, communities, identities) not as the bearer of any given meaning, but rather as a crucible in which competing conceptions of meaning – stories and accounts about the world and what it means – mingle together and contest each other.

The hermeneutic dimension of meaning, on the other hand, requires us to delve more deeply into the interplay of subjectivity, interpretation and phenomenology. It asks us to pay attention to the locatedness of subjects in discursive fields and how meaning derives from experience(s). The essential contingency of meaning, as it emerges from the approach outlined above, signals the need for caution when it comes to the idea of a conclusion. Closure, as the attempt to fix meaning, must be seen not as a decisive resolution as to a final and correct rendering of 'what it is all about', but rather as a practice that seeks to privilege a particular account of the world to the exclusion of others. Alterity and the concomitant responsibility towards the other that it engenders are the foundations of a rather different conception of ethics than tends to circulate in IR circles. Responsibility towards the other is not founded here on a premise of presence, or of what the other 'is' rather in otherness alone.

Why Study Meaning in the Context of IR?

IR in its present form is a product of the concerns of, essentially, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These centuries, at least in Europe, have been characterised by many and varied discussions about what we might term 'meaning'. At its most obvious, this has manifested itself in the great 'isms' – liberalism, realism, constructivism, nationalism, fascism, socialism, communism and so on. All of these have been raised by their practitioners to the level of a philosophy of being, way beyond a system of mere practice, a replacement, usually explicitly, for the God who is said to be 'dead' under the 'progressive' project of modernity.

This has in turn led to a regular resurgence in philosophy and politics of attempts to explain what might have replaced God. Phenomenological thinking like

that outlined above requires a philosophical and political engagement. Particularly in the twentieth century, we saw the blurring of barriers between categories of thought and practice. We are no longer concerned with the 'isms' of the great ideologies. Various kinds of 'post-modernisms' are now said to have replaced the old certainties of Enlightenment 'foundations', thus questioning the very idea and meaning of progress in history. There is a widespread feeling that history and IR theory are uneasy cohorts, which is as much the fault of historians as theorists. Partly this arises from an understandable feeling that history was often abused by those who have used it to their own vile ends. Partly it arises from the problem of 'whose' history we are to be privileged. Doyle sums this last point up as 'Who or what are we?' But as he also points out in the desire to cover the 'larger issues' there is the danger that an ahistorical theory of IR will surrender 'the particularities of the moment and the individual' (Doyle, 1997: 22–4).

We live and derive our sense of meaning through these intangibles, expressed in stories about which we all share some degree of understanding, not through the mere exercise and experience of political power. One way of approaching myth is to examine the 'rotation' of myths in the general consciousness. A simple example of this might be the rise, decline and second coming of the liberal myth of the market. In 1914 it reigned supreme, by 1939 Polanyi and many others had declared it dead, now it is supreme again, but for how long? Thus, progress becomes a myth; a chimerical belief to be realised as the ultimate goal of human societies.

Modernity: The Crossroads Between Tradition and Progress in IR

The theme of modernity is particularly relevant for International Relations as a discipline to juxtapose the conceptions of various theoretical paradigms on their understanding of modernity. Notably, there are two broad patterns of analysis that emerge from the extensive discursive discussions on modernity. Firstly, the modern period is presented as an improvement over the earlier traditional epochs that were characterised by superstitions and credulous myths, which circumscribed the lives of individuals with homogeneity and rigidity. It thus represents a more positive and sanguine account of the modern world and its accomplishments in contrast to the previous periods in history. The second interpretation is ominous and pessimistic as it emphasises the costs entailed due to the obvious successes of modernity.

The alienation of people from their anchors like culture and tradition, the corrosion of values and sense of morality and the endless flux due to dismantling of the natural order has pushed the world into a state of atrophy and degeneration. From this vantage point, modern societies are oscillating in a state of persistent unpredictability with no ties guiding and holding them together, with people stupefied under the omniscient control of the liberal, bureaucratic state which in turn is shaping their subjectivities. The latter position has its intellectual lineages in the writings of scholars like Leo Strauss, Hannah Arendt, Theodor Adorno and Michel Oakeshott.

The conservative position, attributed to the thinkers mentioned above can be attributed to traditionalists in the field who read history, interpret texts and frame knowledge in a similar manner thus having wide reaching implications for the study of International Relations. Thus it is pertinent to bring to fore the marginalised discursive dimension of modernity within the discipline to establish the philosophical and historical context for contemporary international relations. It is crucial to critically investigate the pre-dominant narrative of linear, rational progress associated with modernity within the mainstream writings in IR. This frame of reference comprehends modernity in mainly developmental terms, it is seen as a movement from ignorance and reliance on myths to scientific advancements and use of rationality, from being uncivilised and barbarian to civilised and democratic, from being conformist and constricted by lack of choice to the advent of liberalism and free markets.

The mainstream political philosophy and social sciences have predicated the perennial questions concerning humanity on this image of modernity, including issues relating to inter-subjective relationships between individuals, dilemmas confronting the past and present and unfurling the potentialities of future. The resulting narrative of modernity is shaped by the remoteness of modern subjects from their predecessors, in the pre-modern times. A sequential model of development, also known as the stages of growth is applicable across socio- economic, historical and knowledge production domains. Under the aegis of this model, the rational subject confronts and resolves all the problems faced by him in the different realms.

A clarification on the use of the nomenclature of the terms modernity and modernism is proffered in the following section. It is pertinent to apprehend that the

conception of modern isn't necessarily associative with a specific epoch or a precise historical period. Instead, it is a compound set of interpretive practices, with their origins in the dichotomies and dualisms associated with the Enlightenment period in the west. Hardt and Negri argue that modernity entailed the discarding of transcendence by Western Europe and embracing immanence in philosophy and political/social thought (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 69). This led to the rupturing of the medieval order which was based on transcendental authority. As Hardt and Negri explain, the power of creation that was exclusively consigned to the realm of divine/God now was brought to earth with man being at the centre of producing knowledge (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 73).

The two broad philosophical underpinnings are compelling conduits for understanding the preponderant narrative around modernity. With its inception in the Descartes notion of 'cogito ergo sum'[2], the first strand is centred around the post-Cartesian thought which advocated that all knowledge was embodied, as the mind cannot be separated from the corporeal. The second strand is inevitably interwoven to the first and concerns with the development of Newtonian physics in the seventeenth century which implied that the rational man could respond to the vicissitudes of an external reality. Modernity therefore necessitated a particular way of discursively organising and framing the reality which entailed creation of binaries and dichotomised premises to grant human knowledge its indubitable grounding. This cardinal principle was the idea of progress, pivotal to all of western political philosophy, according to which the ascent of rational man was interpreted in relation to the distance from the metaphysical traditions and primitive societies.

The dominant narrative of modernity is the story of progress, with the evolving of human ability to rationalise. However, this conceptualisation of modernity contains an inherent paradox in itself. The incongruity is reflective in the triumph of distancing from the pre-modern world and its primitive practices including idealism and metaphysics however at the same time human knowledge is predicated on the history, culture and language of the pre-modern times. Thus, in detaching itself from the legacy of the pre-modern period, the contradiction arises due to the

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[2] It is a Latin proposition that translates into- I think therefore I am. This is the foundation for all western philosophy as it purported to form a secure grounding of knowledge.

foundationalism of pre-modern times, which reigns at the ontological core.

This paradox has a significant role in the current discussion around modernity as it is suffused with implications for the present power hierarchies in the world. Modernity is thus said to have privileged the experience of the 'white west' and in doing so obscured the coercive, inhumane practices like that of colonialism on which western hegemony was constructed. It is suffused in modes of thinking that validate the power asymmetries of the contemporary world order.

Many thinkers from Fredrich Nietzsche to Theodor Adorno have observed this paradoxical faith in foundationalism to be at the core of the modern undertaking to oppose any differences or variations in human life. It is therefore crucial to understand that these pre-modern traditions can't be simply dismissed and have critical potentialities embedded in them. These have been marginalised and silenced from the self-glorifying accounts of 'global' portrayed by the dominant theories of realism and its successor neo-realism. It is important to facilitate a broader understanding of history to illustrate how people think and act, influenced by the past which seemingly goes beyond the orthodox principles of IR theory.

Bruno Latour contends in his work *We Have Never Been Modern* (1991) that modern western practices of knowledge are confined to a Cartesian divide with distinctions drawn between fact/value, human/non-human, nature/culture, mind/body which in turn facilitates the modern agenda of representing reality as monolithic and coherent. A detailed analysis of these practices would reveal the façade created by these divisions; these are illusions created to propagate the modernist agenda. The argument regarding the advent of science and reason changing the world irrevocably, is also challenged by Latour who argues that modernity is a matter of faith. His study blurs the constructs of nature and culture as distinct categories by formulating them as entwined in a multiplicity of hybrid relationships that makes it untenable to separate them.

These distinctions are constitutive of modernity and questioning and overthrowing them requires the reworking of our mental landscapes. Latour proposes the plurality of modes of existence by repudiating the distinction between objects and subjects (Latour, 1991: 143). Other scholars including Phillipe Descola (1994),

Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (1996) and De Sousa Santos (2016) have accentuated the myth of universality attributed to modernity while bringing into picture the epistemologies from the global south. Others including Anibal Quijano (1971) and Immanuel Wallerstein (1973) trace the origins of the singular narrative of the modern world to the conquest of America, which was the constitutive act in forming the modern world system. Many communities don't distinguish as rigidly and establish the modern hierarchies between human and non-human by emphasising the co-existence and diversity of life.

The modern common sense argues in favour of a singular, stable reality so deeply entrenched in rationalist thinking that it renders different cosmologies providing an alternative view as irrelevant. Scientific methods, considered to be superior to other ways of investigating reality are human constructs and therefore make the world in their own image, the performative element is crucial in highlighting the singularity and boundedness of the modern world. A closer examination of the monolithic doctrine of reality shows that science has played a crucial role in forwarding the colonial agenda by extinguishing alternative realities and indeed is a potent manifestation of colonial power. The effacing and quarantining of plural worlds by mainstream assumptions has long remained unacknowledged in IR theory.

For a genuinely plural and international discipline, one must envisage methodological commitments beyond the western, scientific model. This will include asking germane questions like what qualifies and constitutes knowledge about the international, who has the legitimacy to speak and is their equal visibility for all part of the global system in the practices of the discipline. Re-contouring IR would imply moving beyond the material concerns and investigating their social implications in terms of knowledge production. The wilful amnesia enveloping the colonial heritage of the discipline, reinforces the mainstream claims of value neutrality and objectivity through distancing the subject from the object. IR speaks from the core, about the whole, with there being little attempt to bridge the divide, making the discipline neither international nor reflexive in its own practices.

Rupturing Coherent Theories: A Melange of Post-Modernist Ideas

The evolution of the discipline of IR can be identified with the successive clashes

between opposing theories, also known as the trope of 'great debates' resulting in Manichean ordeals to maintain identity and propagate their respective assumptions as the only credible manner of understanding the world. A cursory glance at these debates would help in grasping the formative, constitutive genealogy of the discipline. These debates can be delineated as: idealism vs. realism in the 1930s; traditionalism vs. scientism in the 1960s; the inter-paradigmatic debate between neo realism and neo liberalism in the late 1970s and positivists vs. post positivists in the 1990s. There is a pressing urgency to re-envision the mainstream theories of IR to puncture the linearity and coherence maintained by these great traditions across millennia.

The key theories – liberalism, realism and Marxism stem from the 'epic rendering' of the classical texts that lead to them being ahistorical by denying any discontinuities and alternative accounts of history (Schmidt, 1998). This is clearly illustrated in the case of realism that is dated back to Thucydides (1564), venturing further with Hobbes (1651) and Machiavelli (1532) to E.H. Carr (1939) and Hans Morgenthau (1948) with finally culminating in the writings of Kenneth Waltz (1979) and John Mearsheimer (2000). This seamless flow is characterised as isomorphic because it obscures any fractures/ breaks that lead to discontinuity of the coherent narrative.

Kenneth Waltz, the theorist who singlehandedly is credited for revolutionising the discipline by propounding the theory of neo realism places emphasis on the structure rather than process in international politics. This explains the constant-ness of affairs in world politics which in actuality is transitioning at an unprecedented rate. Anarchy or the lack of a supra-structure in terms of a world government is advanced as a persistent condition encapsulating world politics. Richard K. Ashley postulates a seething critique of realism by arguing that there are inherent silences on critical features of world politics which include 'process and practice' in the real world (Ashley, 1986: 290). Individuals and their choices and desires are overshadowed by the engulfing structure of anarchy.

Thus, any sort of transformation is occluded by inflexible theoretical constructs and obstinate structures circumscribing all political action. Realist scholars provide an underlying rational logic for following these assumptions, i.e. self-preservation. This limited nature of rationality isn't convincing to provide the in-

depth analysis of state actions. Neo-realism presents an atomistic and utilitarian imagery of international politics, with a restraining definition of power in solely material terms. Classical realists including Niebuhr and Morgenthau analysed power through social and psychological prism, leading to a richer analysis. The transposition of economic framework with emphasis on rationality, instrumental gains and structural constraints into the field of international politics, has stripped the discipline of its performativity and ingenuity.

Similar to the critique presented by Ashley, another prominent scholar, John Ruggie (1998) advances the claims of functional differentiation between states arguing it is essential in theorising about change at the systemic level. He presents the case study of heteronomous medieval world in contrast to the sovereignty governed modern world of nation-states. According to him, there is history behind anarchical state structure in the present context, thus highlighting the dynamism and fluidity of politics. State interactions and behaviour is not static, and can be credited for bringing in transformation in the global system. This is evident in the changing notions of legitimacy and conceptualisation of sovereignty dating from medieval Europe to the present times.

The medieval period was marked by an entanglement of hierarchy and anarchy, whereby it was difficult to distinguish between domestic and international affairs, making it distinctly different from the modern age. Thus, overlapping tendencies were distinctive of the period and the neo realist attempt to project it as a timeless, anarchical realm is both ahistorical and anachronistic. The changing notion of sovereignty is based on a sharp dichotomy between domestic and international which is a product of the modern state system. It is erroneous to assume the eternality of the realist assumptions as it denies the motion of history. As Ruggie succinctly puts that Waltz's conceptualisation has a reproductive logic not a transformational one (Ruggie 1986: 142, 152).

On the other hand, Waltz doesn't completely invalidate any notion of change, his analysis is based on canvassing the rise and fall of great powers and he considers the shift in the national power capabilities as the only relevant change to be examined (Waltz, 1979:177). This conceptualisation of change is extremely constricting and circumscribed by focussing only on the material (economic and military) aspects of

interactions between states, making neo realism impotent in envisaging change outside the calculus of material power. It is precisely for this reason that neo-realists failed to predict the end of cold war. The tectonic shift in world politics with the end of the bipolar world after the collapse of Soviet Union could not be explained by realist logic with Waltz offering a structuralist reading of the sequence of events (Waltz, 1993: 44). Contrary to neo-realist assumptions, the history of world politics is marked by various complexities and benchmarks including the coming of Enlightenment, spread of capitalism, advent of colonialism, discovery of nuclear weapons and the rise of religious fundamentalism. Therefore, it is fallacious to believe that the world has remained the same structurally. The homogenised representation of international politics from times immemorial has had a bearing in the way we understand the everyday world around us.

The biggest challenge to mainstream IR theories was presented by the kaleidoscope of postmodern theories including post structuralism, critical theory, feminism, marxism which were tied together in their opposition to the modernist rationality advocated by the Enlightenment project (Brown, 1994: 60). These theories propagated the idea that knowledge is fragmented, particularistic and relative rejecting universal laws governing history or human behaviour. These theories, though diverse, elaborated on the major themes of subjectivity, language, text and power thus contesting the epistemological and ontological foundations of modernity.

These theories problematise the taken for granted claims and assumptions about world politics by focusing on the question of representation and exploring the dominant frameworks and the manner in which they reproduce relations of power (Edkins, 2007: 89) and how that permeates our understanding of history. Most post modernists denounce universal lessons drawn from history and believe that all historical truth claims are unfounded. Post modernists thus summarily reject Leopold von Ranke's (1886) archival method and John Acton's (1906) optimism about treating history as complete and certain due to the dynamics of power that goes into history writing. This brings us to looking at the interface between knowledge and power.

Following Michel Foucault, it is imperative to understand the nexus of power that operates between knowledge and power. The most effective form of exercising

power in modern times according to Foucault is in its ability to mask itself well; the unique characteristic of being productive (Foucault, 1984: 95). Power produces both subjects and bodies of knowledge that serve its interests. The discipline of International Relations (IR) is exemplar of the deeply rootedness of such a conceptualisation of power as it erases the histories of other people in signifying western knowledge as being authentic and legitimate. It is vital to understand that contemporary issues and problems being examined in IR are not matters related to epistemology or ontology but based on dominant understandings of power and authority, making these struggles for the 'correct' interpretations of international relations (Devetak, 2005: 169).

The inextricable link between knowledge and power makes knowledge production more than just a cognitive endeavour with significant normative and political implications. By privileging certain narratives over others, IR scholars are reproducing the dominant interpretations of the world, in a way constituting certain understandings as obvious (inside/outside dichotomy reflective in the relationship between anarchy and sovereignty) while marginalising and silencing others. Rather than assuming the 'given ness' of the world, the scholars need to investigate the inter relationship between power and representational practices that present and elevate one discourse over the other (Der Derian, 2009: 194). To bridge the schism between thinking about the world and acting in it, critical theories elucidate on the inter-connections and mediational practices between praxis and poesis.

Exit from History? The Death of Meta-Narratives

There have been novel insights into the discipline of international relations with the advent of post-modern thinking in the late 1980s. These include decentring power relations, debunking canonical reading of political theory, historicising identity politics, spatio-temporal reflexivity and re-evaluating the claims of globalisation. These have challenged universal myths and rendered archetypes as obsolete. The major political meta-narratives concerning modernity including Enlightenment, capitalism, nationalism have been treated with incredulity with the rise of post-modernist accounts (Lyotard, 1984: xxiii). R.B.J. Walker argues that theories of IR not just offer substantive explanations but are a window to the contemporary political imagination and therefore express a particular historical understanding of the nature

and character of political life (Walker, 1995: 5). Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer in their notable work *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1972) claim that modernity was replete with horrors like genocides and world wars. They considered Enlightenment to be 'totalitarian/ totalising' since scientific domination resulted in crushing of dissenting voices (Adorno, 1972: 328).

Another purposeful intervention made by the post-modernist thinking is the emphasis on replacing the dominant positivistic methodology in conducting research. They deny the possibility of value neutral knowledge independent of subjective interpretations, hence bringing into fore the questions regarding ethics of scholarship and politics of writing (Zhefuss, 2013: 54). The moorings of science are torn apart by suggesting that knowledge is 'located' and not 'discovered'; by offering 'interpretations' rather than 'findings' (Rosenau, 1992: 8). The central themes running through most postmodern theories is their questioning of the ontological essentialism and epistemological foundationalism of conventional modes of inquiry.

The mainstream meta-narratives of IR are universal, pre-given, self-determining and a-temporal, which is seen as deeply problematic by postmodern theorists who call for contingent, open and variety of historical explanations. Monolithic, singular meta narratives justifies privilege and authoritarianism, for post modernists truth is pluralistic, contextual and self-conscious of the ethnic, gender, class, race, time and place differences (Rosenau 1992:78–81). Language has an intrinsic role to play in expressing reality and the postmodern thinkers dismantle the Cartesian duality by reaffirming the role of power in constituting subjectivity. By drawing on Ferdinand de Saussure, postmodern thinkers argue that there is no necessary relationship between a word and an object, debunking the referential theory of meaning and the 'myth of the given' and emphasise that meaning is a product of convention (Butler, 1990: 43).

The postmodern theorists conceptualise difference by critiquing the prevalent logo-centric nature of western political theory. Logo centricism implies a way of reasoning that operates on reproducing binaries such as fact/value, nature/culture, empirical/transcendental, literal/ metaphorical where the first term refers to the desired quality to be aspired towards whereas the second one is relegated as inferior in the scheme (Culler, 1985: 92). This leads to hierarchisation between the terms

because of the preference given to one while the other is seen as a negation.

This has widespread implications for understanding the politics behind representation. Roland Bleiker elaborates the distinction between the mimetic and aesthetic forms of representation. The conventional theories in IR subscribe to a mimetic form of representation which is as realistic and authentic to the real world as possible (Bleiker, 2009: 14). On the contrary, aesthetic forms of representation assume that there is an inevitable gap between representation and the represented (Bleiker, 2009: 14). The postmodern approaches therefore inquire into the pre-text politics, regarding the world as multi-layered and inter-connected they open up new vistas like museums, airports, poetry, art and photography for understanding international politics around us (Campbell, 2002; Sylvester, 2009). Jacques Ranciere's (2004) concept of 'critical aesthetics' would be useful in disrupting the relationship between the visible and the represented. This challenges the institutionalised ways of producing knowledge and create the conditions for imagining alternative worlds.

Amidst the debate between facts and representation which defines the core of modernity, Jacques Derrida provides with a functional intervention proclaiming that there isn't anything 'outside the text'. He argues for 'inter-texuality' that is meaning can only be understood in relation to another text, as there are gaps between authors intentions, the context s/he is writing in and the interpretation drawn by the reader. In a similar vein, Roland Barthes (1967) had propounded the notion of 'death of the author'[3] arguing for a more active role for both the readers and the socio-political milieu in which the text was written and is received. The reader no longer passively receives the message from the text, rather interprets it according to the intellectual, social and political discourses around him. A quick look at the methods of dispensing knowledge across history including story tellers, balladeers and saga writers conveying their message through collective knowledge with no claim to authorship, as these were passed on from generation to generation.

The linear idea of history also known as 'chronophonism' is repudiated by post modernists, who advocate for a fragmented, complex and disrupted

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[3] Roland Barthes argues that the author has no sovereignty over his own words and that they belong to the reader who interprets them. The author is irrelevant and the text is open to a more fluid interpretation.

understanding of history. They also disdain fixity and rigidity and believe in fluidity and flux of constructs. In summation, the disgruntlement with positivism and its appending assumptions has led IR scholars to question the canon of historical verities, opening new avenues for research by reformulating the central questions of world politics. This shall pave the way for a more robust understanding of the discourses surrounding us through the deconstruction of the matter and language binary (Vaughan- Williams, 2015: 21). Yale Ferguson and Richard Mansbach wrote succinctly in their work *The Elusive Quest* the underlying responsibility of the academic zeitgeist to evolve to respond to the challenges presented by the current times.

The post modernists critique the Rankean method of analysing history which insists on parsimony and elegance in explaining causes and their effects and thus poses a vital challenge to theorising in International Relations. The procrustean treatment meted to historical analysis based on grand theorisations and overarching laws is misguided and deemed quixotic by revisionist historians. John Robert Seeley (1880) was an avid advocator of 'scientific historical methods' which according to him uncovered truths containing scientific generality and significant political bearings. This could be described as the endeavour pursued by many scholars of international relations.

The quest for parsimony and coherence pushed scholars to recast economic concepts in social/ political terms. The chimerical allusion of micro-economic theory has swayed neo realists who subscribe to a structuralist explanation for events in world politics. In a fashion, akin to economics, Waltz even compared the functioning of great power politics to an oligopolistic market (Waltz, 1979: 33). He transposed theories of the firm wherein market forces dictated human behaviour to the realm of international politics; influenced by economic efficiency there was coupling of political choices to the production/ allocation of goods. Politics, like economics, was governed by an 'invisible hand' that was steering conflict and directing interests to a stage of equilibrium.

Stanley Hoffman argued that political analysis could be studied in an instrumental manner analogous to economic behaviour (Hoffman, 1987: 15). Neo-Realist scholars pursue rigour and accuracy without sufficiently taking into account

the role of human agency, ideas and practices; in their search for general laws covering politics, they overlook how these could lead to change. The rational actor approach to politics guided by instrumental rationality hinges on the assumption of purposeful behaviour to meet certain ends. However, economic choices are driven by singular, profit maximising goals whereas it is difficult to point to the preferences and intentions of actors in social/ political situations. Political actions are often motivated by multiple reasons which is unnerving for the pareto-optimal models of choice making as it professes to have found the answer for categorising behaviour amidst the chaos. An economic explanation therefore runs the risk of imposing uniformity over an otherwise heterogeneous system. In contrast historically contextual analysis involves around finding connections between ideas and material world, revealing in the process how particular historical structures undergo transformation. It is critical to transcend the empiricist fixation by comprehending deeper levels of social world.

Sites of History: Reviving, Creating and Unmaking the IR Narratives

This section deals with the underlying subject matter of International Relations as a discipline. It addresses the concerns regarding what qualifies as the 'prime' subject of the discipline's study, further raising questions associated with identifying the subject matter and labelling the discipline into competing theories that present a polarised view of the world drawing on a confluence of disciplinary traditions. There can be two substantive ways of understanding the subject matter of IR as distinct from other disciplines: i) functional differentiation of the international from other realms and ii) conceiving IR as the study of social world above a specific scale (Buzan and Lawson, 2017: 62). Concerns about the subject matter of the discipline have long animated the history; what is the dividing line between sociology, political science, history and IR, have never been addressed let alone answered by theorists. The search for central research questions is premised on the conviction that every discipline functions and innovates through asking fundamental questions about itself anew. In comparison to other disciplines, is it possible to claim a substantive realm peculiar to IR.

The discipline has had a fairly inimical relationship to self-introspection and this is most visible in the manner various labels are attached to the discipline including 'international relations', 'world politics', 'international politics', 'global studies'. The narrowest nomenclature of International Politics eschews the discipline

to be a subset of Political science focusing on the relations between states and covering aspects of strategy, security, international organisations and foreign policy. World politics includes politics at the transnational level along with debates on global governance. International Relations underscores the middle ground with 'international' encompassing actors other than sates and 'relations' comprising of interactions beyond merely politics, consisting of economic, social and cultural dimensions. Global studies underscores both the multiplicity of interactions beyond the state at the international level. These approaches highlight actor/system privileging dichotomy, deeply entrenched in the discipline.

Most disciplines within the social sciences are defined by the function/domain of activity they study which is carved out distinctly including economics, sociology, law, psychology among others while IR conspicuously doesn't fit this model with various subdivisions in IR overlapping across functionality, time and scale. What is the 'marker' that differentiates IR from other disciplines and grants it legitimacy? As Justin Rosenberg points out the disciplines seek validation in terms of representing a peculiar feature of social reality which ensures a division of labour among the disciplines (Rosenberg, 1993: 43). The recent attempt pointing at the end of IR theory, implying moving 'beyond' the disciplinary constructs merely highlight the eagerness to be heroic saviours and forget our complicity in the tragedy of international politics we have constructed and over which we now despair.

Forgetting is a powerful tool, so is undoing these great debates and binary constructs, but eventually forgetting makes us who we are, in fact it shapes the world around us. History can be viewed in three contexts- as a teacher, narrative and as representation. It is therefore important to review the historical consciousness of IR scholarship.

IR theorists are immersed in history; they aren't simply story tellers of unstructured narratives. The omission of contextual sensitivity while theorising implies that mainstream IR exhibits little sense of historical dimensions of approaching the problems facing us today. It is paramount to recover history for theorising about international relations. Historians acknowledge that the narratives they weave, like all narratives are based on contingency and are conditional constructs (Burke, 1992: 235). IR theory dwells on the charade created by parsimonious

explanations based on empirical evidence, which is present centred and clouding our interpretations of the past. Lessons drawn from history aren't facile or nomothetic, yet as scholars we turn to derive broad generalisations from them, passing it off as lessons from the past. In fact, historical lessons are ambivalent and filed with complexity, they are precarious about the predicaments they are faced with and provide no definitive answers or theoretical paths.

The famous historian H.A.L. Fisher wrote about the unforeseen and the contingent while looking at history rather than a harmonious pre-determined pattern (Fisher, 1992: 29). Following his cue, Arthur Schlesinger noted that history can provide a profound and grounding sense of human fallibility (Schlesinger, 1996: 17). It gives meaning and substance to our moral aptitude. In an idealist vision, the human mind is capable of classifying the enmeshment of history, politics, art, science into meaningful categories. Michel Oakeshott refers to these are 'modes of experience' which help in developing authentic and autonomous abstractions from experiencing the whole (Oakeshott, 1938: 12). Oakeshott argues that is impossible and counterproductive to be infatuated with finding definitive answers in history, since one can never know history if it is considered to be fixed and finished.

The recent advent of a new turn in IR with Benno Teschke (2003) referring to it as the historical turn; Duncan Bell (2016) addresses as the historiographical turn and Stephen Hobden (1998) as historical (re)turn suggests for a ubiquitous engagement with the past, however failing to acknowledge the 'problem of history' as highlighted by the debate between the traditional and critical historiographers. It is crucial to embrace the fundamental indeterminacy of the historical meaning to bring back historicity into our analysis of IR. The point of debate in the 1950s and 1960s between 'traditionalists' and 'scientists' against the backdrop of the behavioural revolution was regarding the privileging of spatio-temporal aspects while undertaking research in world politics. While the former adhered to a historical understanding, the latter were concerned with making sweeping, value free generalisations and abstractions.

Traditionalists led by Hedley Bull contended that scholars had cut themselves off from history resulting in a garish and callow view of international politics (Bull, 1969: 37). They believed that historical interpretation was at the core of studying

international affairs. Martin Wight's epigrammatic equation Politics: Political Theory: International Politics: Historical Interpretation summarised the claim forwarded by traditionalists (Wight, 1966: 32). The scientists who were influenced deeply by the behavioural revolution criticised the historical interpretation for being unstructured, anecdotal and unscientific. A.H. Birch (1969) and Richard Little (1991, 1995) argued that there is a constant tension between theorising based on abstraction and historical analysis rooted in interpretation.

This antagonism reflects the constant desire to comprehend both the particular and the general (Little, 1995: 15). It is paramount to bridge the gap between history and abstraction as Weber remarked; without our understanding of the historical phenomenon concretely, the general laws would be devoid of their content, making them useless (Weber, 1949: 80). The quest for parsimony through reliance on generalised laws and causal models has stripped mainstream IR of its complexity to understand events and processes.

After providing a brief tour d' horizon of the debate between traditionalist vs critical historiographers, it is vital to point that the 'problem of history' was elided by the conventional accounts of IR. The debate around historiography is marred by intellectual parochialism since both sides present caricatured understandings of the other. The most venerable question guiding scholars during the debate was 'What is history' and these two sides offered an exegesis based on their assumptions. The problem of history implies the impossibility in achieving closure or arriving at a closed interpretation of history.

The second great debate defining the methodological contours of the discipline had a significant impact in the manner of conducting research. Set in the 1960s the behaviouralists believed that knowledge could only be advanced through application of methods from the natural sciences and challenged the traditionalists (classicists) who adhered to developing IR through interpretive historicist methods. Behaviouralists led by Morton Kaplan propounded that we could implicate causality through observation of systems and subjecting them to empirical testing via falsification. This was considered the right path for knowledge development and progress of IR theory (Kaplan, 1966: 380).

However, traditionalists like Hedley Bull, while acknowledging the instantaneous development of scientific methods maintained that a neatly categorised system wouldn't do justice in expanding the ebbs and flows of world politics that are necessarily interpretive (Bull, 1966: 361). He wrote that applying such stringent standards of proof and verification would be of no value to the intricate workings of IR. Kaplan criticised the methods and their reliance on sweeping generalisations applied across time. In contrast, the behaviouralists relied on positivist methods of conducting research, rejecting factors that could not be measured including human behaviour, emotions, motivations as influencing politics. They thus proposed the fact/value distinction or separating the researcher from her/his context to avoid seeping of any biases while conducting analyses. Thomas Kuhn propagated that any new area of research challenges the established one on the basis of being an exemplar (Kuhn, 1962: 18). Thus behaviouralism emerged as victorious in the second great debate in the discipline with researchers imitating and replicating its positivistic methods to set the agenda and find answers in the IR theory discourse.

The historical problem in IR comprises of epistemology, ideology and sociology. The various historical challenges faced by the analysts in IR are summarised below:

Selection Bias: This is the most prevalent obstacle faced by scholars across social sciences, Barbara Geddis (1990) remarked that the cases one chooses determine the answers we receive in the end. It can be traced to a disparity in the selection of data based on randomisation which results in not being accurate in the representation leading to creating of bias in the conclusions drawn. This can be purposive/ instrumental, as omitting certain things could advance a theoretical claim as better than others. It is imperative to explore alternative potential explanations which reside in the sources/ data marginalised by mainstream perspectives.

Anecdotal Evidence: Although this can be subsumed under the selection bias, its prevalence demands for it to be listed as a separate category. This form of historical analysis generalises from meticulously chosen particulars. The evidence is drawn from casual or informal encounters relying heavily on personal testimonies. It is considered to be a didactic tool rather than a research method utilised by theorists to corroborate their assumptions by selectively choosing specific information about

events and narratives. The most prominent example would be the use of analogies that are anecdotal to present the current dilemmas mirroring the past.

Ahistoricism: As a heuristic tool, ahistoricism promotes theorising without any sensitivity to the spatio-temporal context. The discipline of IR since its inception has been focussed on dealing with contemporary political issues. Scholars are ahistorical in their failure to acknowledge the impact of their milieu on their research, leading to the fallacy of presenting contingent knowledge constructs as eternal laws of politics. The fast moving nature of the subject makes it a forward rather than a backward looking discipline with the exception of historical sociologists who deal with providing wide ranging perspectives rooted in historical context like Mann, 1986; Anderson, 1974; Tilly, 1990 and Wallerstein, 1991. The discipline has the tendency of reading the present back into the past with occasional forays into the past being driven by finding similarities between the current 'anarchical international order' and drawing parallels to specific periods like the classical Greece and Italy during the Renaissance period, with seldom attempts to write a global history of IR.

Euro Centrism/Western-Centrism: International relations (IR) as field has been completely rooted in the practices, intellectual conventions, and agency claims of Europe, thereby negating the non-western part of the world to a marginal place. Most mainstream theories treat the global transformation as equating the European system with a global one. The mainstream theories touted as the 'foundational' knowledge for the discipline perpetuate the Eurocentric / Western understanding, leading to proliferation of highly lopsided and ultimately parochial knowledge of the world. There is a pressing need for a retreat from IR's historic complicity with colonial violence and subordination of alternative epistemologies – opening the possibility of making its process of knowledge production truly global and democratic. Alternative theories are seeking de-centering of the west, including its epistemes, institutions, politics, and Westphalian world order, through centering the histories, lands, livelihoods, bodies, thoughts, emotions, and spiritualties of indigenous peoples. Decolonial imaginaries have the ability to rupture the linear understandings of time, underpinning discourses whose objective is to distinguish the past from the existing.

Anarchophilia: One of the consequences of the discipline's fixation with Euro/western centrism and ahistoricism is Anarchophilia which implies the

overwhelming disposition of the discipline to assume that the structure of international politics has timelessly and naturally been anarchical. This belief was the mainstay of the hegemonic discourse in IR guided by neo realist scholars headed by Kenneth Waltz. According to Waltz, international political systems are defined in terms of self-regarding units which are the primary actors whether they are city states, empires or modern nations interacting in an overarching framework of anarchy (Waltz, 1979: 91). Instances from other parts of the world to bolster the claims of anarchy as being timeless and a norm have included places like Sumeria, China and India. Adam Watson, has criticised this perennial assumption about the world being anarchical by delving into the history of the past five thousand years to note that one can identify a wide range of structural factors guiding international system on the spectrum of anarchy to empire to hegemony to suzerainty (Watson, 1992: 32). Watson like Martin Wight, draws on extensive historical knowledge to force us to reconsider the immutable anarchical assumption of IR by questioning the intimate ties between the peculiar Euro/western centric experience and transposing it to justify conditions in the existing times.

Theoretical Sieving: This involves interpreting history from a monolithic theoretical lens, that produces coherent knowledge at the expense of tautological research. Such simplistic understanding preferred on the basis of parsimony creates deficit in terms of understanding the diversity and difference comprising IR. Precision and rigid mono-causal explanations might fulfil the criteria prescribed by natural sciences but are unsuitable for the terrain of social sciences, yet the dominant theories in IR adhere to singular notions of explaining reality without any consideration for the multifarious variables at interplay in compounding an event.

Ideographic vs. Nomothetic Claims: A major axis of tension in history is between the two kinds of claims ideographic or particular descriptions and nomothetic or law like generalisations. Those who are proponents of particularist tradition including Michel Oakeshott, argue that when comparison begins as a mechanism for generalisation, history ceases to exist (Oakeshott, 1963: 143). He argued against laws of strict causality since they were appropriate standards of science not history. The nomothetic model was propounded by Carl Hempel with his breakthrough in deductive reasoning for historical interpretation. He argued that the methodological

unity of empirical sciences provides general laws that can be applied analogously to history and natural sciences. He proposed the 'covering model' under whose rubric, historical interpretations were deduced from general presumptions that covered similar cases (Hempel, 1942: 43). Thus while the particularists emphasise significance of difference and context; their counterparts focus on generalisations and finding patterns.

The aforementioned factors including ahistoricism, Euro/western centrism and Anarchophilia have mutually reinforced the biases present in conducting historical analysis and have wide ranging implications for understanding the neglect of history in the disciplinary mapping of IR. According to Ian Hacking (1999) the perusal of knowledge practices and complexes is constitutive of 'historical ontology'. Following the thought of Michel Foucault, Hacking propounds that problems are inherently conceptual in nature with history of philosophy concerned with the concepts. Historical ontology is indicative of the emergence, diffusion and elimination of various concepts and modes of classification.

Each concept has a particular history, once in existence they shape a variety of possibilities – institutional, ethical and cognitive for the agents. In brief, historical ontology is the study of the immanent potentialities available within concepts within particular socio-historic contexts. One of the aspects of historical ontology is to follow the trajectory of 'organising concepts' concerning knowledge, reasoning, objectivity and truth. It aims to provide answers for ground-breaking questions like what is history? What distinguishes truth from other forms of knowledge? In doing so it provides us with the understanding that knowledge is contingent and significantly differs across time and space. The historical variability of knowledge and the methods of acquiring it demonstrate how power circulates and attributes legitimacy and credibility to certain voices which are heard above others within academic fields. This is of direct relevance to IR, since it concerns with expertise and control over knowledge gathering and dissemination. Hacking further elaborates that through 'looping effects'[4], the already formulated theories and research agendas are continuously evaluated in their capacity to influence individuals and institutions. Such

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[4] Hacking (1999) presents an account of co-constitution of categorical/disciplinary identity and personal identity as people recognise themselves with socially sanctioned categories, hence institutional and personal reflexivity occur simultaneously.

effects even though unintended and intricate deeply shape the social world around us.

An example would be from the field of psychology whereby being labelled as 'insane' or 'abnormal' can shape the way people view themselves thus defining their sense of self as well as how they are treated by society at large including modern state apparatuses. This is what Foucault refers to as framing of subjectivity where power isn't repressive but rather productive as it is shaping individuals into docile subjects by neatly defining and categorising then. Thus power plays a crucial role in moulding our subjectivity. Judith Butler's (1990) idea of performativity is analogous to this conceptualisation of power wherein the modern capitalist state through its economic-knowledge practices has shaped the subjectivities of people. These technologies of capitalism are integral to state governmentality creating rational, instrumental and egoistic subjects.

One of the major causes for the marginalisation of historical thinking about international thought from the discipline has been due to the pre dominance of the contextualist approach associated with the Cambridge school and the writings of John Dunn (1965), J.G.A. Pocock (1961) and Quentin Skinner (1969) that dominated the field since the 1950s. The central argument propounded by these theorists is that historians of ideas should analyse the claims of the past thinkers in the context of the language available to those authors at the time they were writing. By drawing on the conventional meanings of political languages in the past, one can establish the intentions and authentic meanings of past texts.

One of the criticisms levied against contextual thinking particularly in relation to IR is that contexualists deny presentism that is bringing present ideas in evaluating past texts which according to them could lead to anachronism. This implies that one must not look in the past for solutions to present problems. This created a dilemma for scholars approaching the study of history and many including Darshan Vigneshawaran and Joel Quirk (2010) have argued that history plays a crucial role in determining the normative standards on which contemporary scholarship must be evaluated.

To conclude, theoretical constructs aren't merely cameras, engaging in passive recording of the world events but are actively partaking in constructing them. IR

scholars need to embrace the idea that theories don't merely explain or represent but are constitutive of the world they seek to explain or represent. A major task for disciplinary historians then is to critically re-evaluate the existing categories and concepts governing modern international relations. David Engerman (2009) prompts us to remember that these powerful categories surrounding modern life seem to be natural and neutral rather than human creations. With this view, we now turn to evaluating the notable contribution of E.H. Carr to the sociology of knowledge in presenting his utopian critique and its implications for the discipline of IR.

Revisiting The Twenty Years Crisis: Understanding the Intersections of Tradition, Progress and Utopia

E.H. Carr's critique of inter-war idealism was grounded in the writings of Karl Mannheim. Mannheim had ventured (Mannheim, 1929: 65) to utilise the Marxist notion of false consciousness which led to defending of the status quo into a generalisable tool of social analysis. He posited that ideas were never detached from power or existed in vacuum but were rather products of the socio-historical milieu. The task upon critical theorisation was to unmask the 'sociology of knowledge' to provide a clearer understanding of the relationship between power and interests. He asserted that the first aim for critical theory must be to demolish the camouflage, unveiling the nexus between ideas and interests (Mannheim, 1929 :123).

This aptly describes the task set forth by Carr in his distinguished contribution to the discipline *Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939,* by exposing the idealist façade of the 'harmony of interests'. Carr proclaimed that the doctrine of harmony of interests was emanating from Jeremy Bentham's idea of 'felicific calculus' which implied the greatest happiness for the greatest number coalesced with Adam Smith's notion of the 'invisible' hand which led market forces to regulate themselves without any state control leading to the optimum benefits for all. When transposed to international relations, these assumptions served the basis for propagating several cardinal principles guiding politics including states pursuing their own interests furthered the larger interests of the world community and commonly held values of faith in world peace and aversion to conflict. Norman Angell wrote in *The Great Illusion* (1914) that war was 'simply a failure of understanding' (Angell, 1914: 25).

Carr argued that the privileged nations often steered clear from owing any responsibility by blaming the weak as perpetuators of violence, disturbing the harmony in international order. He drew upon Arnold Toynbee in expounding that maintaining international order and adhering to international law were in the interests of the entire mankind, however few countries were overpowered by their anti-social desire which was professed in their barbarian and aggressive actions (Toynbee,1934: 83).

Carr proclaimed that the notion of harmony of interests was demagoguery on the part of the advanced capitalist nations to further their interests and expand colonial rule and therefore held absolutely no verity. He saw this as an ingenious attempt to invoke a moral device by the dominant countries to justify and maintain their privileged positions in the international system (Carr, 1939: 80). Carr went on to criticise the aphorism 'adjusting thought to purpose' by pointing out the tendency to conceal parochial interests under the garb of universal principles. He challenged the sanctity of the institutions like the League of Nations which for him didn't reflect the eternal principles of peace but rather the selfish interests of the hegemonic states. Ideas like free trade, solidarity among nations and spirit of internationalism were merely rhetorical ploys advanced by the prepotent states and were reflections of their particular national interests (Carr, 1939: 87).

He thus discredited the utopian internationalists who accepted these universal principles and termed them as dangerous and wilfully nostalgic. Carr's analysis of sociology of knowledge helped him discern how history was falsely being interpreted during the time. His work underlines that what came to be unwittingly known as inter-war principles and universal pronouncements for human welfare were in fact products of power exercised by the collective few to serve their interests.

It is interesting to understand the role of history in Carr's analysis and how he viewed it from the prism of progress. Carr's famous lectures on *Progress in History* and *The Widening Horizon* highlighted crucial questions regarding truth and knowledge claims, objectivity and relativism and the role of progress in writing the history. He explicitly advocated for grounding theory in history; utopians were fixated with the future, thinking in terms of creative spontaneity while realists were entrenched to the past in identifying the causality (Carr, 1939: 11). He was heavily

influenced by Nicolo Machiavelli's notion of 'la verita effettuale della cosa' or the effective truth as the founding principles for realist study of international affairs. In Chapter XV of the *Prince* Machiavelli wrote that the ruler must look at the truth of the things, valuing them for what they are and the effects they produce. For Carr, the Florentine thinker was the first to view history through a sequence of cause and effect, the direction and implications of which could be analysed and understood through intellectual effort in contrast to the utopian reliance on imagination (Carr, 1939: 63).

He also drew heavily from one of the most prominent late Victorian intellectuals John Robert Seeley who in his ground-breaking work *The Expansion of England* (1883) deliberated on the relationship between politics and history. Seeley criticised the parochial understanding of theorising during his times, which focussed on a teleological unfolding and glorification of the English constitution and granting of liberty. He advanced multifarious connections between the international, the domestic and the imperial and believed that a nuanced, in-depth understanding of the past would help in better grasp of the present as well as mapping of the future. He thus combined the spatio-temporal dimensions in his analysis of relevance of history in present day politics.

Drawing from this Carr wrote that it is quite inherent in human nature to draw wrong lesson from the past or not learn from the past errors. Individuals aren't merely passive and disembodied observers and receivers of history but rather actively partake in constructing it. Like any other form of human inquiry, writing about history entails interpretation and selection which is closely tied with one's prejudices, pre- conceived notions and other biases, in short the ideology governing the researcher. Ideology is the meeting point for history and politics (Carr, 1975: 224). The reason for Carr's scepticism regarding history was founded in the idealist epistemological tradition of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Following other thinkers including Benedetto Croce, R.G. Collingwood, Michel Oakeshott, and Carl Becker, Carr argued that a theory of knowledge that perpetuates a rigid separation of the object and the subject wasn't accomplishing the task identified with theorisation (Carr, 1961: 158). Theories are not just given but rather are products of malleable socio-political circumstances.

Thus, Carr provided a balanced opinion on the theory ladenness of empirical observation, repudiating the polar extreme views of Rankean school of thought

historians and idealist historians. He was brazenly critical of the fetishism with facts amongst scholars subscribing to the Rankean school of historiography and explained that all observation entailed some degree of filtering of facts. On the other end, he also denied the idealist claims of empirical observations entirely based on theoretical assumptions. Carr purported that a scholar continuously engaged in a process of molding the facts according to his interpretation and his interpretation according to his facts, leading to a perpetual cycle of exchange between theory and evidence. The perspective regarding independent and objective interpretation of facts by the historian was considered to be a preposterous fallacy which was deeply embedded in social sciences and hard to eliminate (Carr, 1939: 10). Nevertheless, Carr maintained that understanding and mastering the past by a historian would hold the key in comprehending the present (Carr, 1939: 29). A methodical historian would investigate multiplicity of causes, build hypothesis and develop analogies without making simplistic mono-causal assumptions about processes and events under analysis.

Drawing on Karl Mannheim's concept of relational objectivity, Carr proposed that historical facts can never completely be objective and value neutral, since they only come to fore as facts by virtue of the importance ascribed to them by the historians. There cannot thus be objectivity of facts in history, only an unequivocal acknowledgment of relativity of knowledge (Carr, 1939: 159). He prescribed for the historian to transcend his limited vision which is a derivative of his socio-historical context to successfully analyse history.

According to Carr, the relevance and significance of a historian's research is legitimised and endorsed only teleologically, making history a progressive science providing deeper understanding into the course of events. Thus, like G.W.F. Hegel and Karl Marx, who were utopian propagators of the idea of history as progressive, Carr, subscribed to the similar principle, i.e. history was based on the principle of progress. In his path breaking work *What is History*, he cited John Acton arguing that history can be written only by those who find a sense of direction and purpose in history (Carr, 1961: 10). The historian must believe in a progressive movement of history, that history is advancing into something better; any society that ceases to believe in the ideal of progress in future can't survive. Thus, the fundamental premise governing his thought was that progress was an inevitable and inescapable part of

writing and understanding history.

Modern historiography cannot flourish without having faith in the doctrine of progress, this is the touchstone for demarcating the real from the fortuitous (Carr, 1961: 165). Carr emphasised that progress couldn't be conceived with a finite beginning and end, elaborating that the notion of a clearly definable goal of progress in history, often proposed by nineteenth century historians is irrelevant and infecund (Carr, 1961: 160). Carr recasted Reinhold Niebuhr in a secular manner while arguing that history can't be simply situated in the past or present, in fact it is a 'moving procession', it is incomplete, in the process of becoming. As we move towards the future, we shape our interpretation of the past. It is thus interesting to take note of Carr's optimism regarding history considering the discipline has relegated his writings within the tight trope of realism, thus making a selective reading of his writings. The parsimony so central to the realist theorisation has been questioned by targeting one of its chief proponents.

The Great Debates of IR: Re-living the Story

Herman Hesse (1943) remarked that studying history meant surrendering to chaos and yet retaining faith in order and meaning. This section provides a brief overview of the disciplinary history of IR that has been structured around 'great debates'. A discipline's history is never impartial or neutral undertaking and the turn to understand the previously neglected sociology of discipline throws new light on the ideas, theories and institutions and their role in shaping the same. The historiography of a discipline is closely related to the current struggles for establishing legitimate sense of identity within the field and can be mapped through two frames – internal and external. Scholars subscribing to the internal framework prioritise academic, canon based narratives of the disciplinary past while external frame work seeks to investigate the non- academic, real world factors in understanding the trajectory of the discipline.

However, maintaining these sharp distinctions is detrimental to presenting a nuanced understanding of IR's past. It is crucial to challenge the predominance of the Anglo-American commitment to positivist methodologies by presenting alternative

critical imaginaries that serve as heuristic tools to reveal the fissures between theorising and reality.

Ole Waever in his article 'The Sociology of a Not So International Discipl*ine'* published in 1998 wrote that the discipline of IR had advanced through a series of debates about methodological claims about constructing knowledge and whose position was right in the process of doing so. It is important to note that for organisational purposes, the discipline has been divided into these neatly tight categories of great debates, which in turn has deeply influenced the self-image of the discipline as it has failed to capture the nuances in the trajectory of the evolution of the discipline. It is clear that the construction of mainstream narratives is imbued with power struggles and those on the victorious side seldom engage with the losing side, leading to a stalemate in the discipline.

The first great debate was between the inter war realists and liberal internationalists/idealists which became the founding stone for the discipline with realism emerging triumphant and United States establishing its predominance within the western world in post second world war period. The second debate between the traditionalists in Europe led by English school theorist Hedley Bull and behaviouralists in America in the 1960s was marked by the emergence of scientific methods, reliance on quantification, rational choice and formal modelling to be emulated by the discipline of IR. Scholars including David Singer (1961) and Marion Levy (1966) were proponents of the application of scientific methods in IR for granting its enterprise the same legitimacy and worth as that of natural sciences. Stanley Hoffman argues that IR has predominantly been an American science, which only propagates and advances the interests suited to America's role in the world order (Hoffman, 1977: 21).

The primacy of realism in this discourse fits well with America's position as the global super power and the favourable institutional environment for the reception of scientific method which relied on empirical testing and value neutrality. This preoccupation with scientific methodology, is one of the biggest contributors in forestalling the metastasising of the discipline to other parts of the world. The third great debate also known as the inter-paradigmatic debate was between the three main theories neorealism, neoliberalism and marxism, with different ontological and

epistemological concerns, each vying for theoretical dominance in the discipline during the 1970s. Drawing from the Kuhnian framework and the notion of incommensurability of paradigms each of these theories had its own lexicon with specific meanings and precluded any form of inter-paradigmatic interaction. There was no common ground for these theorists to interact with each other, since they literally were studying variedly different worlds. The fourth great debate between the rationalists and reflectivists in the 1990s was again touted on the lines of rationalists choosing to scientifically study institutions and processes of world politics whereas reflectivists were concerned with the socio-historical contexts affecting the very constitution of the processes and institutions that defined the international sphere.

The divide between positivists and intrepretivists was deepened with the publication of Martin Hollis and Steve Smith's exemplar work *Explaining and Understanding IR* in 1990. They expounded the Weberian distinction between *Erklaren* which implies explaining and *Verstehen* denoting understanding and said that these two presented a picture of the world either based on explaining through use of scientific methods or an account based on hermeneutic principles but these two world views were incompatible and irreconcilable (Smith and Hollis, 1990: 11). There are two ways of narrating stories about the world based on fundamentally different assumptions which led to the perpetuation of 'incommensurability' and securing each side from criticism and dialogue as they continued to theorise in their intellectual cocoon. As Steve Smith argues, the divide between positivists and post-positivists is the biggest obstacle to constructive engagement between these scholars representing these two positions.

To conclude, the involution of the discipline has produced a proliferation of competing theories vying for explanatory edge over the others. However, these are still guided by the arcane, orthodox methods and patterns of conducting inquiry. The ideographic/ nomothetic distinction underlies research agendas in the field with a debate around what is the object of analysis rather than the methods/ approaches to conducting that analysis. The Lakatosian emphasis on discerning a 'winning' theory has made both students and scholars internalise the conflicts they study. One of the major pitfalls of the discipline writ large has been its inability to reflect sufficiently on the inter-relationship between theoretical knowledge and historical practices.

Building Historical Consciousness in International Relations: Intersectionalities of
Tradition, Progress and Utopia

This section uncovers the dialogue between the concepts of Tradition, Progress and Utopia through a triumvirate classification of historical consciousness, looking at history as an 'instructor', as a 'narration' and as a 'rendition'. These are utilised to understand the notion of progress and utopias in various traditions of IR. These three competing genres represent 'lessons from history' (as presented by liberalism internationalists and English school theorists), 'revenge of history' (as presented by realists and neorealists) and 'escape from history' (as presented by post-modernist theories) in IR. Through an analysis of the historical consciousness embedded in each of these theories, a critical understanding of the discipline can be mapped out.

The genealogy of International Relations shared an intimate relationship with historical reflection. The second great debate clearly marked the contestation between use of historical methods and epistemology vs. scientific methodology (Bull, 1966; Hobden 2002; Kratochwil, 2006). There was a resurgence in the interest in history with the writings of Smith, 1999; Elman and Elman, 2001; Ferguson and Mansbach, 2008 who were responding to the post-positivist turn in IR theory. In a sense, this reflected a continuation of the second great debate between the place of history and reliance on scientific methods in IR. Recent historiographical writings delved into the questions of 'doing proper history' in IR by reflecting on selection bias for theory building, limited access to primary sources and testing theories (Hobson and Lawson, 2008; Vaughan-Williams, 2005). Despite these contributions, little attention been has paid to the nature of historical consciousness itself which has played a pivotal role in shaping of IR theory.

Self-consciousness is predicated on negotiating one's relationship with the world around, which is an inherently inter-subjective experience. This is the founding stone for most disciplinary action, knowing oneself, marks the beginning of understanding those surrounding us. The concept of consciousness that entails the mediation between subject hood and experiential reality is pivotal for historical understanding. Temporality or situatedness in a particular context is essential in

defining subjectivity which elucidates the inter connection between past, present and future. It is therefore important to theorise about historical consciousness to understand the notion of change in IR- which is the core concern among competing IR theories. By scrutinising and focussing attention on the theories of IR, there is an attempt to highlight the historical consciousness about temporality reflected in each of these theories. The analysis demarcates theories into a triumvirate framework: lessons from history, revenge of history and escape from history which unveils that the disciplinary fault lines among opposing theories can be understood in terms of the difference of historical consciousness.

The writing of history has a complex past with multiple forms and concomitant processes. However, to explore the notion of historical consciousness that can be transposed to IR the following taxonomical structure is provided.

History as Instructor: This category locates knowledge according to its ethical, functional and instructional application in the present and future times to deal with the vicissitudes impinging human beings. The past is viewed in glorious terms, an enduring inspiration, an exemplar that needs to be registered and disseminated to posterity in the anticipation that future generations would emulate and enrich their lives from the lessons from the antiquity. Thucydides recounted this kind of historical record as 'timeless' and an 'eternal possession' and Cicero proclaimed it to be the *historia magistra vitae* which means history acted as a teacher providing life lessons. Edmund Burke (1790) was amongst the foremost proponents of viewing history as a teacher, learning from the past mistakes (the French Revolution, in his case) and not giving up on rituals and customs of the past as they provided a strong sense of stability and identity and were akin to natural order.

Similar connotations of history are also found in the religious texts in the Christian tradition which argue for human redemption and thus date way back beyond the secular connotations entwined with the advent of Enlightenment. The genre emphasises not just lessons from the lives of individuals, which can inspire politically and morally but also represents a disembodied form with the study of fortunes of city/nation states (Rise and Fall of Great Powers by John Kennedy and James McPherson's Lincoln and Second American Revolution). The focus of this genre is to remind us about how history can instruct and enlighten us about sequence of failure

and success through recounting these incidents and events that would lead to improvement for generations both present and future. An important distinction needs to be made between employing history as a teacher and the philosophy of history tradition. The historians of philosophy of history are concerned with interpreting the purpose or teleology of historical development rather than finding appropriate lessons.

History as a Narration: While looking at history as a teacher offers a meaningful rendition of the past to deal with present and future predicaments, the objective of history as a narrative category is to assuage the stretch and the remoteness between antiquity and current times. The past is made accessible through techniques of storytelling that make is familiar and comprehensible in the present day. Many literary figures including William Faulkner and Garcia Marquez have written that the past is continuously with us, it isn't even past. The retelling of stories need not be framed within a particular moral framework and one could have multiple narratives of the past. Most significantly, the past isn't at the mercy of contemporary writers for appreciation and validation or even misappropriation.

This is a major concern for those who treat history as representation. One of the examples of this genre of writing would be the evocative and picturesque description of Marie-Antoinette's execution by Thomas Carlyle (1837). This is in fierce contrast to Edmund Burke's moral conceptualisation from the reading of the tragic end faced by the queen. Burke conceived of history as a 'volume of instructions', indicative of a larger lesson inherent in the concreteness of the French Revolution. The narrative genre emphasises the exhilarating power of the story itself. However, with the ascent of scientific methodology, analytical vigour and empiricism as markers for valuable research, this form of writing received a fallout. This became evident in the writings of German historian Leopold von Ranke who attempted to professionalise the investigation of history founded on primary archival catalogues. Following him, Sir John Seeley, the nineteenth century historian wrote that history faded into literature if it lost sight of its relationship with the real world politics (Seeley, 1895: 61). Lord Acton wrote in 1895 that the knowledge of the past was a crucial instrument of action to be utilised in the making of the future. These historians believed that the study of the past could provide the moral principles required to buttress the turbulent present times which even meant supporting imperialist plans for

aggrandisement and exploitation.

History as Rendition: This genre is analogous to history as narrative tradition in acknowledging that different meanings can be ascribed to past events. However, history is more than just the past, it entails a symbiotic relationship between the past and the present. It can be seen as a sequence of temporal chain of events that are interpreted to provide meaning that has a bearing for present and future. Reference, truth and meaning are crucial aspects of representation, thus the consideration of ethics of history writing is equally important. The act of representation is inevitable a deeply political act with fluidity and dynamism around usage of abstractions and motifs. The objective of this category is to draw parallel to IR in Cox's terms become the critical approach rather than the problem solving theory (Cox, 1996: 33). It aims at providing a deeper understanding of oneself (self-reflectivity) while theorising about history.

The abridged outline indicating the genres of historical consciousness assists in delineating the inter-connections between past, present and future for the purposes of understanding claims about knowledge in the field. IR theory thus is fundamentally dependent on rumination on the constitution of temporality. The exploring of the nature of historical consciousness reveals the disciplinary dialogue between IR and history.

The next section shall provide an overview of how these genres can be applied to the study of IR under the categories of i) lessons from history ii) revenge of history and iii) escape from history help to understand the conception of change.

Lessons of History

The inter war idealists and their successors liberal internationalists along with English school theorists fall within the category of those who draw lessons from history. Theorising about IR implies assimilating historical lessons from history for a better future, in some ways a propagation of 'grounded utopias'. Time is a trifling and ephemeral component of human life and all notions of utopias are set in time. The consistent scepticism around the ideas of progress has led to re-enactment of the

possibilities of the past in juxtaposition to the present leading to opening up of qualitatively different future. This revaluation of relationship between past, present and future is particularly crucial for drawing lessons from it. Historical time is seen as being pregnant with dreams and aspirations for a better life. Liberal internationalists and their predecessor's inter war idealists along with English school theorists challenge the ostensibly irredeemable practices of existing times by expanding the horizons of imagination and possibilities (liberal notion of league of nations or the English school's concept of international society). Karl Mannheim claimed that with the relinquishment of utopias, human beings would lose their ability to shape history and therewith, the ability to change it (Mannheim, 1929: 123). Lessons from history can be empowering and constricting as they provide the platform for change through reflection as well as maintenance of status quo.

Revenge of History

The maxim of immutability of history advocated by the realists and neorealists has at its core the idea that patterns repeat themselves endlessly. The realm of international is encompassed by an overarching anarchical structure making it hard to pursue change. There is inherent cynicism regarding prospects for alternative imaginations because of the belief that any attempts at change would cause disruption in the international system which would lead to horrendous consequences with history seeking revenge for tempering with its established patterns. As Machiavelli pointed out, fear is a very strong force for making people comply, and the fear of history seeking revenge for meddling with its course is convincing enough for people to acquiescence with the status quo. Thus maintenance and furtherance of status quo is considered as the only solution to avoid any standoffs with historical continuities because of the horrendous consequences attached to tampering with the eternal laws of history. It is quite anomalous that even though the international system is so steeped in anarchy whose conventional meaning is chaos/disorder; it is trepidatious about the anarchy that would ensue because of imagining possibilities.

Escape from History

The theories of post modernism in IR subscribe to the view of escape from history. The transitory nature of things makes it untenable to preserve a sense of continuity

with history. These theories reject any form of certainty, objectivity and foundationalism associated with the western notion of Enlightenment and view the past as inchoate, fragmented and open ended with the major role accorded to historians in its interpretation. History lacks a centre, unlike mainstream IR theory which is rooted in the west, particularly Europe and embodies complexities, ambiguity, diversity and inter-referentiality. Post modernism thus offers an escape from history through questioning the given monolithic, coherent universals and instead formulating fluid and multiple realities. This form of theorisation entails being self-reflexive of the history as it has contributed in the constitution of the present.

The term history encapsulates two things: a reality and its representation. Representation of past entails an intricate relationship between power, knowledge and resistance. The postmodern theories in IR deal with the pluralisation of history and its conjunctive problem of narrativisation. By escaping from permanence and objectivity associated with history, the post modernists believe in unsettling and transgressive accounts of the past. History is no longer viewed in stable, linear terms and the works of Derrida, Lacan and Foucault have contributed in enhancing our understanding for construction of past. The plotting of escape from history also involves rejecting the methodological tools and apparatuses associated with conducting research about the past.

The return of narratives and fiction writing is a significant step in this direction, although it is often charged for not being academic enough and relegated to the margins of IR. The linguistic turn with its associative tropes including metaphor, metonymy, irony and synecdoche can act as powerful tools for reinterpreting and breaking away from the past. By subscribing to the notion of 'escape from history', postmodern narratives have rewritten stories of oppression and exploitation and promoted inclusivity in the discipline.

Every thinker who has concerned himself with historical process has speculated about the meaning of time and its flow. Following Hegel, Marx, Toynbee and Sorokin among others have investigated the theme of time flow as a pattern of fluctuation with dynamic interaction between past and present. Man's cognitive abilities can be divided into categories based on the time continuum. The ability to organise and reorder reality within self (present) and in relation to others (unknown

future) enable him to inhabit two worlds: the present and the imagined. The discovery that 'here' could imply both yesterday and tomorrow led to the creation of Kantian categories of temporal and spatial. The next section provides for the need to reimagine the disciplinary contours of IR by invoking imagination and fictive theorisation to the fore.

Speculative Beginnings: Writing New Futures

Karl Mannheim wrote that 'even though experience can teach us that something is composed in a particular manner, it cannot demonstrate that it could not conceivably be otherwise (Mannheim, 1929: 24). Utopias have been understood conceptually in terms of binaries: utopian fantasy as opposed to political reality, real vs. ideal, rational vs fictional to contain the force of imagination. Memory and counter memory are crucial historical strategies for analysing a text. Memorisation entails remembering the past in its original sense with covering of its ambiguities and fissures. This coherent past provides the foundation and ordering for modern disciplinary practice and thinking. Memory imposes discipline and encapsulates the myths of origins by rendering alternative points of departure as trivial or implausible (Walker, 1993: 27). The claims about continuities, ruptures, teleologies and progressions are wilfully erased through an essentialist reading of the past. In contrast to this is the notion of counter memory which resists any foundational reading of the past. It emphasises the notion of forgetting and the politics around it with disciplinary stakeholders neatly ironing out any sub plots that question the validity and efficacy of their narrative.

There is a need to draw on different ways of storytelling which make the status, aims and task of International Relations intelligible. Attention to writing of IR theory provokes a recognition of the perceived task of the project of the discipline. Theorising in IR is guided by the desire for authority, control and closure. In doing so, it is important to bring in the notion of utopian theory and deconstructive theory in IR. There are linkages between the two: utopian and deconstructive theories are political in nature by evoking an elsewhere which acts a signpost for criticism of the foreclosed possibilities inherent in the present. They present a challenge to the statis by disrupting the given normative orientations and epistemological securities. This interruption is always already fictive.

Mainstream IR theories are based on epistemological certainty, foreclosing the possibilities of politics. Politics is founded on 'lacking': hence precepts are discovered, directions are required and theories are created for addressing the dual questions of meaning and order. These fault lines built on the notion of lacking can be reconfigured via the fictive – it makes theory and politics possible. By exploring the ways in which theories govern themselves and negotiate their own construction, we open them to their own fictivity and reflexivity. This reconfiguration would lead to radical openings. It is important to note that undecidability doesn't alleviate us from responsibility. Theorists cannot be excused from their role in IR because of their indecisiveness regarding prioritising systemic over individual concerns, order over justice and anarchy over meaningful engagements at multiple levels.

It is crucial to explore the concomitant disruption of structures, of subject/ object and ontological claims by utopian and deconstructive theorisation. IR theorists need to assert openness of reading, that wouldn't privilege a singular point of entrance to the text. As Roland Barthes envisages, the text is a galaxy of signifiers, it has multiple entrances and one can't declare authoritatively which one is the main one (Barthes, 1972: 52). By transitioning to this model of reading and writing in IR, scholars will disrupt linearity, leading to new beginning and endings. By challenging the reified meanings deeply embedded in the vocabulary of IR, one opens the space for creative epistemology of the possible. Nancy Fraser writes to deconstruct the political and essential is not a political stance but it is to question the very positioning of the political (Fraser, 1997: 71).

Bringing in fictive theorisation in IR would comprise of i) viewing the political in terms of becoming rather than already given being, ii) resisting hypostatisation of any form – epistemological, ontological or methodological, iii) questioning the naturally given existing categories and iv) most importantly seeing the world as an unfinished and open ended place. Fictive theories can thus guide and inform us in our pursuit of better future. Fictive theorisation seeks to expose and explore the ways in which political narratives in IR have set established boundaries to foreclose any alternative political interpretations by establishing definitions of international, social, political, economic and human conditions. These definitions serve the justificatory function, the necessary a priori to the very concept of proper

'international'. This creates a dual problem of the status and effects secured by the stories about the international.

The ordering and evaluating of theories is intricately tied to the project of interpretation which is inherently political. There are two contradictory strands running parallel in IR: the attempt at totalisation and the attempt at dispensing meaning. The conventional form of IR theorisation would privilege uniformity rather than dispersal of meaning. Fictive theorising reflects on the processes by which certain meanings become possible and desirable for the field. It presents a foundational critique as a form of genealogical excavation of the deeply entrenched and reified meanings. The aim of fictive theorisation is to generate a praxis of reading that is actively engaged in meaning making.

As human beings who seek intelligibility, we are already fictionalising creatures. However, is it possible to learn to think differently without reifying those very fictions that we create? The idea of fictive theorising in IR presented here is inherently a political project: a transformative reshaping of the world attentive to fluidity of concepts and definitions, dynamism of processes of formation and transformation and open to the idea of possibilities. For the future to 'be', the possibility of alterity must always be open, otherwise it becomes a power-driven, hegemonic endeavour, much like that carried out by conventional theories. Knowledge cannot be conceived in IR in terms of merely the 'given' but through a creative epistemology of the possible. Mainstream IR has long defined theory in terms of realisability, implementation and feasibility by complying with the dominant forms of thought. However, the transformative potential for future is always in the present – illuminating, confronting, disrupting the given reality as the only reality.

Fictive theory is anticipatory, pre figurative and transformative, interpreting possibilities for a better world. As the stoic philosopher Marcus Aurelius pointed out, 'Wisdom doesn't consist in knowing the world, but in imagining the ways in which it could be better'.

Conclusion

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This chapter has not just outlined the historical genealogy of the international problematique but showed the differentiation and structuration as well as absences and blind spots of the discipline. In challenging the foundationalist/progressivist myth through the discipline's rendezvous with history, the centrality of considering the west as the normative referent is also exposed.

There are two inter related reasons that necessitated the engagement with critical historiography: the first is that International Relations theory has been a passive reflector of institutional racism and Euro/western-centrism but has also contributed in constituting these narratives and secondly, IR theory is inherently performative and there is a pressing need to deconstruct the past to understand its political underpinnings.

The focus on 'meaning' as emphasised in the beginning of the chapter draws on the Heideggerian claim that human life escapes, more so if we try to capture it from a theoretical and objectivising prism (Safranski, 1998: 132). The disciplinary debates in IR are reflective of a deeply political narrative around the direction and course of the discipline. This chapter has been an attempt to show how we might think differently about IR in the light of the very real critique levelled at it by the post-modernist thinkers and the breakdown of the theoretical certainties of the Cold War era. By accepting that we need to reintegrate historical and philosophical thinking of a particular kind, in order to place the notion of 'meaning' at the centre of our thinking it is hoped that we can avoid both the worst excesses of post-modernism without assuming that liberal triumphalism is the only viable alternative. This can be done by bringing 'myth' back to centre stage. This could then enable us to accept the non-linearity of history, and the need to reinvent ourselves constantly, in other words the need to attempt to re-engage with 'being through time'.

It is imperative to reposition the study of history and the methods of the historian back to where they belong in IR, to the centre of our concerns, not on the periphery. IR can then once again become a discipline that does not either merely reflect what is alleged to be 'obvious', but neither does it have to refuse to accept what is possible. What is lacking is the energy, the existential drive to understand what history might have to teach, and not merely to be the passive objects of history.

At the moment we are just rejecting all that is foundational and not seeing the lineages of meaning that have been manifest in our own century and many before it, those that posed all the questions that are now and as ever important.

Hope isn't a bad thing. In fact, hope in some senses also signifies fear. Our fears find moorings in our hopes. Hope also expresses vulnerability and strength to challenge the linearity of time and complexities of reality. Stories can be complex, but still adhere to scripts that can be analysed through scriptural hermeneutics, grammatical norms and plot summaries. We can employ similar tools for the study of everyday stories in IR. For ancient Greeks, theory implied contemplating and speculating outside the fixed forms of thought. Taking cue from them, modern theorists could transcend the rigid scientific claims and fixed judgements by tethering theory ideas closer to the ambiguous real world.

A retrospective analysis of the discipline of International Relations through the concepts of tradition, progress and utopia will lead to finding potential alternatives to the current crisis of disjuncture between theory and practice with its dangers and tribulations in search for greater relevance of our own ideas. Rewriting the disciplinary history can help in illuminating ways in which human imagination can transform the character and direction of future politics. We have to learn to think differently, in order to feel more at home in the world we cohabit.

Chapter Six
Conclusion

"There can only be a 'perspective' of perceiving and knowing; and the more we subject a 'thing' to plural interpretations and permit diverse meanings, the more comprehensive our 'concept' of this thing, will be."

Friedrich Nietzsche (1990: 42)

"One can not reach for new horizons unless they display the courage to lose sight of the shore."

William Faulkner (1929: 11)

Epilogue

The interlinkages between IR and the three concepts of tradition, progress and utopia call for reconfiguration of IR itself. The discipline of IR must incorporate the normative underpinnings excluded systematically from mainstream theorisations and discuss the possibilities regarding the future, giving up its insistence on maintaining the status quo and state centricism while addressing the questions of what does and would potentially to be human. The historical determination of human nature pursued in the discipline distances one from these existential questions which are pre-requisites for happiness and flourishing of human beings. This engagement with utopia, tradition and progress has also helped in understanding what constitutes as a legitimate form of knowledge. The advanced western societies also termed as 'knowledge economies' have expropriated and exterminated all alternatives of knowledge production. It would be therefore interesting for future research to uncover the meanings of utopia, progress and tradition ascribed by these societies for a comparative analysis.

Nostalgia, Presentism and Anticipation – the triple temporality in International Relations are being addressed in this thesis while questioning the stakes, aims and relevance of their inclusion in the writing of IR theory. The re-conceptualisation of the project of IR theory necessitates a future oriented imagination, inventing a novel political imaginary which is deconstructive and open ended. The 'fictive' theorisation

takes an anticipatory form and is modelled around the ingenious epistemology of potentiality. Fictive theories are guided by the dual claims of producing knowledge: firstly, fictivity is disrupting, it questions the intelligibility of producing dichotomisation including reality/fiction, utopian/ concrete and in the process rendering the world as limiting and secondly, since thought in itself is anticipatory while inquiring about the future, it represents the undisclosed space that is yet to created. Hence fictive theorisation is primarily creative, resolutely disruptive, intrinsically transgressive and entirely performative both in text as well as practice.

The study of International Relations, like social-political theory in general, is inherently dependent on multiple intellectual traditions. This basic reality cannot be ignored or wished away without serious distortion. Despite this, the predominant conceptualisation of the discipline is grounded in a fervent allegiance to monistic metaphysics by arguing that there can be only singular explanations and simplistic causal relationships describing the reality around us (Spegele 1996: 49). There exists an ineradicable conflict between the truth claims emanating from either of these-monistic claims about international relations. The adjudication of these opposing claims of truth is left up to the victors who emerge triumphant from such encounters. This dichotomisation captures the essence of the discipline and is documented thoroughly through the great debates that trace the genealogy of the discipline. The recognition of the first clash between realism/idealism representing dual epistemological structure is essential to a comprehensive and complete understanding of IR as an academic subject and address the following questions: a) Can IR be conceived as a coherent and singular discipline?; b) Should this be the guiding force behind conducting research?; and, c) Is there a distinctive analytical value to IR theory.

The arguments advanced in the previous chapters challenge the conventional story of the growth of the discipline through progressive stages. This approach, however, should not be interpreted as an exercise in historiography or nostalgia, so much as an attempt to recover a conception of IR largely uncontaminated by today's exaggerated claims of unity or heterogeneity; it is less a return to the discipline's recent past than a turn towards its only possible present. While this study regard this largely forgotten and/or neglected conception of the subject as classical, it is only

classical in the sense that it is difficult to imagine IR in any other way.

The conventional conceptual mapping of the domain of IR represents privileged positioning of binaries wherein idealism is opposed to the political present and the practicality of action. These hierarchised binaries domesticate the forces of fictivity through the fierce insistence on prioritising the real and fitting theories to the world rather than critiquing the foreclosing of fictive possibilities embedded in the present. Fictive theorisation is crucial for outlining the potentialities dormant in the present socio-political context; acting as a stimulant driving political change. It is impetuous to consider utopia as an end state perfection, rather it must be viewed as shifting in perpetuity both spatially and temporally. Utopianism perfuses contemporary social and political thought as the repertoire of our yearnings and aspirations. The vision about good life embedded in any form of social theory is guided by the utopian impulse. The political critique of 'what is' i.e. the existing conditions presupposes a 'what ought to be' which is a latent manifestation of utopianism.

One of the primary reasons for the lack of transformational capacity in IR is due to its dismissal of utopian tradition in the formative years of the discipline with the first great debate between realism and liberal internationalism. The key to understanding the disciplinary parameters and potential of IR lies not in its uncertain future, nor its increasingly chaotic present, but in its recent past and, much more remotely, the essential ambiguity of social theory in general.

Though organised theoretical investigation of international relations is much older than its modern namesake field, it is from the late 1930s to mid-1950s that the truest articulation of its purpose, possibilities, and limits can be found. The emergence of IR as an autonomous subject came somewhat earlier, largely as a response to the grim and pressing realities of the First World War. It was at the midpoint of the twentieth century, however, that IR came into its own, striking an essential balance between the well-intentioned, but excessive, optimism of its founders, and the equally well-intentioned, and excessive, pragmatism of their self-appointed heirs and critics. This idealist-realist counterbalance was largely unintended, yet salutary, since each vision of IR undermined the propensity of the other to congeal into dogma. But the notion that a coherent academic field could be founded on largely antithetical

principles could not easily resist the pressures for consensus, unity, and conformity characteristic of the now prevalent, positivistic, conception of science and discipline. That IR fails miserably to meet this standard in the 1990s is no surprise to anyone acquainted with its earlier development.

Many would find it odd that IR can, on the one hand, consist of more than one sort of intellectual activity and, on the other hand, still be conceived as a distinct field, it is probably due to the unchallenged presupposition that a discipline can only be founded on consensus. Despite being a rather loosely specified term, the word 'discipline' has become so bound up with methodological unity that it sits uncomfortably with the basic premise of this thesis. Though various versions of IR exist, it is generally conceived as a mono-science. For the positivists any truth claims about IR must be verified by the methods of empirical science. For the post-positivists, any truth claims about IR must meet the test of rational consensus (Brown, 1994: 219). What each of these disparate, and internally diverse, conceptions of social-political thought have in common is an unwillingness to recognise that it is possible to accept the legitimacy of more than one intellectual activity in an ambiguous field like IR.

It is neither mandatory nor prudent to consider 'consensus' over the intellectual boundaries of a discipline as an attribute of progress; nor do diverging views regarding the substantive facets of international relations including what and how to study, preclude theorising and thinking of IR as a coherent discipline. Notwithstanding the apparently complex reality, the conventional accounts of theories of IR have bifurcated the international realm into simplistic divisions, beginning with the realist-idealist axis of contention. Idealism and realism have been disconnected from their philosophical usage to be transformed into paradigms under a singular science in the modern discipline of IR, the explicit goal of which is steadily to replace the utopian fancies of the former with the dispassionate observations of the latter, as determined from the purportedly archimedean vantage point of scientific method. These two aren't merely representative of the competing perspectives within the discipline, but are fundamental, inextirpable fault lines running beneath it. Since the time of Thucydides at least, these philosophical divisions have rendered up competing conceptions of the subject, its theorization, and what constitutes theoretical and

substantive progress.

Tabula Rasa of the IR Consciousness: Inventories of the Present

The trajectory of the discipline of IR is premised on forgetting the role of idealism in the course of its evolution. It is crucial to note that forgetting entails not only a negative process; a neglecting or over looking, but it also is a necessary part of our existence[1]. The unravelling of the foundational myths of the discipline illuminate the distortions contorted across history by different scholars to propagate rhetorical intentions.

The illocutionary force of fictive is emphasised and deployed to present alternative to the contemporary theorisation in IR. This thesis is a trans-disciplinary attempt at exploring the epistemological claims put forth by fictive theories and their subsequent effects on the discipline. 'Fictive' is deployed in contradistinction to the 'fictional'. There is a subtle but extremely important distinction between fictional and fictive; while fictional relies on its opposite, the real/true and therefore is rooted in epistemological positivism, fictive transcends this distinction. This thesis is aimed at reconceiving the discipline of IR as an open ended endeavour grounded in future potentialities. The creative political imaginary is guided by epistemology of possibility. Drawing upon and weaving stories from the three concepts of tradition, progress and utopia, it is an attempt at making alternative conceptualisations intelligible and legitimate. The thesis fervently advocates for the reconfiguring of the meta-physical and political locations of utopias. The re (ordering), re (shaping) and re (evaluation) of what constitutes the international and how we approach it and the ambivalences in the present theories are explored through the thesis.

There can be further engagement with the concept of deconstructive narratology and Jacques Derrida's work on 'undecidability' as well as exploration of Roland Barthes's 'textuality' which can contribute to reviewing the epistemological and temporal aspects of theorising. The thesis explored the ways in which IR theory negotiated with meaning making in the world. It investigated the claims that justify particular construals of and interventions in the 'international'. The foundations of the

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[1] There is literature on the neuro-cognitive correlates of engagement with fictional epistemology that highlights the heuristic value of fictive and imaginary in understanding the world (Iser, 1993; Thomsan Jones, 2008; Walsh, 2016).

discipline are based on reason, objectivity and materiality according to the conventional understanding making it difficult to posit any contestations. Fictive theorisation inaugurates novel cognitive and normative standards of engaging with the world. The work for a fictive theorist is at dual level, firstly it is to emphasise the capacity of theory to articulate visions and potentialities beyond the current order and secondly and more importantly it is 'inventive' role of creating cognitive and normative standards that are not just political but politicised due to their epistemological concerns.

Fabricating the Future

This thesis presents an endeavour to articulate creative epistemology in terms of possibilities that challenge the hierarchised and oppressive world order. It attempts to bring back the notion 'fiction' as central to our academic perusals. The continuing spell of existing and thinking statically in IR according to Ernst Bloch was a diagnosis; forewarning and response to the symptomatic reification that is multivalent and pandemic (Bloch, 1923: 35). The utopian vision challenged this dormancy underlying the international order. Temporality, the divide between the present, past and future is collapsed while engaging in fictive theorisation. Conceptualising time as a possibility thus leads to reconfiguration of the world itself, both in terms of how we think about it but also how we approach to do things in practice.

At the epistemological level, there is shift from reliance on the 'given' to the 'possible' while theorising about the world. The constitutive fictivity is operationalised through the political praxis as it opposes any form of reproduction of the given/present, thus enabling social reordering in a completely novel manner. The fictive mode of theorisation isn't referential but intrinsically creative. Political anticipation is an essential component of resisting the replication of the current forms of hierarchised oppressive relations. Fictive theory enables transcending the boundaries between the present and possible by attuning resistance to create space for alternatives. Fictivity brings out one such site of anticipation and its excavation can lead to revealing much more about reality. Fictive theories generate their own political and ethical consequences which further widen the ambit of research in

international relations.[2] There are cognitive implications of presuming the before and after in a narrative, that gears towards a conclusion.

The underlying theme immanent to the thesis is to reject disciplinary teleology and consider it as another form of fiction. The choice of concepts – tradition, progress and utopia, is critical for contemporaneously reading and denying the canonical understanding of the discipline. The use of canons is inquisitorial and critical, exposing their caveats and blind spots to the narratives around which the discipline sustains itself. A re-reading of these canons can lead to these being repository of hopes, desires and fears, hitherto unexpressed. It is important to note that the sites of difference can also be seen as potential sites of transformation.

There are exciting projects opening new avenues and creating possibilities by blending political theory and utopian studies. Wendy Brown's *Politics Out of History* (2001) and *The Enchantment of Modern Life* (2001) by Jane Bennett are animated with the question of how to navigate through modernity by arguing for an interlocutory potential between politics and theorising that revitalises the utopian endeavour. The claims made by fictive theories aren't just about creative epistemologies of possibility but also political in nature. They inform, guide and/or fabricate the desired futures. Fictive theorisation entails viewing the political in terms of becoming rather than being; it is a culmination of a critical and utopian project. The critical project consists of questioning the existing categories while the utopian project comprises of viewing the world as unfinished and dynamic.

The lessons IR can draw from the engagement with the concepts of Tradition, progress and Utopia can be summarised as follows. Firstly, that fixity (valued in IR) is misleading, fallacious and crafted artificially; secondly, the complexities surrounding temporality, alterity and potentiality must be theorised and thirdly, the otherwise insignificant and inconspicuous concepts can reveal 'difference' in International Relations in novel ways. In political theory, both Thomas Hobbes and Immanuel Kant through their conceptualisations regarding the 'state of nature' and

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[2] It is important to distinguish between the concept of imagination and fancy as explicated by William Wordsworth. Imagination is a creative mental process of fusing and unifying the forms of experience that can't be accessed through habitual modes of reading and perceiving (Schlutz, 2015: 167). The obsession with value neutrality in IR can be linked to its unimaginativeness.

'world government' respectively are exemplars of didactic fictional accounts regarding the nature of world politics.

The exploration of the three concepts of tradition, progress and utopia has exposed the manner in which the dominant political narratives in IR foreclose boundaries, establish acceptable interpretations and thus define the disciplinary ambit of IR. These admissible definitions provide an apriori justification for the very existence of the discipline with its 'correct' and 'proper' research agendas. The disruption the core foundational narratives through tracing the element of 'fictive' within them manifests in paradoxical and *sui generis* moments confronting hegemonic discourses. The arguments presented in the thesis posit that fictive theorisation is both essential and ubiquitous.

The foundational epistemological claims in IR are deeply political and grounded in fictive logic. The mainstream theories in IR in themselves are narratorial, fictive and creative at their core since they disrupt alternate epistemologies of defining what qualifies as political and construct categories of permissible and unacceptable and thereby what is incontestable and treated as natural in international politics. At stake of these knowledge claims is the dual question of 'status' and 'validity of effects' through which the notion of 'political' is constituted, comprehended and lived in.

Conjuring up the Dead: International Relations and Political Philosophy

The discipline of IR has ineluctably heavily drawn on the post-Enlightenment idea that the objective of research in social sciences is to expose the empirical regularities which govern the world around us. This explicitly positivist view is sometimes softened by a rationalist tradition of political-philosophical analysis that predated and survived the consolidation of the discipline. The rationalist conception of IR shares with positivism a number of assumptions about knowledge and progress, but seeks to search for timeless patterns not only on empirically demonstrable laws or 'facts', but also on properties of human nature assumed for the sake of argument to be true and unchanging. While IR is not alone among the aspiring social sciences in trying to control or eliminate normative preferences in analysis it, more than any other field, has managed to confuse this explicitly methodological technique with science per se. This accounts for the dominance of realist accounts of international politics which,

despite a tendency to link them to a continuing tradition within the field, become virtually synonymous with the science of IR itself, since science purports to deal exclusively with how things *are* in the real world of political action. One apparent rival to the exceptional status of IR is economics, where the predominant view is that analysis can be as "value-free" as it is in the natural sciences. Historiography in IR is thus little more than a process of tracing the evolution of international theory through primitive to more advanced scientific stages. The problem with this approach extends beyond its thoroughly anachronistic conception of theory and progress to include the reality that there is no demonstrable, continuous scientific tradition in international political theory.

There is in fact a real continuity in political theory, but of a sort not valued or recognized by linear, progressive models of science. While political theorists often claim to be anchored to an external world of facts, the inherently speculative nature of their enterprise and its concepts gives no lasting assurance that knowledge of the political world can be cumulative. Political theory is a continuous intellectual tradition only in the sense that the same, or similarly defined, normative problems are endlessly debated, and always within a historically unique construction of problems and solutions. It is precisely because liberty, equality, justice, and other political concepts are 'essentially contested' that political theory, and the broader realm of social thought to which it belongs, remains an essentially ambiguous, and open-ended, activity.

Because the intellectual and material circumstances of political theory are subject to constant change, so too are its problems and solutions. At its most general level, debate moves along a timeless continuum framed at opposites ends by more and less sanguine assessments of the possibility for political change or movement in a desirable direction. To put it ironically, it is the very discontinuity and incertitude of political thought that forms the basis for its continuity, though it is more often remarked, and better appreciated, by poets, sages and philosophers than aspiring scientists. 'What is important,' writes Sheldon Wolin, 'is the continuity of preoccupations, not the unanimity of response' (Wolin, 1960: 3). Political theory might thus be described in the same terms that stoic philosophers viewed the world as a whole: 'there may be progress here and there, for a time, but in the long run there is

only recurrence' (Russell, 1979: 263). This is not to deny the desirability of progress. It is simply to suggest that who wears these labels at any given time depends not on any universally valid or external standard, but on the ever-shifting sands of social and intellectual convention. It is to this sort of intellectual tradition that international political theory belongs, and from which it has been severed by the modern discipline of IR.

While the alleged longevity of the Realist tradition is cited as confirming evidence for the power of its insights, it tends to contradict the popular idea that IR is a distinctly modern science. If Realism were a real, continuous historical tradition, its modern exponents could be expected to exhibit more confidence in the sufficiency of its interpretive capacity than their preoccupation with scientific status would suggest.

The problem, as Terry O'Callaghan (1998) points out, is that realism is not a historical, but a modern analytical, tradition. Following Brian Schmidt, he defines an analytical tradition as a retrospective construct which is defined by present criteria or concerns (Callaghan, 1998: 189). Thus, it was precisely because none of the so-called founding fathers of the discipline, from Thucydides to Morgenthau, saw themselves as working within a well defined and specified discursive framework that the modern discipline of IR had to be constructed (Callaghan, 1998: 189). To the extent that IR theorists see themselves as aspiring scientists, then, they can have little interest in trying to understand political theory as a historical tradition.

Conjuring up the Living: The Deceptive Autonomy of International Relations

An exactly analogous pattern emerges with regard to social theory. Students of IR, if and when they have ventured into this realm, have tended to engage in a very selective appropriation of concepts, often with an eye to their perceived fit with pre-existing theories and assumptions. Among the most striking aspects of American IR are: its relative equanimity in the face of mounting turmoil within the discipline as traditionally conceived; its continuing antipathy, and growing indifference, to theory in anything but a very restrictive sense barely distinguishable from honing and applying the usual methods and models.

Anthony Giddens' conception of structuration theory offers a useful illustration of the general attitude of IR scholars to theoretical innovations that

originate 'outside' the field. Commenting on the epistemological plurality of social theory in general, Giddens argues that it is always as much about interpretation as nomological explanation (Giddens, 1977: 149). Giddens' attempts to accommodate subjectivist and positivist accounts of social theory parallels the classical conception of international relations theory exemplified by Carr, for whom 'sound thought' was a matter of achieving a proper balance between free will and determinism (Carr, 1939: 19). Giddens simply puts this perennial problem in the more technical, social-scientific language of structure and agency. He propounded that actors are both created and creators of social systems. The critics of structuration theory often miss the point that it isn't about free will in opposition to structural constraints. Rather, his analysis highlighted the subtle overlapping between reflexive action and institutional constraints (Bryant and Jary 1991, 204).

IR theory, like social theory generally, is notoriously event driven. Not surprisingly, therefore, the unfolding reunification of IR and social-political theory has been propelled largely by developments at the national and global level politics. Among the many aspects of IR said to demarcate it from political theory, none has been more central, more significant or more rigorously defended by theorists and statespersons alike, than the permanence of the state. As Howard Williams *et al.* put it, 'since the state is assumed to represent the most perfect form of political association that humankind has thus far devised, the normative order that the state claims to represent must be secured from outside interference' (Williams, Wright, and Evans, 1993: 2).

The myriad intellectual traditions that define political and social theory through the ages can be attributed to a perpetual, ineradicable core dispute over the possibility for sustained intellectual, material, and moral progress. If there is a single, continuous intellectual tradition that unites antiquity, modernity, and postmodernity it is the contingent, unpredictable, and unstable nature of both knowledge and the social world itself. Martin Wight, despite his insistence on the general recalcitrance of international relations to political theory, is one of the few modern commentators on the subject to recognize that the only appropriate cast of mind for the IR theorist is a 'cautious agnosticism' (Yost, 1994: 274). This tradition of non-traditionalism is contrasted by Wight with the Realist view of history as repetitive and cyclical, and the

revolutionist view of history as 'linear, moving upwards toward a cataclysmal finale and righteous culmination'. Opting for what he sees as the intellectual via media of rationalism, Wight suggests that we would do well to be sceptical about attributing history with any specific pattern or meaning or putting confidence in the perpetuity of progress of political institutions (Wight as cited in Yost, 1994: 274). But while Wight is correct to see IR as incompatible with progressivist theory, he is wrong to identify this incompatibility with the ontological distinctiveness of international politics.

Rather, as E.H. Carr suggests, neither pessimism nor optimism about the possibility for progress in international relations (or any humane science) can exist to the exclusion of the other. According to Carr, the founding basis for political thought is an amalgamation of the virtues of both utopia and reality, since segments of both are inextricably blended in human nature (Carr, 1946: 93).

It is important, however, to break free of the old habit of seeing IR as a unified science, and the best hedge against this intellectually enervating practice is an appreciation for the broader context of political philosophy to which the academic study of international relations properly belongs. There is simply no continuous, historical, scientific tradition on which to substantiate the modern presupposition that IR ought to be regarded as a distinct, autonomous discipline. Nor is the famously anarchical structure of international relations convincing evidence of its ontological distinctiveness. The disciplinary issue has become a needless distraction, bogging down in arcane, second-order debates about overly subtle, sometimes meaningless, distinctions between this or that paradigm, research method or framework.

Ironically, the obsession with disciplinarity unity and consensus characteristic of post-Second World War IR scholarship has been a major obstacle to intellectual progress. This is because international relations, like all subjects of political inquiry, involves inherently normative and prescriptive judgments about a range of substantive concerns, while offering no objective criteria for saying which particular issues should be most compelling, or which technique best suited to its investigation. It is easy to see that this sort of tradition could scarcely satisfy the desire for a continuous, systematised body of knowledge explicit in the modern attempt to turn each of the divisions of political analysis into an independent science. But, in the case of IR at least, systematisation and rigor has been largely an internally generated elusion made

possible by elevating analytical abstractions to the status of permanent scriptural truths, and by an almost total disregard for, or caricatured distortion of, the traditional works, methods, and presuppositions of political philosophy (O'Callaghan, 1998). Intellectual pluralism, though conceived as an enemy of science, is a fundamental fact of both the study and practice of social-political relations. But, given its traditional interest in the state, and its appropriate form and conduct, political philosophy is not entirely unsystematic and offers a viable alternative to the forced methodological unity demanded of the more narrowly scientific conception of international relations.

The point is to suggest that the form and content of social-political knowledge in international relations is as richly contextual, and inherently contestable, as the body of contending ideologies that comprise political philosophy (Goodwin, 1982: 29). This contestability extends to the conception of knowledge itself, including the typically unspoken, unexamined and unassailable presupposition that science is a cumulative and progressive business. Now that the attempt to treat IR as structurally homo-morphic to the natural sciences has been soundly discredited, its relationship and affinities to classical political philosophy are increasingly obvious.

Inheritances: The Matter of History or the History of Matter

The idea of progress is integral to the post Enlightenment political and social theory that it seems, more than any other element, to distinguish the discourses of modernity from earlier modes of knowing. Absent in ancient and medieval thought, for example, is any systematic attempt to articulate the potential for human actors to understand, and control, changes in the world around them. The modern preoccupation with material betterment and technological advance, raised to extravagant heights in capitalist-industrial societies, has transformed a particular and historically specific conception of progress into a universal, inescapable and desirable 'truth'. It is only when this modernist monopoly on the idea of progress is broken that rival conceptions of the idea can be addressed. The upshot, then, is that progress, while outwardly a modern and liberal concept, is neither exclusively modern nor liberal. In IR the timelessness of realism has scuttled progress by overemphasising the permanence and cyclical nature of the tradition.

The point to be made here is that the possibilities, benefits, and evaluative criteria for progress are viewed in different ways at different times. This is not to

suggest that the concept itself is historically variable. The literal meaning of progress-to move towards better, higher, more advanced stages of knowledge or material wellbeing is not at issue. Approached in this way, it becomes clear that ancient civilisations had a conception of progress not unlike that of the moderns. Every society, after all, is modern in comparison to its own immediate past. While the Greeks stood at the dawn of what we now call the Western civilisation; they did not know it, and with hubris reminiscent of the Enlightenment, had a very generous estimation of their intellectual capabilities, a substantial faith in human progress, and a commitment to universal theoretical constructs.

The key distinction between modernist and antiquarian conceptions of progress is not the notion that the stock of knowledge grows over time, since 'the idea that knowledge accumulates is much older than the eighteenth century' (Plamenatz, 1963: 412). The distinctiveness of the two sets of discourse rests instead on the role that knowledge is thought to play in society. Thus, while our definition of progress is morally neutral – referring to the 'gradual betterment of humanity' or to 'forward movement' – we are likely to differ profoundly from one era or culture to another over what it is that constitutes human betterment (Wagar, 1967: 55). In modernist thought, the idea of progress is usually linked to a conception of knowledge as a means to a steadily increasing good. As the stock of knowledge grows, so too do its uses. This technocratic version of knowledge and progress has come so much to dominate modern thinking about the world that it has tended to push all other conceptions of the uses of reason and rationality aside.

While the idea of progress is much older than often acknowledged, only since the increasing prestige of the natural sciences championed in the 'Age of Reason' has it been generally and consistently argued that the present is better than, and preferable to, the past (Plamenatz, 1963: 412). The ancients, however, never lost sight of the occasional pressing reality that progress was unlikely to be lasting, and staving off decline was a major preoccupation. The problem of progress is closely related to the problem of knowledge since, once we know what is true or best, we will arguably feel compelled to move toward it.

The essential ambiguity of social thought, as evidenced in the nature-convention distinction, can be reduced to two very general and conflicting sets of

assumptions about knowledge. These can be variously labelled, and contain numerous strands, but, in keeping with the categories deployed in IR and in this study, can be usefully described as idealist and realist. While they contain distinct, largely antithetical, assumptions, idealist and realist thought are united by a rejection of the complacent acceptance of traditional values as a source of genuine knowledge. In the idealist stream, authentic knowledge derives from an understanding of a transcendent, otherworldly reality that gives meaning and order to all activity.

In contrast to idealism, Greek realist thought derives its moral and intellectual standards from the workings of nature. The hypothesised super-sensible world of the idealists is, by definition, outside the realm of empirical investigation, and beyond the bounds of human reason; as such, it cannot yield genuine, or useful, knowledge. With a desire for rigor that prefigures the strictures of Enlightenment science, this realist conception of reality demands that all superstitious and conjectural elements be rejected, and that knowledge be sought only where it can be found: in the observable realm of nature. Implicit in this realist position is a rejection of all totalising claims about knowledge, since empirical reality consists not of Platonic universals, but of diverse concrete particulars (Tarnas, 1991: 71).

In contrast to the classical propensity simply to accept the irreconcilable duality of intellectual life, modernist discourses exhibit a distinct affinity for totalising conceptions of knowledge and understanding or totalising conceptions of truth-relativism. In its most extreme form, the desire for certainty in modernist discourse is expressed through its aspiration to an authoritatively ordered body of empirical sciences encompassing the entire physical and social world. In its most extreme form, the sense of uncertainty characteristic of anti-modernist thought is pushed to the point that all beliefs become relative and fallible. While diametrically opposed conceptions about knowing, the scientific and relativist perspectives attempt to impose finality on social-political theory alien to the more appropriate ambivalence of the classical conception of progress. In the version of progress that predominates, modern thought is not simply different from that of the ancients, but, in its self-declared attainment of the highest possible standards, methods, and forms of knowledge, implies a devaluation of all pre-modern knowledge.

Typically, as noted above, modernist thinkers link the idea of progress to a conception of knowledge as a means to a steadily increasing good. As the stock of knowledge grows, so too do its uses. In international politics, this version of progress is the driving force behind what Richard Ashley (1986) terms technical realism. In modernist discourses progress is also thought to hinge vitally on the power of human reason which, typically, is thought to be great. Inspired by the 'fantastic success' of the natural sciences, modern social theories have had little trouble embracing the 'assumption that the world is thoroughly accessible to science and reason' (Morgenthau, 1993: 41). Modern analyses thus tend to collapse the problems of intellectual, moral, and material/political advance into one model of progress; knowledge and praxis is united, this finds expression most eloquently in Karl Marx's dictum regarding philosophers having interpreted the world; while the point is to change it (McLellan, 1984: 158).

But in modernity, as much as antiquity, progress remains a contested idea, the meaning of which is to move forward both temporally and spatially (Goodwin, 1982: 136; Donnelly, 1991: 2). The advent of science, and its application to social inquiry, has made the contestability of progress easy to overlook. But sceptical voices have always been present, since the middle of the twentieth century in particular, when the purportedly liberating effects of science, rationality and reason and its largely uncontested version of progress were subjected to searching and sustained criticism by the Frankfurt School theorists. Jürgen Habermas, the most important exponent of this school, is particularly critical of the positivist version of science and rationality, suggesting that it is simply another of the many ideologies characteristic of the modern age. It is not the hubris of modernity, therefore, against which the social theorist must guard, but the exaggerated promise of the scientific method.

Once the historically variable idea of human progress got bound up with the rekindled, and redoubled, faith in rationality characteristic of the Enlightenment, its inherent contestability and universality was lost. Progress was now conceived as a uniquely modern idea that could not be pushed back into antiquity, except in the sense that certain currents of pre-modern thought exhibited a relatively modern understanding of the concept. If the Greeks and Romans had some inkling of progress it was only in the sense of vague anticipations, and whatever intimations existed had

to vie with powerfully anti-progressive myths like the myth of the golden age or the myth of eternal recurrence. There was even a propensity among the ancients to remark an apparent causal link between the advances of technology and the decline of morals (Strauss, 1968). It was the triumph of the scientific method alone that appeared to make possible a true idea of progress, one fully emancipated from 'the superstition, pessimism, and tendency to otherworldliness which hampered all pre modern thought' (Wagar, 1967: 58). Thus conceived, the essential modernity of the idea of progress could not be escaped.

The Danger of Premature Conclusion(s)

There is a necessity for earnest and enduring re-evaluation of the manner in which we conceive International Relations not just in the immediate frame of reference but in wider, profound discursive commitment to humanity per se. It is imperative to examine the privileged, monolithic and irreducible reality presented through a specific theory as the 'only' way of experiencing reality and the world 'out there'. Through uncovering the inter-connections between poesies and praxis, knowledge and power and interpretation and meaning making, this thesis presents the potential for transcending the narrow, inflexible and caricatured realist understanding of IR.

The dominant analytical tools and normative-political commitments of IR need to be relocated for it to be more inclusive; silences need to be broken, spaces need to be opened and gaps need to be exposed for facilitating the process of perceiving and acting beyond the circumscribed boundaries of 'meaningful' and 'possible'. For comprehending the present structure of International Relations, it is important to understand the discursivity of the fundamental categories that represent a particular form of matrix between knowledge and power which has been conflated to be universal and exclusive. The linkages between the hegemonic Anglo-American positivistic methodology and the tradition of neo-realism is an articulation of the disciplining rituals that shaped the modern narrative of IR. The three concepts of tradition, progress and utopia act as catalysts for emphasising the world-making essence of theories and correspondingly redefining the same. Conventionally, theory has been framed as a cognitive response to a world 'out there', thus creating a dichotomy between theory and practice. The study of the concepts of tradition, progress and utopia leads to a critically attuned perspective on global politics, moving

beyond the immutable laws, grand theorisations and static versions of historical necessity to unleash the potential for change. In doing so, they not only question the existing power relations and notions of truth but also profoundly impact the ways in which we think and act in the world around us.

Much of the mainstream IR scholarship represents reality in crude, dichotomised, universalist and essentialist terms, largely detached from the intricate complexities of actual practices in the world. This thesis aims to serve the dual objective of challenging the reproduction of traditional theories that presented a hierarchical, narrow picture of the world and in the process also emphasise the implications of meaning making through our reliance on theories by offering new avenues in terms of the use of fictive theories.

It is important to challenge the realist understanding of treating reality as totalised, universalised and unchanging since it is rather characterised by ambiguity, contradiction, and difference. R. N. Berki (1971) points out that the realist conception, despite being pre-dominant, presents a primitive and inadequate picture of reality. There are two implications of this primitive and inadequate representation of reality for international relations.

First is the prominence of the logic of immediacy which signifies that there is a concrete, tangible, material reality that exists and can be accessed through sensory perceptions. The language of immediacy is appropriated by realism that professes to help navigate the observable realities of the world. The second major implication is the logic of necessity which accords great significance to facticity. Reality is perceived to be eternal, objective, inevitable and unchanged by human actions. The underlying purpose purporting these theories is 'control', they seek in order to shape and influence various connotations of human conduct/behaviour in the international realm. The anarchical realm posits a threat and danger to humankind and necessitates a need for restraint which is advocated as integral for sustaining international relations by realists.

The reflection on the processes of gaining knowledge helps us understand how truth claims are constructed; how and why certain objects are defined and categorised in a specific manner and what objects exists within the purview of knowledge claims.

It has larger implications for structures of power, the relationship between producers and subjects and the social milieu at large. Jim George (1985) called for opening up the thinking pace for alternative approaches to re-read and re-write the discipline's present and past. Presumably, the discipline of IR is a global discipline, yet theorising about the concerns and issues gravitates towards the west. In addition, accessing the ostensibly international discipline is subject to various asymmetries concerning language, perspective and epistemology. Despite its self-understanding as a global discipline studying a global reality the mainstream theorists seem to be oblivious towards the relationships of power, knowledge and resources that shape the state of affairs internationally. For transcending this amnesia towards otherness and difference in terms of practices and beliefs and other geo-cultural locations of knowledge production in the world, the thesis advocates for the reliance on fictive mode of theorisation.

The debutante discipline of International Relations has been particularly detached from wider developments in social theory, picking up rather late, for example, on the disciplinary implications of post positivistic or Frankfurt philosophy, a sluggishness that has left the field poorly placed to meet the many-sided perspectives of postmodernism. Despite these broad-ranging attacks, however, a sizable proportion of IR scholars remain committed to an essentially positivistic conception of theory,

If the plurivocal utopian aspirations resounding throughout history in different corners of the earth could be distilled into one slogan, this uncanny chorus of voices would announce, 'another world is possible'. From a profound sense of dissatisfaction with the present, this battle cry draws the energy to outline a new socio-political configuration in a performative gesture[3] that strives to bring into existence the very future order it inaugurates in speech. But the utopian fervour, ignited by a righteous urgency, does not leave enough time for reflecting upon the meaning of the performative and, instead, prompts its adherents to adopt the prefabricated interpretation of these words imposed by the same hegemonic ideology it aims to

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[3] This is derived from John L. Austin's notion of capacity of speech/communication to consummate an action. Examples of performative language are: promises, judgements in court, wedding vows etc. The idea emphasises the significance of speech acts and non verbal communication that helps to maintain identities.

overthrow; herein lies the tragedy of many utopian experiments of the past. To restore to utopia its radical edge, it behoves us to dispense with the certainties inherent in the consensually accepted meaning of 'another world is possible' questioning not only its overall sense but also every single word comprising this expression. With a view to reassuring its supporters, imparting to them a feeling of hope, and gathering them around a common cause, the utopian slogan strategically presents the 'other' world, the world to come, as undoubtedly better and more desirable than the 'old' world.

The formalism of 'another world is possible' however, does not substantiate this implicit assertion, for the future it promises, if qualitatively different from the present, is always unpredictable and fraught with risk that dwells in all open-ended possibilities. On the other hand, the apocalyptic overtones of the phrase proclaiming the end of this world and the advent of the next one, based on the shaky foundations of a belief that the present can be reduced to a tabula rasa, upon which the infinitely malleable future will be inscribed, harbours extreme idealism.

Utopianism remains a figment of collective imagination unless it is materialised and subjected to resistance. In order to avoid the double trap of formalism and idealism, while retaining the utopian impulse, the thesis advances the notion of fictive theory that acknowledges, and even embraces, the risks of alternative futures; that replaces the empty form of utopian hope with the figure of existence; and that recovers the material underside of utopian projections, even as it spells out their limitations. Revisiting utopian thought today entails registering the obvious philosophical connotations of 'world', 'possibility', and 'otherness' – terms that are also crucial to phenomenology and existentialism, not only for the purpose of excavating the various semantic layers of the slogan but also for reorienting it back toward existence, wherein it has originated.

First, the world, commonly understood as a unified structure inhabited by multiple individuals, is a concept presupposed by objectivist science, which reduces divergences in perspective to different points of entry into a reality, ultimately monolithic and the same in itself. Globalisation, starting with the economic integration of world markets, and scientific rationality with its growing monopoly on thinking are the mutually reinforcing aspects of a single metaphysical outlook that

raises the notion of one world to the status of a regulative ideal for lived actuality. But, as phenomenology shows, a plurality of worlds is intrinsic to the concept of the 'world', understood as a web of significations irreducible to an objectively true and, hence, unitary structure of meaning.

The event of utopia would, on this view, be defined carrying with it the possibility of rupture and delineating a path to a new world. Second, phenomenology and existentialism reject both an erroneous identification of possibility with something merely imagined, lacking any bearings upon actuality, and the quasi-Aristotelian approach that takes it to be synonymous with potentiality awaiting its inevitable realisation. Rather, possibilities form the fabric of human existence, guiding our projects and actions in the world without standing for telos to be fulfilled. In the context of fictive theories, they ought to be nurtured as possibilities, not converted into blueprints for the realisation of a predefined political project. Uncoupled from a teleological worldview and the logic of productivity, possibility would not be annihilated by historical failures inherent in an existential modality of utopia. Third, in the mirror of a utopia that tears the continuum of the present, the subject sees herself as alien to herself, incapable of making sense both of the new world unravelling before her eyes and of her own place in it.

This subjection to 'otherness' tied to the finitude of sense and of the world, highlights the frailty of meanings that, rather than transcendental or trans historical givens, are transitory existential fragments that arise and pass away in temporal immanence. If fictive theory is to heed the call of the other, summoning us to our responsibility, it would need to come to terms with such finitude as its own enabling condition and, instead of insisting on the immutability of the project it enunciates, accept diverse possibilities, including those that do not coincide with its own vision for the future.

This thesis entailing the study of IR took a series of peregrinations, leading to unexpected vistas; it is also an ode to getting lost which has more than just the physical dimensions, it is a state of mind to be explored and embraced fortuitous journey in discovering one self in relation to the world. The change that the thesis envisages is not merely additive but foundational. It is an attempt to re-theorise IR through critical reflections on the textual tropes of tradition, progress and utopia.

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