

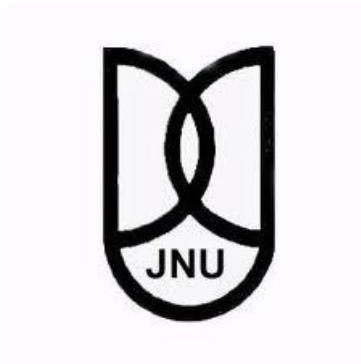
**Global Reform in the Thought of E. H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau and
Reinhold Niebuhr**

Dissertation Submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University

for award of the degree of

Master of Philosophy

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Declaration

I declare that the dissertation entitled “**Global Reform in the Thought of E. H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau and Reinhold Niebuhr**”, submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this university or any other university.

Jayant Chandel

Certificate

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

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To My Parents

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List of Abbreviations

EU European Union

IR International Relations

Chapter 1

Introduction

The purpose of this dissertation is to evaluate the understudied issue of global reform in the thought of E. H. Carr, Hans J Morgenthau and Reinhold Niebuhr. We examine the thought of these three scholars in order to understand the source behind the divergent positions of these scholars on the issue. Most of the works on the issue have ignored this significant theoretical question. In addition, most of the works on “global reform and classical realism” fail to evaluate the centrality of this issue in the overall theories of these scholars. Whether the issue is a “core” or “peripheral” part of their theories has never been evaluated. Hence, the study is an attempt to fill this gap in the theoretical literature on classical realism.

The term “global reform” is one of the several terms, which is employed by scholars to describe attempts to bring changes within the anarchical international system. It has been described by scholars like Scheuerman as “calls for far-reaching reforms to the international system” (2010: 246). Cosmopolitan theorists like David Held call such measures to reform the international system as “cosmopolitan governance” (1995). Another cosmopolitan theorist, Daniele Archibugi (2008), calls such measures of reform as “cosmopolitan democracy”. Held (1995: 223) argues that gradually we are moving away from the notion of “citizenship rights” which is limited to the boundaries of nation-states. He argues that gradually such rights are being transferred at the global level where there is already “citizenship rights within framework of international law” (Held 1995: 223). Morgenthau on other hand refers to proponents of global reform as “world federalists” or simply as “reformers” (1962: 57). Hence, these various terms are basically used to refer to the set of ideas or theories which talk about any possibilities or impossibilities of reforming the nature of current international system which consists of nation-states as a constituting entities.

1. Background

The discipline of International Relations (IR) as an academic field of inquiry arose in the aftermath of two bloody world wars. Quite naturally, the discipline and its earliest proponents, in many ways, were obsessed with the questions of war and peace and issues related to global reform. The birth of international organizations like League of Nations and discussions around it was one of the triggering factors which led to the origin of one of the classic works of the discipline: *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (1939). The book was considered a devastating blow to the proponents of global reform who thought that certain perennial issues, which confront the international community- interstate war and conflicting self-interests - could be solved by global institutions and reform measures like education. On the other side of Atlantic two other scholars (Reinhold Niebuhr and Hans J. Morgenthau), just like E. H. Carr, were pondering over similar issues. Hans J Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations* (1948) in many ways laid the foundation of systematic and theoretical study of international politics. Together these scholars are considered part of, what we now call the "classical realist" school of thought in IR. Since then Realism has become one of the mainstream paradigm of international relations. Without doubt, it is the "oldest and most frequently adopted" theory of IR (Donnelly 2005: 29).

As far as modern-day discussions on global reform is concerned, the writings of these classical realist has been ignored not only by the modern day realists but also their arch rivals like cosmopolitan theorists like David Held and Daniele Archibugi (Scheuerman 2010: 247). There has also been a revived interest in the notion of world state (Wendt 2003). In his recent work, Alexander Wendt is actually pondering over the subject of world state and argues that it is an inevitable teleological end of human history. However, in most of these discussions and debates the ideas of classical realists is missing. Even observers who write about European Union (EU) discard realism completely by invoking the "stereotypical" understanding of realism as a rational theory (Rynning 2005: 11). At this moment, the grand experiment represented by the European Union is facing lot of issues related to legitimacy and an increasing threat of nationalist

forces. In this present context, the thought of these Classical Realist scholars on the issue could prove to be quite useful.

To be clear, the Neorealists like John Mearsheimer and Kenneth Waltz have not written much on the issue. Unlike classical realists, who were writing in the aftermath of two world wars and demise of the League of Nations, the Neorealists like Waltz and Mearsheimer made a substantial break from the “Classical Realist” school of thought and instead turned their focus on the structural understanding of international politics and were far more skeptical of issues of reform in global politics. For Kenneth Waltz (1979: 112) the notion of world government is an illusionary idea and “would be an invitation to prepare for world civil war”. Furthermore, this break was also a significant break from the multi-variable analysis of Morgenthau and moved realism towards a more parsimonious theoretical route.

Hence, the study will not focus on the Neorealists and their views on the issue. Recently, there have been attempts by scholars like Scheuerman (2010 & 2012) and Craig (2008) to fill this gap within the literature by extensively focusing on this ignored aspect of classical realism. This study is an attempt to address this gap. Due to time and space limitations the study will focus only on three main proponents of this school- Morgenthau, Carr and Niebuhr. By focusing on these three scholars the study will try to understand the logic of Classical Realists on the issue of global reform in the following manner. Firstly, the study will attempt to bring out differences among these scholars on the issue of global reform. Then it will try to find out the reasons behind this difference. Secondly, by focusing on their views on the issues of global reform the study also intends to bring back the view of these scholars in the modern day theoretical discussions on issues of global reform. But, due to limited space, nature of research questions and scope of the project we would not be discussing the modern day literature on global reform issues. The intention is to merely bring their views to the fore. Thirdly, by focusing on their works on global reform the study tries to see what conceptual and theoretical role their views on global reform play in their overall thought and whether it was logically consistent.

2. Literature Review

The secondary literature on classical realism is very extensive and varied. In 2000s, there was a sudden growth in the literature on classical realists like Morgenthau and Carr. This revival of interest in these texts was largely a result of new political developments in the aftermath of the end of cold war (Lebow 2008: 241). In general, there have been many attempts either to bring back their views into our discourse or to redefine the core beliefs of these scholars. But, for present purpose we only look at the literature which directly deals with the issue of reform at global level. The existing literature on the issue of global reform and classical realism can be categorized according to two criteria. Moreover, it is according to these criteria that literature has been selected for the purpose of this literature review. The first criterion, which we will use to categorize the literature, is by looking at the nature of analysis provided by the particular piece of work. We use the following strategy to do this task: Is the work seeking to provide an “internal critique” by using “realism’s terms of reference” or not (Donnelly 2000: 2)? This categorization of internal and external terms of reference is significant for the purpose of this dissertation, as it will provide an analysis of the issue by using the internal terms of reference. In addition, there are a few works, which deal with the issue in this manner. The works that fall into latter category are more or less critical/post-structuralist works, which are trying to understand the literature by interpreting/criticizing these realist scholars from a standpoint of an outsider by using methods and techniques, which are alien to realism as a research program.

The second criterion, which is used to select the relevant works from existing literature, is by looking at the scope or extent of these studies. Due to the logistical and time related constraints the study only focuses on three major classical realist scholars. Hence, the literature has been selected accordingly. Two types of literature are taken into account. Firstly, we have focused on scholars whose works analyzes the whole school of classical realism in general in the context of global reform. They try to cover the whole school and focus on most of the prominent scholars in this school (Scheuerman 2010 & 2012). Secondly, there are works which deal with these scholars individually rather than focusing on whole school.

One of the earliest scholars that exclusively focused on Morgenthau's views on global reform and world state was James Speer (1968). According to Speer "Morgenthau's entire treatment of world politics [is] centered upon the requirements for the world state" (Speer 1968: 207). And this treatment of world state according to Speer is actually "main purport of his thought" and everything else is "peripheral". And, this core of his theory hinges to a larger extent on his understanding of sovereignty. Campbell Craig (2008) self-consciously picks up from where Speer had left and tries to understand what according to him are the two divergent approaches taken by Morgenthau. Speer solves the issue by arguing that issue of world state is the central part of his theory. However, for Craig the focus on world state was actually a result of a shift in the nature of world politics itself. After comprehending the dangers of thermonuclear war and its threat to human existence, in 1950s and 1960s, Morgenthau changed his views and "renounced state-centered realism" and "advocated an immediate world state" (Craig 2008: 195). For Craig, Morgenthau actually moved away from a "bleak vision" of international politics as depicted in his earlier works like *Scientific Man vs Power Politics* and *Politics Among Nations* (Craig 2008: 196). Hence, unlike Speer Craig contends that in fact Morgenthau moved away from state- centered realism and in a way distanced himself from his earlier works. But, if we take a close look at *Scientific Man vs Power Politics*, Morgenthau is actually arguing that it is not possible to completely eradicate the perennial problems which we face by coming up with rational solutions. In other words, the book is a treatise against the scientism of modern times and rejects the feasibility of any single scientific formula in curing the perennial problems within the human society. Any attempt to place his ideas on world state or global reform in general should not ignore this philosophical assumption, which is central to his worldview. In addition, this reaction against scientism and position of centrality of power did not fade. It can be found in some of his latter works. In an essay written in 1975, he clearly sounds skeptical of so-called "science of peace" (Morgenthau 1975).

The amount of secondary literature on Niebuhr is also huge. As far as global reform is concerned, Gordon Harland (1960) made the first ever attempt to understand his views on the issue. But this work is mostly trying to understand the work of Niebuhr in isolation and fails to answer the sources of his views on global reform (especially world

state). He explains the whole belief system of Niebuhr: from politics to theology. In a more recent work, Eric D. Patterson (2008 a: 167) interprets the present-day “multilateralism” from a Niebuhrian perspective and provides a critique of the “renewed utopianism” wherein “trans- and supranational institutions and international law” is considered “morally superior” to the power politics. Modern day international institutions are based on these “weak philosophical underpinnings” which believes in the power of education to cure ignorance and contends that “civilization is becoming more moral” (Patterson 2008 a: 169-170). Hence, in such a scenario, the triumph of notions like “love, justice, goodwill and brotherhood” is inevitable (Patterson 2008 a:169). And, such notions fail to deliver only due to a lack of belief in the efficacy of these ideas. According to Patterson, this “utopian multilateralism” is actually an “ideology” which permeates the foundations of “international law, multinational institutions and transnational movements” (Patterson 2008 a: 170). Patterson criticizes the attempts to project the EU as an institution, which “transcends power politics” (Patterson 2008 a: 174). But, this portrayal is based on dubious assumptions which ignore the power struggles within EU and also the attempts to make the EU as a counterweight to the United States. Hence, it is wrong according to Patterson to believe that we are transcending power politics and states now act more in favor of “global interests” (Patterson 2008 a: 173). Niebuhrian Realism provides us with many tools to evaluate the multilateralism which considers “consensus or compromise” as a superior virtue. According to Niebuhr, “consensus” in itself is a “morally problematic form of decision making” as it hides inequalities of power, which lies in any decision-making process (Patterson 2008 a: 174). Hence, states often shun their own moral responsibility by “excusing themselves under the guise of no international consensus” (Patterson 2008 a: 175). For Christian Realists this shunning of moral responsibility by individual states is very problematic. Because, for them “responsibility is a key feature of political decision making for individual and of collectives” (Patterson 2008 a: 176). Hence, present-day ideology of multilateralism allows states to shun this responsibility as it lacks “moral resources” and favors consensus based action. Christian Realists do not reject international law and institutions completely; instead, they make us more aware of the limitations (both moral and

political) of the “collective” decision making (Patterson 2008 a: 179). Individuals and Collectives can never operate in a same manner.

In a recent published work, Daniel Edward Young explores the relevance of Niebuhrian “Christian Realism” for the understanding of international institutions (2008). Young tries to combine the ideas of Niebuhr with those of Constructivism and English School in order to provide a better understanding of international institutions and law. Jean Elshtain (2010: 45) on the other hand, argues that most of the works of Niebuhr (including “his hundreds of op-eds”) are fully comprehensible only when we take Niebuhr’s “anthropological presuppositions” regarding the nature of “man”. The “metaphysical, theological, moral and political realist” aspects of his work are connected to each other (Elshtain 2010: 44). This is a very significant observation. If it is true, how are these presuppositions influencing his understanding of issues of global reform (like world state)? The dissertation will try to explore this particular aspect.

As far as E. H. Carr is concerned, Graham Evan’s (1975) article on him is one of the earliest attempts to understand his international thought. According to Evans, the writings of Carr cover a very wide spectrum and often confuse people. But, there is a “well integrated and consistently held” set of arguments in his works. Thus, he rejects the analysis of Johnston who argues that there are “at least two different theories which he fails to relate to one another in consistent fashion” (1967: 861). According to Johnston, Carr in his later writings actually succumbs to the same “utopian illusions against which *The Twenty Years’ Crisis* (1939) was originally directed” (1967: 861). Apart from his earlier works like *The Twenty Years’ Crisis* (1939), Sean Molloy also focuses on his later works like *Future of Nations, Conditions of Peace* (1942) and *Nationalism And After* (1945) (Molloy 2003: 279). In a critical analysis of Carr’s works Molloy argues that his “theory” attempts to provide a “synthesis of utopianism and realism” and after developing this insight he “sets out applying it to contemporary politics and possibility of change in international politics” (Molloy 2003: 284-285). And, the possibility of “change” in international politics is an “inevitable” feature of international politics (Molloy 2003: 285). According to Molloy, Carr’s insistence on moral relativism is a reaction against the “modern, liberal, Enlightenment inspired epistemic community of international relations scholars of both realist and liberal schools” (2003: 299). Carr,

according to him, clearly falls outside of this community. According to his biographer Jonathan Haslam (2000), the huge influence of anti-enlightenment Russian scholars like Dostoevsky played a profound role in developing his attitudes towards enlightenment and its intellectual traditions. Building on this understanding of Carr, Molloy clearly states that in many ways Carr was an “important precursor of critical and postmodern theories of international relations” (2003: 279). In his recent work, *The Hidden History of Realism: A Genealogy of Power Politics* (2006), Molloy provides a Post-Structuralist critique of the notion of existence of “realist paradigm”. According to him, there is a lack of “theoretical purity and consistency among” these scholars which clearly demonstrates that there is not a coherent “single ‘Theory’ of IR” (Molloy 2006: 3). For him there is no single “social scientific paradigm” or “tradition” and there is “plurality of truths” (Molloy 2006: 5). Post-structuralist interpretations question the existence of any single truth and for them “truths” are matters of representation. There is no single truth and any attempt to essentialize and homogenize knowledge is ill founded. It all depends on how we interpret texts. According to Molloy all this is merely a “conflicts of interpretations” and we need to question the “dominant knowledge/ discourse” (Molloy 2006: 10). There are two major problems with these post-structuralist works. Firstly, in an attempt to question the existence of the single truth, they tend to focus more on the differences within these scholars and ignore the common features, which run across any single tradition/school of thought. This dissertation does not deny the differences, which exist between various scholars within a same tradition. On the issue of global reforms, there are clear differences between Carr, Niebuhr and Morgenthau. This dissertation tries to explore this difference. However, this does not mean that there is no such thing as “realism” as a school of thought. Secondly, in an attempt to provide a critical interpretation and discover “plurality of truths” the originality of text is lost in these works. Hence, both Morgenthau and Carr are interpreted and projected as critical scholars.

Similarly, Linklater (1997) also tries to bring out the critical aspects in the writings of Carr and argues that his “reputation” as a realist has distorted his ideas on nation-states and their future in world politics. He argues that in his works we can find the “possibilities of new forms of political association” (Linklater 1997: 321). And, Carr imagined this new emerging political community with a more “sensitive” lens which

wanted to reduce “material inequalities” and respect “cultural differences” (Linklater 2000: 234). In a more recent work, Molloy (2008) compares the ethical and moral concerns, which underlie in the theorization of Carr and Morgenthau. He compares both the scholars and contends that they had a radically different view of morality. Whereas, Carr was a moral relativist who refused to consider morality as something universal, while for Morgenthau morality is something, which is transcendental and universal. This understanding of morality actually takes him closer to the Niebuhrian view of morality which has mostly “gone unnoticed” in the secondary literature on Morgenthau and Niebuhr (Tjalve 2008: 6). How and to what extent are their views on morality connected to their global reform in particular? Does this have any impact on their divergent views on issues of global reform? These questions have mostly been ignored in the literature on global reform.

Another critical attempt to reinterpret the mainstream understanding of classical realism are the works of Scheuerman (2010 & 2012). He makes one of the rarest attempts to focus on the entire school of classical realism especially in the context of global reform. Scheuerman (2012: vii) calls the realists of this era as “progressive realists” who were mostly “left leaning” and drew heavily from the “experiences of the interwar” Europe. According to him these realists were not “conservative” unlike the modern day realists. While summarizing their views on global reform he argues that

“Like global federalists, Progressive Realists sought extensive international reform. They argued, however, that many of its proponents neglected the centrality of *supranational society*, or what they occasionally called *world community*: any desirable as well as viable system of postnational governance would need to rest on a corresponding postnational society capable of exercising basic integrative functions akin to those regularly achieved by successful national political communities”.

(Scheuerman 2012: vii)

By focusing on their “biographical details”, he argues that we can challenge the image of realism as conservatives who were “backwards-looking” (Scheuerman 2012: 14). Then he also tries to elaborate in a chapter entitled “why (almost) everything you learned about

realism is wrong” why “Progressive Realism offers a more subtle account of international politics” (Scheuerman 2012: 16). Briefly, he argues that hitherto the scholars and textbooks have largely misrepresented the views of these scholars. They are “normatively and politically” more much more refined (Scheuerman 2012: 7).

There are however many problems with this interpretation. Firstly, in an attempt to project all of these scholars as “progressives” he downplays the major difference between these scholars: between E H Carr on one hand and Niebuhr and Morgenthau on the other hand. Scheuerman ignores the Carr’s endorsement of state planning and Soviet Union (while he downplays its excesses) as “naïve and anachronistic” (Scheuerman 2012: 188). Here in an attempt to project the whole school as “progressive” Scheuerman misses a very significant issue. We simply cannot reject E H Carr’s views on planning as “anachronistic”. There is a logical consistency in most of his works. In his monumental work *What Is History?* Carr clearly depicts “historiography as an inherently theoretical enterprise” (Papagaryfallou 2016: 88). For him history is a progressive enterprise and he saw a “golden age looming ahead of us” (Mehta 1963: 150). Hence, Carr the historian cannot be distinguished from his works on international politics. And, in his later works like *The Soviet Impact on the Western World (1947)*, *The New Society (1951)* and *Nationalism and After (1945)* clearly show his interpretation of history wherein past, present and future is interconnected. And, we can predict the future course of human society by looking at our past. It was this belief in historicism, which led Carr to defend the planning and view the Soviet Union sympathetically. Therefore, for him the Soviet Union was clearly a progressive improvement over western democracies as it challenged these states by projecting itself to be a “pioneer of a new and more progressive form of democracy- Soviet democracy” (Carr 1947: 1). This is not the case with Niebuhr and Morgenthau who were much more skeptical of the progressive potential of the Soviet Union (Niebuhr 1970 & 1949; Morgenthau 1947). According to Carr, the Soviet Union challenges the western democracies, as they themselves never underwent radical changes after the bourgeois revolutions in countries like France and England (Carr 1947: 10). Hence, Soviet democracy for him is a logical end to the history of human progress. And, it challenges the West to “complete the unfinished revolution” which Soviets were able to do (Carr 1947: 10). Hence, it cannot be simply rejected as “naïve”, instead the historicist

approach undertaken by Carr is the fundamental part and parcel of his scholarship which naturally takes him to view planning and reforms within the Soviet Union in a sympathetic and progressive manner. For Niebuhr, modern faith in history as a “redemptive process” is based on the belief on the constant progress of man’s “power and progress” (Harland 1960: 99). He questions the modern progressive view of history. The historicism of Carr is an understudied phenomenon in most of the secondary literature. Charles Jones (1997) formulates one of the rarest attempts to explore the role of historicism in the thought of E. H. Carr. While exploring historicism he argues that most of the works of Carr exhibits a substantial semblance to the ideas of Karl Mannheim and the conclusions which he reach regarding the Soviet Union and the fate of small states in Eastern Europe in largely due to the influence of Mannheim. According to him,

“it was from Mannheim that Carr took not only the structure of *The Twenty Years’ Crisis*, but also his post-positivist and interdisciplinary methodology, his belief in the policy role of the intellectual, his strong sense of connectedness of foreign and domestic policy, his insistence on forms of international society that heavily discounted the sovereignty of small nations, and the besetting weakness of inadequately acknowledged historicism and elitism”

(Jones 1997: 232)

Jones adopts, what Hacker has coined as, an “Intellectual Plagiarism” approach to evaluate texts of Carr wherein most of the major ideas are borrowed “wittingly and unwittingly” from Mannheim (Hacker 1954: 778). Hacker contends that this obsession with “biographies of individual authors” should not be the core task of a political scientist (1954: 779). Furthermore, by insisting that the most of his major works were written under the influence of one single author is clearly mistaken because it is not the fault of Mannheim’s ideas alone (which Jones suggests) but the nature of historicism itself which might lead him towards such conclusions. In other words, the culprit is not Mannheim per se. It seems the main culprit is the nature of historicism itself and his understanding of moral relativism which is responsible for Carr’s devastating conclusions. This is another problem with the “Intellectual Plagiarism” approach which the Jones undertakes is the overemphasis on Carr’s relationship with Mannheim makes him miss the larger point about historicism itself. The dissertation will discuss this contentious issue in detail in the

chapter on E. H. Carr. For now, we hypothesize that it is the nature of historicism as an approach and moral relativism, which leads him in this direction. Furthermore, the different visions of history, which Niebuhr and Carr embraced, and its impact on their theory, is largely ignored by scholars who attempt to write about their views on global reform. In the context of global reform, no one has ever tried to test the impact of Carr's historicism on his quest for a utopia in his later works. Here, Karl Popper's (1957: vii) critique of historicism as a "superstition" is very significant. In his devastating critique of historicism, which is often projected as a scientific and rational enterprise, Popper contends that there is in fact no "rational" method to "predict the course of human history" (Popper 1957: vii). And any utopian attempt to scientifically predict the future is not only unscientific but also dangerous. Hence, he rejects "the possibility of theoretical history" (Popper 1957: x). The dissertation will explore the connection, if there is any, between historicism of Carr and the impact it had on his theory.

Unlike Carr, for Morgenthau, history and theory are not one and same thing (Morgenthau 1962: 57). For Morgenthau, scholars throughout human history have actually rarely made attempts to theorize international politics apart from certain exceptions like "Kautilya and Machiavelli" (Morgenthau 1962: 56). It is mostly the historians, reformers and practitioners who have actually written about it. Hence, for a historian who is trying to explain international politics, "theory is like the skeleton, which invisible to the naked eye, gives form and function to the body" (Morgenthau 1962: 57). Carr the historian is clearly writing about international politics from this perspective. But, for Morgenthau, what distinguishes a self-described theorist from a historian is that the theorist actually gets rid of "historical recital, makes the theory explicit" and only uses the historical events "in bits and pieces to demonstrate his theory" (Morgenthau 1962: 57). Morgenthau contends that just like a historian a reformer is someone who is a "forward-looking theoretician" wherein "his scheme of reform provides an explicit theory of what international politics ought to be" (Morgenthau 1962: 57). And this prescription regarding the future is actually based on their analysis of the past and the present ("what international politics actually is"). And it is this obsession with reform which prevents these reformers like the "World Federalists" to actually develop an actual theory of international relations (Morgenthau 1962: 57).

3. Definition, Rationale and Scope of Study

After the above discussion, it is actually important to state the research puzzle, which guides this dissertation. The roots of the divergent views of Carr on one side and Morgenthau and Niebuhr at other, on the issue of global reform, has not been explored by the secondary literature on this issue. Why did they actually take different paths on this issue?

Before proceeding further, we would like to explain the exact understanding of the terms like “global reform”. For the purpose of this dissertation, the term global reform is as the attempts to either move away from the nation-state centric anarchical international system and/or radically alter the capitalist system. Hence, global reformists talk about the future of the international system which is populated by nation-states and how it is desirable and possible to transcend this system and develop some sort of world state or regional federation. They also talk about the possibilities to either bring radical changes within the capitalist system itself or completely overthrow it. This broad definition of the term global reform is useful for our present purpose for several reasons. First, all of these scholars have engaged with the proponents of world state and federations like European Union. They have pondered over these issues. And, in the present context where scholars are increasingly discussing the future of European Union, this theoretical discussion over ideas of classical realists over issues of global reform is very pertinent. Furthermore, scholars like Morgenthau and Carr have actually written about the issue of European integration when the earliest attempt to come up with this project began. It is one of the biggest planned project, which tries to integrate multiple nation-states within a region. Second, the focus on the future of nation-states as entities is also useful, as scholars like Carr have actually pondered over this issue. Nation-states, despite various predictions of their demise, continue to exist. In fact, in 21st century, various marginalized nations are still struggling for their own nation-states (For Example Palestine, Kurds, and Catalan). Hence, it is actually difficult to suggest that the attraction of nation-states is going down and we are moving towards some inevitable world state. Lastly, these scholars have also directly written about the radical reform measures like planning in the Soviet Union.

As far as scope of this study is concerned, as it has been already been stated the study is will focus on only three main scholars of this school: Hans J Morgenthau, Reinhold Niebuhr and E H Carr. The following criteria that has been used to select these three scholars:

1. The chosen scholar has written extensively on the issue and consciously debated with their contemporaries who were proposing various global reform measures. All three of these scholars fit these criteria quite neatly. For example- Niebuhr has written dozens of articles on the issue and debated with proponents of world state like Frederick Schuman. Similarly, Morgenthau has provided an extensive critique of Carr and his attempts to come up with own utopia after the publication of *The Twenty Years' Crisis*. Similarly, Morgenthau has extensively focused on the idea of world state in the major theoretical work *Politics Among Nations*.
2. The selected scholar should be one of the most influential scholars within the school. In a worldwide survey of IR scholars in 2009, Morgenthau was “still ranked 18th” among the most influential scholars (Pashakhanlou 2017: 8). Hence, without doubt he is the dominant figure from the school who has extensively written on the issue. Niebuhr, during his time, was one of the most significant realists of the period. Morgenthau himself has acknowledged the intellectual influence Niebuhr had on him (Rice 2008). Even Carr’s works were widely influenced by Niebuhr’s major works like *Moral Man and Immoral Society (1932)* (Morgenthau 1948 a). E. H. Carr on other hand continues to be the major figure in the discipline. His masterpiece *The Twenty Years' Crisis* is still considered a classic and is considered an essential text in the field.

4. Research Questions

- How did these three classical realists understand the issue of global reform?
- What sort of divide is there, on this issue, within this so-called school of “classical realism” in general and within these three scholars in particular?
- What are the sources behind this divide? How this divide does impact the conclusions of its proponents on the issue of global reform?

- Are their views on global reform part of the core of their theories? If yes then how are they consistent with their focus on other core issues like human nature, morality and power?

5. Hypotheses

- The historicism of E H Carr clearly leads him to have a different and much more radical view on the issue of global reform.
- The less radical views of Niebuhr are clearly molded by his views on scientism and history. And this critique of scientism and modern interpretations of history is consistent throughout his body of works and is informed by his pessimistic view of human nature.
- The critique of scientism is what takes Morgenthau much closer to Niebuhrian understanding and interpretations of future of human history. And its impact is reflected in his writings on global reform.
- The transcendental and universalistic understanding of morality on one hand and relativistic morality on the other leads these three scholars to radically different conclusions on issues of global reform.

6. Methodology, Sources and Analytical Framework

Traditionally, within qualitative interpretive methods, there are two prominent methods to interpret texts. The first method insists that it is the “context” (political, religious and economic) which “actually determines the meaning of any given text” (Skinner 1969: 3). The second prominent method insists that it is the “text itself”, which is the sole repository of the true meaning of any given text (Skinner 1969: 3).

This dissertation will employ the latter method as an interpretive method. As it has been hinted, while discussing post-structuralism, this work will try to interpret and be more faithful to the text rather than the context. There are several reasons for this strategy. First, this work acknowledges that there are certain ideas, which are perennial in nature and can be found throughout the works of these scholars. For Niebuhr and Morgenthau the conception of human nature and skepticism of scientism in many ways

constitutes a central part of their thought process. Even though when they are not explicitly saying it, while discussing issues related to global reform, these factors lead them to a skeptical view of planning and world state. This methodological approach is more or less inspired by Andrew Hacker's article, "Capital and Caruncles: Great Works Reappraised" (1954). He is writing in many ways against the contextual approach, which is very much prevalent in the social sciences, wherein the major aim of the scholar is to "bury" the so called "great works" (1954: 776). He also advises political scientists to refrain from taking a few approaches which favor context/individual over the text. Firstly, he asks us to refrain from adopting a "biographical approach" wherein scholars put too much emphasis on a particular event in a scholar's life wherein it is ultimately a particular event, which is behind most of their ideas. Secondly, he also maintains that often such works wittingly or unwittingly link all the ideas of a particular scholar/classical work to a certain predecessor (1954: 779).

Hence, in case of Machiavelli, it is his temporary "bad temper" which actually leads him to write a work like *The Prince* (Hacker 1954: 777). And in order to understand "real Machiavelli" one needs to move beyond *The Prince* and "must read his discourses" (Hacker 1954: 779). Such works are not difficult to find in case of these three scholars. Hence, there is a growing body of literature on Morgenthau which is attempting to link all his major ideas to the scholars like Carl Schmitt (who was the crown jurist during the early period of Nazi Germany) or to a particular phase/event of his life (Scheuerman 2008; Mirowski 2011; Honig 1996). Scholars like Mirowski try very hard to explore this connection in order to link his theory to Nazism. For example, Mirowski (2011) argues that both classical realism after world war two (especially in US) and Neoliberalism is a product of the ideas which were prevalent in 1920s and 1930s Germany (2011: 211-212). Hence, scholars like Carl Schmitt with a reactionary view of modernism had a huge influence of Morgenthau and most of his major works like *Politics Among Nations* (1948). In short, everything Morgenthau wrote is a result of this small phase of his life or was written under the influence of Carl Schmitt. Hacker (1954: 777 & 779) asserts that such approaches are problematic as such works do not consider the "whole theory" but rather are more concerned with the "biography of a single man" or "history of ideas". This according to Hacker is not a task of a political scientist. Hence, Hacker argues that

we should evaluate such works because they often contain ideas which are “timeless for both causal and ethical theory” (Hacker 1954: 783). They are useful in a number of ways. Firstly, such timeless works can help us in “explaining the political behavior of today” (Hacker 1954: 783). In other words, they have what we may call “universal application”. Hence, the evaluation of classical realist views on global reform can help us in understanding various theoretical and present-day political problems which we face (For Example, the crisis within the EU). Secondly, normatively speaking such works can help us in coming up with “norms which are as worthy of attention as they ever were” (1954: 783). Hence, in other words, the goal should be to concern ourselves with things these scholars are “trying to theorize about” and refrain from “deifying” the person/scholar (Hacker 1954: 785). In short, as a political scientist it is necessary to discuss ideas of these scholars because they help us in understanding certain phenomenon of international politics. This is not a work in what some may call “history of ideas” where more emphasis is on why the text was written in a certain manner and then deconstruct the text to bring out hidden meaning within those texts.

Another reason this approach (preferring text over context) is useful is that it allows us to evaluate their views on global reforms and to discern the place of these ideas in their theories and establish their position within it theoretically, conceptually and logically. For this purpose an analytical framework as developed by Pashakhanlou (2017) will be employed. He developed this analytical framework while studying the role of emotions like fear in realism. To uncover their conceptual understanding of global reform the dissertation will try to reveal the general understanding of global reform in their writings (Pashakhanlou 2017: 13). To uncover the role of global reform in their overall theories the work will try to find whether they explicitly incorporate their understanding of global reform in the overall frameworks (Pashakhanlou 2017: 14). This will accurately determine the place of these ideas vis-a-vis other ideas. Does it constitute the core of their theories or remains at the periphery? To determine whether their views on reform is logically consistent or not? We will try to decipher whether their writings on global reform is “logically consistent with the rest of their frameworks” (Pashakhanlou 2017: 14).

The original works (books, articles and book chapters) written by these scholars will be considered as primary sources. And any interpretation and analysis will try to be faithful to the primary sources by using sufficient quotes/summaries from original texts. The secondary sources will be used to understand the wider influences on these scholars and also to place their ideas in the intellectual environment in which they grew up. Hence, for this task we will look at the secondary literature on classical realism and these three classical realists. Also biographies of these scholars will be taken into account to understand the roots and nature of their thought.

7. Chapters

The dissertation is divided into five chapters:

Chapter 1 Introduction- In the first chapter the background of the research along with research question, hypotheses and methodology has been elaborated.

Chapter 2 E. H. Carr and Global Reform: The Specter of Historicism and Moral Relativism – In this chapter we begin with a discussion on the meaning of historicism and Carr’s take on the concept, which was coined by Popper. After this brief discussion, we analyze his works on Soviet history and international relations. We discern his worldview and from his *What Is History?* (1961) and show how Carr’s historicism and his “theoretical history” had an impact on his understanding of the issues of global reform. We fulfill this task by not only looking at his writings on international politics but also on the Soviet history. In this chapter, we discern how historicism coupled with moral relativism had an impact on Carr’s thought on reform.

Chapter 3 Morgenthau: Rationality, Science, Morality and the Problem of Reform in World Politics – The third chapter of the dissertation is about views of Morgenthau on the issue of global reform. In this chapter, we look at Morgenthau’s views on science and social sciences, which had an impact on his views on “rational” planning methods, which Carr supported passionately. For Morgenthau, planning should be about approximate solutions because social scientists can only discern trends not predict with certainty. In the second half of the chapter, we look at his understanding of morality and its impact on

his views on world state. We also compare and contrast his universalistic understanding of morality with the relativistic understanding of Carr.

Chapter 4 Limits of Progressivism and Science: Reinhold Niebuhr and the Issue of Reform- In the fourth chapter, we will analyze the views of Niebuhr on the issue of reform by analyzing his understanding of history as a complex process, which cannot be simply discerned by giving causal explanations derived from natural sciences. Then we will take into consideration his understanding of morality and the role of morality in international politics. In the end of the chapter, we will look how his interpretation of history and understanding of morality had an impact on his skepticism regarding any suggestion of world state. In this chapter, during various stages we will also compare and contrast the views of these three scholars on the issue.

Chapter 5 Conclusion- In this chapter we will conclude the findings of this dissertation and whether the hypotheses which we developed in the introduction is entirely valid or not.

Chapter 2

E. H. Carr and Global Reform: The Specter of Historicism and Moral Relativism

1. Introduction

Edward Hallett Carr was a prolific scholar who wrote extensively on a variety of subjects- history, historiography, international politics and biographical Works. Among his historical works, he is best known for his multi-volume history of Soviet Russia, wherein he examined one of the largest projects, which were undertaken to reform the “nature” of international society, global economy and the nation-states. In simple words, it can indeed be called as one of the largest conscious attempts to bring radical reforms. To some observers this corpus of his writings seems largely inconsistent with his writings on international politics (especially *The Twenty Years’ Crisis*) wherein he makes a case against utopianism and provides a “realist” critique of it. Hence, according to Paul Howe (1994: 277) E. H. Carr can easily defy any attempts to classify his writings into a single camp. Similarly, Richard J. Evans (1975) argues that there are in fact “two faces” of E. H. Carr. And, his historical writings on Russia are largely inconsistent with his much known work *What Is History?* (1961).

But this dissertation argues that such an approach is a wrong way to explain the thought of Carr. And by the end of this chapter it will be quite clear that his historical works and those on international politics are not entirely disconnected from each other. Paul Howe argues that as far as his writings on international politics are concerned it is not inconsistent as his writings are philosophically “consistent” and it has been made clear in his classical work *What Is History?* (1961). According to Paul Howe, his writings were in many ways “ahead of his time” because it “bears many similarities’ to the work of present day critical theorists (1994: 277). And this philosophy very much tried to break away from the “conservatism” of “traditional realist approach” (Howe 1994: 277). In the end his goal was to bring about a more “peaceful and just international order” (Howe 1994: 277). Critical theorists like Robert Cox (1981) and Andrew Linklater (1997 & 2000) very much acknowledge this aspect of E. H. Carr. Cox argues that Carr by bringing

in historical forces within his analysis enriches his theory, which is a positive development over ahistorical realism. Andrew Linklater also sees his works as one of the earliest attempts to transcend the restraints of international system, which other realists overemphasize. Similarly, in a recent book on the issue of classical realism and global reform William E Scheuerman (2011: 11) also celebrates the realists like Carr who were “life-long radicals” but relegates the more problematic part of his views on reform (For example: his views on planning especially Soviet reform) into the footnotes as he declares these ideas as merely “irresponsible political illusion” (Scheuerman 2011: 176). Thus, according to Scheuerman Carr’s works on Soviet Russia can be ignored because he believes that despite his “poor political judgment” in case of the Soviet Union it is possible to “salvage some elements of Carr’s” progressive thought (Scheuerman 2011: 177). In other words, we can ignore the problematic aspect in order to provide an account of his views on global reform. This gap in the literature is quite visible in most of the critical accounts on Carr. This dissertation argues that if we have to understand Carr’s thought then we have to take into account these problematic ideas. Carr’s worldview is informed by a certain vision of history and any attempt to understand his views on reform cannot ignore his views on one of the greatest attempts to reform the capitalist system and international society. As we will show in following pages Carr’s thought suffers the similar tragedy as did the reforms in the Soviet Union because they share the same tragic view of human history and believe that in fact we can plan the course of history if only we can discover its trajectory. This was one of the biggest flaws in his thought on global reform and cannot be simply rejected as “naïve and anachronistic”, as Scheuerman does in another footnote (2011: 188).

So how exactly one can understand his writings? This chapter argues that historicism is what binds his works together and allows him to engage in his own version of historical utopianism which he used to see as something which is grounded in the historical process, hence, realist. And, Carr approaches these two subject matters (both his works on international politics and history) in almost similar way. Carr’s understanding of history perfectly fits the description of what Karl Popper calls “theoretical history”. This chapter argues that it is the due to the nature of this theoretical history and his understanding of morality that he reached such radical conclusions on

issues of reform. Such an analysis of Carr's works also criticizes the critical theorists take on his works as it sadly fails to incorporate his views on Soviet Russia.

In the first section, we will try to address the elephant in the room (which is also a core component of our lens via which we analyze his works): historicism, which unfortunately has been largely ignored by critical scholars who are very positive about the normative side of his writings. But, most have ignored the problem which historicism brings with it. And, its impact is reflected in a major way in his views on developments within the Soviet Union, planning, Stalin, global reform issues and issue of morality. In the second section, we will look at the issues of reforms as discussed in his major works. In this section, we will see how his writings on international politics and history are actually related to each other. This chapter will also analyze whether his ideas on reform are core components of his theory or not. Here we will keep in mind the analytical framework which was explored in the introductory chapter. In the third section, which is very much connected to second section, we will look at his understanding of morality and the issue of moral relativism and try to see whether it affects his ideas on this issue. It is in the second and third sections where we will test these two hypotheses related to E. H. Carr, which we propositioned in the first chapter:

- Hypothesis 1: The historicism of E H Carr clearly leads him to have a different and much more radical view on the issue of global reform.
- Hypothesis 2: The transcendental and universalistic understanding of morality on one hand and relativistic morality on the other leads these three scholars to radically different conclusions on issues of global reform.

In the fourth and last section, we will conclude the chapter with the findings and implications of these findings.

2. What is Historicism?

This chapter tries to see the link between “Historicism” as a method and its impact on the thought of E. H. Carr. What impact does historicism have on the thought of E H Carr? Before answering this question, we need to first discern whether their presence was even there in his works. Hence, firstly we will focus on the concept of “historicism” and understand the concept as it is as only then we can test whether it had any influence on his views of global reform issues regarding future of “nation-states” and nature of international society. First this section will provide a general overview of the meaning of the concept, and to be fair to Carr we will proceed with a short discussion on his criticism of Karl Popper and his idea of historicism. Then we will go into the details of this concept which will then be used in our analysis of Carr’s thought.

The major goal of Karl Popper in his works like *The Poverty of Historicism* (1957) is to criticize what he considers as “in improper use of historical enquiry in a systematic study of society” (Dray 1959: 156). Popper identifies two trends/doctrines within this broad approach of historicism: Anti-Naturalistic and Pro-Naturalistic. For our purpose it the later trend which is more relevant, still we will explain in brief both these trends. Anti-Naturalistic version of historicism denies that there are any so called “laws” which are similar to the natural laws (Popper 1957: 5). “Sociological laws” unlike the natural laws is largely context dependent as it is the “history” and “differences in culture” which determines the nature of society. In words of Popper, it “depend[s] on a particular historical situation” (1957: 5). Anti-naturalists reject the notion of generalization as any circumstances never “persist from one period to another” (1957: 6). They are also opposed to the notion of “social uniformities” because it undermines the notion of “active reform” which is often the core of the historicist worldview (1957: 7). Popper identifies these “activist” attitudes as a defining feature of this tendency. Hence, the famous dictum of Marx, “the philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point however is to change it” (Marx [1845] 1978: 145), is rooted in this method and tradition. This leads us to the next criticism of historicism which is very much related to the former point. The notion of “novelty” and change is of significance for historicists as “nothing is of grater moment than the emergence of a really new period” (1957: 10).

The “pro-naturalistic doctrines” on the other hand believe that it is possible to develop “long-term forecasts” wherein we can successfully predict as long as it is longue duree sort of forecasts (Popper 1957: 36-27). Historicists are very much skeptical of the “short-term predictions” which is much difficult to do (Popper 1957: 37). This brings us to the issue of “historical laws” which is a core component of historicism as a method (1957: 41). Here Popper is trying to criticize their understanding of “historical laws”. He argues that they reject the generalizations which transcend any one historical period. For them the “only universally valid laws of society must be the laws which link up the successive periods. There must be laws of historical development which determine the transition from one period to another” (Popper 1957: 41). Hence for the historicists only real laws are the “historical laws”. According to Dray, here Popper is merely trying to criticize their understanding of “laws” as they often confuse “historical trends” with inexorable laws of history (1959: 155). And one of the biggest fallacies of these thinkers is that they treat trends in history as laws. This according to Popper can never be a basis of “scientific predictions” (Popper 1957: 120). Such predictions can be problematic as once the historicists have discovered the laws of history, “historical laws”, it becomes very easy for them to “predict” the future course of human history though “not with minute exactness of detail” (Popper 1957: 42).

This brings us to the issue of “theoretical history”. How exactly do historicists understand human society and its course of development? According to Popper, the history that Historicists talk about is not history in traditional sense. They not only look “backwards to the past but also forwards to the future” (Popper 1957: 45). Hence, they look for “broad trends” in accordance with which the historical structures change. Hence, by providing a critique of this trend, Popper is merely giving an “anti-historicist” argument, which by his own admission should not be confused as “anti-historical” (Popper 1957: 45).

After this brief discussion, it is important to emphasize the relation between these two doctrines. According to Popper, these two “doctrines have much in common” as both believe in the notion of “holistic thinking” and also “misunderstand the methods of

natural sciences” (1957: 105). After this brief discussion of historicism, we shall move towards the criticism of Popper by Carr.

Carr in his critique of historicism argues that Popper used the concept of historicism “as a catch-all for any opinion about history which he dislikes...he invents historicist arguments which have never been used by any historicist” (Carr 1961: 92). He further argues that Popper in a strict anti-determinist fashion pushes the notion that there is such a thing as abstract individual and this can be divorced from the effects and the influences of society (Carr 1961: 93). Hence, Popper’s assertion that “everything is possible in human affairs” is quite a naïve notion as it ignores any impact of social systems on the individuals and its actions (Carr 1961: 93). As Carr, both free will and determinism operate amongst us. The antithesis of free will and determinism is quite a complex affair as “all human actions are both free and determined” (1961: 95). In his seminal work on international politics, *The Twenty Years’ Crisis (1939)*, he touches on the similar theme (1939: 11). The utopia as a notion argues Professor Carr can be identified with “free will” whereas determinism can be related to the notion of reality (1939: 11).

Anyway for Carr, the historian should never shy away from expressing the notion of “inevitability” within any historical process (Carr 1961: 96). According to Carr, any historical event is “inevitable” only in the sense that it has already happened and there are certain causes which lead to this particular event. He goes on to argue that the charge of “historical inevitability” is more of a red herring as it is purely based on “emotional and unhistorical reaction” (1961: 98). He then goes on and rejects the idea of Popper who rejects any “theoretical history” on the ground that we cannot discern “the course of human history” by any “rational method” (Popper 1957: ix). On this subject Carr argues that the Historian can in fact predict the progress of human history as he “distils from the experience of the past as is accessible to him, that part which he recognizes as amenable to rational explanation and interpretation” which in turn helps him to “serve as a guide to action” (Carr 1961: 104). Hence, in the ‘theoretical historical’ vision of Carr history is “progressive science” wherein the progress is not a continuous one. It is the “belief” in the “progressive development of human potentialities” (Carr 1961: 119). And, this

progress according to Carr can discern the future course as the historian's tendency to generalize by studying events of the past enables her/him to provide a "general guide for future action" (Carr 1961: 69). In simple words, past, present and future are interconnected and it is the task of the historian to view the progress of history along those lines.

E. H. Carr's position is thus entirely antithetical to those of Professor Karl Popper who in his devastating critique of "Historicism" argues that any claim that we can discern "the course of human history" by any "rational method" is a fallacy. And, as it has been made clear in previous paragraph Carr did subscribe to this view of history. Popper rejects this so called "rational method". According to him the future of human progress (progress of human history) depends a lot on the trajectory which the growth of scientific knowledge takes. And, we can never predict what trajectory this "future growth of our scientific knowledge" might take. Hence, any claim that we can "predict the future course of human history" is blatantly false (Popper 1957: ix-x). The progress of scientific knowledge determines the growth of human history. He defines this sort of historical writing as "theoretical history". He is not at all rejecting any attempts in "social prediction" wherein no social/economic theory can be developed which predicts that "certain developments will take place under certain conditions" (Popper 1957: x). He is merely rejecting the approaches wherein the predictions about future course will to a large extent be influenced by the course which the growth of scientific knowledge takes place in the future. Moreover, it is on this ground he is rejecting the grand schemes like planning which Carr defends very sanguinely. In other words, predicting the future course of history along with the claim that we know how to solve the complex economic/social problems and to be able to organize large scale planning for the golden future on the basis of our study of past is a fallacy. In this chapter we try to disprove this claim of Carr regarding historicism of Popper and argue that his views on "Soviet Democracy" and Soviet experiments in planning were to a large extent a result of his "theoretical history" which believes in the grand narratives wherein past, present and future are interlinked in such a manner that we can predict and reform the course of civilization. This according to Popper is a methodological error. In words of Karl Popper, "historicism is a poor method" which fails to "yield result it promises" (1957: 58).

3. E H Carr on Global Reform: An Overview of his Works and Understanding of Reform

“All the thoughts and all the activities of historicists aim at interpreting the past, in order to predict the future”.

(Popper 1957: 50)

It is a well-known fact that Carr while providing a realist critique of utopianism does not fully abandon it (Carr 1939). While talking about the demise of the old world order, after the aftermath of two great wars, Carr moves into his own utopian project which was of course not “utopian” according to his understanding, unlike others utopians like St Simon his utopian prescriptions were based on his understanding of power, history and morality. Hence, in the concluding chapter of his classical work *The Twenty Years' Crisis (1939)* he posits a very emotive appeal and argues that

“those who believe in world revolution as a short cut to utopia are singularly blind to the lessons of history; and the number of those who hold this belief appears to have diminished in recent years. There is no more reason to assume that the path lies through world revolution than to take refuge in blank despair. Our task is to explore the ruins of our international order and discover on what fresh foundations we may hope to rebuild it; and like other political problems, this problem must be considered from the standpoint both of power and of morality”.

(Carr 1939: 226).

Which “lessons of history” was Carr referring to? How do they inform us regarding the future course one must take in order to reform our societies?

In his subsequent works on international politics like *Conditions of Peace (1942)*, *The Soviet Impact on the Western World (1947)* and *The New Society (1951)* he is drawing “lessons of history” in order to rebuild the foundation of a ‘new society’. It seems like these works were in many ways a continuation of this search of a reformed

world order and international society a task which he began in the last chapter of *The Twenty Years' Crisis (1939)* itself. In other words in these works, he is doing exactly what he proclaimed in this chapter: by looking at the ruins of old international order he intends to build the foundation of a new order which is based on his “dialectic of power and morality” (Molloy 2003: 279). Hence, only by a detailed study of his works on history and IR one can fully understand and situate his views on global reform within his overall thought.

How does the complex dialectics of power and morality, realism and utopianism and belief in progressive view of history, which forms the core of his theory, influence his views on issues of global reform, future of nation-states and democracies, the predictions regarding the new emerging units and role of planning in bringing reform? How central are his views on this issue within his theory? Is it consistent with other central tenants of his thinking?

3.1 Future of Nation-States as an Effective Unit and Inevitability of Larger Supranational Units

In the last chapter of his book *Conditions For Peace (1942)*, E H Carr expresses doubts about the continued effectiveness of small nation-states in providing security and economic welfare to its citizens. While writing about the prospective future of a new world order, he rejects both the naïve utopians and hardcore realists (Carr 1939: 226). The new “foundations” can only be built by exploring the past and then finding the cure on that basis. And, this process should involve both aspects of our political life: Power and Morality. And, in the last chapter of the *Twenty Years' Crisis (1939)*, along with his other major works like *Conditions of Peace (1942)*, *The New Society (1951)* and *Nationalism And After (1945)* he tries to build his own realist utopia which according to him is more formidable as he takes a “historical approach” to solve the problems of the present (Carr 1951: 1). As it will be argued in this chapter, it was due to his historical approach that is rooted in the historicism and moral relativism that affects his conclusions regarding the future of the world order.

For Carr the nature of units, which populates the system very much, had an impact on the character and conduct of the international politics. After the demise of the

western Christendom and establishment of nation-states in Europe, the “new national unit” was very much identified with the rulers (or sovereigns) who ruled over that particular unit (Carr 1968: 2). The international relations were largely a product of the activities of these individuals who conducted the foreign affairs of their states by using devices like matrimonial alliances. Hence, international law which began to take shape during this period was the product of this particular context. Hence, the treaties were signed on behalf of the subjects who had no say in these matters and its execution relied on the “personal good faith of the sovereign” (Carr 1968: 3). Hence, wars as an instrument of policy was a matter of princes and their mercenary armies and had no impact whatsoever on the lives of common people in terms their movement and involvements (Carr 1968: 4). Whole nations as collectives never went into a total wars with each other. Even the economic policy of this period, mercantilism, was a product of this particular context wherein economic interests of the rules and that of the state were considered identical to each other (Carr 1968). It was only after the French revolution, rise of nationalism and Napoleonic wars that notion of “nations” was personified and it was assumed that nations just like individuals had a “personality and character of their own” (Carr 1968: 7-9). Still there was a longstanding peace among nations after the end of Napoleonic wars. For Carr this was due to the fact that like the former era there was a new ground on which some sort of international solidarity could be formulated. And, in this case it was the bourgeois state and its ruling classes which shared a common interest in maintaining a peaceful international system. Hence, it was the nature of “bourgeois democratic states” which had an impact on their conduct within the international context (Carr 1968: 10). Furthermore, the strict division between the political and economic realms which was assumed to exist allowed a “highly organized autocracy” to control the international economic system (Carr 1968: 16). This assumption was very much a product of a system which was under the hegemonic influence of Britain which allowed the “merchants, brokers and bankers of London” a chance to “transform the national economies into a single world economy” (Carr 1968: 15). Hence, it is not surprising that Carr suspects that in the period after the Second World War there will see “retrogression from the unqualified nationalism” of the preceding period (Carr 1968: 34). And, according to Carr this trend will only continue towards “integration and formation of ever

larger political and economic units” (Carr 1939: 229). It is the inevitability of the larger units as the most efficient units within the international system which led him to endorse, in his book *Conditions of Peace (1942)*, the notion of “New Europe” (1942: 270). In the last chapter of the book he gives ample amount of time how can we create “institutions” which will ultimately bring about a “new order” in Europe. The historical trend points towards the feasibility of this future. In 1942, while writing in the middle of the war Carr argued that in the aftermath of war it would be impossible for many defeated powers to provide relief to its people (1942: 242-243). Hence, he calls for a “wider provisional authority or framework strong enough to hold centrifugal forces in check” (1942: 243). And, this pan-European framework should try to provide relief by “ministering” the “needs of Europeans” (1942: 243). Here Carr contends the failure of the League to bring about peaceful change within the international society was largely due to its faulty attempts to “combine in a single operation two distinct process- the process of ending the war and the process of building the durable framework of an international society” (Carr 1942: 236). According to Carr there are two distinct processes which require different “method”. And, any attempt to rebuild international society can only be “satisfactorily achieved” after the peace has been established by the “dictation of the victors” (Carr 1942: 237). It is only then that the cooperation can be maintained between the European powers. He proposes several arguments in favor of European integration. Any Pan-European Authority has to “represent the interests of Europe as a whole and not of any one section of it” (Carr 1942: 255). This can only be achieved by embracing the idea of equal cooperation which should form one of the basic principles of this ‘new Europe’. It should also reject the “principle of differentiated standard of living” which privileges one nation over another (Carr 1942: 256). Any long-term cooperation and peace within this new Europe will depend on the ability to fulfill these goals. He also talks about a “Bank of Europe” which would manage a common “European currency system” (Carr 1942: 269). It is only then, according to Carr, that we can achieve a new economic and political order (Carr 1942: 270).

And Carr’s call for the larger unit is based on his reading of history wherein it seems that “national unit has become too small” and in order to maintain a “durable international order” such larger units are not only desirable but also feasible (Carr 1942:

274). The principle of “national self-determination” only becomes less meaningful with the consolidation of economic and military power within a larger centralized unit. In the next section we will talk about another important pillar in thought of E. H. Carr: Planning in the Soviet Union.

3.2 Carr’s Historicism and His Views on Planning

In his autobiographical note written in 1980 E. H. Carr (2000) writes that the purges in the 1930s did lead to a “disillusionment and revulsion” towards the Soviet system. But, that is not at all visible in his writings on Russian reforms in the 1930s. In the mid-1930s, he was still writing about the developments within the Soviet Union “in a generally positive spirit” (Davies 2000: 100). While writing in 1936 about the famines in Russia he tries to explain the famines as a product of historical conditions. He writes that the “human life” in Russia “has always been, to put it brutally, the cheapest and most abundant of the commodities. It will require centuries of evolution to alter this tradition” (Cited in Davies 2000: 101). Nevertheless, this problem of famine had nothing to do with the “tradition” as E. H. Carr argues. It was mostly due to the Soviet Union’s planning measures that enforced during 1930s. The peasants were forcibly collectivized, the wealthier peasants or kulaks were evicted from their lands and the countryside in places like Ukraine was forced to starve itself to death (Applebaum 2017: 2). During the height of this famine in places like Ukraine, the activists of the party along with the state machinery motivated by decades of “hateful and conspiratorial rhetoric” took away the remaining grains (2017: 3). In addition, this rhetoric regarding kulaks did not originate in the aftermath of the famine or other failures of the experiments that were undertaken in the Soviet Union. As early as 1918, Lenin had identified, in one of the essays entitled “Comrades Workers, Forward to the Last, Decisive Fight!”, kulaks as one of the internal enemies of the state (Lenin 1965). Hence, the destruction of the countryside in the Soviet Union was a product of a long drawn and consciously undertaken radical reform measures and it cannot be explained as the faults of “Russian tradition”. Anne Applebaum (2017) in her remarkable research on the famine in Ukraine busts such myth’s regarding the causes of famines in the Soviet Union. However, E. H. Carr the historian justifies the ills of the system by using his version of “theoretical history”, takes

refuge in the moral relativism and historicism, and invokes the notion that it was in the Russian “tradition” to allow and facilitate the deaths of such a large population.

In early 1940s, while reviewing a book on political economy Carr argues that “what is needed is no mere re-patching of our economic system but a fundamental re-shaping of our whole civilization” (Carr 1944: 564). This review aptly catches his belief in the power of planning as the revolutionary solution to the ills of capitalist society. Despite all his “revulsions” towards the Soviet economic experiments he continued to believe in the necessity of planning and laid out his detailed views regarding the future. And this demand for repatching the whole economic system has been laid very enthusiastically in his work *The New Society* (1951). He argues that in the aftermath of two world wars, the well laid foundations of the Industrial revolution and doctrine of laissez-faire has taken a backseat. Now it is well accepted that the “society has an obligation to provide” a good living standard to the common people (1951: 52). Furthermore it is also widely recognized that the society is also obliged to “provide useful and productive work” to its members (1951: 52). As the philosophies which governed the past century collapsed, Carr argues that it has now become necessary to “create a new philosophy which will furnish an incentive and reinforcement for a new social habit of work” (Carr 1951: 53). So, basically he wishes to create a new economic order and takes up this task in this work. Firstly, Carr proposes that we should try and “increase the share of the” working classes “in the proceeds of [their] work” (1951: 53). Secondly, the “new incentive” can also be derived by achieving the “nationalization of industry” (1951: 55). This nationalization of industry Carr believes will create a “necessary condition of the transition from purely economic incentives to incentives which include a sense of social obligation on the part of the worker” (Carr 1951: 55). According to Carr, this is quite a necessary step in transition towards socialism. Either “we have to advance towards socialism as” defined by Carr “or perish” (Carr 1951: 55). How is this idea of socialism related to planning? What role historicism plays in his analysis?

The New Society (1951) along with his *The Soviet Impact on the Western World* (1947) is quite positive about the developments within the Soviet Union and contends that these developments do indeed pose a severe challenge to the Soviet Union by

providing a serious alternative system. Scholars like Davies try to explain his views on Soviet planning by arguing that he simply viewed it as a “challenge” not as a “model” for the western world (Davies 2000: 104). He is looking for some sort of synthesis between these two systems. Carr’s understanding of the Soviet Union and planning is flawed as it will be shown in this section as well as in the section on the future of democracy in the international society.

While writing about planning Carr argues that, the birth of the idea of planning is one of the most significant “impact of the Soviet practice” on the international society (1947: 20). Marx according to Carr was a staunch enemy of utopianism hence he was against any idea of developing “unreal visions of future socialist society” (Carr 1947: 21). For Carr planning is a two faced “Janus-like” experiment which involves the elements of “national efficiency” and “social justice” (1947: 27). And, any notion of planning “rested” on the “deliberate rejection of the laissez-faire thesis (1947: 27). And the Soviet Union was one of the first states to combine both these aspects of planning into a single policy (1947: 28).

For Carr socialism and planning though are very different concepts in terms of their origins but in the course of the “historical evolution of the capitalist system” it is almost impossible to separate these two concepts (Carr 1951: 38). The “historical evolution” of the capitalist system not only made these two concepts compatible but they have also made an economic system based on control and planning “for socialism” as the only “available alternative” which could solve the problems of our civilization. Hence, the plea for “re-patching” which Carr makes in 1940s is very much based on an inquiry which is rooted in his vision of history. These two works of international politics are very much a product of his visions of history and how past relates to the present. In addition, Western democracies have to reconcile political democracy with “planning for socialism” as it is the “only way” for these democracies to survive (Carr 1951: 39). Moreover, as these “hollow” Western democracies only provide political liberty and equality, this according to Carr is “useless”, as they will only be completed when people are given a say over economic issues (Carr 1951: 38). This brings us to the issue of his positive views of Soviet economic and political system. For historicist like Carr it is all a part of

an inevitable historical process and our task to achieve this “golden future” which lies ahead of us (Mehta 1963: 150).

This sentiment that we can actually “reshape” the whole civilization, according to Popper, is what leads to utopian experiments like planning which bring nothing but harm to the society as a whole. The future course of human society can never be rationally traced in such a manner that we can change the “whole civilization” radically. But for Carr, it is the planning which is the “attempt to introduce ‘economic rationality’ into the process” (Carr 1961: 83). Hence, it is the laissez-faire economics which does not make sense and is an “irrational” leftover of an earlier century. It has no place in the current moment of history (mid-20th century). In other words, to borrow the phrase of Karl Popper, only plans that “fit in the main current of history can be effective” as it is the only rational end in the course of history (1957: 49). Hence, for a historicist only those activities that take into account the “impending changes” are a reasonable option because they depend upon a “scientific foresight” (Popper 1957: 49).

3.3 Carr, Utopianism and Historicism

William E. Scheuerman (2011: 9) in one of the rarest scholars who deal with the subject acknowledges that the roots of his thought can be “located in the ideas of critical social thinkers like Karl Marx” themselves. Similarly while acknowledging about the critical nature of Carr’s theory Paul Howe argues that Carr’s philosophy was not a product of moral “relativism” (1994: 279). He was in fact a firm believer in the notion of gradual progress of humankind as long as it takes into account the “historical” forces which are very much part of the process towards a better future. This line of argument is very much closer to Carr’s understanding of history as he rejects any aspect of human affair which lies outside of human history as “mysticism” (Carr 1961: 109). Hence, there is nothing which is “outside history” the progress of human society depends on this course of history (1961: 109). This puts him radically at the odds with the realist thinkers like Niebuhr who share a very limited vision of the power of history and historians. This subject will be dealt in the chapter on Niebuhr in detail. Here in a limited manner we will only focus on the thought of Carr.

According to Carr, a realist accepts “unconditionally” the “causal sequence of events” which can lead him/her to ignore any possibility of change/reform (Carr 1939: 11). The “complete utopian” on the other hand rejects any notion of causal sequence which can lead her/him to have any proper understanding of reality which can lead to problems when they seek reforms.

Why does Carr label early socialists like St Simon as utopians and but not Marx? In one of his works on Soviet history, he describes Marx as anti-utopian both “by temperament and conviction” (Carr 1952: 12). Scholars like Davis have also acknowledged this aspect in Carr’s work. According to him Carr distinguished between “Marx and Bakunin” because they “represented the conflicting” realist and utopian versions of socialism respectively (Davies 2000: 92). But why exactly did he view Marx as a realist?

According to Carr, Marx believed in the notion that socialism was “inevitable” part of an evolutionary historical process (Carr 1952: 11). And, Marx in his causal and “scientific” socialist analysis was very much sure about the function and inevitability of “planning in a socialist order” (Carr 1952: 15). However, within Marx’s analysis due to his ‘realist’ convictions, he was against formulating concrete “policies” and programs in advance (like utopian socialists). Therefore, the task of laying out any workable “economic policies”, which had to be enforced, in any case had to be “worked out empirically by the workers who had made the revolution” (Carr 1952: 16-17). Thus, according to Carr, such Marxist declarations regarding the future course of human history were not utopian as long as they offered the explanations based on “long term generalized indications” based on historicist convictions (for example inevitability of socialism and planning) (Carr 1952: 17). As our discussion of historicism has made it clear, the long term forecasts regarding the course of human history is not an unrealistic task for a historicist. Thus, for them these predictions are merely “an attempt to solve the old problem of foretelling the future” (Popper 1957: 42). What they (historicists) are afraid of is making “short term” predictions (Popper 1957). For Carr and his “theoretical history”, it only makes sense to not treat Marx as a realist not a utopian due to his nature of predictions which were in line with his method itself. Therefore, on one hand, the utopian

socialists, like St Simon with their “visionary schemes of ideal” collectives which shares the gains of production according to the needs, were “utopians” as their analysis was a product of their “aspirations” and lacked any “logical connexion with the conditions” within which they were to emerge (Carr 1939: 6). But on the other hand, Marx and his logical and scientific declarations regarding unavailability of socialist order was anti-utopian as it was based on a “belief in the transformation of society by slow, immanent *historical processes* (emphasis mine)” (Carr 1952: 12). It is this progressive view of history which he himself propagated in his major works like *What Is History?* (1961).

Thus, we can in a way argue that Carr’s understanding of utopia was itself limited as it accepted utopian socialist future as long as they were a product of an analysis which talked about scientific socialism as different from utopian socialism as it was both “scientific and evolutionary” (Carr 1952: 11). This failure in this thought to recognize the utopianism within the evolutionary declarations of Marx is due to the result of his “belief” in the progressive view of history wherein future was very much part of an ongoing historical progression. According to Carr a historian should “distil from the experience of the past” and try to draw lessons which might “serve as a guide to action” (Carr 1961: 104).

And, one can find traces of this understanding of history in his analysis of Soviet Union and its planning measures. In one of his volumes on Soviet history, *The Interregnum* (1954), Carr discusses the ‘problems’ which Soviet planning faced in its initial years. Carr argues that when it comes to planning, theoretically speaking, it was assumed that proletariat would play a role in creating socialism (1954: 11). But, in case of Soviet Union this was an “inherent” problem as the planning measures had to somehow solve the existence of millions of peasants as any “transition to socialism” required the “support of this” class which did not fit into the theoretical analysis of Marx (1954: 11-12). Hence, after two years of New Economic Policy (NEP) within the agricultural sector (which profited most not the industrial sector) it was the the rich peasants (“kulaks”) who profited the most during the period (1954: 14). Kulaks, according to Carr, “were producing large surpluses for disposal on the market” (1954: 15). The industrial sector failed to revive itself and it was only the “primitive and backward local industries” which

flourished (1954: 19). Another problem which was quite “disquieting” was the emergence of so called “private traders”. These traders flourished as state run “shops” were failing to compete with the “prices of commodities in the general market” (1954: 18-19). Thus, like Carr the planners of Soviet Union also deemed them as a problem in the larger scheme of things. Carr finds these developments just as “disquieting” as the planners of Soviet Union did (Carr 1954: 18-20). This attitude of treating Kulaks as part of the problem by the Soviet elites was not simply a new phenomenon wherein it was only after the failure of NEP they became the problem in the equation. It is very much part of a historicist worldview. As early as 1918, in one of his writings, Lenin had already identified several internal enemies of socialism. He writes

“We all know who that internal enemy is. It is the capitalists, the landowners, the kulaks, and their offspring, who hate the government of the workers and working peasants—the peasants who do not suck the blood of their fellow-villagers. A wave of kulak revolts is sweeping across Russia. The kulak hates the Soviet government like poison and is prepared to strangle and massacre hundreds of thousands of workers. We know very well that if the kulaks were to gain the upper hand they would ruthlessly slaughter hundreds of thousands of workers, in alliance with the landowners and capitalists, restore backbreaking conditions for the workers, abolish the eight-hour day and hand back the mills and factories to the capitalists. That was the case in all earlier European revolutions when, as a result of the weakness of the workers, the kulaks succeeded in turning back from a republic to a monarchy, from a working people’s government to the despotism of the exploiters, the rich and the parasites”.

(Lenin 1965: 55)

Thus, the kulaks were part of the problem because in the historicist analysis of Vladimir Lenin the “working people’s government” was the next and more evolved phase and the people who were responsible for turning back the wheel of the progressive movement of history were naturally deemed as enemy of the revolution. Thus, it is not at all surprising that after the failure of NEP it was the social groups who were supposed to be profiting from the remnants of the past system or wanted to save that system from revolutionary

forces were considered a problem. This sort of argument is not a new argument and as the 1918 speech of Lenin shows it was quite consistent with historicist worldview that looks at the past in order to plan the future. This brings us to another core aspect of this method that explains their inability to understand the failures of their grand schemes of planning. According to Popper, because of the historicist understanding of laws of historical development as something inevitable there is usually a tendency to “submit to the laws of development, just as we have to submit to the law of gravity” (1957: 53). This according to Popper is tragedy of historicist thinking as their optimism towards future is somewhat limited “by the outcome of the historicist analysis itself” (1957: 52). Hence, those who did not “submit to the laws of development” like those kulaks were quite naturally seen as problematic. Therein lies the explanation as to why Carr was limited in his understanding and dangers of utopianism in his writings on Soviet Union.

Why did the policy makers of the Soviet Union and E. H. Carr see these developments as problematic during that period both? It can only be understood if one believes in the whole utopian project that the Soviet Union stood for i.e inevitability of socialism which their version of “theoretical history” clearly envisaged. In a recently published autobiographical note Carr (2000: xviii) clearly accepts that he was “impressed by the” Soviet Union’s “Five-Year Plan”. The experiments in planning within the Soviet Union provided “answer to the anarchy of Capitalism, so clearly demonstrated by [this] economic oasis” (2000: xviii). Furthermore, he contends in his later works that the “preoccupation with the purges and brutalities of Stalinism” “distorted” his analysis of the Soviet Union and somewhat ignored what Stalinism and Russia had offer to the western liberal states. He criticizes scholars and dissenters who focus on only the authoritarian aspect of Soviet Union and its experiments. It offered according to Carr “lessons for western society; and this tied up with [his] interests in the Marxist critique of capitalism and the bourgeoisie” (Carr 2000). This brings us to another aspect (but connected to this problem) of his analysis i.e future of democratic nation-states within the international society.

3.4 Future of Democratic Nation-States and “Soviet Democracy”

By the 1930s, E H Carr was very much aware of the ongoing famines and with the problems of the Soviet system (Davies 2000: 99). Still he was very firm in his belief that the Soviet system provided an alternative to the capitalist system and considered Marx (especially in the aftermath Russian revolution) as the “most far-sighted genius of the nineteenth century” (Davies 2000: 100). Hence, Soviet Union for him provided a challenge globally to the states within the capitalist system in a number of ways. In his works he discusses the impact Soviet Union might have on the democracies in the west. In his book *The Soviet Impact On The Western World (1947)* he writes:

“Today, when the open enemies of democracy have once more been overthrown in a victorious war, western democracy is confronted by a new challenge from a country which purports to be the pioneer of a new and more progressive form of democracy- Soviet democracy”.

(Carr 1947: 1).

How Soviet Union can even be called a “democracy” can be found somewhat puzzling to many scholars but for E. H. Carr and his version of “theoretical history” it was not a far-fetched take on the issue. In his “progressive” historical analysis of democracies he contends that the Soviet Union was a “progressive” development and an improvement over the western democracies. E. H. Carr cites the speech given by Stalin wherein he praises the “new constitution of 1936 as ‘the only thoroughly democratic constitution in the world’”. It would be a mistake to dismiss such pronouncements as mere propaganda or humbug.” Hence, for Carr it was much more than propaganda and like Soviet leaders and many apologists of the Soviet Union during that period he considered it as a “new and more advanced species of democracy” (1947: 4).

According to E. H. Carr, “Soviet democracy” is a democracy, which contains the features of “Russian tradition” (1947: 4). Thus, in a moral relativist fashion he argues that we can call it a democracy because within “Russia it has been customary throughout ages to exalt the place of the community in social and political life and to stress the collective character of rights and obligations.” (Carr 1947: 4-5). Hence, unlike Western society, the

Russian society is very collectivist in nature and any collective obligation that the Soviet Union forced onto the individuals could be explained away as a democracy with a Russian face. For Carr this was only one aspect of Soviet democracy i.e. a “particle of truth” regarding Soviet democracy as there was indeed a presence of democratic tradition which had its origins in the west. Hence, in order to explain this other aspect of “Soviet democracy” he tries to give a *long duree* type explanation of democracy within west. He begins by identifying the influence of French revolution, which during its initial phases “identified society with the state and posited all-powerful ‘general will’ from which it was treason to dissent” (Carr 1947: 7). Scholars like Rousseau, according to Carr, “boldly identified ‘nation’ and ‘people’” as somewhat similar entity (Carr 1945: 7). Hence, the notion of general will of the “people” was born. Therefore, according to Carr it was this “totalitarian democracy” which was a product of the revolution which provided a working model for the so called Soviet democracy. And, “the challenge which Soviet democracy presents to the western world is a challenge to complete the unfinished revolution” (1947: 10). Hence, it was an improvement over the limited “political democracy” which was prevalent in countries like Great Britain. He views the “toleration” within western bourgeois democracies as signs of weakness as they fail to control intolerant opinions that can be detrimental to the existence of the democracies itself. However, while correctly recognizing the drawback of liberal democracies he ends up praising the “soviet democracy” for its intolerance towards alternate opinions (1947: 15-17). But, this analysis is highly problematic as it justifies the existence of overbearing, dictatorial nanny states where there are almost no checks on the power of the state to punish individuals for engaging in wrongthink. His unproblematic acceptance of “totalitarian democracy” as an ideal model (“here is therefore no essential incompatibility between democracy and dictatorship”) is problematic to say the least (Carr 1947: 11). Moreover, it was not just the fascists as Carr so vehemently suggests who will ultimately bear the brunt of the authoritarian nanny state. The Soviet Union and its “totalitarian democracy” effectively punished individuals (including politburo members, army generals, and common peasants) and exterminated entire social groups (kulaks or rich peasants) without hesitation as they were declared enemies of the collective and banished for eternity from the mainstream of the so called “progressive” “soviet democracy”.

Another aspect of “Soviet democracy” which Carr celebrates is the challenge which the Soviet Union posed to the legitimacy of bourgeois democracies of the west within the international society (Carr 1947: 17-19). According to Carr, there was no provision for the direct participation of the masses because outside the “electoral struggle” the nature of state remained “bourgeois” and it favored men of certain social classes (1947: 17). He shares Lenin’s criticism of bourgeois democracies. Lenin talked about reviving “primitive democracy” under socialism as masses will also be allowed to participate in the “everyday administration of the state” (Lenin [1917] 2014: 158). Carr argues that it is in fact a case within the Soviet Union where

“the principle of encouraging the direct participation of the Soviet citizen survived and, allowing for some reaction from the first outbursts of enthusiasm, found expression in the obligation of unpaid public service for party members and trade unionists and in the work of local soviets”.

(Carr 1947: 18).

This according to Carr is a “challenge” which “Soviet democracy” poses for the western democracies (1947: 17). According to Carr the Soviet Union “has never ignored the human element” when it comes to the issue implementation of the policies of the state (1947: 18). But he conveniently ignores the policy making aspect of so called “bourgeois democracies”. At least in case of democracies there is chance to bring some sort of change and express one’s opinion without facing the wrath of the authoritarian state. In his progressive version of history, the developments within the Soviet Union clearly seemed as an improvement over the ills of western democracies within the international society.

As a scholar, who spent such an ample amount of time studying the Soviet Union and still was able to ignore such aspects of the nature of “soviet democracy” and its horrendous experiments is not incomprehensible. For this purpose we have to keep in mind the E H Carr the theoretical historian and his understanding of history, progress and morality. And all this in turn is connected to the faulty methodological enterprise which he used according to his own admission and rejects Poppers reservations regarding such type of scholarship.

Now moving on to the secondary literature on Carr by critical theorists these problematic aspects of Carr have been hardly cited or analyzed in detail. If he can be called the predecessor of the present day critical theorists then it is also essential for the critical theorists to understand the problem which historicism can rise for any theoretical work especially normative ones as they also give a prescription/guide towards action. Carr has already acknowledged that it is the task which he undertakes in his works like *Nationalism And After* and *Conditions of Peace* which according to his own admission contained “elements of utopianism” (Carr 2000: ix). Paul Howe like other critical scholars falls into the similar trap as he fails to look at the drawbacks of Carr’s analysis. He rejects charges of moral relativism on Carr by arguing that he was against the advocacy of any omniscient values which transcend history. While such an approach can be problematic but Howe fails to critically examine Carr’s understanding of morality and accepts the claims which Carr himself makes in *What Is History? (1961)*. The scholarship of Carr was influenced greatly by his understanding of morality. This brings us to the contentious issue of morality and its impact on his thought.

4. E. H. Carr, Moral Relativism and its Impact on His Thought

While writing the preface to the second edition of his seminal work *What Is History (1961)*, Carr gives us a rare clear glimpse into his understanding of morality. He laments the

“wave of skepticism and despair, which looks ahead to nothing but destruction and decay, and dismisses as absurd any belief in progress or any prospect of a further advance by the human race. [It] is a form of elitism- the product of elite social groups whose security and whose privileges have been most conspicuously eroded by the crisis, and of elite countries where once undisputed domination over the rest of the world has been shattered. Of this moment the main standard bearers are the intellectuals, the purveyors of the ideas of the ruling social group which they serve”.

(Carr 1961: 5)

Hence, for him the ideas which we propagate are very much a product of the social group which we belong to. It is on this ground that the moral indignation of Soviet Union or any reservation regarding its progressive view is very much a product of our social group. The morality for Carr is the product of a particular historical context within which it originates. Hence, any attempt to “erect a superhistorical standard or criterion” which passes judgment on the institutions or systems of the past is an “unhistorical” method (1961). While writing about how historians like him judge the moral values he argues that

“the way in which we fill in the cheque from time to time is a matter of history. The process by which a particular historical content is given to abstract moral conceptions is a historical process; indeed [all] our moral judgments are made within a conceptual framework which is itself the creation of history”.

(Carr 1961: 82).

Hence, theorists who bring timeless wisdom from the classical economics to counter the arguments in favor of “planning” are making exactly the same mistake. According to Carr, this moral condemnation of planned economy in Soviet Union is a product of an earlier period of history and the “criterion by which [planning] should be judged is not the old ‘economic rationality’ of classical economy” (Carr 1961: 83). Any attempt to “erect a [universal] standard is unhistorical and contradicts the very essence of history” (Carr 1961: 83). Then how are we to judge the events/institutions without any universal criterion? Carr addresses this issue by invoking the use of comparative moral judgment. It is vital of the historian to embrace this moral attitude as history by its nature is about “movement and movement implies comparison” (Carr 1961: 83). And, seemingly universal moral values like “equality, liberty, justice and natural law varies from period to period or from continent to continent” (Carr 1961: 84”).

And relativist and comparative moral judgment which is the product of “historicism” impacts not just historical writings of ancient/medieval history. In fact, Carr criticized his contemporaries of their failure to see experiments within the Soviet Union from the standpoint of the Russian context. Therefore, this criterion according to Carr is even applicable to the contemporary history and works on international politics (like history of the Soviet Union). In an article written after the death of Stalin, Carr (1953)

tries to apply the same moral principle while judging the policies or programs like forced industrialization/collectivization by Stalin. He justifies it by invoking his moral relativism and argues that his policies “typified the eastern element in Russian policy and outlook” (1953: 5). And, it was a much needed “eastern corrective to the predominantly western bias of the Russian revolution” (1953: 3-4). The legacy of Stalin and his policies can never be fully grasped without acknowledging the ‘Russian element’ within which they evolved. Therefore, he judges him according to a Russian standard and argues that Stalin and his policies should be evaluated by contrasting

“The Russia of twenty five years ago with the Russia of today, the outstanding and almost breathtaking contrast is the rise of Russia to become one of the two great powers,...rapid expansion and modernization of the Russian economy. This achievement cannot be disassociated from the name of Stalin. If, therefore, Stalin appears today as the curious and baffling amalgam of the latter-day Peter the Great, forcing industrialization on the recalcitrant peasant Russia, and of the high priest of Orthodox Marxism calling down anathema on the west, it is perhaps the role of Peter that the history will remember him”.

(Carr 1953: 7)

This curse of moral relativism is apparent throughout his works and is central part of his overall thought process. In order to counter the western bias he falls into the fallacy of moral relativism and tries to find moral good even in the policies of Stalin. Is this sort of moral worldview connected to his historicism?

According to Popper (1957) for a historicist, the course of history also determines the value system that they embrace. Hence, they recommend us to “adjust one’s system of values” in conformity with the “impending changes” (Popper 1957: 53). According to Popper this thinking is very much part of a “historicist moral theory” (1957: 54). The historicism is more than a “doctrine of method”, it is also a “philosophical system” (1957: 54). According to Carr the values which we should embrace is also determined by the “course of history” (Carr 1951: 109). It is the “progress in history” which determines

which values are “truer than those which are rejected” (1951: 109). Hence for example in his book *The New Society* Carr argues that one of such truer values is the renewed notion of freedom itself. According to Carr, the older notion of freedom wherein we only consider political freedoms (i.e “freedom from political constraint of kings and tyrants”) is no longer tenable (Carr 1951: 107). The classical liberal doctrine which resists state intervention in the economic process by refusing to propose “extension of equality from politics to economics” is no longer tenable (Carr 1951: 108). Now any notion of freedom has to include also the conception of “freedom from want”. It is on this grounds he calls for the enforcement of planned economies even in western democracies and fulfill the unfinished task.

Carr’s morality is very different from that of Niebuhr or Morgenthau as unlike Carr they did believe in a universal conception of morality. This is one of the primary reasons, why we could clearly see their almost irreconcilable views on the issues like future of nation-states, planning and role of the Soviet Union in world politics. In the following two chapters, we will focus on the thought of these two thinkers and the reason behind their radically different conclusions regarding these issues of reform.

5. Conclusion

E. H. Carr is one of the most optimistic realists who in many ways contradict one of the main tenets of realist tradition i.e a pessimistic worldview (Gilpin 1986). His positive outlook was very much a product of his progressive worldview. He was extremely positive about the issues of global reform and because of his historicist analysis, he considered developments and experiments within the Soviet Union as a positive development. In this chapter, we tried to test our propositions regarding the role of Historicism and moral relativism on his thought. After the above discussion, it is quite clear that Carr after his critique of utopianism in *Twenty Years’ Crisis (1939)* starts his own search for a ‘realistic utopia’ based on his reading of laws of human progress. The drawbacks in his thought were largely inherent in his method and philosophical worldview itself. In addition, historicism as a method blinded him towards some of the failures of the Soviet reform measures like Planning. His moral relativism restricted him in his criticism towards some of the problematic aspects of his thought regarding

problematic aspects of reforms of 20th century. His views on issues of reform are not only methodologically consistent but also it was inevitable for him to ignore it due to his worldview. He openly starts a project to look for the foundations of new order in the last chapter of his book *Twenty Years' Crisis* (1939). Not only that in his works like *The New Society* and *The Soviet Impact on the Western World* he is actually looking for this new economic and political order. He even talks about how there is a need of radically reforming the western civilization. All this observation is not at all surprising if we can unravel his historicist worldview and moral foundation. This we have clearly established by doing a close reading of his *What Is History?*(1961) and elaborating his understanding of history. Therefore, the views of E. H. Carr on the issues of reform, are not only logically consistent with his other major conceptions like morality but also form the core of his thought.

Though he acknowledges in a later autobiographical note regarding some of the drawbacks of his utopian thinking, he nevertheless failed to see the drawback in this own thought while writing his multivolume history of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the discussion on historicism and its impact on thought of E H Carr is also important because the use of such method is still quite is use. For example scholars like James Mittleman (1998) try to use somewhat similar argument in some of their works. But, most of the literature on Carr has more or less ignored this important aspect of his thinking. For example, for critical scholars like Linklater, E. H. Carr by looking at the possibilities of “new forms of political organizations which were already immanent in existing societies, Carr avoided the naiveté of utopianism and sterility of Realism” (Linklater 1997: 338). As this chapter as clearly shown that Carr could not entirely escape the “naivete” rather his blindness towards the dangers of his method of historicism actually made him oblivious to the dangers of advocating large-scale changes which were based on a certain reading of large-scale historical process. His policy prescriptions in writings like *The New Society* (1951) were never implemented in the Western world. However, how can one interpret the relevance of his critical writings for the present day issues of reform without actually taking the failure of his method while analyzing one of the most extensive and large-scale reforms in twentieth century history? Scholars are trying to draw critical portions of his thought without recognizing the inherent moral and theoretical weakness

within his worldview itself. This chapter tries to fill that gap. Any discussion of large-scale global reforms has to address this weakness in his thought and most of the works fail to do so. More discussion on the issue and its relevance for any attempt to interpret issues of global reform will be done in the last chapter after we have written about the thought of Morgenthau and Niebuhr in the next two chapters.

Chapter 3

Morgenthau: Rationality, Science, Morality and the Problem of Reform in World Politics

1. Introduction

Hans Joachim Morgenthau without doubt is one of the pioneers in the field played a major role in “placing Realism at the center” of the discipline (Williams 2005: 82). Despite this stature, which Morgenthau still enjoys in the field there is a widespread confusion regarding his views. This chapter is a take on his understanding of the issue of reform in general and why it is more difficult in the realm of international politics. According to scholars like James P. Speer (1968) while scholars tend to focus more on the peripheral aspect of his thought they have ignored more or less the core aspect of his thought. And the core of his thought is his views on world state and everything else revolves around this major obsession of Morgenthau. According to scholars like Veronique Pin-Fat (2010: 39) the question of ethics and morality constitutes the core of Morgenthau’s political realism which is mostly ignored and the scholars in general have historically focused on his more-well known concepts. Those critical of him have painted a caricature of the thinker as a positivist “who claimed that the study of international politics should be scientific” (Pin-Fat 2010: 39). After all a cursory reading of his infamous “Six Principles” does makes him look like a positivist figure. But in this chapter we argue that this view of Morgenthau is wrong and even his Six Principles are not radically against the philosophical Morgenthau which critical scholars like Pin-Fat give a more sympathetic treatment. The roots of his ideas on social science theory, reforms and morality are very much rooted in his philosophical worldview, which had a very different take on the so-called rationalism of nineteenth century. How was his worldview related to his views on global reform especially three particular issues: World State, European Federation and Planning?

We will address this point in three sections. In the section one, we will look at his views on rationality and scientism and his critique of so called ‘method of single causes’. This section evaluates Morgenthau’s nuanced view on the issue and argues that as is

often believed, he is not rejecting rationalism and sciences in its entirety. Rather he is merely criticizing the philosophies, which vulgarized the understanding of rationalism and natural sciences themselves. Unlike overenthusiastic rationalists of his period he is merely exposing the simplicity of their understanding and presents his own understanding of sciences in general. Then in the last of portion of this section, we analyze what impact it had on his views of planning and why he was skeptical of the prophets who claimed to know what exactly could be done rationally to organize planning. In the second section, we will move to his understanding of morality in general and problem of morality in international society in particular. His view on morality puts him in a radically different position in comparison to scholars like E. H. Carr. In the second section, we focus on his moral relativism and the impact it had on his views of reforms especially in the context of the Soviet Union. This section is divided into two parts. In the last section, we will look at his views on other issues of reform world state and European Federation and how they were related to his understanding international morality. In this chapter, we will test two propositions regarding his views on issues on global reform. They are following:

- Hypothesis 1: The critique of scientism is what takes Morgenthau much closer to Niebuhrian understanding and interpretations of future of human history. And its impact is reflected in his writings on global reform.
- Hypothesis 2: The transcendental and universalistic understanding of morality on one hand and relativistic morality on the other leads these three scholars to radically different conclusions on issues of global reform.

2. Morgenthau on Science, Rationality and Planning

The problem with the “philosophy of rationalism” is that it is the product of the experiences of the political struggles of a particular age (Morgenthau 1947: 11-12). They do not carry the perennial truths, which could be found in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Rejection of perennial truth as reflected in the classical philosophies is merely a “modernistic prejudice” (Morgenthau 1973 [1948]: 4). Scholars like Veronique Pin-Fat (2010) have also recognized this aspect of Morgenthau’s theorizing which in many ways form the core of his thinking. The philosophy of Aristotle and Plato carry perennial transcendental truths for Morgenthau. This “transcendental metaphysics” which he

borrowed from ancient philosophers “underpins” the core of his theorizing” (Pin-Fat 2010: 42). After borrowing from these philosophers Morgenthau in his book *Science: Servant or Master?* (1972) argues that the “origin of science” lies in the “shock of wonderment” (Morgenthau 1972: 24). And, wonderment is a universal condition which we reasonable humans find ourselves in “the face of the unforeseen and hence the unintelligible” (Morgenthau 1972: 25). According to Morgenthau (1972: 25), reason fails because “its logical processes are unable to transform sensual experience into systematic knowledge. Man wants to know what there is to be known; yet empirical reality sets limits to human understanding”. This failure of reason is what puts limits on the ability of the humans to know and make them realize the “limits of [their] power” (Morgenthau 1972: 25).

However, the modern confusion and overconfidence regarding reason and science is the result of the prejudice, which is rooted in our modernistic belief of scientism itself. Thus, when he is criticizing the “philosophy of rationalism”, he is not arguing against the “reason itself” but merely against their understanding of reason (Morgenthau 1947: 12). He is merely acknowledging the limits of human reason. In words of Sean Molloy, Morgenthau is not trying to “dispense the category of the rational in its entirety” (2006: 77). He is merely disrupting the connection, which is often made between rationalism, a crude interpretation of natural sciences and the nature of reason which scientism makes. He is trying to problematize their understanding of reason, which is rooted in scientism. Hence, rationalism makes it possible for the natural sciences to provide us with the causal explanations of a particular social or natural phenomenon but we as humans find as insufficient as we also search for meanings of things in our political and social life (Morgenthau 1947: 110). Even his infamous “six principles” reflects his complex understanding of reason. While laying out his first principle about the existence of “objective laws” which govern politics, he talks about how it is the task of a theory to not only ascertain facts but also provide “meaning” by using reason (Morgenthau 1973 [1948]: 4). It is the task of a theory to not only explain the facts but also look for “possible meanings of foreign policy” by rationally analyzing the “actual facts and their consequences that gives meaning to the fact of international politics” (Morgenthau 1973 [1948]: 5).

According to Morgenthau, this “belief in science” and its capability to solve “all problems of man” is what bind the liberals like Bentham and Herbert Spencer to Karl Marx (Morgenthau 1947: 11). What is wrong with this philosophical worldview is that they ignore the presence of “biological impulses and spiritual aspirations” of human beings (Morgenthau 1947: 12). Do these limitations not affect their capability to find solutions of our social problems and reform the nature of politics itself? For Morgenthau therein lies the failure of this worldview. It is not simply insufficient in diagnosing the nature of man but it also insufficient is providing solutions to these problems. One of the major drawbacks is the prevalence of single causal explanations of our social problems (Morgenthau 1947: 86); failure to understand the complexities of the reason and the role of reason in human affairs (Morgenthau 1947: 108); It also “distorts the problem of ethics” in politics (Morgenthau 1947: 12); and, it also vulgarizes the natural and social sciences themselves.

It was this belief in science which gave birth to the notion of “science of peace” wherein it was assumed that “international relations reveal their true nature in the harmony of interests” (Morgenthau 1975: 20). And, any conflicts were due to the “ignorance and emotions” and “reason” alone was capable in solving the problems of mankind (Morgenthau 1975: 21). In 19th century, this so called “science of peace” became eventually a “separate branch of knowledge” (Morgenthau 1975: 23). Gradually this sort of scientism gave birth to so-called method of “single cause” wherein it was assumed that once a magical and reasonable scientific formula is applied then all the problems of society will solve themselves (Morgenthau 1975: 24-25). Political actions always involve risks and uncertainty, but in the age of reason science provided rational and certain solutions to our political problems (Morgenthau 1975: 26). The “abolition of war” was certainly one of the goals of this scientific approach. This method of single cause was applied to the foreign policy by the liberals. Hence, according to liberals the aristocratic governments and feudalism were deemed as enemies of peace and reason (Morgenthau 1975: 26). This was a general tendency during that time and was the product of the “victory of liberalism” domestically where increasingly there was a “peculiar narrowing of the political” sphere within the states (Morgenthau 1975: 27). Sciences, religion, trade, commerce and judicial systems were made autonomous to the

extent that most of the affairs within the state itself were made to look more and more technical in nature (Morgenthau 1975: 32). In this context the application of this method to the international sphere only made logical sense. But according to Morgenthau, this was a fallacious attempt as they completely ignored the nature of international politics itself. While in domestic sphere, liberalism managed to reduce most of the political problems to the realm of “technical” which could be solved by providing the “scientific solution by the dominant group” (1975: 33). In domestic sphere this led to the “narrowing of the political” and the gradual “widening of the non-political”. Thus, sciences, commerce, industry, legal settlements etc. were no longer matter of politics during normal course of affairs in domestic realm (Morgenthau 1975: 32). In domestic realm this was possible because once the middle classes had settled the “struggle for power” in their favor; it was possible for them to relegate such issues, which had no direct bearing on the balance of power within those societies, in the realm of non-political (Morgenthau 1975: 33).). In the international sphere, the “balance of power” is the main stabilizing factor and unlike domestic sphere it could never be permanently settled (Morgenthau 1975: 33). Hence, in this context the technical and scientific solutions to the political problems could never be solved simply by “scientific devices” (Morgenthau 1975: 33). Such fallacious application of ‘scientific solutions’ to the political problems will always fail in international sphere. What are the implications of this observation for the reform measures like planning?

In an article written in 1944, he talks how limits of science have an impact on the capability of humans to bring changes within society. According to Morgenthau, this “philosophy of rationalism” is very much based on not only on a distorted understanding of the complexity of human condition but they also distort the sciences themselves. This belief that the scientific truths can solve all the problems of mankind is extremely disastrous. He rejects this optimism on two grounds- firstly, he rejects the notion that we can draw any “analogy between natural and social world”; secondly, according to him even the modern scientific thought accepts the limits of science and rejects the simplistic notions of the natural sciences which informs the “philosophy of rationalism” (Morgenthau 1944: 1974). The philosophy of rationalism, which binds the liberal thought

to that of classical Marxism, and its belief in single cause fail to deliver the expected results because they ignore the complexity of social sphere. They ignore the fact that

“Any single cause in the social sphere can entail an indefinite number of different causes, and the same effect can spring from an indefinite number of different causes. It is impossible to foresee with any degree of certainty which effects will be brought by this particular cause, nor it is possible to state with any degree of certainty in retrospect what particular causes has produced this effect”.

(Morgenthau 1944: 175)

Thus, any such belief that we can radically plan any large-scale desired changes within societies is based on a wrong method. This puts him at odds with E. H. Carr who is looking for his own ‘rationalist utopia’. E. H. Carr sees large-scale civilizational changes not only desirable but also achievable based on his historicism. But, for Morgenthau it is a fallacious method.

According to Morgenthau (1944: 177) this fallacious belief in the “certainty” is even rejected by sciences themselves. The certainty within sciences is true only in case of the “averages of large numbers of similar objects but not for individual objects as such” (1944: 178). Here Morgenthau is not rejecting the possibility of coming up with the social laws but he is merely outlining the uncertain nature of these laws. They indicate trends which can point towards the conditions which are “most likely to occur” in a certain condition. In other words, at best social scientists could only come up with a “series of hypothetical possibilities” (Morgenthau 1944: 176). Thus, he is rejecting such works of social sciences which presume that they can actually “predict social events with a high degree of certainty” (Morgenthau 1944: 178). Social sciences for him then are about “statistical averages and probability” not “certainty and predictability” (Morgenthau 1944: 179). Hence, probability is the essence of social sciences not predictability as it is almost impossible to exactly predict things in the social realm. This brings us to the question of the role of observer (social scientists/ planners) within the social realm.

According to Morgenthau, the social sciences just like natural sciences cannot study the object in a fully detached manner as is often argued. He argues that the nineteenth century proponents of scientism not only misunderstand social sciences but they also misunderstood natural sciences (Morgenthau 1944: 180). In reality, the object under study (both natural and social world) is in many ways “the product of human action” itself (Morgenthau 1944: 180). Hence, social scientist is not a mere indifferent observer but also stands in the “streams of social causation as an acting and reacting agent” (Morgenthau 1944: 180). A social scientist directly intervenes in the human society. Thus, the social world which one tries to understand and recreate is very much a product of the “quality of human mind” itself (Morgenthau 1944: 181). Hence, social world and natural world reflects the “qualities of human mind”. At one hand our understanding of them is limited due to the limits of the human cognitive faculty. On the other hand, the relationship between mind and nature is more than cognitive. The act of doing science is not merely for the purpose of exploring the social or natural world. But we as an observer also end up disturbing the course of human society by intervening in it (Morgenthau 1944: 180). In other words the human action also plays a significant role in influencing the nature and society itself. Thus, in words of Morgenthau “the common element of which mind, nature, and society partake is no longer reason pure and simple but reason surrounded, interspersed, and underlaid with unreason” (Morgenthau 1944: 181). Therefore, it is the “quality of human mind” itself which impacts the quality of social and natural world and our understanding and interpretation of it (Morgenthau 1944: 181). And, because this human mind is itself not only driven by “reason pure and simple”, but, there is also an element of unreason which is very much part of it, then the social and natural world around us is reflective of this imperfect human mind (Morgenthau 1944: 181). And, it was for this reason that Morgenthau rejected the purely rationalistic method, which ‘rationalistic philosophy’ preached, to create a perfect social world. The imperfectability of most of the attempts in planning social and economic reforms is reflective of the imperfectability of human mind.

In the light of the above discussion the act of planning itself cannot predict with certainty the course of human history. According to Morgenthau planning then is an

“Intellectual scheme which anticipates a chain of causes and effects, partly created by the planner’s action, partly taken into account by his social experience. The realization of the anticipated effects, then, depends upon the control the planner is able to exert upon the causes, as well as upon the reliability of his social experience, which makes him foresee the intervention of other causes not created by him”

(Morgenthau 1944: 182)

This is what makes planning a very difficult and unpredictable task. All the factors can never be under the control of any planner and none of those factors can be expected to bring foreseen results with an absolute certainty. This makes the task of planning an extremely difficult task with very unpredictable results. The good and evil which normally comes out of planning can never be claimed with certainty that the outcome was according to plans (Morgenthau 1944: 183). Thus, according to Morgenthau, the more logical or coherent the planning is the greater is the likelihood of its “incongruity” due to the contingent and complex nature of human condition which is reflective of human nature itself.

But his insistence on the contingency of the social life is in no way a rejection of any attempts in planning whatsoever. The recognition that the social life is contingent does not mean that it is chaotic. There is a “certain regularity” and order despite the complexity. There is certain “limited number of limited patterns” within any human society during a period of history (Morgenthau 1944: 183). And these patterns are “in retrospect as a meaningful process, governed, if not by necessity, but at least by certain objective laws” (Morgenthau 1944: 183). This is a very significant observation because for many critical scholars there are in fact two Morgenthau. His criticism of rationalism and scientism in his works like *Scientific Man Vs Power Politics* (1947) along with this work is seen as something, which is very different from his six principles. It is argued by this group of scholars that his six principles along with the work *Politics Among Nations* (1948) is something of a break from more philosophical European Morgenthau which can be seen in works like *Scientific Man Vs Power Politics* (for example see Flynn 2014).

Morgenthau is not exactly rejecting rationalism and planning in its entirety but he is merely rejecting a certain trend within social sciences, which viewed rationalism and natural sciences with a flawed understanding. For him the social world is then

“a highly complicated combination of numerous systems of multiple choices which, in turn are strictly limited in number. The element of irrationality, insecurity and chance lies in the necessity of choice among several possibilities multiplied by the great number of systems of multiple choice”.

(Morgenthau 1944: 184)

Thus, rationality for him lies in working for something which is possible during any given time as there are always a limited number of options which are available and we should always aim for something which is achievable among these limited numbers of options. Thus, a right way towards social planning according to Morgenthau lies in “marshaling human and material forces in rational anticipation of those potential trends” (Morgenthau 1944: 184). Hence, while rejecting rationalism of the kind which provides simplistic and certain solutions to all our problems, he embraces the social planning which is not rigid in nature and takes into account the “series of alternative and hypothetical patterns, one of which will supply the rational foundation for an *approximate solution* of a specific social problem” (emphasis added) (Morgenthau 1944: 185). For this purpose, he derives from successful military planning process which is not at all based on simplistic solutions. For him a successful military planning also takes into account the “actions and reactions of the planner’s own well-disciplined army” (Morgenthau 1944: 184). Similarly, in case of planning the changes within society which is a much more complex organism has to take into account the actions and reactions of various social groups. That is why it is the *approximate solutions* not the certainty of single causal solutions, which was based on an erroneous understanding of natural sciences and human society, which is more successful in arriving at one of the achievable trends. It is for this reason the certainty with which the Planning within the Soviet Union was undertaken failed to deliver as they were looking for a certain end (socialism, end of market economy) and were using the method of single causes which is based on

“certainty and predictability” not “probability”. This interpretation of planning by Morgenthau is radically different from that of Carr which we have already discussed in previous chapter. His belief in predictability with a sense of certainty about a future is what made his approach towards social sciences a radically different enterprise.

3. Role of Morality in the Thought of Morgenthau

“It is a dangerous thing to be a Machiavelli. It is a disastrous thing to be a Machiavelli without virtue”.

(Morgenthau 1948 a: 134)

In one of the most authoritative analysis of the texts of Morgenthau Richard Ned Lebow argues that “power was the starting point – but by no means the end point – of his analysis of international affairs. He believed that successful foreign policy depended more on the quality of diplomacy than it did on military and other capabilities, and had to be tempered by ethical considerations” (Lebow 2003: 217). This section looks at his understanding of the issue of morality and its connection (if any) to his views on world state.

While talking about morality and its role in society Morgenthau argues that the “moral law is not a utilitarian instrument aiming at the protection of society, even though its observance has this effect, but its commands are absolute and must be obeyed for their own sake” (Morgenthau 1960: 354). Unlike Carr, he rejects the notion that morality can be relative. In words of Morgenthau

“If the disparate historic systems of morality were not erected upon a common foundation of moral understanding and valuation, impervious to the changing conditions of time and place, we could neither understand any other moral system but our own, nor could any other moral system but our own have any moral relevance for us. It is only because we as moral beings have something in

common with all men- past and present- that we are able to understand, and make our own, the core of the moral system of others”

(Morgenthau 1960: 357).

And what exactly is that moral sense which we share with other fellow human beings who reside in separate cultures? For Morgenthau this “moral sense” is inherent part of our nature as all of us are “capable of making logical judgments” and allows us to judge morally things from past (Morgenthau 1960: 357). These moral “truths” cannot be created out of thin air but are found “in the nature of things” and are “true regardless of time and place” (Morgenthau 1960: 346).

Furthermore, this moral law cannot be used as deemed fit for our purpose (utilitarian purposes) rather they are an “indispensable precondition” in the civilized existence of human beings. And moral laws are useless if there is no “transcendent[al] orientations” which provide meanings to those moral laws (Morgenthau 1960: 358). And for Morgenthau this universal and transcendent morality can be found within the ancient Greek texts and texts of Abrahamic religions (Morgenthau 1960: 354 & 357). And the loss of this transcendental moral orientation, according to Morgenthau, will lead to the loss of any “reliable standard” which we need to “judge and act” (Morgenthau 1960: 359). It is on this ground that Morgenthau criticizes E. H. Carr in an article written in 1948. He argues that lack of any moral standpoint leads him to equate power with morality and turns into a “utopian of power” (Morgenthau 1948 a: 134). Thus, Soviet Union and “Soviet democracy” is projected as a “pioneer of future” (Morgenthau 1948 a: 132). In the second chapter on Carr we have already looked at how moral relativism robs Carr of any standpoint with which to understand the reform measures which were undertaken in the Soviet Union. Despite their disastrous nature he continued, for a long time, to believe in the utopian and progressive credentials of the Soviet Union. In the light of his understanding of history we were able to conclude that his seemingly bizarre take of issues like “Soviet democracy” was a product of certain worldview which was rooted in historicism as a method. Morgenthau was totally against his historically specific understanding of the politics because according to Morgenthau, the moment we remove the “objective standards” which constitutes the core of our moral fabrics then we end up

diluting our sense of morality according to the pressure of the collective (Morgenthau 1960: 347). The moral fabric of the society will then be held hostage to the “ever changing amorphousness of public opinion” (Morgenthau 1960: 347). In other words, moral good cannot be held hostage to the wishes of the public opinion and whims of the collective.

What role do these objective moral principles play in our society? Firstly, it is the objective moral laws which provides meaning to our lives and supplies the “vital link with things past, future” and present (Morgenthau 1960: 359). Secondly, apart from providing meaning to our lives they also act as restraining force which “keep[s] aspirations for power within socially tolerable bounds” (Morgenthau (1948 b [1973]: 225). From the philosophy of St. Augustine to the teachings of the Bible, the dominant trend within the western civilization has been influenced by the vision which condemns any philosophy wherein “ubiquity of power” as the paramount fact of life is acceptable (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 225-226). Any society or political system which glorifies the absence of any “unrestrained manifestations” over the “will to power” has in the long term perished (Morgenthau 1973[1948]: 226). This according to Morgenthau demonstrates the strength of those intellectual traditions which try to restraint and regulate the power drives “that otherwise would either tear society apart or deliver the life and happiness of the weak to the arbitrary will of the powerful” (Morgenthau 1973[1948]: 226). Morality in simple words aims to protect the weak and restrains the powerful from doing whatever they wish to do.

While these generalized observations on morality constitute the core of his thinking, how exactly does morality operates in international realm? Is there a thing called International morality?

Morgenthau (1948 b [1973]: 230) rejects any suggestion that there is no such thing as morality in the international realm and leaders are only motivated by the “considerations of material power”. He also rejects the purists whose understanding of international morality ignores the concept of power altogether and give magic formulas for achievement of world peace. There are some moral limits on the power drives within in international society. Statesmen do work for the self-interest of their states but under

certain conditions even they reject policies which do look expedient from the point of view of national interest but are reprehensible from a moral point of view. Hence, there is a universal “reluctance to use violence without limitation” and always there are attempts to use legal treaties and ethical arguments to question the use of naked power in world politics (Morgenthau 1948 c: 84). Even though most of the times the legal treaties fail in achieving the desired end due to the nature of international politics still these attempts is recognition of “certain ethical limitations which most nations frequently violate while feeling they ought not to violate them” (Morgenthau 1948 c: 85). In recent times even “war as an instrument of international politics” is used in a limited manner and one of the major tasks of the modern statecraft is to find ways to avoid wars themselves (Morgenthau 1948 c: 48). This ethical limitation is more of a modern invention but this remarkable development has been certainly limited by the changes in the nature of wars and their impact on the general populace. Now in an era of industrialized societies the notion of total war has made civilians and production facilities a legitimate target along with the military of other nation-states. Thus, unlike the eighteenth century and most of the nineteenth century now, wars are not fought on behalf of princes for their glory, but they are fought by the citizens of nation-states on behalf of certain “ideals” or “principles” (Morgenthau 1948 c: 87). According to Morgenthau in an era where national loyalty triumphs everything the nature of wars has very much become like the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries “religious types” as they have become “ideological in character” (Morgenthau 1948 c: 87). Even though the acknowledgement of the role of moral limitations within international politics remains, the conduct of warfare makes it very difficult to avoid civilian death during period of wars. It is in this context of heightened nationalism that we see the rise of “nationalistic universalism”

3.1 Nationalism and Its Impact on Morality of International Society

Morgenthau warns against the notion of “nationalistic universalism” (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973] : 329). He posits that “nationalistic universalisms of our age claims for one nation and one state the right to impose its own valuations and standard of action upon all other nations” (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 331). Hence, unilateral moral crusades couched in the language of universalism are a trait of our age. Thus, recently the “neoconservatives”

in US are one modern example of such universalism which believes in the unilateral mission to bring change in world politics. And, such claims are not new as US politicians of various stripes have often viewed it as a “shining city upon a hill” (Marcus 2018). But this condition is in no way limited to any one particular nation (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 332). It is a defining character of our era where nationalism triumphs all other affinities. Hence, “any nation can” be part of this sort of “crusading nationalism” as conditions “shift from nation to nation according to the condition of spirit and power” (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973] : 331). Morgenthau laments the loss of universal standard of action which was replaced by the nationalism (1948 c: 88). During nineteenth century it was very common among diplomats in Europe to “transfer” their loyalties from one state to another and it was a common practice which did not “insinuate the violation of moral standard” (Morgenthau 1948 c: 90). Today in the era of heightened nationalism such actions will be labeled as treason. Thus aristocrats in nineteenth century could conduct diplomacy by following codes of conduct which were supranational in character. Loss of prestige was considered a loss of power which made it very difficult to break moral codes (Morgenthau 1948 c: 91). With the gradual rise of “democratic selection” of officials who are responsible to a nationalist collective and answerable to it there was also a radical change in the nature of international morality and international society (Morgenthau 1948 c: 91). Hence, people making foreign policies are susceptible to the public opinion. A change in public perception could lead to changes in the policy making circles and have an impact on the policy itself. And, this “transformation within the individual nations changed international morality as a system of moral restraints from a reality into a mere figment of speech” (Morgenthau 1948 c: 91). This makes application of universal moral code of conduct very difficult as citizens who influence the policy making now generally do not all share a common view of the international morality and society. Some are driven by pure nationalist convictions some are not (Morgenthau 1948 c: 92). Furthermore the fluctuating nature of the parliament and policy makes it very difficult for individual policy makes to conduct ethical policies as “ethical codes have their seats in the consciences of individual men” (Morgenthau 1948 c: 93). When in the era of mass democracies the “responsibility for government is widely distributed among a great number of individuals with a different conception” of morality, in that case, the

“international morality as an effective system of restraints upon international” politics is almost an impossible task to accomplish (Morgenthau 1948 c: 93). Now policy makers represent more the will of the collective (i.e. nations) and their moral codes are molded by the “national societies” whose values they represent at international level (Morgenthau 1948 c: 94). In words of Morgenthau “the national societies now gave to their representatives on the international scene the standards of conduct which the international society had formerly supplied” (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 249). In simple words, one on hand the rise of nationalism was directly responsible for the demise of international society itself, whereas on the other hand, the democratic selection destroyed the international morality (Morgenthau 1973 [1948 b]: 248).

During nineteenth century the supporters of nationalism were very positive about the capability of this phenomenon in “strengthening the bonds of international morality” (Morgenthau 1948 c: 94). They believed that by magically fulfilling the aspirations of all the nations we could actually create a perfectly peaceful and harmonious international society. In this case nations will be driven by their common humanity and ideals of “freedom, tolerance and peace would prevail” (Morgenthau 1948 c: 94). But nationalism resulted in something quite opposite as instead of creating a tolerant international society it was very “particularistic and exclusive” (Morgenthau 1948 c: 94). In this era of nationalism even organized religions fail to transcend the nationalistic barriers as they had successfully done in the past. This “victory of nationalism over internationalism” has had three major impacts on the nature of international society (Morgenthau 1973 [1948 b]: 250 & 251). Firstly, in the era of nationalism the nation states have great capability at their disposal to place enormous compulsion on its members (Morgenthau 1973 [1948 b]: 251). Secondly, the loyalty which is expected from an individual for her/his nation-state in many ways entails the disregard for any universal moral code of conduct. Finally, this also makes it very difficult to support the international morality when they are in fact in conflict with the “moral demands of the nation” (Morgenthau 1973 [1948 b]: 251). In this context, how feasible is it to talk about the entities such as world state? Is it achievable in any near future without actually having a well-developed international society and international morality which allows us to easily transcend national obligations? In light of the above discussion of the ideas of Morgenthau about science and morality it is quite

clear that answer to both the question lies in negative. In the next section we will look at his views on World State and European Federation (now Union) in detail.

4. Morgenthau on World State and European Federation

In his book *Politics Among Nations* (1948) Morgenthau makes an argument against the feasibility of world state on two grounds: conceptually and practically (Craig 2008: 198). As has already been hinted the world state was impossibility due to the non-existence of a “transnational community” which could pledge allegiance to a world government by transcending national allegiances (Craig 2008: 198). Conceptually for Morgenthau any discussion of the idea of world state rested upon a “thorough parallelism between the world-state and nation-state” (Speer 1968: 212). In a book, which clearly revolved around the problem of power and peace in world politics, Morgenthau looks at the persistence of peace in national societies in order to understand why international society lacks such a state. According to Morgenthau the “national societies owe their peace and order to the existence of a state which, endowed with supreme power within the national territory, keeps peace and order” (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 481). Hence, those who seek peace in international politics according to Morgenthau call for the “transference of the sovereignties of individual nations to a world authority, which would be as sovereign over individual nations as the individual nations are sovereign within their respective territories.” (Morgenthau 1968: 481). This analogy rests upon a Hobbesian interpretation of peace within domestic societies wherein the absence of such a state would make domestic societies “resemble the international scene and the war of ‘every man against every man’ would be the universal condition of his mankind” (1948 b [1973]: 481). He elaborates at length the conditions within the domestic societies which make such a peace possibility. He identifies three conditions: presence of “suprasectional loyalties” which transcend the loyalty towards one’s social group, “approximation of justice through a modicum of satisfaction for their demands” and the allocation of the “overwhelming force” within hands of an authority which keep under check all attempts at disturbing the peace” (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 483-485). These three conditions together make the possibility of large scale organized violence very difficult. Every domestic society is held together by a sense of community wherein there is a shared sense of loyalty which

triumphs the divide which often exists between social groups over “economic sphere” (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 482). Individuals often identify themselves with a particular economic class, religious group and political group. These identities often clash with individuals who identify with other identity groups. However, there is not just a conflict with the individual of other groups but also it is impossible to fully give full allegiance to the religious, political and economic groups at the same time as they also are in conflict with each other. This “pluralisms of domestic groups and conflicts” makes an individual realize the “relativity of their interests and loyalties and this [helps] in mitigating the clashes of different groups” (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 483). In simple words an individual might have a conflict of interest with another individual in the realm of economics but they might share similar political or religious interests. This plurality of interests mitigates the clash between the social groups and individuals within the societies. Furthermore, the contending social groups with their conflicting sense of identities are also “members of the same national society” (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 483). This shared sense of national identity is held together by multiplicity of variables: similar language, same customs, same historical recollections, similar national symbols and some shared worldview which is informed by a “fundamental social and political philosophy” (Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 483). This sense of belonging to a national community is what holds these societies together despite being populated by pluralities of social groups with multiple identities (not just economic).

In our section on Morgenthau’s understanding of morality we have already discussed his understanding of the issues like nationalism, nationalistic universalism and international morality. It is quite clear that there is not such a developed and mature sense of community at the international level. Even during present times in places like Europe after decades of attempts to develop the sense of European community which was supposed to triumph the national identities and develop a supranational regional level identity, we can still recall several events like: Brexit, the recent demonstrations in Spanish regions like Catalonia and Basque which points to the continued persistence of nationalism and the sense of identity which it provides. In words of Morgenthau “the answers are bound to be in the negative”, when we look for any mature and developed international society. This is the situation in a region (leave alone international level)

which boasted for decades that they are successfully creating a pan-European identity, which will lead to political integration. Things are much more complex and the sense of national identity is only becoming more and more solidified in an era of globalism and globalization which were also projected as variables which will create a sense of cosmopolitan identity. The rise of populism in Europe and elsewhere (both on the left and the right) provides us clear evidence of the continued significance of national identity. The international society in which we live in continues to be populated by sovereign nations which continue to guard their national identity. Hence the following words of Morgenthau continue to find relevance in the light of above real world evidence:

“Are the people of the world willing to accept the world government?...No society exists coextensive with the presumed range of the world state. What exists is an international society of sovereign nations. There does not exist a supranational society that comprises all individual members of all nations and, hence, is identical with humanity politically organized. The most extensive societies in which most men live and act in our times is the national society. The nation is as we have seen, is the recipient of man’s highest secular loyalties. Beyond it there are other nations, but no community for which man would be willing to act regardless of what he understands the interests of his own nation to be. Men are willing to give food, clothing, and money to the needy regardless of the nationality. But they prefer to keep the needy where they are rather than to allow them to go where they please and thus become useful citizen again. For, while international relief is regarded as compatible with the national interest, freedom of immigration is not. Under the present moral conditions of mankind, few men would act on behalf of a world government, if the interests of their own nation, as they understand them, required a different course of action”.

(Morgenthau 1948 b [1973]: 490-491)

Hence, most of the confusion, which modern-day progressives demonstrate when they show towards the failure of states to do enough to help the immigrants and the rise of

populism and nationalism, becomes quite clear. The single causal diagnosis, which we often read on daily basis, again offers ignorance, lack of education etc. as explanations and solutions to these problems. We have already talked in this section how this belief in education as the remedy of all the problems of humanity is problematic. While it is possible for some people like activists, scholars and certain social groups to transcend the national identities and identify with a less developed international community on the basis of humanity. It is quite naïve to think that all of the individuals will give up the notion of national identity which gives so much meaning to their lives (in terms of shared language, a sense of national community, shared institutions of the past). This places great many hindrances on the path of individuals pursuing goals, which are clearly altruistic and done in name of common humanity, but often the rhetoric of nationalism makes it very difficult for the individuals to support something, which can be often interpreted by nationalists as a challenge to the interests of the nation as a whole. This makes it a challenging task as national and international morality clash with each other.

According to Campbell Craig (2008) in one to the most recent and authoritative interpretation of his ideas of world state, Morgenthau gradually evolved his views of the world state as described above. Morgenthau according to Craig moved from a very pessimistic understanding of the possibility of the world state towards a more sympathetic one. And, according to Craig the major factor which led to a more sympathetic treatment of the possibility of world state was the danger of thermonuclear war at the height of cold war. In words of Craig (2008: 208) “the thermonuclear revolution forced Morgenthau to *abandon his attempts to develop a rationalistic theory of international politics* and a blueprint of American foreign policy (emphasis added)”. According to Craig in the late 1950s Morgenthau gradually moved away from the more pessimistic interpretations of the world state when he moved away from the world of “policy advocacy” (2008: 203). The more philosophical Morgenthau of late 1950s according to Craig changed his views regarding the power of nationalism and his writings signaled that he now believed that “predominance of nation-state” has come to an end (Craig 2008: 204). According to Craig, this change, which Morgenthau expresses in series of lectures in late 1950s, shows a radical break from his views on the issue in his seminal works like *Politics Among Nations (1948)*.

There are several problems with the above interpretation as the “radical break” which Craig talks about (as in abandoning his belief in rationalistic theory) is quite an over exaggeration. Firstly, as has been discussed in the section on Morgenthau’s views on rationality and science, his complex understanding of rationality and social sciences never fully embraced the rationality, as we generally understand it. In his *Scientific Man vs Power Politics* he rejects a particular interpretation of rationalism which he calls as the “method of single causes” and his theory was never ever part of this form of rationalism which he vehemently rejects. And, on his account of this particular form of rationalism he is very consistent. He never embraced it. What he embraced was a complex understanding of social sciences as an enterprise which rejects “prediction” and deals in “probabilities” and “trends” (Morgenthau 1944). Unlike those who preach “method of single causes”, the social scientists according to Morgenthau deals in possible trends and cannot come up with a strict prediction about the future but rather they elaborate a limited number of trends which could be discerned. Thus, it is very difficult to predict the feasibility of a single future. Even in a 1975 article, he rejects the notion that the scientific method and reason alone can solve all the problems of humanity (Morgenthau 1975: 22). This so-called “science of peace” with its belief in the method of single cause fails radically when it comes to international politics. Hence, he never changed his views of rationality and its connection to issues of reform in world politics as Craig argues. Whereas on one hand, the so called reluctance and dilemma of Morgenthau of towards whole heartedly accepting the idea of world state comes from the philosophical confusion which James P. Speer (1968) talks about. On the other hand, for Craig (2008: 211) this “confusion” demonstrates his failure to “develop any *mechanism* by which such a state might arise” despite talking about thermonuclear wars and its effect on the nature of world politics. Craig laments the fact that he continues to “emphasize the structural impossibilities of world-state formation” in his later editions of *Politics Among Nations* (Craig 2008: 211).

The elaborate discussion on his views on rationality and scientism clearly explains why he was reluctant to such any ‘mechanism’ regarding such a complex question. It was against his philosophical worldview and here he was very consistent unlike as these scholars may argue. In his 1975 article, (just like his 1944 article, which we have already

discussed in section on rationality) he describes why any elaborate and ultra-rational mechanism fails to give desired result. According to Morgenthau, internationally the so-called scientific solutions fail in two ways. Firstly, either the course of affairs in international politics will continue to operate as if those rational devices were never suggested. Here he talks about the failure of the so-called technical “international commissions of experts” who try to solve complex political problems in a technical manner (Morgenthau 1975: 34). Hence, in this light it is not at all surprising that despite his soft corner towards the idea of world state he continues to be skeptical about this notion and more importantly continues to talk about world politics in an unaltered manner because it was not a possibility during that time. This observation also explains why he was skeptical about the notion of reform in world politics in general. In modern times continued problem to reform the world politics despite the problems which we face in form of nuclear weapons, climate change and plan elaborate economic changes which is not impossible to find can be explained by his skepticism of the “technical” solutions which experts continue to provide. And, when such solutions fail the immediate reaction is to not look at the limitations of the formulaic propositions but rather criticize the nature of international politics itself as the single causal hindrance which has to be removed. Secondly, when such technical solutions do have an impact they never bring out the desired result but only “produce effects unforeseen by their promoters” which are often quite “disastrous” (Morgenthau 1975: 34). Thus, his reluctance to fully embrace and elaborate the possibility of world state is a philosophically consistent view, which is clearly elaborated in his more philosophically oriented writings.

Campbell Craig (2008: 207) also argues that Morgenthau was so much troubled by the advent of thermonuclear weapons and their impact on world politics that he wished for “a new theoretical understanding” of international politics. However, in the fifth edition of the book *Politics Among Nations (1948)*, in the preface written in 1972 he talks about several “important changes” which has taken place since he published the book for the first time. He talks about various changes that took place: the “explicit recognition by the west of the territorial status quo in Europe”, the decreasing rhetoric of the ideology, gradual rise of China as a “potential third superpower”, Vietnam war and its impact on the power of US and the continued decline of United Nations (Morgenthau

1948 b [1973]: vii). And, this approach of Morgenthau is quite linked to his overall philosophical worldview which informs his understanding on social science. In an article written in 1940 Morgenthau is troubled by the tendency of social scientists to “stick to their assumptions in the light of contradicting facts” (Morgenthau 1940: 260). Hence, it is quite natural for him to address the changes in world politics and their relevance for his thought as he does in his preface. But not even once he mentions the continued relevance of the thermonuclear war for his theory and thought in general. If he was so much troubled by the prospect of thermonuclear war that he was even ready to radically change his realist theory of international politics as Craig argues, why did he not even mentioned once such a troubling factor in his 1972 edition’s preface as he mentions other emerging changes in world politics?

But, then how are we to understand some of his newspaper articles and college lectures which form the basis of Craig’s argument? Here, we shall turn back to the method, which we follow in this dissertation. As we have already mentioned in the first chapter, the aim of the dissertation is to look for what might Morgenthau call “perennial” aspects of his thought wherein those ideas which are “timeless for both causal and ethical theory” will be considered (Hacker 1954: 783). According to Andrew Hacker (1954) there is a tendency among the scholars while interpreting a particular classical author to focus on ideas which might have been a product of a particular momentary historical event and then find relevance for those findings for their overall thought in general. It is true that at the height of the cold war Morgenthau was at certain point obsessed with and troubled by the prospect of thermonuclear war like most of the scholars during that point. So as a public intellectual it is quite possible for such a figure to talk about the issue and address it. But, that does not mean that it had any impact on his basic understanding of the structure and nature of international politics itself as scholars like Craig elaborate. If that was the case he would have surely mentioned the impact of such a great event on his theory in the 1972 preface as he addresses other major changes in world politics.

In another article written in 1963 entitled “The Political Conditions for an International Police Force”, despite the supposedly increased infatuation with the idea of world state in late 1950s and early 1960s which Craig talks about, Morgenthau is again

questioning the reliability of any attempt to raise an international force in a world which is divided into nation-states. Hence, for Morgenthau the fact that the international society continues to be populated by nation-states where it is very difficult to transcend the loyalty towards a supranational entity continues to be an important fact which cannot be ignored. Here the extensive quote of Morgenthau about non-feasibility of such suggestions is quite evident:

“An international police force can only be instrument of an international organization, such as the United Nations. It is this relationship that makes its reliability a continuous problem. In a society of nation-states it is possible for some outstanding individuals to transfer their loyalty from their respective nation-state to an international organization even on a particular issue or in general. But it is too much to expect that the large masses of individual members of different nations could so transfer their loyalties that they would execute reliably and without question whatever order the international organization might give them”.

(Morgenthau 1963: 399)

This elaborate argument by Morgenthau of the problem of the reliability of an international force is clearly sustained by his continued acceptance of nationalism as a variable which continues to have an impact on international politics. While his acknowledgement that nationalism continues to be force to be reckoned with should not be treated as endorsing the state of the world. It is clear in the section on international morality that Morgenthau used to find nationalism as a negative force in world politics and he expresses clear disgust towards nationalism while discussing the issue of thermonuclear weapons. But, this disgust is normative in nature and is not something new and it should not be taken as a proof for his changing views of the structure and nature of international politics itself and up to the point that he is even wishing for a radical new theory of international politics in an era of thermonuclear bombs. Even during the height of his supposedly changing views on nation-states and world politics (early 1960s) he was publishing works which were clearly skeptical of things like “international police force” in a world which continues to be divided. The problem according to Morgenthau will continue to persist as long as the “overall structure of international relations” remains

similar in nature (Morgenthau 1963: 403). Now we shall move another contentious issue in the modern day concerns of global reform: the notion of European Unification.

When it came to the issue of European Federation Morgenthau was quite positive, but in a skeptical and cautious manner, about the project during its early phases. Here, again for him the issue of balance of power within Western Europe and globally cannot be ignored as far as discussion of European Federation is concerned. The European Federation according to Morgenthau is another “revolutionary attempt” to solve the “age-old political problem” of Europe i.e the “natural superiority of Germany” (Morgenthau 1952: 131). This imbalance of power (or threat of imbalance of power) has haunted the nations of Europe even before 20th century. He talks about the positive aspects of the functional aspects of the integration as a bottom up approach which is favored by most of the actors (Morgenthau 1970: 338). What is contentious and will be contentious according to him is the political aspect of the problem which is very difficult to solve wherein problems might arise due to the “divergence of the interests and policies” among the “major European nations” (Morgenthau 1970: 338). Hence, European integration will face problem not with the functional aspects of the project but with the “political considerations” of balance of power and interests (Morgenthau 1970: 338). And this rests on judiciously “recreating the identity of interests and coordination of policies” not just within countries of Western Europe but also between them and the United States.

Morgenthau opined his views on the issue during the cold war when the project was limited to countries of Western Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union were two major powers which had a huge impact on the prospects of the project. But, the European project has since then moved far beyond Western Europe and the world has since then become a unipolar world. The expansion of European project to the Eastern and Southern Europe clearly posed some of the problems for the project especially in the sphere of political unification. With the expansion of EU in present times it is very difficult to “re-create the identity of interests and coordination of policies” which Morgenthau talks about (Morgenthau 1970). There is a clear divide in countries of Western Europe with those of Eastern and Southern Europe. Whereas, the former are richer economically, this certainly creates the divide in the realm of economic interests.

Similarly, in terms of religious identity, national identities and even the identity of Europe there is a clear divide between the countries of Eastern Europe (Poland and Hungary) and Western Europe. These two blocs also share a divisive understanding and interpretation of European identity itself. So it was quite shocking for the politicians of Western Europe when recently Victor Orban the Prime Minister of Hungary declared that the goal of his party is to protect the Christian identity of Hungary as it forms the major part of European and Hungarian identity (Guardian 2018). In similar address he also talks about formation of Hungary as a “Christian democracy” (Guardian 2018). This declaration clearly flies in the face of predominant conception of European identity as developed by the predominant powers of the Union at the moment as secular and rooted in secular values like human rights and multiculturalism. In a policy document entitled *The Development of European Identity/ Identities: Unfinished Business (2012)*, “diversity” (in a multicultural sense) and “promotion of democracy and human rights” are two clearly identified secular notions which are supposed to form the mainstay of the so called European identity (European Commission 2012: 32). Also it is quite well known that after the recession there was clear clash of interests between the states of Western and Southern Europe over austerity measures which were imposed on countries like Greece. Thus, with the expansion of Europe to so many countries it is extremely difficult to manage the conflicting interests within the Union without which no such political integration is possible in Europe according to Morgenthau. And, this problem cannot be solved by cooperation in technical and functional realm alone which are not that controversial to begin with.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter, we tried to test the truth of two propositions regarding the thought of Morgenthau and its impact on issues of global reform. After the above discussion it is quite clear that his critique of scientism which is based on the ‘method of single causes’ and his critique of the rational planning methods is related. And, he does not reject social sciences in their entirety he merely critiques analysis which had a rather naïve understanding of science and rationality. In light of this observation we have to alter our first hypothesis which stated the following: The critique of scientism is what takes

Morgenthau much closer to Niebuhrian understanding and interpretations of future of human history. And its impact is reflected in his writings on global reform. We will compare his criticism of scientism with that of Niebuhr in next chapter but for now. His criticism of scientism of a particular form i.e. ‘method of single causes’ is what made him more critical of Planning as a method of reform when it is envisaged in that simplistic fashion. He was not entirely against the planning as such but rather he was more critical of the simplistic reform measures as undertaken by Marxists and Liberals with their belief in hyper rationalism which was based on a crude understanding of sciences themselves. Hence, the first hypothesis is not entirely valid.

The second hypothesis stated the following: the transcendental and universalistic understanding of morality on one hand and relativistic morality on the other leads these scholars to radically different conclusions on issues of global reform. Here we discussed about the impact of their views (that of Carr, Morgenthau and Niebuhr) on morality on their thought especially in context of global reform. We have already seen Carr’s understanding of moral relativism and its impact on his thought. In this chapter we saw how moral universalism of Morgenthau actually made him critical of the so called progressive reform carried out in countries like the Soviet Union whose true nature progressives like Carr failed to grasp. Similarly, it is for this reason that Morgenthau believes that just like domestic society, international society has to develop a sense of developed morality in order to have anything like a world state. Also the presence of nationalism and nationalistic universalism makes the claims of universalism a problematic thing because in the era of nation-states the states often makes universalistic claims on the basis of their own values and standard of conduct. It is for this reason he is quite critical of the phenomenon as thinks it places a major hindrance in the path of mature diplomacy, which is paramount for the maintenance of peace and order in the international society, which continues to be populated by sovereign nation-states.

Chapter 4

Limits of Progressivism and Science: Reinhold Niebuhr and the Issue of Reform

1. Introduction

Realists like Reinhold Niebuhr had a significant impact upon the discipline of international politics in the twentieth century (Coll 2008: 21). He had a “towering presence in American intellectual life” for more than three decades (Bacevich 2008: 23). He was writing in a context in which certain events and trends “decisively shaped their world” (Coll 2008: 21). And, some of them were: the demise and decay of the ‘Victorian liberalism’ with its belief in perfectibility of human beings and notion of progress, and the “feasibility of abolishing wars through free trade, education and science” (Coll 2008: 21). The rise of Nazism, the two bloody world wars and holocaust only put a final dent in the already declining confidence in liberal rationalism. The world was also witnessing rise of “totalitarian and authoritarian philosophies” that were threatening to engulf the whole globe (Patterson 2008 b: 1). Niebuhr “provided the intellectual resources for coming to grip with the –isms of the day (i.e. fascism and communism)” (Patterson 2008 b: 1). He was directly addressing these issues as he lamented the isolationism of the US that for him was “immoral” (Patterson 2008 b: 1). It was in this context that thinkers like Niebuhr came up with their pessimistic vision of history, science, rationality and the idea of reform. Hence, in light of the events and the continued overenthusiasm of idealists in providing rational solutions to issues like war and issues of reform he provided certain answers to some of the issues that were perennial in nature. In addition, according to Eric D. Patterson (2008: 2) his writings continue to provide the answers to some of the problems that we face. In the last two chapters, we focused on the views of E. H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau on the issue of reform. In this chapter, we will test three hypotheses related to Reinhold Niebuhr:

Hypotheses 1: The less radical views of Niebuhr are clearly molded by his views on scientism and history. And this critique of scientism and modern interpretations of history

is consistent throughout his body of works and is informed by his pessimistic view of human nature.

Hypotheses 2: The transcendental and universalistic understanding of morality on one hand and relativistic morality on the other leads these three scholars to radically different conclusions on issues of global reform.

Hypotheses 3: The critique of scientism is what takes Morgenthau much closer to Niebuhrian understanding and interpretations of future of human history. And its impact is reflected in his writings on global reform.

In the first section of this chapter, we will focus on Niebuhr's understanding of history and natural sciences. Do these views have any impact on his views regarding issues of reform in human society? In the second section, we will focus on his views on the issue of morality, especially morality in international society. In this section, we will also compare and contrast his views of morality with those of E. H. Carr and Hans J. Morgenthau. In the third section, we will see his views on the issue of world government and why he thought it was impossible to create it and why it was a rationalistic illusion. Then in the last section, we will conclude the findings of this chapter.

1. Modern History, Progress, Science and Problem of Reform: Limits of Progressivism and (Social) Sciences

E. H. Carr while talking about his understanding of history criticizes Niebuhr as someone who engages in "mysticism" as he believes in ahistorical truths that lie outside history (Carr 1961: 109). For historicist like Carr this notion of history was incomprehensible. Niebuhr would have certainly found the certainty of Carr regarding history as an "Illusion of managing history" which he warns against (Bacevich 2008). Niebuhr talks about this conception of history while talking about the messianic trends within the body politic of United States (Niebuhr 2008 [1952]). Hence, his criticism of utopianism like creation of world state and attempts to bring socialism in twentieth centuries is related to this understanding of history and his disdain for any claim that human beings can create history and alter its course rationally. In this section, we will analyze and elaborate his

understanding of history and why it placed him radically at odds with the scholars like Carr.

The progressive view of history which Niebuhr criticizes rather extensively in his works like *The Nature and Destiny of Man (1943)* which was, according to Niebuhr, a product of the “Biblical and Hebraic” influence which helped in creating this “hazardous” illusion of

“Meaningful history. The effort to discern meaning in all the confusions and cross purposes of history distinguishes western culture and imparts historical dynamic to its striving. It must be distinguished from all confusions and responsibilities of man’s historic dynamic with two evils inhering in the historical emphasis. One is the evil of fanaticism, the consequence of giving ultimate significance to historically contingent goals and values. The other is the creative, but also confusing, Messianism, the hope for a heaven on earth, for a kingdom of universal peace and righteousness”.

(Niebuhr 1943 [1996] : xiv).

Moreover, it is this messianism, which lies behind the utopian philosophies, which want to create a utopia and thereby solve the perennial problems of humanity by radical reform measures. Thus, it is not surprising that Niebuhr rightly interpreted twentieth century Communism as a “secularized version” of this “persistent Messianism” which was in fact a significant “characteristic of both Hebraic and Christian thought” (Niebuhr 1943 [1996]: xiv). And, both these interpretations of history (secular Messianism and Christian Messianism) share a certain belief in the meaning of the history.

In his work *The Nature and Destiny of Man* Niebuhr elaborates in detail the connection between the philosophies of progressivism, which came out of the influence of Renaissance, and the Christian movements like sectarian Protestantism (Niebuhr 1943 [1996]: 170). With the advent of renaissance came the belief that the history of human progress is very much “filled with endless possibilities” (Niebuhr 1943 [1996]: 155). This was a positive development as renaissance provided some sort of solution to our

immediate and “proximate problems” by providing some immediate solutions (Niebuhr 1943 [1996]: 156). This was a great development because it allowed us to question the human condition by questioning the status quo. This advent and development of sciences including human sciences with all their techniques which allowed us to pursue with success our “conquest of nature” but these scientific techniques due to their nature were only able to identify “what was true” and ignored the falsities in their thought and method (Niebuhr 1943 [1996]). And, what they ignored was vital because it lies at the core of the modernistic confusions regarding the nature of man and history and the frustrations which come over our failure to create a perfect society. This frustration was very much a product of progressive visions of history, which in their triumphant celebration of “endless possibility” ignored the “endless possibility of [both] *good and evil*” within human beings and within our societies (Niebuhr 1948 [1996]: 155). This altruistic belief in constant “progress of history” were in many ways a product of the “culmination of knowledge and the extensions of reason, the progressive conquest of nature” and triumph of scientific techniques which in turn were supposed to lead to a “gradual conquest of chaos and evil by force of reason and order” (Niebuhr 1948 [1996]: 155). It ignored the fact that with every human achievement will encompass both the elements within it i.e. chaos and order. And the progressive history itself has no solutions to the problems of human history (Niebuhr 1948 [1996]).

Despite the similarities between the modern-day, progressive philosophies and the Christian eschatology, which we have already talked about, according to Niebuhr, there were many profound differences between them. Firstly, it was believed that the rational laws like those of nature along with pure reason give “meaning to the whole of history” and can alone guarantee the progress of history (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 166). It failed to deal efficiently with the “problem of power” because once the reason has triumphed it was believed that it will “inevitably bring the vitalities of history under its dominion” (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 166). Secondly, this progressive view of history used to regard the dynamism of history in only a positive manner. The “pessimism of the medieval culture” and its understanding of history was replaced by naturalism and its optimism (1969: 184). Hence, all inevitable developments within human history were in general towards the “advancement of good” (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 166), and “progress” (Niebuhr 1969:

184). The “laws of nature” it was believed could only provide the meaning to human history and existence. This belief in natural laws and their capability to provide meaning to human history (i.e. progress) replaced religions, which never claimed to provide meaning to human existence only in the course of historical process because for them pure redemption was not possible in this world alone (Niebuhr 1969: 182). Thus, declarations of Marx that socialism was not only inevitable but also a good development in the progressive development of humankind was not an aberration but one of the examples of the progressive mood, which encompassed 19th and 20th century, thought. It offered full redemption to the suffering masses in this world by means of revolutionary upheavals.

This does not mean that Reinhold Niebuhr rejects sciences, which were product of the renaissance in its entirety (Harland 1960: 69). He was merely writing against the “misapplication of scientific method” (Rice 2008: 259). For Niebuhr within the realm of human affairs the methods of natural sciences have a rather “limited application” (Rice 2008: 259). But, he acknowledges the good which the sciences have done and is merely elaborating its limits by focusing on the ideas of Reformation which contains the answers to some of the problems which modern human society faces. In a book chapter entitled “Christianity and Darwinian Revolution” (1958), Niebuhr gives us some glimpses into his understanding of natural sciences and their relation to human sciences. Here, he criticizes the attempts to misuse theories of natural sciences like Darwinism because clearly for Niebuhr such attempt to make social sciences more scientific was an “error” (Niebuhr 1958: 33). Hence, “progress was assured” just like in the biological world by the evolutionary “forces” of history (Niebuhr 1958: 35). Furthermore, the borrowing of such scientific theories of history can be broadly divided within two categories which are polar opposites of each other- deterministic (Social Darwinism and Marxism) and voluntaristic (Liberalism) (Niebuhr 1958: 35). But both these categories of historical theories share one similar belief: that they could “manage history”. This tendency to include the pretense of science within the social sciences is what leads to the “illusions of managing” history. Whereas for scientific liberals like Comte the management had to be undertaken by ‘enlightened elites’, for the Marxists this task had to be undertaken by the enlightened and conscious revolutionary groups like “proletariat” (Niebuhr 1958: 34).

Though divided by their belief in the power of the individual/collective, both shared the same belief in the feasibility of reform by rational management of history by some sort of philosopher king.

What must be clear is that Niebuhr at no point was entirely rejecting the Renaissance he was merely criticizing it for simplifying the complexity of human history (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 159). There were diverse intellectual, philosophical and religious movements which emerged out of the renaissance but they were all united by a common unifying principle (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 160). And, this principle was the unique “impulse towards the fulfillment of life in history” (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 160). This positive belief in the impulse was the product of two sources: classical Greek philosophy and the Biblical “impulse towards sanctification and the fulfillment of life” (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 160). And this common belief underlies most of the religious and secular thinking which was the product of devices as developed under the influence of renaissance. Thus, from Cartesian rationalism to French Enlightenment and from progressive liberals to the revolutionary Marxists all share this common feature despite their divergent interpretations of history. In the light of this discussion, it is not surprising that Niebuhr used to find the appreciation and acknowledgement, by Marxists scholars like Bernstein, of the radical sectarians like the “Cromwellians” as the frontrunners of the Marxist movement (Niebuhr 1968: 48). Both of the ideologies share same sense of history though they had different interpretations of it. The major factor behind this development was, according to Niebuhr, the newfound confidence in the power of reason that became very prevalent the age of scientific discovery (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 164). But, in this era of over-optimism while at one hand the classical Greek belief in the rationality of man was appropriated, but on the other hand it “disassociated [itself] from the historical pessimism of classical culture” (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 164). Thus, despite their rather divergent views on the role of reason in historical progress most of the idealist philosophies were united in their disbelief in the notion that anything can lie outside the dominion of human reason and history (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 164). And, most of the western “sociological-historical philosophies” of nineteenth and twentieth centuries “take this idea for granted” (Niebuhr 1943 [1994]: 166). Hence, both Liberalism and Marxism believed in this basic assumption to be a truth. Liberals believed the historical process

itself to be a “redemptive” process, which allowed human beings to move from “ignorance to intelligence” and hence become the “master of historical destiny” (Niebuhr 1960: 37). Hence, for liberals just by pursuing our own self-interest we would somehow bring “a higher social harmony” (Niebuhr 1960: 37). But, this understanding of history according to Niebuhr was a fallacy because it led to huge “disproportions of power” within those societies and ultimately led to the degradation of communities itself (Niebuhr 1960: 37). The Marxism on the other hand, claimed to have solved this liberal fallacy, but they also were misunderstanding the process of history. In order to challenge the evils of the liberal societies they in turn recognized the “social institution” of “property” as their source and argued that by destroying it we could bring redemption (Niebuhr 1960: 37). Unlike liberals who thought “endless growth and development” to be a redemptive force, the Marxists thought that it is only by destroying the “old order” and ushering in a “new order” we could truly emancipate the human beings (Niebuhr 1960: 37). However, instead of acting as a force of redemption, which they claimed to be, the “prophets of this new religion” actually became the “tyrannical king-priests” of the twentieth century (Niebuhr 1960: 37). Hence, as a theory of politics and economics, these two theories might be “antithetical” in nature but in words of Niebuhr as “moral and religious theories”, they are quite similar (Niebuhr 1960: 38). They both ignore the fact that the roots of the problem of our society and human beings cannot be reduced to certain social institution. The problem is “man’s lust for power”, which is much deeper and is rooted in human nature itself (Niebuhr 1960: 38).

Niebuhr’s understanding of history was very much related to his interpretation and understanding of human nature itself (Harland 1960: 90). Jean Elshtain also argues that Reinhold Niebuhr’s political and historical writings cannot be fully understood without understanding the “anthropological presuppositions” which informed his view of human nature (Elshtain 2010: 46). Furthermore, this understanding of human nature was informed by reading of Christian texts and their understanding of it (Brown 1986: xi-xii). Therefore, before moving further, we would like to elaborate in brief his understanding of human nature, as it is intimately connected to his criticism of Marxism and Liberalism and their understanding of reform and its role in the progress of human history. For Niebuhr, any “flawed” understanding of human nature is going to “mar the specific

political conclusions” which we often make (Elshtain 2010: 46). It was for this reason that for Niebuhr the utopian worldview inherent within Marxism and its interpretation of history was not a simple “harmless over belief” (Niebuhr 1969: 148). This overbelief had real world consequences as it informed their interpretation of the progress of human history. Hence, their worldview is flawed because it is based on a flawed understanding of human nature. Marxists have a “tendency” to simply reduce, the selfish aspects of human nature of being “more interested in their own needs” and the “natural egoism”, to the ills of “capitalistic system” (Niebuhr 1969: 148). Hence, it is hardly surprising that they ignore the “problem of temptation” to misuse the power within any “dictatorship of the proletariat” (Niebuhr 1969: 148). According to Niebuhr, the “will-to-power” has been part of human nature since eternity. The “will-to-power” as “a form of egoism” even corrupted the “ascetic abbots” who misuse their power and exercise complete “tyrannical rule over their monks” (Niebuhr 1969: 148). What makes these “ascetic commissars” believe, asks Niebuhr, that they are above such temptations to misuse power? It was for this reason that Niebuhr finds the claim, that the “dictatorship of the proletariat ultimately destroys itself”, is an absurd claim (Niebuhr 1969: 149). No party or individual will give up power or not misuse it in absence of some control by the society. It is naïve to remove any social control and expect that without that control power will not be abused in an authoritarian manner. Hence, for Niebuhr, democracy as a “form of social control upon the leaders of society is a perennial necessity of justice” (Niebuhr 1969: 149). If a polity ‘evolves’ into a post-capitalistic polity this does not mean that the nature of power and capacity of humans to abuse it will disappear. It will manifest itself in some manner. In light of their misunderstanding of nature of man and history, it is hardly surprising that for Niebuhr, communism provides “false answers to our problems” wherein it is believed that by “abolition of private property” we could solve perennial problems of human beings (Niebuhr 1969: 132).

According to Reinhold Niebuhr, we human beings are unique in the sense that we have a “capacity for self-transcendence” which allows us to stand “above the structures and coherences of the world” and exercise the “radical freedom of the self” (Harland 1960: 67 & 73). Moreover, it is this capacity of man “to transcend the necessities of nature” which enables him to “make and to know history” (Harland 1960: 91). This

however does not mean that man is a completely free individual. We human beings, believes Niebuhr, are both “creator and creature” and it is this peculiar position of human beings which gives us “freedom” to be creative but also chains us to the bounds of “natural necessity” (Harland 1960: 91). It is the combination of these two factors (not privileging one aspect over other), which makes human beings unique. In words of Niebuhr “the unity of the self in its body, mind and spirit, in its freedom from natural necessity and in its involvement as creature...was obscured in all forms of dualism [and] Descartes is a convenient example, which cut the self into two entities, body and mind, or body and spirit. The unity of the self can only be expressed in poetic, religious and metaphorical symbols” (Niebuhr 1943 [1996]: xiii). Natural sciences alone cannot capture this essence of human beings as they strictly treat them as rational and scientific beings.

For Niebuhr it is a grave fallacy to obscure any one aspect of human nature and most of the modern day political thought commits the mistake of emphasizing one aspect of human nature over another (Harland 1960: 65). It was for this reason that Niebuhr resisted the simplistic rationalistic notion of human being as a creator of history and resisted the idea that human beings can actually create world government without presence of any developed sense of community (more on this in last section) (Niebuhr 1949). This brings us to his criticism of the simplistic notion of the man as the “creator of destiny” and the “master of historical” destiny (Harland 1960: 86). And, it was on this ground that he warns Americans to resist the temptation of acting as the “master of destiny” in one of his works titled *The Irony of American History* (1952).

As human beings are not entirely tied to the necessities of the flux of the nature, which provides them partial freedom to “reorder and transmute the causal sequences of nature” and to “make and to know history” (Harland 1960: 91). Thus, we humans are in many ways a product of this history and we can understand “history” only by exercising our unique freedom to transcend. This leads us to another aspect of his understanding of history: the capacity of human beings to partially escape the necessities of nature. This makes it necessary for us to “sharply distinguish [history] from nature” (Harland 1960: 91). It is on this ground that he radically moves away from the historicist and Marxist

interpretations of history, which we have already discussed in the second chapter. The historical pattern, for Niebuhr, is much more complex thing than nature itself, which cannot be simply understood in a causal manner. The “bewildering confusion of freedom and necessity” makes human history unique and difficult to make sense of as it “cannot be made to conform to the patterns of either logical or natural coherence” (Harland 1960: 92). This nature of human history makes it difficult for the historian to write history with the same exactitude, which is one of the major requirements of natural sciences and their methods (Harland 1960: 93). But, this does not mean that Niebuhr is rejecting the notion of social sciences and especially history as a discipline. What he is simply asking us is to accept the complexity of causation in history and stop making huge claims about the human destiny based on ‘scientific’ interpretations of history. In Niebuhr’s words, “real historians have an instinct for the peculiar quality of history and know the hazards of the predictions of the future” (cited in Harland 1960: 94). In simple words, Niebuhr was warning against treating the human history and its progression as a science and understood the inherent dangers of predicting the course of human history. This understanding of history goes radically against the Carr’s understanding of history and role of the historian. As we have already seen for Carr a historian’s prime task is to predict. Hence, in other words, Niebuhr was simply writing against scientism in social sciences. He is rejecting the misplaced belief that methods of natural sciences can actually solve most of the problems of social world (Harland 1960: 70). He rejects the dominant view of our era, which believes that “every bit of truth and wisdom must be first cleared by science before it can be given credence” (Niebuhr 1954 a: 464). While rejecting the notion that science can solve all the problems of human society and human nature he contends that the

“So-called ‘methods of science’ which have gained mankind so many significant victories over the forces of nature and have laid the foundations for the whole accumulation of technical power, have been singularly deficient in generating *wisdom* in human affairs. The hope that the same methods which conquered nature, exploiting her resources and harnessing her energies, can also eliminate ‘prejudice’ and ignorance in human affairs is a rather silly hope. Its silliness is

proved by the vanity and folly, which some of the social and psychological sciences produce on all the ultimate human and historical issues”.

(Niebuhr 1954 a: 465)

But, what we often forget is that the social scientist and historian pass judgment upon the “historical process” while also being involved and being part of it (Niebuhr 1954 a: 466). The observer of historical process has to “detach” himself/herself from their interests in order to write an objective history (Niebuhr 1954 a: 466). However, “natural sciences” methods, despite their great achievements in their own realm, do not provide social sciences tools to remove their own interests from the object of study. And, this has to do with the nature of human history itself as “nature” and “history” are entirely different entities (Niebuhr 1954 a: 465-466). On one hand, natural sciences study nature, which is a “repeatable process” and things recur more regularly, which can be studied and replicated under controlled experiments (Niebuhr 1954 a: 465)? On other hand, study of human history involves humans who are “creatures of the process” and creators of history at the same time (Niebuhr 1954a). According to Niebuhr, this does not mean that there are no recurrences and analogies cannot be drawn from the reading of history. There are indeed many similarities between human beings based on ethnicity, economic or geographical factors which can indeed allow us to generalize about the attitudes and “probable actions” of people (Niebuhr 1954 a: 466). But due to all this generalizations about social groups the scientist often tends to forget the most unique part of human nature i.e “freedom over structure and necessity” which makes us beings who are not simply “rooted in the world of natural necessity” and historical process (Niebuhr 1954 a: 466). And it is this aspect of human being (their capacity to be free) which has given them the capability to “elaborate endlessly complex historical and social configurations” (Niebuhr 1954 a: 466). It was for this reason that “good historians” long before the “modern sciences” came into existence were able to come up with generalizations about the causes and trends of the past historical events (Niebuhr 1954 a: 467). Hence, what distinguishes a good historian from a “charlatan”, argues Niebuhr, is their “reverence for the facts of history” which allows them to see a “pattern in history” (Niebuhr 1954 a: 467). This does not mean that history is a science as someone like E. H. Carr might insist

as historians cannot fulfill one of the key “tests of science” i.e. ability to predict. According to Niebuhr, it is almost impossible for a historian to achieve this criteria. According to Niebuhr, the limitations of predictability in human sciences is due to the fact that the “historic causation moves on so many levels of cause from the basic geographic and climatic natural forces in which history is grounded, to the complex motives which may actuate the influential leader in a critical decision, that there must remain a hazardous and subjective element in every historical generalization or analogy” (Niebuhr 1954 a: 467). And when we do draw lessons from the past in order to inform present policies or predict future it is not that convincing and falls short of expectations. The “number of contingent elements is too great and causation too complex to justify” such predictions (Niebuhr 1954 a: 467).

Apart from the issue of predictability within social sciences there is another significant issue which according to Niebuhr makes social sciences and history a different endeavour than natural sciences. This significant factor is the issue of “value judgements” (Niebuhr 1954 a: 467). A true scientific analysis often tells us that there are “certain ends” which are inevitable (Niebuhr 1954 a: 468). But according to Niebuhr, within the social sciences this becomes problematic because scientific explanations regarding certain ends do not tell whether they are “desirable” or not. The issue of “desirability of certain human and historical ends” is one of the most significant questions which human beings have to seek (Niebuhr 1954 a: 468). This is due to the fact that we as human being apart from seeking causal explanations of events also seek meaning in our lives. And “meanings” about any desirable or undesirable value-system is drawn not from the method of science but from the “system of meaning” which is derived from the prevalent religious or philosophical worldview which informs us (Niebuhr 1954 a: 468). For “positivists” this aspect of human nature (i.e. need for ethical and moral judgements) might be explained as “emotive” aspects. Any values which does not confirm to the “norm of truth” derived from a strictly scientific perspective is untrue therefore useless (Niebuhr 1954 a: 468). In simple words, there are no truths apart from scientific truths which are based on scientific methods alone which in turn are borrowed from natural sciences. Thus, when historians, simplistically reduce history to the realm of “natural sciences” they “obscure all the important points in human life, matters of ethical choices

and responsibilities [and] complex relations between good and evil” (Niebuhr 1954 a: 468). Hence, there is no scope of incorporating our moral standards which allow us to pass moral judgements when we use the methods of natural sciences. But Niebuhr acknowledges the role of “modern philosophy” in “emancipating us” by logically demolishing the “metaphysical” and “supra-rational” truths which were quite common before the advent of the age of science. But in this process of emancipation the sciences have established another “tyranny” and this time it is the “tyranny of science” and its methods (1954a: 468). They in turn establish the “system of nature as the ultimate reality” and deny the much more complex aspects of human condition (Niebuhr 1954: 468). Thus, historians (and here we can cite historicists we discussed in second chapter here) reduce the “bewildering complexity of historical causation” and human condition is an oversimplified manner in order to make their historical analysis more “scientific” (Niebuhr 1954a: 470). We have already discussed in the second chapter in our discussion on historicism how historicists oversimplify historical process in order to predict the future of human course. Hence, in light of their scientific “theoretical history” which draws a lot from the natural sciences “socialism” or “planning” only look as something inevitable in course of development of modern capitalist industrial civilization. Hence, it’s hardly surprising that Niebuhr finds solutions given by “historicists” like Marx or Lenin as “false answers” to our perennial problems (Niebuhr 1969: 131-132). We have already discussed why he thought that Marxist understanding of human nature is wrong and is reflective in their analysis of history. For someone like Niebuhr who believes in the complex understanding of human beings, who are both bound to certain structure but are also able to exercise their freedom by rising above the process of nature and history, is what makes his understanding of history radically different from the historicists like Carr. Thus, by simplistically reducing the ills of human beings to capitalist system (in case of Marxists) or lack of education (in case of liberals) we risk ignoring the evils of these political systems themselves. These progressive ideologies fail or fall short of their promises because while claiming that they provide “meaningful world” they forgot the darker aspects of human condition which did not correspond to their progressive worldview. These darker aspects of human existence, “death, sin and catastrophe”, were not in any way product of a particular economic system (Niebuhr 1969: 185). The

progressives think that they can dispel completely these negative aspects by progress. In these philosophies, there is no “recognition” of the “perils to anarchy which reside in human egoism, particularly collective egoism” (Niebuhr 1969: 185).

It was on this ground that he criticizes Marxists for their failure to explain the ills of the Soviet Union. Hence, Soviet aggression in Europe was never seen as imperialistic in nature because the imperialism itself was the product of capitalism and the greed of capitalist states (Niebuhr 1969: 133). Similarly, historicists like Carr end up admiring the “Soviet democracy” as a democracy, which expands the control of mass from political to the economic realm. Because he ties the ills of western democracies to the ills of capitalist system and its decay, it is not at all surprising that he fails to see the ills of the post-capitalist political and economic system, which was established in the Soviet Union. All this criticism of progressivism does not mean that Niebuhr did not believe in any form of reform or positive change within society. What he was merely questioning was the over optimism of these ideologies which was disastrous. This long quote of Niebuhr perfectly catches the glimpse of his views on the shortcomings of utopian ideologies and their shortcomings, he writes:

“Some of the chaos of human existence can be overcome, it is possible to have a society in which there will be security for everyone rather than insecurity for many. No doubt the proper education and experience can reduce human egoism and can beguile it into less socially harmful expressions. But this kingdom of God upon earth where everyone will give according to his ability and take according to his need, this anarchistic millennium of communistic dreams, what is that but a confused naturalistic version of a religious hope? The optimism which is based upon it may outlast one five year plan and possibly two or three. But after many five-year plans have come and gone it is discovered that strong men still tend to exploit the weak, and that shrewd men still take advantage of the simple, and that no society can guarantee the satisfaction of all legitimate desires...what will become of this optimism?...The beauty and meaning of human life are partially revealed in ideals and aspirations which transcend all possibilities of achievements in history. They may be

approximated and each approximation may lead to further visions...Marxism may represent a more realistic politics than eighteenth-century democratic idealism. But as a religion it will just end where the latter ended. Its optimism will sink ultimately in despair”

(Niebuhr 1969: 193-194)

Hence, Niebuhr believed that the human world will forever remain an imperfect world despite the presence of abstract ideals like liberty and equality which provide justice in this world and help in reforming it. However, these conceptions should only be treated as guiding principles, which can only be approximated in this imperfect human civilization. What is worse is that when these values, which are in actuality guiding principles to ameliorate human condition, are not realized then the despair itself sinks in. Thus, as we have seen in the earlier chapter how in order to fully realize principles like the destruction of private property or economic justice not only leads to despair but also large scale destruction of social groups (as in rural Soviet Union). The shortcomings and failures of the five-year plans were not due to the unrealistic nature of those goals but due to the elements, which were remnants of the past system. Hence, it was the rich peasants i.e. Kulaks who were identified as the part of the problem. It was for this reason Niebuhr talks about treating the goals and values of reform process to be realistic in nature. Hence, Niebuhr’s pessimism regarding the optimism of these ideologies should not be mistaken as rejection of any improvement in human condition and that there is no scope of improvement of our social and economic systems and institutions. By bringing the darker aspects of human nature and their capacity to do evil he is challenging such idealistic sentimentalities which ignored these aspects. For Niebuhr, human beings were capable of committing both good and evil and it was “this mixture of grace and sin, in both individuals and cultures” which acts as a redemptive force in the human condition (Brown 1986: xii). And all individuals and cultures have the capacity to do both good and evil and it is only by recognizing this significant aspect of human nature we can “use power creatively in the service of justice” and this is the good aspect. But at the same time “we can also abuse power destructively in service of the self” (either to serve our own interests or to serve the interests of a certain social group [nation or class] which the

individuals feel they are part of and project their allegiance to them by working on their behalf) “and that is our demonry” (Brown 1986: xii). This is why he thought as we have already covered that some sort of social control is necessary in any political system and democracy is an imperfect but necessary check on the power of ruling elites. In his words, “Man’s capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but man’s inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary” (Niebuhr 1944: xi). The essence of carrying out any reform measure should not be about ignoring naively the human nature and our capability to use/misuse power. It should be about taking those aspects into our considerations while building institutions. It was for this reason that he criticizes the authoritarian regimes in states like Soviet Union and their draconian reform measures. They were built on a fallacious understanding of human nature and it was reflective in their policies and reform measures. While, Carr used to see something positive in those “Soviet democracies”, whereas, Niebuhr used to treat them as ‘tyrannical’. This radical difference comes down to their understanding of history as a process and the role of human beings in that process.

After this discussion of Niebuhrian understanding of history and sciences it becomes quite clear that he was extremely critical of scientism in social sciences and had deep suspicions regarding the capability of social scientists to predict. His suspicions regarding the rationalist methods to bring reforms like planning and education as has been shown was closely linked to his criticism of dominant understanding of history as a linear progression towards more and more human perfection. This puts him not only at odds with historicists like Carr which we have already discussed but it also puts him at odds with Morgenthau who was critical of scientism of a certain kind (“method of single causes”) but did not reject scientific theory in its entirety. He argued that it is the proponents of these “method of single cause” who are misinterpreting natural sciences (Morgenthau 1944). Morgenthau understands theory as something which deals in “probabilities” not “predictions” and also as something which look for “approximate solutions in place of concrete “predictions” (Morgenthau 1944). Hence, a social scientist can only elaborate certain trends regarding the future of a society but can never elaborate a single possibility (Morgenthau 1944). But, Niebuhr seems much more critical of the

enterprise of social science theory due to his fixation on the role of “unique” in history. Daniel Rice (2008) explores the intellectual relationship between Niebuhr and Morgenthau. According to Rice both the scholars certainly shared similar views as far as criticism of scientism were concerned (2008: 259). Before moving further with the comparison between these two scholars we will elaborate in brief Niebuhr’s understanding of IR theory and how it differed from Morgenthau. Hence, despite being similar in their criticism of scientism they had quite a different view of IR theory and role of unique in history. Whereas Morgenthau does not fully reject rationality and theory as an enterprise which is built on generalizations, Niebuhr took much more radical step on these issues. We will discuss the issue in next section.

2. Reinhold Niebuhr, IR Theory and Morality

In a recently published edited volume entitled *The Invention of International Relations Theory (2011)*, Guilhot (2011) argues that the conference on IR Theory which was held in 1954, in which scholars like Reinhold Niebuhr, Hans Morgenthau, Kenneth Thompson, Walter Lippman, William T. R. Fox and Paul Nitze participated, elaborates very clearly how exactly they thought was the nature and future of IR theory and discipline should be. This book explores the relevance of this conference in development of IR and Realism as a theory. In this conference “thinkers as diverse as Morgenthau and Niebuhr” despite their differences considered politics as something which was intertwined with the “manifestations of a deep-seated will to power” which according to them was an essential part of “human condition” (Guilhot 2011: 1). Thus, despite their acknowledgement of certain laws which can be discerned in order to explain politics they were also critical of the strict rationalists who lacked “the acute awareness of the incommensurability between scientific reason and political action” (Guilhot 2011: 2). For them the politics cannot be simply reduced to a simplistic “means-ends calculation” because despite presence of certain rational elements in it politics was “first and foremost the capacity to decide between incommensurables” (Guilhot 2011: 2). It was for this reason that these scholars could not escape the issues of morality and moral judgement in international politics. “Morgenthau and Niebuhr *in primus*”, also disputed the confidant

view of history as envisaged by liberals (Guilhot 2011: 4). Hence, for someone like Niebuhr who unlike the liberal view which considered evil something that can be reduced to ignorance or lack of education, argues that “both good and evil grow in history, and that evil has no separate history” and this clearly placed him at odds with the liberal worldview (Niebuhr 1943 [1996]: xiii). But this does not mean that there were not nuanced difference between these two scholars and their understanding of the issue and it quite visible in their interactions within the conference. In the first portion of this section we would look at the Niebuhrian understanding of morality especially within international relations. Then we will discuss how his understanding of history and more radical criticism of scientism was responsible for some significant difference between Niebuhr and Morgenthau. An elaborate discussion between the attendants of this conference has been published in the appendix of this book (Guilhot 2011). In this section we will mostly be drawing from the proceedings of this conference along with the hitherto unpublished papers of Reinhold Niebuhr who participated in this conference.

In his one of the most famous work *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932) Niebuhr while discussing the problem of group morality makes a “sharp distinction between the moral and social behavior of individuals and of social groups” (Niebuhr 1932: xi). In the 1954 conference Niebuhr presented a paper entitled as “The Moral Issue in International Relations” (1954 b) which drew on a lot of themes regarding the problem of group morality from the earlier work. In the subsequent discussion of this paper he argues that in light of the certain contingencies within international politics it is paramount to have certain moral principles which act as regulative principles (Guilhot 2011: 244). Reinhold Niebuhr identifies liberty, equality and justice as three principles which are necessary to make moral decisions within politics. These principles should be treated as “regulative principles” as the idea of treating these principles as “absolutes” would not only be impractical but would also lead to disorder within international society (Guilhot: 243). Here, Niebuhr criticizes liberal enthusiasm behind the division of the Austro-Hungary Empire within independent nation-states (Guilhot 2011: 244). In their enthusiasm to apply the principle of “self-determination” in an absolute sense within Europe new nation-states were created which were not stable and were prone to disorder. Hence, the end result was more injustice within the heart of Europe. Hence, for Niebuhr

in this case belief in absolute liberty without taking into account the real world implications was a huge mistake (Guilhot 2011: 244). But the acknowledgement of contingency does not mean that it is limited in nature. The complexity of history makes it very difficult, argues Niebuhr, to give any normative theory of international politics “more body” than the universal principles of “justice, liberty and equality” (Guilhot 2011: 246). Before moving further we would like to elaborate his views on these principles as a “regulative” force before moving any further. First we will discuss his generalized view of the issue and then discuss how he views morality in the realm of international societies.

In one of the essays in his book *Faith and Politics (1968)*, he explains how the principles of “Liberty and Equality” as “principle of justice” are “regulative principles” and why they should not be treated as “historical possibilities” wherein these principles can be absolutely fulfilled here and now (Niebuhr 1968: 185). Both these principles in their absolute sense are not a “historical possibility” because each and every community in human history is “organized through a hierarchy of authority and function” which makes the existence of any community a possibility (Niebuhr 1968: 186). Whereas on one hand, “the principle of liberty is related to the unity of a society”, on the other hand, the “principle of equality is related to the hierarchical structure of the community” (Niebuhr 1968: 189). According to Niebuhr no complex society can survive without recognizing the inevitable nature of authority and functional divisions. And the presence of hierarchical authorities is what makes the existence of communities a possibility within a city-state or a modern-day nation-state (Niebuhr 1968: 186-187). Hence, for Niebuhr any attempt to apply these principles as “absolutes” will only lead to the destruction of society. In words of Niebuhr “there are no simple solutions for the problem of social gradation” (Niebuhr 1968: 188). According to Niebuhr it was here that the strict egalitarians like Marxists tend to see rather erroneously inequality within the capitalistic society as a sign of eventual disintegration of these societies by the actions of a revolutionary working class and the establishment of absolute equality in a socialism society (Niebuhr 1968: 188). Hence, Marxists predicted that the demands for absolute equality will lead to a revolutionary moment within these societies. But, despite the predictions of Marxists the liberal societies managed to maintain, despite momentary uprisings, some “equilibrium of organized power” (Niebuhr 1968: 188). In words of

Niebuhr the “corruption of a necessary gradation of authority is as inevitable as the gradation itself” and no political system (even the Soviet Union) can be free of such gradations (Niebuhr 1968: 188-189). All communities and societies also regard some sort of “unity” and order as it protects it from the “chaos of conflicting choices of authority” (Niebuhr 1968: 189). Even within modern-day liberal states, the notion of absolute liberty is just a figment of imagination, as no such liberty exists. Not only is the treatment of “equality” as an absolute principle is problematic and dangerous, so is the treatment of liberty as absolute principle. As any exercise of absolute liberty will destroy the fabric of society and its unity which is paramount for sustaining any community.

Niebuhr’s solution to the problem is to treat these principles as “regulative principles” and acknowledge the fact that within the realm of human civilization complete realization of such principles is impossibility (Niebuhr 1968: 188). And, anyone who tries to make them a reality will only unleash suffering. Hence, as a normative and “regulative principle” “equalitarianism” is an extremely powerful force in the hands of the dispossessed and poor (Niebuhr 1968: 188). They “rightly” dislike the inequalities and try to ameliorate their condition within any society. But, this does not mean that we can actually remove all sorts of inequalities. This is a fallacy. Hence, for Niebuhr the “modern liberal states” are less unequal in comparison to the traditional societies where individuals/social groups are more unequal. Hence, it is not impossible to improve the conditions of oppressed social groups but it would be foolish to believe that it can be entirely removed. Even liberal states have inequalities in terms of class or gender. Hence, in light of these inequalities within societies, according to Niebuhr, if equality will be treated as a “regulative principle” then it will continue to provide the marginalized communities a way to challenge “real and potential injustices” without treating them as the absolute principles which can be disastrous for the existence and stability of community itself (Niebuhr 1968: 189).

Again this notion of treating these principles as absolutes can be linked to emergence of Enlightenment and rise of progressive views of human history (Niebuhr 1968: 190). The notion of egalitarianism as envisaged by the “French Enlightenment” scholars was much more simplistic than the classical Greek understanding of absolute

equality as a thing which should be reserved for “mythical Golden age” (Niebuhr 1968: 190). It was the French revolutionaries who clubbed the notion of liberty with that of equality. The radical notion of liberty which Enlightenment embraced was in turn a product of Christian thought which acknowledged the individual are capable of transcending the “communal whole” (Niebuhr 1968: 191). The enlightenment scholars secularized and historicized this conception of man as a unique individual. Hence, within this secularized version the idea worked as a means to seek “temporal end” to the problem of unfreedom of human beings which is realizable within the process of history itself (Niebuhr 1968: 191). This was a radically different interpretation because within Christian thought “the liberty meant the right of the individual to seek ‘eternal’” ends (Niebuhr 1968: 191). This new “temporal end” which French revolutionaries and sectarians like Cromwellians envisaged was clearly about achieving those ends within a “political community” (Niebuhr 1968: 191). Thus, it was in this context that the modern day “libertarians” and “equalitarian” were born (Niebuhr 1968: 192). And, in the long term, it was the “egalitarians” who according to Niebuhr were more wrong and whose illusions proved to be more disastrous as their theories “made it possible for a group of elite to establish a monopoly of power in the name of utopia” (Niebuhr 1968: 192). In light of this discussion it was not surprising that most of the utopian experiments to bring about absolute economic equality ended up in establishing one party or one family run authoritarian regimes which denied any liberty whatsoever to the individuals. Even after the French revolution, despite the rhetoric in favour of both liberty and equality, it was the belief in absolute egalitarianism, and attempts to realize it in the present moment of history, which led to “annulment of liberty” in any sense (Niebuhr 1968: 193). Thus, it was in the French reign of terror after the revolution wherein the foundations of “Totalitarian Democracy” were laid (Niebuhr 1968: 194). This development of liberty and equality as an absolute principle along with the rationalistic and progressive understanding of the history were entirely interconnected to each other. Hence, in an age, wherein history itself was projected as science, it was inconceivable to recognize any other “truth contradicting the truth which it has perceived” (Niebuhr 1968: 194). The philosophies which were itself a product of strict belief in the methods of natural sciences could never have recognized the faults in their own worldview as their truth were

scientific truths. Hence, in this age Karl Marx clearly distinguished his theory from other 'unscientific' socialists on the basis of presumption of science. According to Niebuhr in such an era, it was impossible to expect them to recognize the "fragmentary character of all human knowledge and virtue, nor of guarding against all centres of power,..particularly when, power pretends to speak in name of people" (Niebuhr 1968: 194). And, when Marxists and scholars like Carr are praising the so called "soviet democracy" they were in fact building up on this historical and philosophical tradition which ignored the dangers of giving power to a ruling party in name of economic justice and economic equality.

But this does not lead one to believe in the truth of a libertarian position as their understanding of liberty and its relation to society is as fallacious as a strict egalitarian position because both the abstract worldviews ignored the "perennial factors of social hierarchy and social unity" (Niebuhr 1968: 192). How can one escape the attraction of treating these principles as absolutes? Here Reinhold Niebuhr (1968: 196) borrows from the successful and less radical Cromwellian revolution and its aftermath in England. Unlike the French revolution, the Cromwellian revolution and subsequent events did not try a revolutionary and sudden break from the past. There was a compromise between the traditional and the radical elements. Hence, "the traditional and social hierarchies and communal stabilities were protected against the too simple supplication of the criteria of liberty and equality" (Niebuhr 1968: 196). Here, the principles of equality and liberty acted in a regulative manner and eventually the "universal suffrage" acted as a check on the power of the traditional elites (Niebuhr 1968: 196). The political system established within the United States after their revolutionary war borrowed both from the "British practice" and French enlightenment theories. Hence, the American political system is the complex mix of both these traditions. Now we shall turn our attention to international politics where Niebuhr recommends similar principles as the only guiding principle which could be acceptable universally (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 269).

The "moral pretension" according to Niebuhr is one of the most consistent features of international politics (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 269). Human beings are more prone to act in a self-interested manner when they do so, on behalf of their collective.

Hence, the self-interest and the “moral pretension” is a much greater problem at the level of the collective. But, this does not mean that all the actions within international realm are merely determined by interests and values which states espouse are only masks to disguise their true intentions (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 271). Despite the tendency to over exaggerate the “moral qualities of” the policies, it cannot be denied that moral values do play a role. But one of the tragedies of international politics is that other states are always going to interpret the intentions of rival or hegemonic states as hypocritical “moral pretensions” (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 271). There is some truth to that charge. But what is not often recognized according to Niebuhr is that “hypocrisy” is the part and parcel of the “moral life” of any collective (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 271). Thus, the cynics often argue that the solution to such a problem is to stop all sorts of moral pretensions whatsoever and pursue one’s pure interests without any concern for morality (even though it is quite hypocritical) (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 271). This cynicism according to Niebuhr is quite a reactionary and dangerous way to look at the international politics. Moral values do place some sort of brakes in the naked pursuit of power. And if a state will give up any “moral pretensions” at all they will end up like Nazi Germany, who in words of Niebuhr “were naturally scornful of the pretension but they ended up building an Empire which was clearly of the devil” (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 271). In simple words while moral pretensions can be problematic wherein states justify all their actions in moral terms, but, having no moral pretension is more dangerous as it removes all considerations regarding the excessive use of power from the picture. Then what is the solution to this eternal moral dilemma?

According to Niebuhr the ‘solution’ lies in the fact that the major moral task of a moral international relations should not only be about “moderating moral pretensions” but also “establishing moral norms for man’s collective life” (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 271). In other words it is as important to moderate the claims of states to act on behalf of moral values as it is equally significant to not give up all moral standards, which allows us to do distinguish between ‘good’ and ‘evil’ within political life, altogether (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 272). And what criteria can one use to do this distinction? For Niebuhr a good and sound moral goodness is only established when “the harmony of whole does not destroy the vitality of the parts” (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 269). This definition

according to Niebuhr is significant as it clearly “excludes all tyrannically enforced harmonies and [also] makes freedom to assert the unique vitality of each part” (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 269). This understanding of morality as the “criterion of moral value” (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 269), is very much informed by his understanding of individual and their relation to the whole which we have already discussed. This uniqueness of individuals is also reflective in his universal criteria to treat international society and its parts in similar manner. According to Niebuhr (1954 b [2011]: 270), in an era of interdependence the most difficult moral task for “individuals and nations” is how to make the pursuance of its own interests as much closer to that of the “more general and universal scheme of value” (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 270). In the discussion after the presentation of this paper, Niebuhr elaborates more on this significant point. In subsequent discussion Niebuhr argues that the best way to achieve this moral criterion which we have already elaborated is to find some imperfect point where “national interest” and “general good” are closest to each other (Guilhot 2011: 245). This won’t be the perfect pursuance of universal good in an international society which is divided into nation-states as such a pursuance of policy where no national good is considered at all will be considered as something “traitorous” by the national collective (Guilhot 2011: 245). In words of Niebuhr

“it is necessary to see that national morality is on a different level than individual morality. Perhaps the best we can do in international society is to find the point of concurrence between national and common interests”

(Guilhot 2011: 245).

Hence, the discussion regarding the role of morality gives a clear picture of his understanding of morality. His universalistic take on the issue of morality clearly puts him opposite to someone like E. H. Carr. While in their criticisms of moral pretensions, wherein states hide their own interests and mask their true intentions, all three scholars, E. H. Carr, Reinhold Niebuhr and Hans Morgenthau, are quite clear. But they start departing when Niebuhr and Morgenthau start elaborating their universalistic moral standards which they found paramount in passing any moral judgement i.e. in judging the goodness and evil nature of any action. They borrow these principles from their study of

Greek classics and Abrahamic religions. But Carr the historicist refuses to endorse any universalistic moral standard because for Carr all moral principles were product of history and hence they are relative to the period in which they originate and only reflect the self-interests of the power groups. But, Morgenthau and Niebuhr believed that by studying the philosophical and religious texts we can actually discern the perennial moral problems which human beings face. For Carr then morality is relative to the history and society in which it is originated. Hence, Stalin and “Soviet democracy” are explained by referring to Russian tradition and inevitability of historical process. But for Niebuhr the Soviet Union was the very example of a “tyrannical” system which could be easily distinguished from more open societies of the West (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 272). Thus, it was possible for Niebuhr to judge issues and institutions without being a slave to the progressive view of history as a process. This was impossible for historicists like Carr and their thought and some of the problems which ensued have already been elaborated in detail in second chapter.

In light of these assertions, Niebuhr recognizes “justice, liberty and equality” as the only principles which can give some “body to normative [IR] theory” (Guilhot 2011: 246). But within international realm just like the domestic realm these principles must only be treated as “regulative principles” (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 269). In fact by following the Niebuhrian logic we can argue that the nature of international politics makes the absolute treatment of these moral principles more problematic as the problem of moral pretension makes the pursuance of imperialistic policies, while ignoring the “vitality” of the parts of the international society, a much greater possibility. Such behaviour will be a moral evil according to Niebuhr because it not only destroys the vitality and uniqueness of the part but also establishes a “tyrannical” order which is unjust to the core. Hence, by applying these regulative moral principles we can actually judge the moral behaviour of states especially great powers within the international realm. If a great power unilaterally acts in a morally pretentious manner which ultimately destroys the vitality of its parts then this act is unjust and against the principles of justice.

Because modern human beings also have a tendency to shape history and its end according to the moral pretensions which are often believed to be the universal truth and

the hypocrisy is more or less ignored. According to Niebuhr this fallacy within international politics (Niebuhr 1954 b [2011]: 272) which produced this idea which in turn is the product of French Enlightenment and its belief in the perfect rationality of human beings need to be moderated by drawing the insights and “wisdom” from Conservative thinkers like Edmund Burke. This is a profound observation wherein he calls for drawing wisdom from the conservative thinkers is a clear sign that the treatment of Niebuhr as a “progressive realist” by scholars like Scheuerman is very problematic (Scheuerman 2011). Also, his unique treatment of history also makes him a non-progressive scholar.

Now we shall move our attention to the disagreements between Reinhold Niebuhr and Hans Morgenthau over the issue of IR Theory. In the same conference on the IR Theory, there was an elaborate discussion between Reinhold Niebuhr and Morgenthau over the issue of developing a “rational theory” of International Relations (Guilhot 2011: 248). While Morgenthau acknowledges the occurrence and role of unique events in history he argues that it is only the recurring events which can be rationally recognized as they make it possible for us to establish historical “sequences and causal relations” in a rational manner (Guilhot 2011: 248). Niebuhr disrupts the connection which Morgenthau makes between “rationality and general laws” and argues that such a limited understanding of rationality does not take into account the role of “unique and dramatic in history” (Guilhot 2011: 248). For Niebuhr history is much more complex “than mere generalizations” and it is both the unique and general which gives us full explanations about historical event (Guilhot 2011: 249). And, any IR theory must take that into account. While Niebuhr never himself wrote anything theoretical regarding international relations still he did not believe that there is no possibility of any such theory whatsoever. In words of Niebuhr

“any theoretical studies solving some of the vacillation between idealism and realism would be of value. The typical realist does not recognize many of the intractable and novel elements in any situation. Analyzing the constants would frustrate both the idealists and the realists. The idealist does not recognize the constants. Any significant theory would be one that

cut both ways against the American tendency to think that history is more malleable than it is, or that it is characterized by universal laws.”

(Guilhot 2011: 257).

As the above quotes make it clear Reinhold Niebuhr regarded any pure realistic and idealistic theory equally incomplete and they on their own did not fully grasp the problems of human condition on their own. Hence, he was arguing for a theory which not only considered the “universal laws” but there should also be no pretence of natural sciences as “history is much more malleable” than any social or natural scientist will accept. That is why he wants a theory to not only consider general laws but also unique into their considerations. This brings us to his criticism of the proponents of world government during that period.

3. Reinhold Niebuhr and The Rationalistic Illusion of World Government

Like Morgenthau, Niebuhr also drew from the analogy of the nation-states to develop the argument against the feasibility of the world state. The criticisms of Niebuhr regarding the feasibility of world government can be reduced to two major fallacies which he found in such proposals (Harland 1960: 227). First fallacy of such thinking was the belief that “governments are capable of creating community” (Harland 1960: 227). Hence, governments cannot create a sense of community on their own. They can achieve “only a limited efficacy in integrating a community” (Niebuhr 1949: 380). Second fallacy, according to Niebuhr is “that governments are not created by fiat (though sometimes by tyranny)” (Niebuhr 1949: 380). Niebuhr accepts the presence of “a rudimentary world community” but this community is not a developed community like most of the national societies. They are underdeveloped not only politically but also in moral and organic sense (Niebuhr 1949: 380). There are several factors which has lead to the development of this rudimentary world community. One of the most important factors which led to this development was the “increasing economic interdependence of peoples of the world”

(Niebuhr 1949: 386). The second significant factor behind this development was the “fear of mutual annihilation” during the heights of cold war (Niebuhr 1949: 386). The third and final factor is a moral factor as “enlightened” people have come to a certain realization that we also have some sort of obligation towards the human beings who are not citizen of our nation-state (Niebuhr 1949: 387). The development of modern technology has helped in the development of this “community of mutual dependence” but this mutual dependence actually increases friction within the community due to lack of “mutual trust and respect” within this “rudimentary” community (Niebuhr 1949: 379). Some of the factors which create a community of mutual respect organically are the “the power of ethnic kinship”, “a common history”, or culture or language (Niebuhr 1949: 385). This does not mean that there are no pluralistic communities which build stable nation-states but even they have something which binds them together and gives them a sense of community. But the world community lacks such “organic forces of cohesion” which makes them a rudimentary in nature (Niebuhr 1949: 385). But, according to Niebuhr “even the wisest statecraft cannot create this social tissue”, they can only divide or “redesign social fabric” but that social fabric on which they work upon has to be a “given” (Niebuhr 1949: 386). And because this “rudimentary” community is infected by mutual distrust of each other the interdependence actually tends to “sharpen the rivalries” among the nations (Niebuhr 1949: 379). Thus, according to Niebuhr it is hardly surprising that idealists come up with solutions like establishing world government in order to create a more integrated world community. This naivity makes already “tragic experiences” of the world of international politics more poignant as such wishful thinking only “beguiles” us into not taking “urgent moral and political responsibilities” and reject the imperfect solutions which the nations of the world community often come up with (Niebuhr 1949: 379-380).

In light of the frustration with the imperfect solutions the advocates of such proposals overestimate the “political ability” of any government to develop a “social tissue” which binds any community (Niebuhr 1949: 380). And, according to Niebuhr, this sense of community wherein there is some sense of respect for other members of society, is a necessary precondition for successful application of any “code of law” (Niebuhr 1949: 380). Niebuhr argues that the Hobbesian argument wherein it was assumed that in a

“state of nature in which all men were at war with all, and of a subsequent social contract through which men established a power over themselves to avoid mutual annihilation, is a pure fiction (Niebuhr 1949: 381). Individuals never live in an isolated manner, hence, “a small human community is as primordial as the individual” (Niebuhr 1949: 381). In other words, the idea of a community predates any conception of state. The notion that individuals can create a “government or community” simply due to their rational efforts is a pure fiction (Niebuhr 1949: 381). Constitution and laws alone cannot forcibly develop “mutual trust”, which is essential in sustaining any community, and create a world community out of thin air (Niebuhr 1949: 381-382). According to Niebuhr, this is simply a “rationalist illusion” (Niebuhr 1949: 381). Another area where he problematizes the understanding of world state is the mainstream understanding of state-society relations. The government, according to Niebuhr, is incapable of creating a community because “the authority of government is not primarily the authority of law nor the authority of force, but the authority of community itself” (Niebuhr 1949: 383). Any community accepts the laws created by any government not only because it is scared of the authority but also because it accepts those laws as “corresponding to its conception of justice” (Niebuhr 1949: 381). In addition, in the nation-states social groups obey the law as long as the government manages to balance the interests of communities and gives some sense of justice in its functioning (Niebuhr 1949: 384). The peace and order within even a national community breaks down and civil unrest ensues the moment there is a realization on the part of any social group that the injustice has been done. The monopoly of power, which is enshrined within the hands of the government, will not function properly if the community is extremely divided. In words of Niebuhr, “the police power of a government cannot be a pure political artifact. Government is the arm of the community’s body, and if the body is in pieces, the arm cannot integrate it” (Niebuhr 1949: 384). By force and coercion, alone we cannot either create a new community or fix an already broken community.

According to Niebuhr, these developments do not mean that we should stop any efforts to develop a sense of community and stop any efforts in integrating this rudimentary community (Niebuhr 1949: 388). It should only make us aware about the “limits” of such “illusory” proposals, which does not consider such limits and embrace

the “security of the impossible from the insecurities and ambiguities of the possible” (Niebuhr 1949: 388). Thus, imperfectability of the present order of things should not be an excuse for not participating in those imperfect solutions to our current problems or taking any action at all. As it is quite facile to seek refuge in the “illusory security of the impossible” and criticize others for their imperfect solutions, which does not correspond their idealistic worldview (Niebuhr 1949: 388). Hence, it also makes it very convenient for the “rationalists and idealists” to “wring their hands in holy horror when torturous process of history do not confirm to their ideal demands” and blame the ignorance of the people for the failures of their rational methods (Niebuhr 1942). For Niebuhr developing elaborate rationalistic solutions is useless because

“instead of having our energies drained off in the construction of irrelevant schemes, concern for building the world community would be better served by a philosophy that knows that life is a better unifier than law, and that community, like political justice, is achieved not merely by destroying , but also by deflecting, beguiling and harnessing residual self-interest and by finding the greatest possible concurrence between self-interest and the general welfare”.

(Harland 1960: 229)

As has already been explained in our section on morality, in order to improve the human condition the best way forward is not to retreat into pure moralism divorced from any reality or worse become a cynic and treat everything in terms of pure self-interest. The way forward for realists like Niebuhr was to try to find some form of “concurrence between self-interest and general welfare” (Harland 1960: 229). Thus, any analysis of his views on issues of reform should keep these reservations of Niebuhr regarding the imperfect human being and complexity of history in their mind.

Before ending the section, we would like to elaborate very explicitly whether Niebuhr’s views on reform are logically consistent with his other major conceptions. One of the most original contributions of classical realists like Niebuhr was his unique understanding of human nature, which not only challenged the mainstream understanding of human nature within human sciences but also challenged their understanding of the

methods of social sciences. This led him to criticize the progressive understanding of history, which is one of the core components of most of both Liberalism and Marxism. His understanding of human nature also challenged the naïve understanding of human beings wherein the source of evil was either lack of education or the capitalist system. Hence, these vices they thought could be eradicated by either education or changing the economic system based on self-interest. Both these philosophies were inherently wrong and Niebuhr's vicious attack on their failures to bring radical changes was consistent of his unique understanding of human beings who had capacity to do both good and evil. As we have already seen his views on reform was closely related to his understanding of history and sciences and they in turn cannot be understood without any understanding of his core concept of human nature. In the first chapter, we developed an analytical framework in order to see whether the understanding of Niebuhr on the issue of global reform was in fact a core part of his thinking and in order to determine that we argued that the logical consistency of his views with other core conceptions will be discussed. Hence, his views on global reform issues were in fact part of the core of his thinking because it is "logically consistent with the rest of [his] frameworks" (Pashkhanlou 2017: 14). Furthermore, most of his views on reform as we have already proved cannot be understood without understanding his overall worldview. Niebuhr incorporates his views on the issue of reform and its limits in his framework because his recognized the imperfectability of rationalism and human beings and wanted to explicitly challenge the idealists on their naiveté over the issues like world government.

4. Conclusion

We began this chapter by laying out the three propositions, which we tested in this chapter. Those hypotheses were:

Hypotheses 1: The less radical views of Niebuhr are clearly molded by his views on scientism and history. And, this critique of scientism and modern interpretations of history is consistent throughout his body of works and is informed by his pessimistic view of human nature.

Hypotheses 2: The transcendental and universalistic understanding of morality on one hand and relativistic morality on the other leads these three scholars to radically different conclusions on issues of global reform.

Hypotheses 3: The critique of scientism is what takes Morgenthau much closer to Niebuhrian understanding and interpretations of future of human history. And, its impact is reflected in his writings on global reform.

In our discussion on Reinhold Niebuhr's views on the issue of reform, we elaborated and analyzed his understanding of progressive history and his criticism of the enlightenment understanding of it. He rejected the simplistic understanding of history as a force of progress as it ignored the complex nature of history, which encompassed both chaos and order within it. It was for this reason that he called for the approximation of values and treating them as guiding principles. They should not be treated as something, which has to be realized in absolute sense because perfectibility is not possible. His understanding of history and criticism of science were very much related to each other. Because by criticizing the modern understanding of history, which drew from method of natural sciences, he was also questioning the feasibility of methods of natural sciences. For him history and nature were two very different entities and human beings unique position allows them to transcend the structures while also being part of it. Hence, human beings are creators and creature (of nature and history) at the same time. It was for this reason he rejects the naïve notion that human beings by their efforts alone can create world government by "fiat" (Niebuhr 1949). His understanding of the unique position of human nature is paramount to understand his criticism of scientism in social sciences as human behavior cannot be predicted with same consistency as it can be done in natural sciences. The findings corroborate the first hypotheses from which we began.

The third hypothesis was about the role played by the criticism of scientism in bringing Niebuhr and Morgenthau much closer to each other. We have already discussed though in their criticism of scientism they are using some of the similar arguments regarding difficulty of predictability within social sciences and impossibility of maintaining objectivity in case of social scientists. But, Niebuhr despite these similarities is much more critical about the sciences and especially rationalistic theories about the

human sciences. The findings does not fully corroborate with the third hypotheses. Morgenthau is only criticizing scientism of a certain kind, which not only misunderstands human society, but also the nature of natural sciences themselves. They indeed had certain common criticism of scientism but Niebuhr went much further than Morgenthau in his radical critique of scientism.

Lastly, the second hypothesis was about the Niebuhr's understanding of morality. The findings validate the hypotheses. Like Morgenthau, Niebuhr also held a universalistic understanding of morality, which was informed by their understanding of religious texts. Both of them did not fully reject the significance of moral pretensions and recognized that despite the hypocrisy of the members of international society they do accept the significant role of universal moral standards in judging the actions of the states. Without any standard moral criteria, they believed it was impossible to judge the goodness or evilness of any state. This places them in a radically different camp than E. H. Carr whose crude moral relativism was radically different from these scholars and took them to radically different positions on the reform issues like soviet planning. While Niebuhr clearly saw the unjust nature of such an authoritarian system, E. H. Carr clearly failed to do so and took refuge in relativism for providing justifications.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The study began with the purpose of evaluating the understudied issue of global reform in the thought of E. H. Carr, Hans J Morgenthau and Reinhold Niebuhr. In that process the thought of these three scholars were evaluated in the last three chapters in order to understand the source behind the divergent positions of these scholars on the issue. The dissertation was an attempt to fill this gap in the literature as works on the views of these scholars on the issue of reform has not looked at the philosophical worldview of these scholars, which informed their works. During the process we also analysed whether the discussion by these scholars of the issue of reform is logically consistent with their other major concepts and whether it constitutes the core of their thinking.

The concluding chapter is divided into five sections. In the first section, we will give a brief overview of the findings of the study. In the next two sections, we will on our findings in order to see prospects of future research. In the second section, on the basis of the findings of this study we will look at the issue of moral relativism and the significance of this issue for the discipline of IR in general and theories in particular. Here, we will build up on our discussion of these scholars and their views on morality. In the third section, we will look at the issue of historicism of Carr and the dangers of the method of historicism and predicting based on a certain reading of the progress of human history.

1. A Brief Overview of Study and Findings

In this study, we were trying to find the answer of the following research questions: How did these three classical realists understand the issue of global reform? What sort of divide is there, on this issue, within this so-called school of “classical realism” in general and within these three scholars in particular? What are the sources behind this divide? How this divide does impact the conclusions of its proponents on the issue of global reform? Are their views on global reform part of the core of their theories? If yes then how are they consistent with their focus on other core issues like human nature, morality and power?

While seeking answer to these questions we tested the following hypotheses in the last four chapters: First hypothesis was that the historicism of E H Carr clearly leads him to have a different and much more radical view on the issue of global reform. Second hypothesis was that the less radical views of Niebuhr are clearly molded by his views on scientism and history. And, this critique of scientism and modern interpretations of history is consistent throughout his body of works and is informed by his pessimistic view of human nature. The third hypothesis was that the critique of scientism is what takes Morgenthau much closer to Niebuhrian understanding and interpretations of future of human history. And its impact is reflected in his writings on global reform. Fourth and final hypothesis was that the transcendental and universalistic understanding of morality on one hand and relativistic morality on the other leads these scholars to radically different conclusions on issues of global reform.

In the second chapter we looked at the thought of E. H. Carr and looked at his major works on Soviet history, international relations and historiography *What Is History?(1961)* which gives a glimpse of his understanding of history as a process. We looked at the critique of historicism as a method by Karl Popper and argued that the limitations and failures of Carr in predicting and judging the reform issues within the Soviet Union were largely due to his method. We also argued that the attempts by the critical scholars in borrowing wisdom from his writings on global reform could not ignore his problematic views on one of the largest attempts to reform the course of human history in 20th century reforms within the Soviet Union. He was drawing lessons from a certain understanding of history, which allowed him to give a *longue duree* explanation of the potential demise of nation-states, challenges of “Soviet democracy” and economic experiments like planning to the western world. We argued that the historicism as a method severely distorted his works. For example while talking about the impact of the developments within the Soviet Union he argues that an economic system based on control and planning “for socialism” as the only “available alternative” which could solve the problems of our civilization (Carr 1951: 39). Hence, this notion that by understanding the course of human history we can actually “reshape” and solve the problems of the whole civilization is a product of his historicism worldview. Similarly, while talking about “Soviet democracy” he failed to see the paradox of calling an authoritarian nanny

state a “democracy”. But we saw in detail how to a historicist like Carr it only made sense as the extension of the control of the collective on the means of production is an inevitable progress from the ‘decadent’ liberal democracies as they failed to expand the popular control over economic realm and get rid of unequal institutions like private property. In this context, Carr’s problematic view regarding the so-called “Soviet democracy” makes perfect sense. As we have already seen, in the ‘theoretical historical’ vision of Carr history is “progressive science” wherein the progress is not a continuous one. It is the “belief” in the “progressive development of human potentialities” (Carr 1961: 119). And, this progress according to Carr can discern the future course as the historian’s tendency to generalize by studying events of the past enables her/him to provide a “general guide for future action” (Carr 1961: 69). In simple words, past, present and future are interconnected and it is the task of the historian to view the progress of history along those lines. Karl Popper rejected this method as a fallacy because we cannot outline “the course of human history” by using “rational methods” which historicists propagate (Carr 1957). According to Popper, the future course of human history depends on the progress of scientific knowledge, which makes it very dangerous to argue that we can actually shape the future of human civilization by means of ‘rational’ methods like Planning. It was for this reason that Carr failed to understand the failures of the Soviet system. In this chapter, we also found out how for historicists like Carr even morality is conditioned by their understanding of history. The moral relativism of Carr was a product of that. According to Popper (1957) for a historicist, the course of history also determines the value system that they embrace. Hence, they recommend us to “adjust one’s system of values” in order to confirm with the “impending changes” (Popper 1957: 53). We saw how moral relativism of Carr destroyed his capability to judge the severities of Soviet system and he always provided explanations based on that. Hence, for Carr the brutality of Soviet Union and Stalin was due to the nature of Russian society and culture and its peculiarities and Western scholars misjudge the system due to their own western lenses. This is extremely problematic position and in our next section we will discuss the significance of incorporating the failures of Carr’s moral judgement in to any attempt interpret his works, Most of the scholars hitherto have not considered this aspect. The findings related to E. H. Carr corroborated our hypotheses on Carr.

In the third chapter, we focused on Hans Morgenthau's views on issues of reform like planning, world state and European Federation. In this chapter, we argued that the works of Morgenthau were consistently informed by his worldview. His criticism of scientism was not a rejection of natural science methods in totality but he was only criticizing what he simply saw as vulgarization of methods of natural sciences. He rejected the methods, which looked for simple causal explanations and called them as "method of single cause" (Morgenthau 1944). Morgenthau argued that a theory should be about "statistical averages and probability" not "certainty and predictability" (Morgenthau 1944: 179). Social scientists according to Morgenthau can never predict with certainty the future course of human society. They can only give a limited number of probable outcomes under a given condition. The limitation of sciences according to Morgenthau is reflective of human being and the quality of their mind. And it is the "quality of human mind" itself which ultimately impacts the quality of social and natural world and our understanding and interpretation of it (Morgenthau 1944: 181). Hence, human society is imperfect because of the nature of human beings and our world reflects this imperfectability. But he does not reject rationality in its entirety. Morgenthau, by recognizing, that the social life is contingent does not contend that it is chaotic therefore incomprehensible and a complete mystery. There is a "certain regularity" and order despite the complexity. In addition, by looking at those regular patterns we can discern "potential trends" (Morgenthau 1944: 184). Hence, he does not completely reject the potentiality of planning but warns against the simplistic rational planning, which is too rigid about the goals and does not look for "approximate solutions", rather they look for concrete and absolute solutions and this is problematic (Morgenthau 1944: 185). The more rational the planning sounds on paper the more disastrous its outcome will be. This observation is very significant for our discussion on Soviet planning in previous chapter. According to Morgenthau, human society is a very complex organism and there are multiple social groups and multiple factors, which affect the outcome. The ultra-rational planning measures do not consider the human factor. They do not take into account how different social groups are going to react to a certain particular planning measures. For Morgenthau therefore approximate solutions instead of absolutes (Socialism or end of markets) are the way forward. This puts him at odds with scholars like Carr who were

sure about the inevitability of the success of Soviet style planning within western world, which ignored the human factors, which is a fallacy according to Morgenthau. As we have discussed the failure of these ultra-rationalistic and ‘scientific’ measures within the Soviet Union, we demonstrated how the failure of the planning was not blamed on the unrealistic goals of planners themselves, rather they started blaming certain ‘privileged’ peasants like Kulaks for their failures. Here, historicist like Lenin and Carr demonstrate the similar mistake as both blamed the Kulaks in their analysis.

In the second half of the third chapter, we discuss the understanding of morality and its role in Morgenthau’s understanding of international society and the limitations it places on any utopian solutions like world state. Morgenthau laments the rise of nationalism and “nationalistic universalism”. He argues that the rise of nationalism makes it very difficult for individuals to ignore their own state’s interests and embrace some abstract universal moral standard. However, this does not mean that Morgenthau himself believed in the relativity of morality. Unlike Carr for Morgenthau, the “moral law is not a utilitarian instrument aiming at the protection of society, even though its observance has this effect, but its commands are absolute and must be obeyed for their own sake” (Morgenthau 1960: 354). In this chapter, we argue that Morgenthau rejects moral relativism as problematic because then it robs us of any standard with which to judge any action. In the last portion of this chapter, we discussed how the nature of international society makes the realization of any world state impossibility. In this section, we also countered the claims of scholars like Campbell Craig (2008) who contend that the threat of thermonuclear wars troubled Morgenthau to such an extent that he radically changed his position on the issue of world state and wanted to radically change his realist theory of international politics. We argue that this sort of literature is quite problematic because it is based on few essays and college lecture given in late 1950s and early 1960s they contend that he gave up his more critical views of world state. This observation is problematic because Morgenthau never mentions even once in any of the prefaces of his later editions about this major development of world politics (presence of thermonuclear bomb). In 1963, he wrote an article wherein he reiterates his views on nation-states and how problematic it is to talk about international police force in a society which is comprised of nation-states. We argue that such observations overstate the significance of

some observations and comments, which were made at the height of cold war when there was a real threat of thermonuclear war.

In the third chapter, we established that Morgenthau was indeed against any sort of moral relativism as he rejects the relativism of Carr. Hence, it is hardly surprising that they had such radically different views of Soviet Union. Here we also established that he criticized the scientism but does not reject the method of natural sciences in their entirety. Instead, he argues that it is the 'rationalistic philosophies' of 19th century, which misinterpreted the natural sciences and the nature of human rationality and human nature. Hence, he does not give up rationalism in their entirety, He tried to correct what he thought was a misinterpretation of natural sciences themselves. Unlike Niebuhr, he was not that radical in his critique of social sciences theories and scientism. Unlike Morgenthau, Niebuhr made a strict distinction between human world and the natural world. Hence, for Niebuhr methods of natural sciences were not useful in analysing human history. Niebuhr viewed human history in a radically different manner and reject the progressive accounts of human history. For Niebuhr human being is both a creator and creation of history. Hence, there is a modern tendency to simplistically interpret history to the realm of "natural sciences" by "obscure[ing] all the important points in human life, matters of ethical choices and responsibilities [and] complex relations between good and evil" (Niebuhr 1954 a: 468). The sciences can never settle the issue of morality and values. Similarly, Niebuhr and Morgenthau also disagreed on the role of unique events in theory. For Morgenthau only the recurring events could be rationally understood and causal laws could be established between them. Reinhold Niebuhr problematizes the connection between "rationality and general laws" which was made by Morgenthau. He argues that such a limited understanding of rationality does not take into account the role of "unique and dramatic in history" (Guilhot 2011: 248). History is much more complex for Niebuhr "than mere generalizations" and it is both the unique and general, which gives us full explanations about historical event (Guilhot 2011: 249). Any International Relations theory should truly reflect this complex nature of human history. Still they are both critical of vulgarization of natural sciences method within social sciences and try to fix this. It did make his views closer to Niebuhr but he is still less

radical in his criticism of scientism unlike Niebuhr. Therefore, the third hypothesis is not entirely valid. Other three hypotheses fully reflect the findings within our chapters.

As far as issue of morality is concerned, Niebuhr is much closer to Morgenthau's understanding of morality. For Niebuhr the regulative principles like liberty, justice and equality give body to any normative principle. However, he also warns us against using those principles as absolutes. In words of Niebuhr (1954 [2011]: 270), in an era of interdependence the most difficult moral task for "individuals and nations" is how to make the pursuance of its own interests as much closer to that of the "more general and universal scheme of value". Policy makers have to find some imperfect common ground between both sets of values, which often clash with each other. It was this belief in universal values that Niebuhr judges the political system within Soviet Union as evil because the tyrannical regime clearly denies liberty and justice in name of establishing equality. This puts him clearly at odd with E. H. Carr. The findings related to Niebuhr corroborate our initial hypotheses regarding him. During the course of our three chapters we also found out how their views on reform issues were logically consistent with their method (in case of Carr) and their views on science and history. The findings also answer one of the research questions about the issue of centrality of their interpretation of reform issues to their thought. Their views were not peripheral to their central concerns regarding morality, power and human nature (in case of Niebuhr and Morgenthau). Hence, for Morgenthau the imperfect social world and our imperfect solutions were reflective of the quality of human mind itself. Morgenthau's understanding of planning measures was reflective of this view of human nature and science. Similarly, for Niebuhr his unique understanding of human beings and human history is what made him more sceptical than Carr about the reforms going on within the Soviet Union.

In the next section we will discuss why this aspect of E. H. Carr's thought poses a lots of challenges for scholars who bring out the critical aspects of his works without fully acknowledging the shortcomings of his method. We will also discuss why this also asks critical and mainstream IR theorists to take the issue of moral relativism more seriously.

2. Trap of Moral Relativism and IR Theory

In an article, written in 1995 Roger D. Spegele, argued that IR scholars and theorists including critical theorists have not explicitly thought about the role of moral relativism in their theories. This omission is evident in the critical works on the thought of E. H. Carr. Scholars like Andrew Linklater (1997) and William E. Scheuerman (2012) ignore his writings on Soviet Union and do not acknowledge the problematic aspects of his thought. Scheuerman (2012) ignores his views on Soviet Union as “naïve” while Linklater argues that Carr’s writing on nationalism allows us to “avoid the naivety of utopianism and the sterility of Realism” (Linklater 1997: 338). We have clearly shown that Carr could not escape utopianism as Linklater assumes and his predictions regarding the future of nation-states and endorsement of multi-national larger territorial units should be read with caution. His overenthusiasm for radical change in history coupled with moral relativism made him oblivious to the darker side of the seemingly progressive Soviet Union and its planning measures. The progressive understanding of history along with the seemingly progressive policies of Soviet Union made him oblivious to the disasters of their experiments. Without critically addressing these problematic aspects i.e. moral relativism of ‘critical’ Carr, the Critical scholarship risks making similar error of judgement while evaluating any progressive change within society. The Soviet experiment tells us that progressive experiments can turn into a nightmare and scholars can still ignore those aspects without fully recognizing their moral ills. Even in present times, the failure of Bolivarian revolution points to the limits of these progressive revolutions and makes the findings of this dissertation more significant for present purpose. Hence, Carr’s limitations as a scholar and findings related to his writings on Soviet Union also gives insights into the study of revolutions in twenty first century (for eg. failure of revolutions in places like Venezuela).

] Reinhold Niebuhr and Hans Morgenthau, unlike Carr, despite all their faults never failed to see the difference between an imperfect Western democracy and authoritarian regimes with seemingly progressive outlook. Their universal moral standard gave them tools to judge such authoritarian regimes. Spegele tries to address this issue in the context of political realism and argues that “the moral relativism as an issue is generally ignored

in international relations, some theorists [who have dealt with the issue] contend that we are logically forced to accept it” (1995: 221). His solution is to make a strict distinction between pluralism and relativism. We can respect pluralism without falling into the trap of relativism. Even after more than two decades, most of the works on critical and mainstream IR have failed to address the issue of moral relativism. This dissertation and its findings pave the way for taking the issue of moral relativism more seriously. Morgenthau and Niebuhr’s view on morality does provide us with a good starting point to counter the relativism, which continues to persist amongst us. After Spegele’s (1995) article and his call for dealing with the issue more seriously, the critical and mainstream theorists still do not take the issue seriously. The dissertation and its findings point towards a serious gap in the literature and calls for research programs within the discipline to take the issue of moral relativism more seriously. This issue is more significant in context of international relations because international society by its nature is populated by diverse cultures and nation-states. This makes the tendency to cling to cultural centric explanations more a possibility. The clashes even within the UN agencies between various states or groupings of states over the values like women rights, human rights etc. is often about clash between attempts to impose universal values by some states and other resisting it by invoking relativism. Hence, the discipline and especially theories need to take the trap of moral relativism more seriously.

Now we shall move towards the third and final section, which addresses the contentious issue of historicism and calls for radical change of the whole systems or civilization.

3. Historicism and Dangers of Prediction: Why it is difficult to plan ‘rationally’ the future course of human history

We have already seen in previous chapters the failures of historicism as a method and why it is difficult to rationally plan the future course of human history. Any *longue duree* explanation of the course of human history, which explicitly or implicitly follows historicism as a method, makes a dangerous mistake of making bold predictions regarding the course of human history. According to Popper, this is a serious fallacy. This discussion of historicism is quite significant as we can still see such fallacious method and worldview amidst us. The looming threat of global warming has made calls for large

scale planning of future of human society by radical green theorists again fashionable (for eg. see Foster 1999: 125-142 and Chandler et al. 2018). Similarly, after the recent economic crisis there were talks of radically changing the economic system, as it does not work anymore. The study clearly warns against falling into the trap of historicism and believing that we can manage and change the course of whole human civilization and economic system by means of radical planning. Any planning measure should remember the advice of Morgenthau regarding the limitations of rational planning measures. The point of any planning should be to look for approximate solutions and the means should be flexible enough which take into account the diverse action and reaction of various social groups. The policy should be flexible enough to consider these things. The policy should reflect the reality on the ground. The planning measures of Soviet Union failed drastically because they never took the diverse reactions of social groups into account. The proponents of radical theories of reform should be careful about their large claims. The dissertation warns against falling into the same trap and the recent attempts to drive insights from a long view of history within critical IR like historical sociology could gain a lot from the discussion on Carr's *longue duree* explanations and his historicism. The insights of Niebuhr and Morgenthau regarding history and planning then gives a good starting point to critically analyse the bold claims regarding the future course of human history and tendency of social scientists and theorists to make such unscientific (in Popperian sense) claims. The course of human history is a very complex process, no social science discipline or theory can lay a claim with *certainty* that they know what that future course should be, and that we can reach that future by radically planning about it.

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